**Whitman County Broadband Action Team**

*Monthly Meeting (2nd Monday, 3-4pm)*

**Purpose:** Collaborative, working group to expand broadband service in Whitman county, communicate with county stakeholders about broadband needs and opportunities, and enhance broadband use to improve quality of life for all who live in and visit Whitman County.

**Members:** Port of Whitman County (Kara Riebold, Kalvin Johnson), Avista Utilities (Paul Kimmell), Whitman County Rural Library District (Cody Allen), Partners for Rural WA-Eastern Region (Jody Opheim)

**Agenda and Notes**

**October 10, 2022**

**1. Administrative**

a. Membership follow up – Neill Library, Janet Schmidt

**Janet has joined the group, Neill Library is still considering how they may want to be involved and who the best representative would be.**

b. Logo – Jody is checking with WSU Extension to see about getting the BAT logo with Whitman County branding added to it. Another option is to have Pullman Marketing create one.

**Janet will contact Debra Hansen with WSU Extension to see about getting the logo modified for Whitman County (done).**

c. Digital Navigator grant next steps

**WCL is still waiting on the final contract/signatures, but Adam, Alyssa, and Cody are meeting regularly and preparing to launch the program once the contract is in place. The program will be a topic of discussion at WCL’s fall retreat and the all staff meeting in December. Cody has reached out to the Salt Lake City public library for additional ideas and advice on rolling out a DN program. When the contract is fully executed and there is a green light from SBO, WCL will prepare a press release for area outlets (consider mentioning the BAT and website URL as part of the release).**

d. SBO round 2 application? – **NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE YET ON ROUND 2 NOFO**

e. PWB 2023 application? – **PWB has started gathering input for Round 2 NOFO**

**2. Communications**

a. Review web page draft: <https://www.portwhitman.com/whitmanbat> (Kalvin)

**The page is a great starting point and we will add information to it as it is available and relevant, with the goal of keeping it clean, simple, and easy to navigate. WCL will link to the page from its website and we will look for other entities to do the same as it seems appropriate (WSU Extension, Port of Whitman, etc.). We will post grant applications if they are funded to provide more information about projects.**

b. How can BAT help spread the work about the ACP?

**Once the DN contract with SBO is signed, we can begin helping WCL advertise the ACP and boost enrollments.**

c. Updates from around the state (SBO, WSU Extension, NTIA, NoaNet, etc.)

* WSU Extension Role with BATs (Kara and Jody)

**We should have more information in the next couple of months regarding a format and elements of a BAT plan that is also in line with what the SBO will need for its BEAD 5 yr plan.**

**3. Infrastructure and Planning**

a. Mapping discussion (Kalvin’s work)

**Kalvin has a good start on the mapping project and we should have a draft to review before the end of the calendar year.**

b. BAT plan vs. Digital Equity plan

**The preference is to prepare one plan, with a robust section on digital equity to be prepared for future NOFOs and to have ready for the state’s 5 year plan submission for BEAD. Janet will reach out to Debra Hansen regarding preferred format as this will tie in with SBO and WSU Extension work related to DE and BEAD.**

c. Elements: Access, Affordability, Adoption

**4. Projects**

a. Digital Equity and Inclusion (DE planning pieces?)

b. Affordability – ACP toolkit

b. Workforce Development (Porchlight certification for communities, AWB remote

online cert)

c. Economic Development (Mashup Labs course for would-be entrepreneurs)

d. Healthcare (online mental health services – PRC has an 8 mo backlog!)

e. Agriculture

f. Education

g. Social Services

h. Local governments

i. Devices

j. Public safety

**The comment was made that the Palouse Fairgrounds needs better internet service and could this be a possible project. Fiber is already in place at the fairgrounds, so this is a provider issue. The county negotiated the agreement with IFN to provide service, so this is a county/IFN issue and not a candidate for grant funds.**

**Additional fiber runs/connections are needed in outlying areas around the 5 communities that received FTTX last fall, so this may constitute a potential project for funding. One area that will need assistance is connecting structures that are few and far between in the areas between towns. The BAT will consider how it can help provide service to those areas, possibly with a wireless tower (with fiber to the tower) project(s).**

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Discussed the idea of having Debra Hansen or Monica Babine join a future meeting. Janet (Debra) and Paul (Monica) will reach out to them. Paul mentioned keeping an eye out for ways to cooperate/partner with Moscow and Latah County if opportunities or mutually beneficial projects arise.

***NEXT MEETING IS DECEMBER 12***