

## Scandia Internet Focus Group - Meeting Notes – 03-21-2018 6:30 pm

Members Present: Steve Kronmiller, Chris Frymire, Kristen Novak, and Beth Mohr.

Tom Murn, from Frontier Communications attended the meeting. Tom walked us through a 6-page power point presentation and answered questions. Steve pointed out that the information shared was being done so to help our Focus Group and the City understand current state and where Frontier is heading. This information should be considered company confidential and not share publically without Frontier's consent.

Tom noted a 2015 Bell Labs study of the internet identified approximately 1 zettabyte (1 followed by 26 zeros) of data have been processed by the internet from its beginnings. The study went on to indicate this figure was projected to grow to a minimum of 2.5 by 2020.

Although the communication circuit between Scandia and Minneapolis was not at capacity, Frontier spent time to improve Scandia' overall connectivity in two ways last year. First, they significantly increase the size of the communication "pipe" to ensure anticipated growth will not saturate it. Second, they created a circuit that resembles a "ring". This allows Frontier to service Scandia from two separate and independent directions. The overall result should decrease the number and duration of customer outages.

Tom then went on to tell us about the CAF II Grant and what Frontier is doing with the money they received. The CAF II grant allows utilities to provide internet speeds of 10 up and 1 down to specific census blocks. Frontier completed build out in parts of Scandia last year and expects to build out the rest of Scandia by the end of 2020.

The group indicated the 10/1 speed was not good enough for many people and falls short of the new definition of "underserved" which is 25/3. We asked Tom what we could do to help Frontier achieve the 25/3 speeds. Tom indicated the backbone was robust enough to support the higher speed, but additional nodes would need to be installed. He told us that he and his engineers would be willing to work with us, the Blandin Foundation, and DEED to apply for a grant to cover this increased cost. If a DEED grant was approved, Frontier would cover approximately half the cost.

Members of the Focus group indicated their satisfaction of the new service, but expressed frustration with the call center. The Call Center people do not understand what is going on in Scandia and seem unable to provide the kind of information and assistance people need to understand if service is available to their home, and how to get hooked up if it is. Tom said he would work to provide Scandia with a map of the area where service is currently available and contact number citizens can use to get the kind of information they need to get hooked up without all the trouble currently being experienced. This information will be reviewed by the Focus Group and provided to the City so it can be communicated to the entire City. We also discussed that a lot of the issues with "last mile" service still might exist in some areas. If citizens believe this might an issue for them, Tom recommended Michele Frederick should be contacted for help. Michele works in the Lindstrom office.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm. I believe we had a very productive meeting and hope more members can attend future sessions.

Next Meeting is Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>. I am awaiting confirmation from Midcontinent Communications that they will be able to come to speak to us about the services they offer in Scandia. I am also in contact with Bill Coleman attempting to arrange a time when he can begin working with our group. Bill's services are being provided by a Blandin Foundation Grant of 32 hours of consulting services.