MEDA Broadband Committee Meeting
February 1, 2021
2pm

Present: Paul Tuss, Steve Simonson, Todd O'Hair, Charlotte Lauerman, Tracy McIntyre, Geoff Feiss, Stephen Walter, Mehmet Casey, Allison Corbyn, Andy Shirtliff, Russ Fletcher, and Gloria O'Rourke.

Updates:
- Steve Simonson shared an update from Billings Chamber – Steve shared the need for broadband and shared the letter. Response was favorable.

Allison Corbyn Update:
- Moving forward with lobbyist for broadband issues. Currently striving to find the right path for traction. There is broad interest in broadband. MEDA could play a role in advocating for the NON-status quo. Set the goals for high performance broadband policy in Montana.

  Allison shared numbers: any business that has a connection of 60/5 or less would be eligible. Also, if providers used the grant they would have to provide 100/100 service.

Discussion:
- Get behind both – Big Sky EDA's effort as well as laying the ground for future MEDA work.
- To get momentum, may need to do similar to MIC – form a coalition and hire an Executive Director. Consider that model. Needs some funding, too.
- Perhaps encourage Governor Gianforte to pursue a broadband expert.
- Russ asked what are other states striving for? Perhaps 100 is not efficient – need a gig.

In the chat:
Governors on Tech: Broadband and Telehealth Top the 2021 Agenda

In his first State of the State address, Gov. Greg Gianforte did not mention technology; the closest he came was when he asked what kind of customer experience the state was giving to its citizens. Gianforte pledged to be "available, accessible and accountable," and asked his agency heads to do the same. He did not provide details about what that would mean.
https://matr.net/news/governors-on-tech-broadband-and-telehealth-top-the-2021-agenda/
tephen Walter, Elvis Nuno, Kristian Richardson, Tracy McIntyre, Mehmet Casey, Russ Fletcher, Jennie Stapp, Andy Shirtliff, Brian Obert, Charlotte Lauerman, Tom Kaiserski, Allison Corbyn, Bethany Chinadle, Karl Unterschuetz, Steve Simonson, Geoff Feiss, and Gloria O'Rourke.

In a world of 'remote everything,' the State of Washington state sees new push for public broadband networks
https://matr.net/news/in-a-world-of-remote-everything-the-state-of-washington-state-sees-new-push-for-public-broadband-networks/

Smart Gigabit Communities

The US Ignite Smart Gigabit Communities (SGC) project is a network of more than two dozen communities addressing modern-day challenges through innovation, advanced networking technologies, and data-driven strategies.

We support these communities by creating vital local and national partnerships, and by sharing tools and best practices for building smart community strategies, services, applications, and sustainability plans that further social and economic opportunity. https://www.us-ignite.org/program/smart-gigabit-communities/

How Gigabit Internet Is Turning Smaller U.S. Cities Into Tech Hot Spots
https://matr.net/news/how-gigabit-internet-is-turning-smaller-u-s-cities-into-tech-hot-spots/

Gigabit TDS Fiber is coming to Idaho

We are gearing up to bring the Coeur d'Alene area a state-of-the-art fiber-optic network that's capable of delivering blazing-fast Internet speeds

Next steps
- Allison shared something in writing for consideration.
- This committee comments on it.
- Review the MIC model.
- Consider bills from Geoff Feiss when in writing.

Next meeting: Monday, February 8ᵗʰ 2pm