

MINUTES

JOINT COMMITTEE ON ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Monday, September 14, 2020

10:00 AM

Room A, MAC

Little Rock, AR

Committee Members Present: Senators Blake Johnson, Jonathan Dismang, Ricky Hill and Kim Hammer; Representatives Stephen Meeks, Co-Chair; Karilyn Brown, Frances Cavanaugh, Marsh Davis, Jim Dotson, Denise Garner, Les Eaves, Fredrick Love, Roger Lynch, Keith Slape, and Carlton Wing

Other Members Present: Senators Jane English and Larry Teague; Representatives Fred Allen, Jana Della Rosa, Denise Jones Ennett, Jon Eubanks, Ken Ferguson, Lanny Fite, Spencer Hawks, Steve Hollowell, Jack Ladyman, Tippi McCullough, Marcus Richmond, Johnny Rye, Jamie Scott, Dwight Tosh, and DeAnn Vaught

Senator Johnson called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve January 15, 2020, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit C]

Without objection, the Minutes of the January 15, 2020, meeting were approved.

Presentation of the Broadband Mapping Website

Mr. Shelby Johnson, State Geographic Information Officer, Transformation and Shared Services; and Mr. Steven Porch, Chief Legal Counsel, Arkansas Department of Commerce, stated that Arkansans can test their broadband speed at www.broadband.arkansas.gov and also participate in a mini-survey which uses the results to evaluate services. **An area is deemed underserved if the broadband speed is less than 25 megabits per second for download and 3 megabits for upload (25/3).**

Arkansas Broadband Manager's Report and Update on Rural Connect Program [Exhibit E]

Mr. Clint Moore, Economic Analyst, Department of Finance and Administration; and Mr. Steven Porch, Chief Legal Counsel, Arkansas Department of Commerce, stated the pandemic has brought attention to the poor broadband coverage throughout the state. The legislature, governor, activist organizations, and internet service providers are working hard to bring broadband to all areas of the state. The Rural Connect Program and Rural Digital Opportunity Fund will help move Arkansas up from its current 50th connectivity position. RDOF is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) initiative designed to inject billions of dollars into the construction and operation of rural broadband networks.

Presentation of the Department of Information Systems Activities [Exhibit F]

Ms. Yessica Jones, Director, Department of Information Services (DIS); and Mr. Josh McGee, Chief Data Officer, DIS, provided an update on how DIS and other departments are currently protecting the state's data. Executive branch endpoints and emails are monitored for signs of compromise and security incidents. DIS monitors all internet activity in the state network for non-malicious activity and determines how the risk is managed. Completed projects include the K-12 broadband upgrade, agencies broadband upgrade, endpoint protection, monitoring solutions, and IT Financial/Service Management. Cyber hygiene is extremely critical and the state currently provides cybersecurity awareness training to all executive branch employees. The Data and Transparency Panel includes representatives from across state government and will focus on developing a pathway to share data to improve government services.

Presentation Regarding the Data Incident of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Website

Mr. Carder Hawkins, Chief Information Officer, Department of Workforce Services (DWS); and Ms. Charisse Childers, Director, DWS, provided an overview of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) data breach that occurred on May 15, 2020. A potential system vulnerability was discovered that may have given unauthorized individuals access to an applicant's information; all public access to the PUA system was immediately halted and an internal investigation was initiated. To date, there is no indication the applicant information was misused. The Department of Commerce and DWS are cooperating with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and as a safeguard, impacted applicants were offered credit monitoring and identity protection services at no cost.

Legislative Report on Fee Changes [Exhibit H]

Mr. Bob Sanders, General Manager, Information Network of Arkansas (INA), reviewed the report of service authorizations and rates approved by the INA Board on June 9, 2020, as required by Act 550 of 2015. INA is a public/private partnership primarily funded by transaction fees that are paid by citizens and businesses using their services. Forty-one new services were launched during the second quarter of 2020, twenty-eight of which were supported by fees.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.