

**eHEALTH COUNCIL**  
Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:30 a.m. CT  
Nebraska Hospital Association, Board Room

3255 Salt Creek Circle  
Lincoln, NE 68504  
**MINUTES**

**ROLL CALL NOTICE OF POSTING OF AGENDA NOTICE OF NEBRASKA OPEN MEETINGS ACT POSTING**

Mr. Fattig called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. There were three voting members present in person at the time of roll call. A quorum was not present. Meeting notices and the agenda were posted on the State of Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar website and NITC websites on December 5, 2023. The agenda included a link to Nebraska's public meeting law and a copy was available on the table.

**Members Present in Person:** Cindy Kadavy, Dave Palm, and Jina Ragland.

Members Present via Video (Non-Voting): Marty Fattig, Ashley Newmyer, Alison Wisco, Betty Jean Usher-Tate, Anna Turman

**Members Absent:** Brian Sterud and Gary Cochran

**APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 14, 2020 AND MARCH 31, 2022 MINUTES\***

Approval of the minutes was tabled.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**DRAFT NEBRASKA DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES PLAN**

Anne Byers gave a brief overview of the Nebraska Digital Opportunities Plan. She noted that goal 6 addresses increasing the use of telehealth technologies in order to increase access to care in underserved areas and to reduce health disparities.

Dave Palm asked about the purpose of the plan, how the plan would be implemented and the timeline. Anne Byers explained that purposes of the plan include meeting the requirements of the State Digital Equity Planning Grant, qualifying the State of Nebraska to apply for additional funding from the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant program, and guiding the development of a state grant program.

The implementation plan includes forming a Digital Opportunities advisory group. The tentative plan is to disband the Community and eHealth Councils and form a new advisory group under the NITC. The Nebraska Broadband Office will take over administration of the follow-on grant, the State Digital Capacity Grant. A representative of the Nebraska Broadband Office could chair or co-chair the advisory group. The draft plan does not include a detailed implementation plan. The advisory group could form work groups to develop an implementation plan more fully.

The NTIA is required to open the application period for the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant program no later than this summer.

Dave Palm asked how the use of telehealth would be measured and tracked. He wasn't aware of any data that captures the total use of telehealth. Anne Byers shared that the plan lists metrics from the NTIA Computer Use Survey to track the use of telehealth by Nebraskans. She suggested that the Digital

Opportunities advisory group could form a working group to explore the issue. Members suggested that the Nebraska Hospital Association may be able to survey members. Betty Jean Usher-Tate said that the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health has some internal data. Other organizations may also have data. Betty Usher-Tate also discussed the use of telehealth for behavioral health.

Members asked about the status of the Nebraska broadband map. Anne Byers shared that the new map is available from the Nebraska Broadband Office website—<https://broadband.nebraska.gov>. The map will be used to determine which sites are eligible for broadband deployment funding from the State of Nebraska's BEAD grant. Over \$400 million will be available for broadband deployment funding. Jina Ragland said that areas that have received broadband deployment funding from another source will be shown as served. She encouraged members to go to the broadband map and check to see if broadband is available at their address. If the information is not correct, Nebraskans can file a challenge in January through local governments or their economic development district.

Cindy Kadavy mentioned internet access for those in nursing homes. Anna Turman discussed the risks of providing access. She said that often we are reactive rather than proactive in addressing security. Members discussed having Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on privacy and security. Betty Jean Usher-Tate suggested the Nebraska Public Media could be a potential partner. Marty Fattig suggested Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) as a resource.

Anne Byers encouraged members to submit written comments on the Draft Nebraska Digital Opportunities Plan..

Anne Byers also shared that she is planning to retire on March 1. She thanked members for their contributions to the eHealth Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.