

Grant County Digital Network Coalition
January 15, 2019
6:00 PM
John Day Fire Hall, 316 S. Canyon Blvd, John Day

AGENDA

- 1. OPEN AND NOTE ATTENDANCE**
- 2. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES**
- 3. APPEARANCE OF INTERESTED CITIZENS** – At this time the Board will welcome the public and ask if there is anything they would like to add to tonight’s agenda.

ACTION ITEMS

- 4. REVIEW OF TOWN HALL & NEXT STEPS**
Attachments:
 - None
- 5. USDA RECONNECT PROGRAM RULES & MILESTONES**
Attachments:
 - December 14, 2018 Notice of Funding Availability
 - Article on Reconnect Program Interview
 - Grant County CAF-II Map
- 6. UPDATE ON BROADBAND LATERAL PROCUREMENTS**
Attachments:
 - None
- 7. COMMSTRUCTURE MASTER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT**
Attachments:
 - Master PSA
 - Work Order No. 1

OTHER BUSINESS

- 8. OTHER BUSINESS AND UPCOMING MEETINGS**
 - Board Meeting – Tuesday, February 5 – 12 P.M. Fire Hall (Procurement Meeting)
 - Board Meeting – Tuesday, February 19 – 6 P.M. Fire Hall

TO: Grant County Digital Board of Directors

FROM: Nicholas Green, Executive Director

DATE: January 15, 2019

SUBJECT: Agenda Item #4: Review of Town Hall & Next Steps
Attachment(s)
• None

BACKGROUND

The Town Hall held on December 18 was well attended. I recommend we take a few minutes to discuss our thoughts on the event as well as future public engagements.

DISCUSSION

Topics to consider:

- Mr. Mitchell's facilitation
- Participation by internet service providers
- Comments from key stakeholders before and after the event (congressional staff, OBAC, etc.)
- Audience comments and participation
- Technology used and its effectiveness

NEXT STEPS

Several new funding opportunities will be available in 2019. We should consider hosting listening sessions in other areas of the county to better understand their broadband needs and explain how our programs can work and what the critical dependencies are for funding and fiber build-outs. The new website will also be a good forum for communicating proactively with residents.

FROM: Nicholas Green, Executive Director

DATE: January 15, 2019

SUBJECT: Agenda Item #5: USDA Reconnect Program Rules & Milestones
Attachment(s)

- December 14, 2018 Notice of Funding Availability
- Article on Reconnect Program Interview
- Grant County CAF-II Map

BACKGROUND

The ReConnect grant is (was?) due on April 29, 2019. USDA's ReConnect website has posted a notice that "Due to lapse in funding, this site will not be monitored and questions about the ReConnect program will not be addressed or answered until the USDA is authorized to reopen."

USDA was supposed to host an in-person forum for prospective applications in north central Oregon in January. An additional six webinars were scheduled for January, none of which have taken place. No new information has been provided on the ReConnect website about rescheduled timelines for these meetings since the December 22 government shutdown.

What we do know is that the eligible service areas for funding are *more* restricted in the ReConnect program than they were under the 2018 Community Connect Program. Successful lobbying by telcos resulted in a decision by USDA that funding cannot be allocated to CAF-II recipient census blocks, unless it is a loan to the CAF-II recipient.

DISCUSSION

Key components of the ReConnect program are discussed in turn.

Funding. Approximately \$560,000,000 in funding has been set aside for funding opportunities under this FOA. Funding is divided into three programs: 100 percent loan; 50 percent loan/50 percent grant; and 100 percent grant. Applicants must provide a matching contribution equal to 25 percent of the cost of the overall project for the 100 percent grant program.

Eligible Service Areas. Proposed funded service areas under the 100-percent grant program, are those where 100 percent of the households to be served do not have sufficient access to broadband. Applicants for this program must propose to build a network that is capable of providing service to every premise in the proposed funded service area at a speed of 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream.

Ineligible Service Areas. Connect America Fund Phase II Auction—Auction 903 (CAF II). recipients can only be requested by the entity that is receiving the CAF II support, and such funding is limited to a 100% loan. The enclosed map shows eligible CAF-II funding areas. Commstructure is verifying how many of these areas were awarded to ViaSat and is developing a GIS-map of census blocks to be able to accurately map which areas are excluded from funding under the ReConnect program.

Access. Sufficient access to broadband means any rural area that has fixed, terrestrial broadband service delivering at least 10 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream. Mobile and satellite services will *not* be considered in making the determination that households in the PFSA do not have sufficient access to broadband, but are used to determine ineligibility based on CAF II (which is bizarre).

SCORING CRITERIA

Applicants requesting a 50% loan / 50% grant or 100% grant request under the ReConnect Program will be required to submit a scoring sheet, that will enable USDA to analyze nine separate special evaluation criteria to score the application. A total of 150 points is possible under each funding category.

Applications in the same funding category will be scored and ranked against the following special evaluation criteria.

Highlighted sections are of most importance to our application – Rurality, Farms Served, Performance of the Offered Service and State Broadband Activity are areas where we will likely receive most points available. Where our application becomes more challenging is in criteria 4-8. The lack of established businesses, healthcare centers, educational facilities and CCFs means we will score only a small fraction of the available points in these categories. We will be further limited in these areas due to the CAF-II service area restrictions.

1. **Rurality of Proposed Funded Service Area (25 points).** Points will be awarded for serving the least dense rural areas measured by the population of the proposed funded service area per square mile. If multiple service areas are proposed, the density calculation will be made on the combined areas as if they were a single area. **For population densities of six or less, 25 points will be awarded.** For population densities greater than six, zero points will be awarded. The density calculation is as follows: Total Population of Proposed Funded Service Area / Total Square Miles of Proposed Funded Service Area.
2. **Farms Served (20 points).** Applicants will receive **one point for each farm that pre-subscribes for broadband service up to a maximum of 20 points (Farm means any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year).** Applicants proposing to serve farms and ranches must have the executive head of the farm or ranch sign the pre-subscription form, available under [Forms & Resources](#), and must submit the pre-subscription forms as part of the application. Points will not be awarded if pre-subscription forms are not included as part of the application to support the number of farms pre-subscribing for service.
3. **Performance of the Offered Service (20 points).** For projects that are proposing to build a **network capable of providing 100 megabits per second (Mbps) symmetrical service (same speeds download and upload) to all premises, 20 points will be awarded.** A certification from a licensed Professional Engineer must certify that the proposed system can deliver these speeds to every premises in the proposed funded service area. The certification form, available under [Forms & Resources](#) must be signed by a Professional Engineer.
4. **Businesses (15 points).** Applicants will receive **one** point for each business that pre-subscribes for broadband service up to a maximum of 15 points. Applicants must have the owner of the business sign the pre-subscription form, available under [Forms & Resources](#), and submit the pre-subscription forms as part of the application. Points will not be awarded if pre-subscription forms are not included as part of the application to support the number of businesses pre-subscribing for service.
5. **Healthcare Centers (15 points).** For every healthcare center served, **one** point will be awarded up to a maximum of 15 points. Healthcare centers, such as hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies, will be counted using the GIS layer provided in the [RUS Mapping Tool](#).
6. **Educational Facilities (15 points).** For every educational facility served, **one** point will be awarded up to a maximum of 15 points. Educational facilities, such as public and private schools, libraries, and technical colleges will be counted using the GIS layer provided in the [RUS Mapping Tool](#).

7. **Critical Community Facilities (15 points)**. For every critical community facility served, one point will be awarded up to a maximum of 15 points. Critical community facilities will be counted using the GIS layer provided in the [RUS Mapping Tool](#).
8. **Tribal Lands (5 points)**. For applications where, at a minimum, 50 percent (%) of the geographical area of the proposed funded service area(s) is to provide service on tribal lands, five points shall be awarded. Tribal lands will be analyzed using the GIS layer maintained by the [U.S. Census](#). Tribal land areas will be tabulated using the GIS layer provided in the [RUS Mapping Tool](#).
9. **State Broadband Activity (20 points)**. For projects that are in a State that has a broadband plan that has been updated within the previous five years of the date of publication of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), ten points will be awarded. An additional five points will be awarded for projects located in states that allow any utilities service provider to deliver broadband service. An additional five points will be awarded for projects located in states that commit to expediting right-of-way environmental permitting.

Applicants will be required to submit evidence from the appropriate State official that a broadband plan has been implemented and updated, that there are no restrictions on utilities providing broadband service, and that procedures are in place for expediting right-of-way and environmental requirements. If service is proposed in multiple states, then evidence must be submitted from each state to receive the appropriate points.

If we maximize our score in Categories 1,2, 3 and 9, we earn 85 (or 56%) of the 150 points available. Depending on the actual CAF-II restrictions, we may struggle to secure points for the various businesses and CCFs that are inside the CAF-II census blocks. This means we will have to alter the PFSA to maximize participation by entities that secure points (e.g. farms), which may require us to expand the PFSA to serve a broader area, while eliminating areas that were proposed under the Community Connect Grant due to ineligibility.

NEXT STEPS

Time is of the essence. These applications are extremely complex and we are competing against established telecom firms who have won prior USDA grants. Our goal should be to submit a compliant application that scores as high as possible on the 150-point scale.

Like the 2018 Community Connect Grant, we will need to build a team of professionals to help us develop the program application. Commstructure will lead the preliminary network engineering and design. CTC Technology is willing to work with us again on the financials and narrative sections. I am meeting with Steve Corbato on February 15th to discuss the role the Oregon Fiber Partnership could play.

TO: Grant County Digital Board of Directors

FROM: Nicholas Green, Executive Director

DATE: January 15, 2018

SUBJECT: Agenda Item #6: Update on Broadband Lateral Procurements
Attachment(s)

- None

BACKGROUND

We are soliciting broadband lateral networks for the fire hall to ESD building (and beyond to the high school). We have received one bid so far. Due to the holidays, the timeline for submissions was extended to January 31st to provide enough time for vendors to submit their bids.

The board may wish to add more laterals as change orders once a contract is awarded. For example, Seneca is requesting a lateral build from the Seneca school to their city hall to improve broadband access for the city using ESD's network and we contemplated doing the same for the run from the fire hall to the John Day City Hall / PD along a route that connects several critical community facilities. These small segments could potentially be added as a change order to the solicited contract.

RECOMMENDATION

I recommend we hold a board meeting on February 5th at 12:00 P.M. to review and make an award decision on the bids. We can discuss and approve any change orders to the scope at that time.

TO: Grant County Digital Board of Directors

FROM: Nicholas Green, Executive Director

DATE: January 15, 2018

SUBJECT: Agenda Item #7: Commstructure Master Professional Services Agreement
Attachment(s)

- Master PSA
- Work Order No. 01

BACKGROUND

Attached is a draft Master Professional Services Agreement between Commstructure (CCLLC) and Grant County Digital Network Coalitions (GCDNC) for your review and approval. I have also included Work Order No. 01 for On-Call Communications Infrastructure Design & Consulting Services. The board is currently working on a professional services agreement developed by the City of John Day. This would allow the board to contract directly with Commstructure for network planning and design.

DISCUSSION

The MPSA will serve as the Primary Agreement between Commstructure and GCDNC with subsequent Project specific and On-Call support Work Orders that detail scope, schedule and budget. Anticipated work orders are:

- Work Order No. 01: On-Call Communications Infrastructure Design & Consulting Services (miscellaneous requests and technical support for non-project specific scope)
- Work Order No. 02: Fielding, Design and Permitting for the John Day to Burns Fiber Optic Network Project
- Work Order No. 03: USDA ReConnect Program Application Support

RECOMMENDATION

The board can streamline its acquisition decisions by having its own contracts rather than having each board decision subsequently ratified by the John Day City Council.

TO: Grant County Digital Board of Directors
FROM: Nicholas Green, Executive Director
DATE: January 15, 2019
SUBJECT: Agenda Item #9: Other Business and Upcoming Meetings
Attachment(s)

- None

OTHER BUSINESS

- None

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Board Meeting – Tuesday, February 5 – 12 P.M. Fire Hall (Procurement Meeting)
- Board Meeting – Tuesday, February 19 – 6 P.M. Fire Hall