

Science/Technology/Innovation (STI) Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 12, 2014

The Science/Technology/Innovation (STI) Committee meeting was held in the Madison-Jefferson County Extension office conference room at 7:00 a.m., Wednesday, February 12, 2014. Participants were Lee Good, Tom Harrington, Leonard Wortman and Marcy Lamb.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 am by Tom H. February meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

1. Lee G. provided an overview of the internet status in the area and indicated he is still waiting on the 3 Rivers cost proposal for internet service and extension of their fiber to the business park. Discussed the Rural Broadband project and if it might be used for the fiber to home and a point of discussion was the time frame for the grant would probably be two years and that it might be better to look at trying to proceed earlier. Tom H. will look at the grant program and see if it may be worthwhile to pursue. The idea that fiber to the home would be a plug and play system that would be easy to install and connect and would add value to the homes connected. Discussed the increasing need to expand capacity and potential pricing opportunities that could exist since it appears we are currently paying a premium for bandwidth. Lee indicated the cost of internet to the fiber hotel could be reasonable and that we would need to solve the transport from Helena to Whitehall and that purchasing equipment and leasing dark fiber could be an option.
2. Discussed the DES radio frequencies and the benefit it provides to the county. Leonard W. indicated there may some interference issues with the north county site that may require some adjustments.
3. Discussed the data center project at the business park and a conference call is scheduled for Friday with a company that build centers. The proposal from a contractor to look at the business park assets and what is available will be discussed and decided on Thursday at the Jefferson County TIFID meeting.
4. Marcy L. discussed the school capability is currently 40 megabits and eventually will need to increase to 100 megabits with increased usage for testing and education. She talked about the possibility of offering bandwidth to the community during downtime when it is not needed by the school as long as security issues could be implemented.
5. Leonard W. provided an update on the Pipestone sedimentation and Jefferson Slough projects. Landowner coordination is ongoing and things are moving forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 a.m. The next meeting will be held in the Extension office conference room Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at 7:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Harrington