

AGENDA
Eau Claire County
Broadband Committee
Thursday, May 20, 2021
4:00 P.M.
Remote Meeting via Webex Events

Those wishing to make public comments must submit their name and address no later than 30 minutes prior to the meeting to rod.eslinger@co.eau-claire.wi.us. Comments are limited to 3 minutes; you will be called on during the public comment section of the meeting. Written comments will also be accepted and should be submitted to the e-mail address listed above.

Join WebEx Meeting: <https://eauclairecounty.webex.com> Meeting ID: 167 775 1184 Password: qMPYqiCn574

*Meeting audio can be listened to using this Audio conference dial in information.

Public Access: Dial in Number: 1-415-655-0001 Access Code: 167 775 1184, Password: qMPYqiCn574

**mute your device upon entry*

1. Call to order and confirmation of meeting notice.
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment (limit to 3 minutes per person)
4. Charter/Spectrum presentation on residential services in the County - **Discussion**.
5. SpaceX Starlink Pilot Project Update – **Discussion/Action**
 - a. Governor Evers/WEDC Starlink Grant Announcement – Chippewa Regional Airport
 - b. Congratulatory Letters to the participants and MOU's
 - c. Next Steps...
6. Broadband Network Project Application Update – **Discussion**
7. Broadband Forward! Community Certification - **Discussion**
8. Healthcare position vacancy on the committee – **Discussion**
9. Review/Approval of March 25, 2021 and April 15, 2021 Committee Minutes – **Discussion/Action**
10. Next Steps and future meetings – **Discussion/Action**
 - a. Future Meeting: June 17, 2021
11. Adjourn

MEETING MINUTES

Eau Claire County
Broadband Committee
Thursday, March 25, 2021
4:00 P.M.

Remote Meeting via Webex Events

Those wishing to make public comments must submit their name and address no later than 30 minutes prior to the meeting to rod.eslinger@co.eau-claire.wi.us. Comments are limited to 3 minutes; you will be called on during the public comment section of the meeting. Written comments will also be accepted and should be submitted to the e-mail address listed above.

Public Access: Dial in Number: 1-415-655-0001 Access Code: 145 754 3095, Password: TkfwMJUi657
**mute your device upon entry*

Members Present: Lynn Thompson, Joe Alf, Donald Mowry, Tom Lange, Tim Laubach, Collin Pomplun, Luke Hanson, Mark Zuber, and Scott Hoffman.

Staff Present: Rodney J. Eslinger – Director of Planning and Development, Dave Hayden – Director of Information Systems

Others Present: Kathryn Schauf, Chris Meyer, John LeBrun, Doug Carlson

Press: Ryan Patterson

1. Call to order and confirmation of meeting notice.

Chairperson Mowry call to order the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and he confirmed that the meeting was properly noticed.

2. Roll Call – Members present are noted above.

3. Public Comment (limit to 3 minutes per person)

Doug Carlson, Town of Brunswick citizen, offered the following questions to the committee: What method or process is the Broadband Committee using to define the areas of greatest broadband deficit per household per square mile? In the Union and Seymour, where Starlink cells are already live, does the committee believe that Starlink service meets the need for those residents, or do they believe there is still a deficit to overcome for them? Will additional property owners be able to sign up for Starlink subscriptions in the pilot area or will they just serve the list up to 50 specific addresses that the committee provides them?

4. Review/Approval of March 25, 2021 Committee Minutes – **Discussion/Action**

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes of March 25, 2021. Lynn Thompson motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Luke Hanson seconded the motion; motion carried on a voice vote with all in favor of the motion.

5. America Rescue Act Fund - **Discussion/Action**

The committee and staff had a general discussion on the American Rescue Act and discussed connecting with our existing partners to learn how we can assist and collaborate on future projects

and to reach out to the school districts, towns, libraries, and other local municipalities all to ensure broadband expansion are coordinate in an efficient manner without duplicating efforts or missing out on opportunities. The committee did not want to narrow their options and noted proven technology should be a focus of the committee. Options maybe include but not limited to wireless vs. wired, short term vs. long term, and upload/download speeds. The group discussed the possibility of forming a task force in effort to collaborate across all entities to ensure we do not miss opportunities for funding or supporting a project. Once the funds are dispersed to the municipalities, each of them will have until December of 2024 to spend the money.

6. PSC Grant Announcements – **Discussion/Action**

Three PSC grants were awarded for two broadband projects in Eau Claire County. Specifically, TCC and 24/7 were awarded grants to install fiber to the premise in the Town of Drammen, and 24/7 was awarded a grant in the Town of Brunswick on a smaller project along Hwy Z covering 30 residences, town hall, fire department, a few businesses, and an Eau Claire Energy Cooperative Substation. Mark Zuber indicated the Town of Drammen project will likely be completed over a two-year span.

7. SpaceX Starlink Pilot Project Update – **Discussion**

Dave Hayden presented the updates to the committee on the survey, allocations, fundraising efforts, and the WEDC grant application process. At this time, staff have received 60 surveys or about 11.5 % return rate. Within two week, the final participation lists should be finalized and be available at the next committee meeting. Staff continues to work with Corporation Counsel regarding the agreement with the medical partners and work continues on the weekly survey that would include incentives for the participants.

8. FCC Emergency Broadband Program – **Discussion/Action**

Don Mowry briefly updated the committee on the FCC Emergency Broadband Program. He explained it is a program to help individuals that struggle to pay for internet/broadband services. A link to the program details will be shared with the committee after the meeting.

9. Next Steps and future meetings – **Discussion/Action**

- a. Future Meeting: April 15, 2021.

Adjourn Action: Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:15 p.m.

Respectively submitted by,

Rodney J. Eslinger
Director of Planning and Development

AGENDA
Eau Claire County
Broadband Committee
Thursday, April 15, 2021
4:00 P.M.
Remote Meeting via Webex Events

Those wishing to make public comments must submit their name and address no later than 30 minutes prior to the meeting to rod.eslinger@co.eau-claire.wi.us. Comments are limited to 3 minutes; you will be called on during the public comment section of the meeting. Written comments will also be accepted and should be submitted to the e-mail address listed above.

Public Access: Dial in Number: 1-415-655-0001 Access Code: 145 162 0393, Password: dR4WbthrX88
**mute your device upon entry*

Members Present: Donald Mowry, Tom Lange, Collin Pomplun, Sarah Lipke, and Mark Zuber.

Staff Present: Rodney J. Eslinger – Director of Planning and Development, Dave Hayden – Director of Information Systems

Others Present: Richard Severn, John LeBrun, Doug Carlson

Press: Ryan Patterson

1. Call to order and confirmation of meeting notice.

Chairperson Mowry call to order the meeting at 4:12 p.m. and he confirmed that the meeting was properly noticed. A quorum of the committee was not present throughout the meeting.

2. Roll Call – Members present are noted above.
3. Public Comment (limit to 3 minutes per person) – None.
4. Charter/Spectrum presentation on commercial and residential services in the County - **Discussion**.

Richard Severn from Charter/Spectrum presented to the committee. He oversees the municipal and educational accounts for the company and is looking for provide broadband solutions in urban areas that are not served with infrastructure.

5. Broadband Oral Progress Reports – **Discussion**

Chair Mowry gave oral reports to the Eau Claire County Towns Association Unit and to the Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors on the committee's actions/projects to date.

6. America Rescue Act Fund - **Discussion**

Mark Zuber recommended that the committee invite Janelle Henning, Town of Washington Administrator and Jen Meyer, Town of Pleasant Valley Town Clerk to an upcoming Broadband meeting so they can share ideas with the committee on expanding broadband in their respective towns.

7. SpaceX Starlink Pilot Project Update – **Discussion**

Dave Hayden presented the updates to the committee on the Starlink finalized participants list and the WEDC grant application process. Staff continues to work with Corporation Counsel regarding the agreement with the medical partners and IS and P&D staff are finalizing the weekly participant survey.

- a. Confirmation of Starlink participant list
- b. WEDC Grant
- c. Next Steps...

8. Telecommuter Forward and Broadband Forward Update – **Discussion**

Rod Eslinger reminded the committee of the County’s Broadband Forward ordinance and indicated the ordinance was submitted to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin for its certification. This review was pending at time of the meeting. Mark Zuber confirmed that 4 of the 13 Eau Claire County Towns have adopted the Telecommuter Forward Ordinance.

9. Healthcare position vacancy on the committee – **Discussion**

The position is still open, and Dave Hayden was going to mention the opening during an upcoming Healthcare Coalition meeting.

10. Review/Approval of March 25, 2021 Committee Minutes – **Discussion**

A quorum of the committee was not present, so the meeting minutes were not acted on.

11. Next Steps and future meetings – **Discussion**

- a. Future Meeting: May 20, 2021

12. Adjourn

Adjourn Action: Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:30 p.m.

Respectively submitted by,

Rodney J. Eslinger
Director of Planning and Development

May 11, 2021



Rod Eslinger, Director of Planning and Development
Eau Claire County
721 Oxford Ave.
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Re: Broadband Forward! Community Certification for Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

Dear Rod Eslinger:

The Public Service Commission's Wisconsin Broadband Office has reviewed your application for certification as a Broadband Forward! Community. Based upon its review of your application and pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 196.504, I am pleased to inform you that the Wisconsin Broadband Office hereby approves your request and certifies Eau Claire County as a Broadband Forward! Community. The certification is effective as of the date of this letter.

Broadband access is increasingly important to our economy, education and daily life. The state as a whole—citizens, governments, providers, schools and businesses—has an interest in expanding broadband access and usage in underserved areas of the state. Becoming certified as a Broadband Forward! Community sends a signal that Eau Claire County has taken steps to reduce obstacles to broadband infrastructure investment by streamlining administrative procedures for broadband projects.

The state of Wisconsin is pleased to support the investment in broadband infrastructure within Eau Claire County by certifying it as a Broadband Forward! Community, and we look forward to working with you to ensure success and continued broadband expansion in your community. The Wisconsin Broadband Office stands ready to serve as a resource for Eau Claire County. Please contact me, Jaron McCallum at 608-267-2160 or jaron.mccallum@wisconsin.gov for additional information.

Eau Claire County's Broadband Forward! Community certification serves as an outstanding example of public-private collaboration to maximize broadband infrastructure investments in Wisconsin—and moves us closer to our goal of bringing broadband access to every corner of our state.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jaron McCallum", written in a cursive style.

Jaron McCallum
State Broadband Director
Division of Digital Access, Consumer and Environmental Affairs
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin