

Minutes, Policy Committee Meeting 10/23/00

The meeting was called to order by Mary Reynolds.

Members present: Mary Reynolds, Governor's Technology Office; Keith Sanders, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Bruce McMillan; Illinois State Museum; Jean Wilkins, Illinois State Library; Joe Cipfl, Illinois Community College Board; Lugene Finley representing William Conrad, Illinois State Board of Education; Alice Engle, representing Michael Schwartz, Department of Central Management Services.

Others attending included: Neil Matkin, Frank Whitney, Lori Sorenson, Doug Jurewicz, Karlin Sink, Frank Walters, George Badger, Lynn Murphy, and Rebecca Dineen all from Illinois Century Network; Anne Craig, Illinois State Library; Don Sevener, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Brent Crossland, Governor's Technology Office; Bill Vetter, Department of Central Management Services.

Voting was discussed. Those appointed by Governor could not have a substitute, so the Director of CMS, the Chief Technology Officer, and all appointed by the Governor, could not have a legal substitute for voting on committee items requiring action. Where respective Boards appointed representatives and a substitute was named, these entities could officially vote if an authorized representative was present. The meeting proceeded with a quorum of 4 out of 7 voting members present.

Two articles from October Government Technology Magazine were distributed as an introduction (background information), *Education Goes Digital* and *Washington Makes A Digital Statement*. Illinois Century Network was prominent in each portion of the survey for Illinois and the successful rankings.

Minutes from the last meeting were distributed as a draft for review and approval at the next meeting.

Keith Sanders made a motion; Bruce McMillan seconded: Move that Policy Committee approve the minutes pending future review and amendment. Motion was carried; minutes were passed pending future additions or corrections.

Community Networking Discussion and White Paper (draft):

Frank Whitney gave an overview of the White Paper. In the process of working on the paper staff identified areas for the Policy Committee to address. One issue discussed was the goal of connecting ICN constituents in an efficient manner. In the process of defining policies and procedures on how to connect communities, how to pay for them, and how communities would be allowed to connect to the network, policy issues that ICN staff asked the Committee to consider were:

Policy Decision 1: Who may connect to the ICN?

What's the scope of the project? Can for-profit organizations connect to the ICN? This is an issue that comes up in every community.

Discussion over whether private Internet providers can connect and under what circumstances ensued. The Policy Committee wants a fuller understanding and asked staff to address the issue more completely in future meetings. Keith suggested that a court decision in Wisconsin on this issue be researched for precedence. George Badger suggested treating the idea of allowing ISPs on the network as a transition and suggested having an exit plan when the situation becomes more competitive.

Keith suggested that ICN staff examine ISP cases based on the ISP showing they are in a position to deliver a unique service to ICN constituents who could not otherwise acquire the service.

Motion: Keith made motion; Jean seconded.

The Policy Committee provided a tentative yes to both policy decision point 1-A and policy decision point 1-B, saying yes, we do believe ISPs should be able to connect to the backbone and yes we do believe that businesses can connect to the ICN via for-profit ISPs. The committee reserves the right to revisit these questions once the staff has brought a white paper which outlines the pro's and con's as well as potential pricing models. The committee gave a tentative yes pending the policy committee being better educated on these two questions.

Motion carried.

Mary Reynolds recommended further guidance in future meeting.

Policy Decision 2: Who is responsible for connecting ICN constituents?

NSHEC, Shawnee Library System, and a private ISP have proposed partnering with the ICN in a way that in some cases expands the network. All three of the proposals include a significant amount of network design implementation on a regional or local level. Shawnee wants to connect the libraries, including those located in K-12 schools to the nearest ICN pop, on a switch managed by the library system, and manage that circuit between the switch and the library. They want bandwidth from ICN, a permanent virtual connection from Olney to Carbondale and from Collinsville to Carbondale. That includes 65 of ICN's libraries that Shawnee would manage. ICN would only manage the backbone connections. The NSHEC proposal involves 6 or 7 colleges and universities, and includes very competitive rates obtained from AT&T Broadband services for OC3. Whether or not ICN is going to proceed with NSHEC has not been decided. Neil and Frank brought different perspectives on this issue:

Neil: The issue is the purpose of the RTC's that the ICN has established. Agrees that partnering with institutions to reach technical solutions to solve problems as much as we are capable of doing so is a correct direction and is not concerned about altering local networks and offering some concessions when needed to make creative solutions work. As an overriding policy, ICN staff want to connect primary constituents in the best way possible. One concern is outsourcing the responsibility of these connections from the ICN to another institution. Neil pointed out that we have established nine RTC's that are funded over the next 18 months (for 2 years total), with 41 staff, at a price tag of \$6.4 million. Neil stated that these centers were created to do the job of connecting ICN primary constituents.

Frank: I'm not certain what outsourcing the responsibility of connecting the ICN constituents entails. I am for out-tasking portions of the network. I think that it's always going to be the responsibility of the ICN to make sure that our constituents get connected. If we can develop partnerships with regional or local entities that help us do this job, I am all for it. An example of these activities is the Shawnee Library System. We have not made any agreements with NSHEC yet. Shawnee has been in process for three years, we are making some concessions for that system and we are not allowing other concessions.

Local communities and local entities need to be responsible for their own future, to manage their own networks. It is the role of the RTC to foster that, to get these communities to a point where they can take care of their own network.

Neil: The issue becomes whether we allow NSHEC or Shawnee to become an agent representing the ICN in that region. We established regional offices for a purpose; they have been staffed now for 4 months, the Policy Committee approved them in the November policy committee meeting. The suggestion that is on the table today might be valid but what value does it add to have nine Regional Technology Centers with ICN staff throughout the state and then add additional organizations seeking to connect the primary constituency of the ICN. What value does it add?

Discussion continued.

The primary concern is who is responsible for connecting ICN constituents. It was agreed that there was confusion on this issue. It was noted that some networks the ICN constituents are affiliated with have told them not to file applications with the ICN until they were able to work out a deal with the ICN. One suggestion was forming an agreement with entities and ask them be responsible for connecting our prime constituents along with the RTC's.

Keith voiced his concern that ICN, through the RTCs, should control and take responsibility for connecting and serving constituents. He also suggested that ICN examine forming potential partnerships one at a time as they arise, and not create a broad policy based on a couple of examples. Mary suggested that the policy committee provide guidance on this issue and the staff move forward as long as everyone was comfortable to see how things grow.

Neil posed the question of scope in ICN responsibility and delivery – do ICN services and delivery extend to the hub or to the doorstep? It was suggested that ICN should help constituents because we would have a better understanding of what was necessary to successfully connect and maintain connection to the network – even if it was beyond our delivery point to the backbone. Jean suggested examining RTC experiences over the next few months before that question is answered.

The issue was tabled pending further staff recommendation.

Executive Director Search

A nationwide search for an ICN Director was proposed. A job description and outline was distributed to the Policy Committee. There was a correction to the Organizational Issues handout: the last line of number four should read “to no fewer than 2, no more than 5”.

Keith will collect edits to the advertisement, Policy Committee members were asked to provide a list of publications the ad should be placed in, responses will be directed to the Governor’s Office. Policy Committee members were asked to volunteer one member of their staff for one or two sessions to examine the list of candidates, the Policy Committee will interview candidates, and then someone should be asked to negotiate with the selected candidate for employment.

Motion: Keith made motion; Joe seconded.

The Policy Committee authorizes staff to advertise nationally for an executive director. The Policy Committee will serve as the search committee and consideration of applicants will commence effective November 23, 2000 (date dependent on timely placement of the advertisement).

Discussion ensued regarding wording changes in the position advertisement. Changes were determined and a motion was made to adopt the wording. The motion carried.

Creation of the Illinois Online Leadership Council

The Illinois Online Leadership Council is needed to coordinate online initiatives closely so efforts aren’t duplicated, and strengths and resources are pooled. This council can lead to coordinated budget requests and coordinated marketing materials that would help reduce the overall cost and create other economies of scale. A goal is to look for additional federal match and more federal dollars for content development through the collaboration of these organizations.

Staff recommends the following motion: The Policy Committee recognizes and endorses the Illinois Online Leadership Council as a vehicle to assist in the coordination of educational content initiatives, create an e-learning Internet portal for the state, and to

seek federal and private funding. The ICN staff seeks authorization to hire a professional grant writer for the purpose described and develop a comprehensive marketing plan to promote the e-learning portal.

Discussion: This does not include e-rate dollars. Mary questioned the purpose of the grant writer. Neil responded that a fast response grant team would be the primary responsibility, and that person could be half or three-quarter time or contractual.

Motion: Keith made motion to follow staff recommendation; Jean seconded.

Motion carried.

Funding of Private Networks Across the ICN Backbone

ICN staff asked for support in the policy of not providing constituents with private networks by segmenting the backbone into smaller sub-networks. A noted exception to this was the video network during the time it is evolving from the H.320 to the H.323 standard.

Motion: Keith made motion; Joe seconded.

Policy Committee agrees that ICN should not fund direct or indirect exclusive connections on the ICN backbone.

Motion carried.

Interagency Agreement

ICN staff sought guidance on the proposition of moving forward to create an interagency agreement between the funding agencies recognizing the fact that in future years there may be other agencies that develop funding for specific needs at ICN, so it would not be a closed agreement. There are 13 points ICN staff submitted for consideration in an interagency agreement to include. Once established, the ICN will work with CMS to codify some of the concessions listed on page 13 of the agenda.

Keith commented that any interagency agreement between SBE and BHE and arrangements with CMS should be brought to the Policy Committee for approval.

Update on CMS and State Agencies Coming Onto the Network

Neil gave a brief overview of several things that have happened with CMS as a result of meetings in the past month highlighting continued improvements in the relationship between ICN and CMS (agenda p14).

Marketing Update

Another mailing is being prepared to target entities that are eligible to connect but have not yet taken advantage of the ICN. The Regional Technology Centers are beginning to contact these entities through user group meetings and are now moving to visit with each institution one-by-one as necessary.

Budget Update

Neil provided a brief summary of the close of the last fiscal year budget including: a reminder of the monies ICN was funded for content development; summary of the monies and funds that were spent on behalf of ICN in the last fiscal year, and the current planning for FY2001. FY2002 will be based on developing ICN policy regarding communities, whether businesses are able to connect; and other issues. Frank has asked for more funds from ISBE to lower the access costs for K-12.

Discussion of possible uses of additional moneys in the governor's budget: community grants to connect to ICN or connect their own groups and infrastructure improvements for current constituents.

Keith commented that it was essential that the ICN staff compile the many successes schools, colleges, and universities are experiencing as a result of the ICN. This could be resolved by continuing to seek content developers, teachers, academic departments, and community college presidents to find out how ICN is improving delivery of educational content.

Mary suggested that there was a need to come up with ways to articulate how ICN serves people better. Keith suggested the staff develop a 1-2 page list of bullet point ICN accomplishments during the Ryan admin.

Update on the Installation of Backbone Circuits

Alice Engle presented an update on Backbone Circuits. An updated sheet was circulated. Several circuits will be installed next month. The primary issue has been problems with lack of physical facilities in many locations. Frank, Neil and their staffs are meeting with CMS staff and their vendors to continue to move forward in providing services as quickly as possible.

Current issues/developments were identified as several vendors who desire to work with CMS or IDOT to place fiber in state right of ways. Williams Telecommunications is actively placing fiber now. This represents a great opportunity to the state and reduces reliance upon vendors to get to the places that are lacking facilities. The state can begin owning facilities again and managing their own network if necessary.

Keith encouraged the ICN to explore wireless methods of delivery. Mary seconded that wireless needs to be explored.

Legislative Reports

Keith questioned the ICN staff's ability to communicate connections by district to legislators. That can't be done now; however staff expects this reporting function to be available by mid-January pending the completion of a comprehensive statewide audit.

User Group Outline and Update

Lori Sorenson presented a brief overview of the Regional User Groups and shared an example outline for organization. As part of the RFP, each Fiscal Agent has the responsibility of organizing a user group in order to facilitate collaboration among the different constituent sectors. An objective is to partner together those more advanced constituents with those that are struggling. Users are serving as a mechanism to provide feedback to the ICN management and then to the Policy Committee to identify what needs are within a community, and how the network needs to grow to accommodate their plans. Groups have just been starting to come together and formalize. It was suggested that the nine regional groups come together in the Spring for a statewide meeting/conference to share best practices. This could also be used as a forum to come to the Policy Committee so that the committee can hear from the users around the state and allow feedback on the uses of the ICN. It was suggested that the ICN create a virtual technology center to be included in the community white paper that would include successful models for other communities and institutions to share across the state.

Overview of the Advanced Engineering Taskforce

George Badger presented an overview of the Advanced Engineering Taskforce (AET). The AET combines a variety of people, both technologically skilled and involved in other projects to examine: how the market is going to change and how the realities with which ICN is coping are going to change over time. ICN staff is responsible for final decisions on engineering; this group is designed to give them advice. Jointly, ICN staff and the AET would develop a plan each year that would tie into the budget cycle, because many plans have financial implications. Specific issues examined include: community networking issue and what it means in engineering terms or what's practical; video – integration of old and how video can be available at the desktop.

Community Meeting Update

Lynn presented an overview of the 31 general information sessions she and Lori facilitated in June, July, and August. There were just over 500 in attendance. ICN is following up with more targeted meetings. RTC staff are also following up to develop productive relationships with constituents.

A Regional Technology Center Update report was presented to the Policy Committee members.

Documentation of the ICN Application Process

Doug Jurewicz commented on the summary of steps in the application process presented in the agenda and presented a report that documents procedures for working with ICN constituents to connect them to the network. Communication between the ICN and the applicants is based on e-mails and faxes and continues to improve.

Signage for Regional Technology Centers and 120 W. Jefferson

Photographs of proposed signage for the Regional Technology Centers and 120 W. Jefferson were presented. Designs for logos for constituent web pages and a community networks sign were discussed. Keith suggested that ICN make sure the governor's name be clearly displayed in order to ensure appropriate recognition for his ongoing support of the ICN.

Calendar Issues

Neil proposed a scheduled calendar of meeting dates. The next meeting will be to interview candidates and discuss any budget or other issues as necessary in January.

Mary adjourned the meeting.