

December 4, 2013

**To:** NITC Commissioners  
**From:** Anne Byers  
**Subject:** Community Council Report

### **Broadband Plan Kickoff**

The NITC is a partner in the Nebraska Public Service Commission's broadband mapping and planning grant. One of the components of the project is the development of a state broadband plan. Since the NITC has expertise in strategic planning and has an existing advisory group whose focus is broadband adoption and development in communities, the NITC will be leading the development of a state broadband plan. In addition to the Nebraska Public Service Commission, other partners include the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and the AIM Institute.

Over 50 stakeholders participated in the kickoff meeting for the state broadband plan in Lincoln or at one of nine other video sites. The discussions centered on identifying strengths, resources, areas in which we could improve, and where we want to be in the future. Participants also discussed the priority areas identified in the regional plans: economic development, agriculture, digital literacy/adoption, and broadband availability and affordability. Work groups are being formed to identify best practices and develop action items for these areas.

### **Broadband Conference**

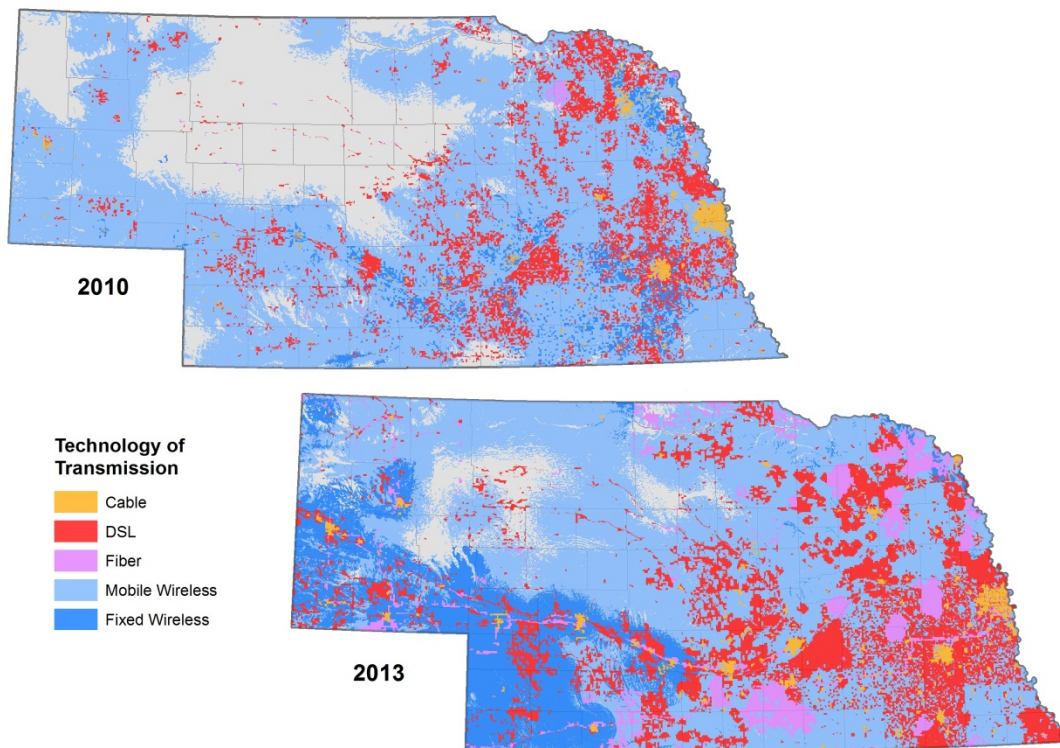
Approximately 250 individuals attended the Nebraska broadband conference in Kearney on Oct. 16-17. Keynote speakers included Steve Kiene from Nebraska Global, and global futurist and author Jack Uldrich.

### **Mobile Pulse**

The Nebraska Public Service Commission is looking for volunteers to download the Mobile Pulse app to their smart phone to test mobile wireless download speeds. Location information but no personal or identifiable information will be transferred. The app will use no more than 100 MB of data in a month.

### **Broadband Availability 2010-2013**

The following maps by the Nebraska Public Service Commission show how broadband availability in Nebraska has improved between 2010 and 2013.



### **Business Survey**

A survey of Nebraska businesses is currently being conducted. Selected businesses who completed the survey will also receive coaching on how to better utilize broadband. Preliminary results show that Nebraska businesses are utilizing broadband at a slightly higher rate than businesses in the other states in which this business survey has been conducted. Broadband is most often used by Nebraska businesses to purchase goods and services, for banking and financial services, and for government transactions.

### **Community Council Members**

The Community Council is being reenergized and we have a slate of new member nominations. A list of members and nominees follows as well as bios of nominees. I will be asking for your approval of the member nominations.

# Community Council Members and Nominees

## Rural and Community IT Development

### Members

**Rod Armstrong**, AIM Institute

**Norene Fitzgerald**

**Darla Heggem**, Twin Cities Development, Scottsbluff

**Joan Modrell**, Nebraska Department of Labor

### Nominees

**Pam Adams**, American Broadband

**Randy Bretz**, TEDxLincoln Curator

**Dave Hahn**, Nebraska Information Network

**Connie Hancock**, University of Nebraska Extension

**Jacob Knutson**, Nebraska Department of Economic Development

**Kim Kuhle**, US Bank

**David Lofdahl**, IT Consultant

**Paul Ludwick**, Nebraska Link

**Monica Lueking-Crowe**, Furnas Harlan Partnership

**Marion McDermott**, Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce

**Megan McGown**, City of Sidney, Community Development Director

## Libraries and Local Government

### Members

**Chris Anderson**, City of Central City

**Brett Baker**, City of Seward

**Phil Green**, City of Blair

### Nominees

**Jessica Chamberlain**, Norfolk Public Library

**Steve Fosselman**, Grand Island Public Library

**Steve Henderson**, City of Lincoln

**Holly Woldt**, Nebraska Library Commission

## At Large

### Members

**Jerry Vap**, Nebraska Public Service Commission

## Community Council Bios

### **Pam Adams**

Pam Adams serves as Marketing Coordinator for American Broadband, a regional telecommunications company based in Blair, NE. Adams has over 12 years' experience in the technology and telecommunications industries, having held positions with Inacom, Compaq, HP, and Bizco Technologies. She has also worked as a self-employed consultant for Frontier Technologies, a startup food processing venture located in Curtis, Nebraska, and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. She has in-depth experience with economic development, public relations, entrepreneurship, and grant writing. Ms. Adams is a graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, with a degree in Agriculture.

### **Randy Bretz**

Randy Bretz is an experienced and innovative leader/administrator with background in communications, telecommunications, higher education administration, sales and marketing, small business administration, distance education, educational consortia, information systems, educational telecommunications, Internet applications, and new project development. He has held management positions with Nelnet, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, the Agricultural Satellite Corporation, Sound Words Communications. He has a Ph.D. in adult education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, M.A. in electronic media and B.S. in broadcasting from Indian State University.

### **David Hahn**

I am from the small town of Pierce, Nebraska. I started working for Northwestern Bell in November 1970 and retired from Qwest/CenturyLink in April 2011. Throughout my 40+ year career in the Telecommunications Industry, I was fortunate to be assigned a variety of jobs. Some of my first job titles included Telephone Installer, Installation and Repair Supervisor, Test Center Supervisor and Special Services Supervisor. Later in my career, I was an Account Manager for the Independent Telephone Companies in Nebraska, then an Account Manager for some of the Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLECs) in the USWest/Qwest 14 state region. The last 7 years, I was a Regional Service Director for the 500+ Independent Telephone Companies located within the Qwest region. In August 2011, I assumed the job of Executive Director for the non-profit Nebraska Information Network (NIN). This organization was formed to work on promoting rural development through the use of telecommunications technologies. NIN is supported by annual membership fees from a majority of independent the telephone companies in Nebraska. One of the main goals within NIN and the companies it represents is the promotion of broadband throughout the state.

I am very interested in the development of a state broadband plan and would like to be part of these activities with the Community Council going forward.

**Connie Hancock**

Connie Hancock is an extension educator at UNL Extension. She has been active in programming which supports the adoption of broadband technology. She has a bachelor's degree in vocational home economics education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a master's degree in guidance counseling from the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

**Jacob Knutson**

Jacob Knutson is the IT Cluster Coordinator for Nebraska's Department of Economic Development (DED). In this role Jacob coordinates and assists activities with IT businesses throughout the state while also serving as a liaison between businesses and DED management. Prior to his position with DED, Jacob worked in Washington, DC – initially for Congressman Adrian Smith (NE-03) and then at the Dutko Grayling lobby firm. He worked on a variety of tasks, including assisting congressional staff of the Member for the Ways & Means Committee, while with Rep. Smith. For Dutko, he served as an assistant to the Energy and Environment team on federal policy work with researching and tracking various energy issues. Prior to attending graduate school, he also did a brief stint in the Department of Interior as a Program Support Specialist for the Bureau of Reclamation dealing with water issues and invasive species.

Originally from St. Paul, Nebraska, Jacob received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Nebraska-Kearney and obtained a Master's Degree from the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

**Kim Kuhle**

Kim Kuhle is the vice president and community affairs manager for U.S. Bank. Previously, she was the director of economic development for the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and the president of Capital Consulting. Ms. Kuhle has master's degree in economics from the University of Nebraska and a bachelor's degree in public administration and economics from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

**David Lofdahl**

David Lofdahl has worked in voice and data for over 40 years serving Nebraska businesses and city governments such as McCook, Dawson and West Point.

**Paul W. Ludwick**

Paul is the Chief Executive Officer of NebraskaLink Holdings, LLC, a Nebraska middle-mile broadband provider that is owned by a consortium of seven Nebraska independent local exchange companies. The

company supplies broadband transport and direct internet access to government, education, health-care, telecom, and enterprise customers.

Prior to NebraskaLink, Paul was with Sprint Corporation for 18 years in various technical, product, marketing, and leadership positions, where he was awarded five US Patents in diverse technologies. Paul worked with Rockwell Switching and Transmission Systems divisions for 10 years in technical and management roles before moving to Sprint.

Involved in telecommunication industry activities, Paul was elected to two terms on the Federal Communications Commission Interstate TRS Fund Advisory Council, where he served 4 years as Vice-Chair, and was appointed by Chairman William Kennard as a charter representative to the FCC Consumer Advisory Committee.

Paul graduated from Park University with a BS in Computer Information Systems and The University of Kansas with a Master of Business Administration and has been active in community service, most recently serving six years on the Olathe (Kansas) Board of Housing Commissioners, with four years as chairperson.

Paul resides in Lincoln Nebraska with his daughter Brynn and has two sons out-of-state, Preston and Parker.

### **Monica Lueking-Crowe**

Monica Lueking-Crowe is the executive director of the Furnas Harlan Partnership, a non profit economic development organization serving Furnas and Harlan Counties in South Central Nebraska. Monica is serving as a broadband business coach.

### **Marion McDermott**

Marion McDermott is the executive director of the Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce. Previously she worked as the office manager/marketing media specialist for Armagost Financial Group and Executive Director of the Ogallala/Keith County Chamber of Commerce.

### **Megan McGown**

Megan McGown is the Community Development Director, Social Media Manager, and Main Street Manager for the City of Sidney. Previously, she worked the executive director of the Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce.

**Jessica Chamberlain**

Jessica Chamberlain has been working with libraries for more than 10 years. Starting out her career in public libraries in Ohio, she returned to Nebraska in 2010 to become the director of the Northeast Library System, a non-profit agency that provides support services to libraries. In 2012 she returned to public library work by accepting a position as the director of the Norfolk Public Library. She knows the important role that libraries play in giving broadband internet access to the public.

**Steve Fosselman**

Steve Fosselman is the director of the Grand Island Public Library and a member of the Nebraska Library Association. He is a supporter of the use of information technology in Nebraska's libraries.

**Steve Henderson**

Steve Henderson is the chief information officer at the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County. Previously, he was the information technology administrator for strategic planning and project management at the State of Nebraska's Office of the CIO. He has an MBA from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and B.S. in Computer Science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

**Holly Woldt**

Holly Woldt is the technology support manager at the Nebraska Library Commission. She supports the Nebraska Library Commission's \$3.6 million grant to upgrade public computing centers in 147 libraries and provide training to local customers. Previously, she held technology positions at the Nebraska Annual Conference of the United Methodist Conference, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, and University of Nebraska. She has a bachelor's degree in computer science from the University of Iowa.