



WSU EXTENSION  
**Okanogan County**

**Meeting Minutes  
OKANOGAN COUNTY & CCT  
BROADBAND ACTION TEAM MEETING  
October 26, 2023  
2-3 pm**

**Meeting started: 2:06 PM**

**Introductions: Attendees by Zoom/call in:**

Roni Holder-Diefenbach (Economic Alliance), Kayla Wells-Yoakum (WSU Ok Co Ext.), Kellie Conn (WSU Ok Co Ext.), Cory Johnson (Okanogan Community Services Office), Rob Ogburn, (CWU Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship), April Wertz (Methow Net), Mike Worden (OCSO), Brandi Schwerdtfeger (ACRS), James Lightfoot (ACRS), Rachel McClure (North District Representative for Congressman Dan Newhouse), Calvin Johanson (Petrichor, Port of Whitman), Mike Maltais (Quad City Herald), Stafford Strong (Charter Communications), Katie Haven (Community member), Steve Quick (OKSD), Carlos Antuna (NVH), Nick Pappin (WSU Extension).

September Meeting minutes approved.

**Funding Updates-**

- Okanogan County Electric Co-op (OCEC) is in the process of entering a contract with BOCC using AARPA funding for the \$500,00 in match. This is for the WSBO grant to serve the upper Methow Okanogan Valley. We are hoping the PUD will approve this project for it is not included in their budget.
- James Lightfoot (ACRS)- BAT is in a holding pattern for the Community Connect grant.
- PUD Reconnect 4 is moving forward PUD is filling out their application.
- Looking for public comments for BEAD funding.
- As our BAT moves forward, does it make sense to serve those minimal residents who have a high cost per passing? One thing to consider is the life expectancy of fiber verses wireless is that fiber has a life expectancy of 20-30 years, which can be upgraded over time, while wireless network is 8 or so years.
- WSBO grants and funding opportunities are now tied in with digital equity and educational services. As our BAT moves forward it is important to discuss ways, we can service the community in order to receive funding.

**Digital Equity Update-**

- April Wertz (Methow Net)- Joanna Bastian is working on getting the word out for Digital Equity in Methow area. Spreading the word on resources for social services; including newspaper articles and speaking with locals.
- Roni Holder-Diefenbach (Economic Alliance)- Attending the first North Central Washington Coalition meeting who meet quarterly and is about broadband infrastructure. Included in the

NCW coalition are Douglas, Chelan, Okanogan and Grant counties. It is all of our broadband action teams coming together to discuss the work that we're doing in broadband, but also in digital equity. Please review and complete to see if you and your organization is advocating to the Governor's office for Digital Equity Funding for Washington!

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=eCgFR53Gc0uxesXQDXVJuEbW2dkBagVPi47Lv3wWoUpURU44M0c1T1JYRIRLRTRPWVMwRE9LWk1NUC4u>

**Presentation-** (Rob Ogburn-CWU Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship) The Tech Hub Program at this point consists of 6 counties in Washington State. Kittitas, Grant, Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan and Yakima. Their proposed actions are around technology, development, commercialization, education and training workforce pathways. Focusing on a Strong Industry, Defense, Emergency Response and Regional Engagement. Tech Hub is highly invested in entrepreneurship development and business assistance, not to replace but to augment where needed. Tech Hub would like to become data and analytics reporting service provider and are looking to be a convening, facilitating and networking provider from the standpoint of connecting opportunities to communities such as Okanogan County. [Rob.Ogburn@cwu.edu](mailto:Rob.Ogburn@cwu.edu)

Roni Received an email from Tracey Blackburn from WSBO with their update, it reads as follows:

Hi everyone,

I and many of my FPO colleagues are starting to get questions about Costquest Licenses for the Challenge Process. I've attached a document on how to apply for a Tier E license (those participating in the Challenge Process as a Pass-Through Entity Challenger meaning local government and non-profits). Additionally, here are some links that might help provide guidance if this question comes up on your end:

NTIA Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric FAQ ([costquest.com](https://costquest.com)) – provides a matrix of license Tiers and definitions as well as other FAQs.

NTIA Tier E License Request ([costquest.com](https://costquest.com))

NTIA Tier D License Request ([costquest.com](https://costquest.com))

I will provide more information as it becomes available. I can also make a mention of this during today's webinar.

Thanks,

Tracey

**Nick Pappin (WSU Extension) Update-** WSBO released their initial proposal which includes community anchor institutions as well as identifying unserved and underserved areas. Nick created a community institution map; he would like us to take a look at the map and tell him of any areas not listed.

BAT Tools <https://broadband.wsu.edu/bat-tools/>

**Kayla Wells-Yoakum (WSU Ok Co Extension)-** Being we are not meeting in the months of November and December, Kellie will be sending a cancellation notice for those zoom meetings. Towards the middle of December we will be creating our 2024 outlook meeting invitations. If you want to participate in the meetings, please accept the calendar invitation and then you'll automatically have the zooms connected to your calendar. NCW Digital Equity and Access Coalition group is meeting quarterly and will be hosted directly after our BAT meeting so stay tuned for those.

Meeting ended at 2:57 pm. Next meeting is January 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kellie Conn, Ok Co WSU Extension Office Manager.

