

## DRAFT MINUTES

### JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE ON ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Friday, June 10, 2016**

**1:00 P.M.**

**MAC, Room B**

**Little Rock, Arkansas**

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The Joint Interim Committee on Advanced Communications and Information Technology met on Friday, June 10, 2016, in Room B, MAC located in Little Rock, Arkansas.

**Committee Members Present:** Senator Bobby Pierce, Representatives Stephen Meeks, Chair; Charles Blake, Jim Dotson, Justin Gonzales, Matthew Pitsch, and Vivian Flowers (alternate).

**Other Legislators Present:** Representative Grant Hodges

#### **Call to Order**

Representative Stephen Meeks called the meeting to order and thanked everyone in attendance for coming out to the meeting.

#### **Consideration to Approve the Minutes**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2016. The minutes were approved without objection.

#### **Discussion of Broadband in Arkansas: Challenges and Opportunities**

- Mr. Mitchell Johnson, President and CEO, Ozarks Electric Cooperative Corporation stated that Ozark Electric serves approximately 150,000 Arkansans via 73, 000 meters in Northwest Arkansas and Northeast Oklahoma. He stated that their service area covers nine counties in Arkansas, primarily Washington and Madison counties. He announced forming a telecommunications subsidiary called, "OzarksGo". This entity was formed in an effort to close the digital divide between rural and urban Arkansas.
- Mr. Randy Klindt, General Manager, OzarksGo, Ozarks Electric Cooperative Corporation, stated that OzarksGo will be a 7,000 mile construction project passing 72,000 homes and businesses. The project is projected to take 6 years, split into phases. OzarksGo will be an all fiber network with gigabyte (GB) service, internet protocol television (IPTV) and phone service provided to all members. The fiber will be owned by Ozarks Electric Cooperative Corporation and leased to OzarksGo to provide broadband services.
- Ms. Elizabeth Bowles, President and Chairmen, Aristotle Inc. an internet service provider and digital media agency noted that Aristotle Inc. currently provides broadband at speeds up to 1GB. They serve approximately 10,000 dial up customers in South Arkansas. Ms. Bowles stated that in her opinion, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) moving speeds standard has done more harm than good. She urged legislators not to look at the type of technology being deployed when making policy decisions but rather whether it meets the stated needs such as latency, throughput, and data caps. In regard to regulatory issues within Arkansas, she stated that bids favoring a particular product such as fiber are misguided and aren't in the best interest of Arkansas. She noted that the playing field for providers should be equal and that the state should define what it wants as relates to technology. Finally, she stressed that there is no future proof technology, this is constant and changing.
- Jay Greiner, Sales Manager, The Computer Works, provides fixed wireless internet service expanding to over 100 towers and covers over 4,000 square miles in Arkansas. Mr. Greiner cited the cost of constant equipment upgrades and maintenance as a major challenge to deployment. He stated that there is a need for fixed wireless and wireless service.

## **EXHIBIT B**

- Richard Arnold, Chief Executive Officer, Conway Corporation and Roy Grubb, Manager of Network Operations, Broadband Services, Conway Corporation. This provider serves approximately 65,000 people within the Conway city limits.

### **Stakeholder Input regarding Special Report referred by the Executive Committee of the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee: “ Potential Benefits of a Centralized Data Warehouse for the State of Arkansas, November 6, 2015”**

- Seth LeMaster, GIS Lead, Arkansas Geographic Information Office (GIS), stated that GIS has created a centralized database, hosting about 12 TB of GIS data. GIS has 397 unique data sets, about 1600 individual downloads per month, over 400,000 data as a service requests, and 63 individual data custodian operations. Everything is open data so that makes security easier. GIS is very much a distribution center and not a transactional system. He noted that a centralized warehouse makes data accessible to more people amongst state and local entities. The removal of silos improves the accuracy and quality of the information.
- Dave Goetz, Vice President, Executive Client Management, OPTUM and Mark Langenfeld, Arkansas Decision Support System Project Manager, OPTUM, discussed implementation of enhanced data sets including common identifier, child placement, parent locator, and care coordination. They stated that appropriate/authorized access, staffing, and convincing states to standardize data are possible challenges while long term reduction in costs is a potential benefit.

### **Arkansas Department of Information Systems Advice and Recommendations to State Agencies Report**

- Donnie Matthews, Information Systems Manager, Department of Information Systems, presented an overview of the Advice and Recommendations Report. A few trends include: requests for hosting solutions, a significant increase in voice over IP for telephone service and WIFI. They are also assisting with several agency relocations to include assistance with cable, data, voice and servers.

### **Information Network of Arkansas, Legislative Report on fee changes as required by Act 550 of 2015**

- Bob Sanders, General Manager, Information Network of Arkansas came forward to present the report. This is a report of service authorizations and rates approved by the Board of the Information Network of Arkansas. See Exhibit G for the full report.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:36 P.M.