

Role of Subcommittees and Subcommittee Members

Much of the Rural Broadband Task Force’s work has been conducted by subcommittees. The task force currently has six subcommittees: Nebraska Universal Service Fund (NUSF), Broadband Data, Broadband Technologies, Public-Private Partnerships, Homework Gap/Leveraging Funding, and Agriculture Subcommittees. Subcommittee members have gathered information, engaged stakeholders, and developed recommendations outside of task force meetings.

Nebraska Universal Service Fund (NUSF) Subcommittee. On October 15, 2018, the Rural Broadband Task Force formed the NUSF Subcommittee to examine “the role of the Nebraska Telecommunications Universal Service Fund in bringing comparable and affordable broadband services to rural residents and any effect of the fund in deterring or delaying capital formation, broadband competition, and broadband deployment.”¹ Subcommittee members include Mary Ridder, Nebraska Public Service Commission; Tom Shoemaker, Pinpoint Communications and Dan Spray, Precision Technology, Inc.

Broadband Data Subcommittee. On October 15, 2018, the Rural Broadband Task Force formed the Broadband Data Subcommittee to address issues related to broadband data. The subcommittee was asked to answer the following questions:

- What data we currently have?
- What data we need?
- How can we get the data we need but don’t have?

Subcommittee members include Senator Bruce Bostelman, Nebraska Legislature; Andrew Buker, University of Nebraska; and Dan Spray, Precision Technology, Inc.

Broadband Technologies Subcommittee. On November 7, 2018 the Rural Broadband Task Force formed the Broadband Technologies Subcommittee to review “the feasibility of alternative technologies and providers in accelerating access to faster and more reliable broadband service for rural residents.”² Subcommittee members include Zachary Hunnicutt, Hunnicutt Farms; Ron Cone, EUS 10 and Dan Spray, Precision Technology, Inc.

Public-Private Partnerships Subcommittee. On Dec. 10, 2018, the Rural Broadband Task Force formed the Public-Private Partnerships Subcommittee to examine how public-private partnerships could best be leveraged to accelerate access to faster broadband in rural areas. Tom Shoemaker, Pinpoint Communications, has worked to update the 2019 recommendations of this subcommittee.

Homework Gap/Leveraging Funding Subcommittee The Homework Gap/Leveraging Funding Subcommittee is charged with identifying strategies to address the homework gap and making recommendations on leveraging universal service and other funding especially for schools and libraries. Subcommittee members include Andrew Buker, University of Nebraska; Ron Cone, ESU 10 and Dan Spray, Precision Technologies, Inc.

Agriculture Subcommittee. The Rural Broadband Task Force discussed the formation of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Sept. 11, 2020 and approved the formation of the Subcommittee on May 17, 2021. The Subcommittee was charged with examining the current and future connectivity needs of agriculture

¹ Nebraska Revised Statutes 86-1102(3)(b)

² Nebraska Revised Statutes 86-1102(3)(c)

in Nebraska. Subcommittee members include Senator Curt Friesen, Nebraska Legislature; Zachary Hunnicutt, Hunnicutt Farms; Commissioner Mary Ridder, Nebraska Public Service Commission; Dan Spray, Precision Technologies, Inc.; and Director Steve Wellman, Nebraska Department of Agriculture.