



Illinois Century Network Policy Committee

February 7, 2001

**Capital City Center's Board Room
130 West Mason
Springfield, Illinois**

Lower Level

10:00 a.m.

Illinois Century Network
Policy Committee Agenda
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I. MINUTES

A draft of the minutes from the October 23, 2000 Policy Committee meeting is attached for approval.

II. NETWORK UPDATES

1. Community Networking

Refinements are still being made to the Community Networking white paper and it will be presented to Policy Committee members when complete. ICN staff is currently examining it closely to ensure that this model actually saves money recognizing that the telecommunications environment in Illinois is extraordinarily diverse. Where feasible, the ICN is connecting communities to facilitate lower cost connections. In Southern/Central Illinois, extension of ADSL circuits is cutting costs for ICN constituents in some cases from \$400 per month to \$78 per month while increasing bandwidth.

The ICN continues to receive inquiries from businesses, churches, and for-profit educational entities asking if they can connect to the network. At the last Policy Committee meeting, the staff was charged to bring more information to the committee regarding pricing options as well as practices and policy decisions implemented in other states and work is ongoing in this regard. In partial answer to this, the Advanced Engineering Team (AET) is exploring long-term implications of adding businesses and partnering with Internet service providers in relation to network capacity. ICN staff is supporting this effort by providing necessary network statistics to the AET and will continue to bring information to the Policy Committee.

Approximately ninety-six percent of ICN constituents are education-related entities or what we refer to as our primary constituency (schools, community colleges, universities, libraries, museums, state agencies, and units of local government). Long-term pricing models presented to the Policy Committee will focus primarily on expanding the network to these primary constituents assuming the scope and purpose of the network is predominantly for educational delivery.

2. Backbone Circuits

Long ordered ICN backbone circuits are coming up slowly. CMS has been working with vendors to move connections forward and a great deal of time has been expended in an effort to resolve vendor's capacity shortages and other issues. In addition, ICN staff has participated in the statewide RFP process that will ultimately create greater incentives for vendor responsiveness. An attached chart shows current backbone status. (Alice Engle)

3. Interagency Agreement

Meetings are ongoing between the State Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education regarding the interagency agreement and progress has been made. When the initial draft is complete, a preliminary copy will be distributed to Policy Committee members for review and edits.

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4. Circuit Inventory and Connectivity Update

Circuit Inventory: Staff continues to work to generate and maintain an accurate inventory of institutions connected to the ICN and at what speed each institution is connected. We have worked with Regional Superintendents, ICN staff, and State Board of Education Learning Technology Center staff to update the data and provide timely updates to the Governor's Office and others as requested. Last minute checks are in process there are some errors that are being corrected in the database of K-12 schools that were listed as *not connected to the ICN*. Preliminary reports are attached along with an updated *Facts at a Glance* sheet.

Marketing Efforts: A new advertising packet targeting K-12 schools not yet connected to the ICN as well as municipal and county governments will be finalized in February and mailed in March. Staff at Regional Technology Centers have been trained in circuit provisioning and data entry and will be processing applications locally in order to respond more quickly to responses from ICN marketing efforts.

State Agencies to Connect: CMS and ICN staff are working together to install necessary ICN provisioned equipment to enable state agencies to connect to the Internet via the ICN. Between thirty and forty state agencies will begin routing through the ICN within the next sixty days and CMS will continue to work with agencies to ensure that particular needs are met.

Connected Institutions vs. Physical Network Connections: In the past, there has been some confusion caused by reporting of physical connections to the network versus the number of institutions connected to the network. These are different counts and can be easily misunderstood. For example, if a community college connects to the network using two circuits, an inventory might show one institution but two connections. As a result, ICN staff will now report the institution that is connected and at what aggregate speed. The number of physical connections and types of circuits is relevant for network management but immaterial for reporting purposes.

Ongoing Policy Briefs: In an effort to better prepare Policy Committee members, ICN staff will begin sending out short executive summaries covering informational items such as Physical vs. Logical Connections, Peering vs. Transport to the Internet, Community Network Options, and other relevant material. If there are particular items of interest to any committee member please let us know.

5. Advisory Groups

The **Advanced Engineering Taskforce** met November 14, 2000 and meets again on March 1, 2001. The AET is updating and revising the 1998 Engineering Study paying particular attention to the integration of video with ICN, future issues that affect bandwidth demands, and capacity of the backbone given current trends.

The **Illinois Online Leadership Council (IOLC)** meets the first Friday of every month and is actively involved in development of an e-learning portal for Illinois. Working with the Governor's Technology Office, the IOLC has commissioned a brochure that reports on all statewide content initiatives. In addition, the IOLC continues to discuss organizational issues

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and potential grant applications. An updated matrix of state connectivity projects and a copy of the graphic chosen to represent the e-learning portal are attached. Although only in the beginning stages of development, the e-learning portal can be accessed at elearning.Illinois.net.

Regional User Group meetings are ongoing and the ICN continues to engage in conversations with institutions connected to the network as well as with potential customers. The Regional User Groups provide the forum to discover how constituents are actually using the ICN; identify additional technologies existing within a region that might further enhance ICN connectivity; describe educational and training opportunities that exist within the region; and to communicate regional needs to the ICN management team. Through the User Groups, ICN constituents are sharing their technology plans and identifying ways to partner, communicating their technology successes, and educating the local community on the benefits of technology and the ICN. Many User Groups are developing newsletters, web pages, and resource databases that will all be accessible via the ICN home page as they evolve.

III. NEXT STEPS/DISCUSSION

(Meeting dates, follow up, etc.)

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION