TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Monday, December 28, 2020
Electronic Regular Meeting – 5:30 PM
Zoom Meeting Platform

Electronic Meeting
(Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8)

An electronic meeting is being held because a meeting in person is impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Commission members, staff, and the public presented by COVID-19.

You can participate in the meeting and can comment on an agenda item by going to https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAsf-uspjkrG9EPN8fZgN23tw_m-5g1TyJm via the internet to visit the Zoom meeting's registration page and submit the required information.

Once approved, you will receive an email message with a link to join the meeting. If you are asked for a meeting or webinar ID, enter the ID number found in the email. A meeting password may also be included in the email. Enter the password when prompted.

If you have no computer or smartphone, or a computer without a microphone, you may call in by telephone by dialing (312) 626-6799. When prompted, enter the meeting ID. The ID number for this meeting is 941 8248 2115.

Once connected, you may dial *9 or click the "raise hand" button to "raise your hand," letting the meeting host know you would like to speak. Providing comments in person is not an option.

Agenda

1. Call to order

2. Approval of minutes

3. Announcements of Commissioners

4. Short public announcements

5. Research regarding broadband affordability and access

6. Adjournment

If you will need disability-related accommodations in order to participate in this program/event, please contact Ty Coleman at 319-356-5454 or ty-coleman@iowa-city.org. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.

Electronic Meeting (Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8)
An electronic meeting was held because a meeting in person was impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of council members, staff and the public presented by COVID-19.

Minutes
Iowa City Telecommunications Commission
October 5, 2020 – 5:30 P.M.
Via the Zoom remote meeting platform

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 5:35 P.M.

Members Present (via Zoom):   Adam Stockman, Gina Reyes, James Pierce

Members Absent: Andrew Austin

Staff Present (via Zoom):   Ty Coleman

Others Present: none

Recommendations to Council: None

Approval of Minutes:
Stockman moved and Reyes seconded a motion to approve the June 29, 2020 minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements of Commissioners:
None.

Short Public Announcements:
None.

Election of Officers:
All commissioners present agreed to elect Adam Stockman to be the chair of the Telecommunications Commission and Gina Reyes to be the vice-chair.

Cable TV Office Report:
Coleman said he hadn't reported on the activities of the Cable TV Office in recent months due to the Commission's shift in focus towards municipal broadband. He noted the list of video programs Cable TV staff had produced over the past six months, as found in the meeting packet, and said he was proud of all the work his team had done in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has included many episodes of the Mayor's Community Connection program and live-streamed updates from the Johnson County Department of Public Health.

Council request for information regarding broadband affordability and access:
Stockman said that the City Council had focused in on some of the work that Reyes had done regarding opportunities for grants and other funding.   He noted that the funding included in the report was no longer available by the time the group's report was ready for submitting to Council.

Pierce agreed that the focus was on promoting affordability rather than expanding availability beyond the three primary providers that Iowa City would have. He said that when he was a part of the Telecommunications Commission in the past, he was in favor of exploring public broadband, but that with the

current status of providers, it makes sense to shift the focus to affordability.

Reyes said one of the Council's comments mentioned bridging the digital divide and that just because you have a cable outside your house, it doesn't mean you have access to service. Stockman said the group should pull together any information they can find on available grants. He said that since it had been a while since the report had been completed, it would be worth looking at the funding opportunities presented within the report, but also looking for more. He noted that over the past several months, many people have had to move to remote solutions for work and school, but that not everyone has access to do so.

Stockman suggested the Commission work to see what opportunities exist and develop a simple list for the Council that includes what the funding potential is and links to the relevant information or applications. Reyes said it would be helpful for each person to see what they can come up with, noting that the group may find some of the same opportunities, but that together they could cast a wider net and potentially identify more options. Members of the Commission agreed that they would each research potential funding opportunities and report back at the next meeting.

Adjournment:
Stockman moved and Reyes seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Adjournment was at 5:49 p.m.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
12-MONTH ATTENDANCE RECORD

	Austin	Reyes	Brenton	Stockman	Paterson
09/23/2019	x	x	x	x	o
10/28/2019	x	x	o/c	x	o
11/25/2019	o/c	x	x	x	o
12/16/2019	o/c	x	x	x	o
01/27/2020	x	o/c	x	x	o
02/24/2020	x	x	x	x	o
03/23/2020 Meeting not held due to COVID-19 pandemic.	-	-	-	-	-
04/27/2020	o/c	x	x	x	o
06/01/2020	o/c	x	x	x	o
06/29/2020	o	x	x	x	o
			Pierce		**vacant**
07/27/2020 Meeting not held due to Commission preference	-	-	-	-	-
08/27/2020 Meeting not held due to unexpected lack of quorum	-	-	-	-	-
10/05/2020	o	x	x	x	-

(x) = Present

(o) = Absent

(o/c) = Absent/Called (Excused)

Broadband grants and funding opportunities
Information or resources provided by ICTC members for the November 2, 2020 meeting

From Adam Stockman

"Pretty much everything I came across circled back to targeting expansion of rural broadband access: https://ocio.iowa.gov/broadband-grants"

From Gina Reyes
See *NTIA Follow-Up* document in the meeting packet.

NTIA Follow-Up

NTIA Role

The NTIA (National Telecommunications and Information Administration) had previously administered large grants. Their role has now changed to promote Digital Inclusion. The new NTIA program is "BroadbandUSA", which provides consultation, and maintains a list of federal funding grant opportunities.

> *"The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) BroadbandUSA program promotes innovation and economic growth by supporting efforts to expand broadband access and meaningful use across America. BroadbandUSA serves local and state governments, industry and nonprofits that seek to expand broadband connectivity and promote digital inclusion."*

- Link to federal funding list: https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/new-fund-search
- Link to public-private partnership paper: https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/ntia_ppp_052417.pdf

Example Opportunities

- US Dept. of Commerce FY2020 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

FY2020 $200.5 million

https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-guide/eda-fy2020-public-works-and-economic-adjustment-assistance-programs

Brief Program Description

EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) programs provide economically distressed communities and regions with comprehensive and flexible resources to address a wide variety of economic needs.

- FCC High Cost Program

FY2020 $4.5 billion

https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-guide/fcc-high-cost-program

Program Overview

The federal universal service high-cost program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service, both fixed and mobile, at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The program fulfills this universal service goal by allowing eligible carriers who serve these areas to recover some of their costs from the federal Universal Service Fund.