



**Iowa Telecommunications & Technology Commission  
Grimes State Office Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
400 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50319  
Meeting Minutes February 20, 2025**

**FINAL**

The Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission's meeting occurred on Thursday, February 20, at 11:00 a.m. in the Grimes State Office Building, ICN Thompson Conference Room, 400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA. To ensure the most efficient use of State resources, the ITTC meeting also included a video conference connection pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8. A video conference ensured that more Commissioners, staff, and the public were able to participate in the meeting. The meeting was accessible to members of the public.

**Roll Call:**

**Commissioners Present**

Steve Olson, Chair  
Bob Holz, Member  
Brett Mason, Member  
Carmine Boal, Member  
Denise Sturm, Member  
Matt Behrens, Representing the Chief Information Officer, Ex-Officio Member  
Drew Stensland, Representing the State of Iowa Auditor, Ex-Officio Member

**Iowa Communications Network Staff**

Ryan Mulhall, Executive Director  
Scott Pappan, Chief Technical Officer  
Patricia Townsend, Chief Financial Officer  
Mike Cruise, Director of Finance  
Patrick Kazeze, Director of Operations  
Stephanie DeVault, Director of Business Services  
Connor Kuehl, Director of Facilities  
Brian Clayton, Executive Officer 2  
Lori Larsen, Executive Officer 2 (Recorder)

**Guest Attendees**

David Merchan, AAG  
Scott Goldberg, FNS  
Mark Siebenburgen, Lumen  
Ray Warner, Aureon  
Kara Heichelbech, Zoom  
Kyle Holmgren, High Point Networks

**Call to Order:**

Chair Olson called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM. It was noted that a quorum was present.

## Approval of the January 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes:

Chair Olson requested a motion to approve the January 16, 2025, meeting minutes. Commissioner Holz moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Boal seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

## Old Business:

None.

## New Business:

## Agency Updates

### Contracting Update – Mike Cruise

- Judicial Wireless Backup – Close to final draft after reviewing both sides' language.
- Part III ITB – Bids were due on Jan 8. Thirty-three (33) sites and awards are being prepared.
- Indianola Municipal Utilities – Re-engaging colocation discussions, seeking the best rates if we have terms over multiple years.

### COMMENTS

None

### Finance Update – Mike Cruise

#### Monthly Revenues and Expenses:

The month of January resulted in an operating margin of negative \$477,661 which is negative 19.3% of revenue. This is \$280,672 unfavorable to the budget, which was negative \$196,989. Two main factors were that we reduced our billable rate for inmate callings by 35% due to the FCC ruling now in effect and there were equipment receipts for a couple of large purchase orders; one being the HVAC upgrade in the Lucas building.

MRC revenues were unfavorable for the month by \$40,410. This was affected by \$69,000 from the decrease in the inmate calling rates.

Direct expenses were unfavorable to budget by \$886. Total allocated indirect expenses are a combined \$257,000 unfavorable to budget. General/administrative and payroll expenses continue to be well below budget. Equipment spending was high.

#### Year-to-Date (YTD) Revenues and Expenses:

Through January, we have an operating margin of negative \$1.84M, which is \$288,000 unfavorable to the budget, which is negative \$1.56M. MRC revenue is \$93,000 favorable to budget. OSP cost recovery is \$256,000 favorable.

Direct expenses are \$235,000 unfavorable to budget through January. Total allocated expenses are \$121,000 favorable to budget.

Other:

- OpenGov/Billing System – ICN is continuing to move forward on those two projects.
- Opening Positions: We are currently conducting interviews for the Accounting Tech 2 position in Payables. We are reviewing how to fill the now vacant Accounting Tech 2 position in Billing.

**COMMENTS**

Scott Pappan commented about the HVAC receipt for the Lucas project. He asked how much of that total expense was claimed?

Mike Cruise said the ICN posted this month \$200,000. ICN received three of the main units, and we still have two temporary units.

**Business Services Update – Stephanie DeVault**

**Service Updates:**

**Order Highlights**

- The team had a handful of orders for Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management and PSAPs.
- K-12 Education orders for Erate and bidding with 470/471s. We have received a handful of orders: Sloan CSD, Iowa City Regina HS, Iowa Valley CSD, English Valley CSD.
- Additional zoom licenses were purchased for Maharishi University.

**Marketing and Communications:**

- Peer to Career met on February 10 with Microsoft. They presented information about their datacenters.
- SYBAC met on February 11 with Corey Martin from the Iowa Hospital Association.
- The Allamakee HS cyber students met with ProCircular on February 14.

**Team Updates:**

- Project Managers: ICN is almost completed with service upgrades for the Anamosa State Penitentiary. The MVS switches and ATAs are being installed.
- City of Des Moines: Cabinets have been shipped, received, and installed at JFHQ.
- NIACC is almost completed with their Zoom install.

**Other Updates:** Business Services has shifted the organization structure into three different territories: West, Central, and East. We have three outside sales representatives (Account Managers) that are meeting with users in their area. We have three inside Account Consultants that complete the inside support of paperwork, escalations, and E-rate filings. We also have a dedicated project manager and sales engineer. This makes a better customer service environment and they can backfill each other.

**COMMENTS**

None

## Network Services Updates

### Network Operations & Security Update – Patrick Kazeze

**Hardware:** We received the hardware from Dell for our new storage solution. We are waiting on some switches but will begin the process of racking and stacking the hardware that is now onsite. Once complete, we will move to begin the initial configuration.

**Network upgrades:** On the core, network upgrades continue on at a steady pace. Our team works as quickly and diligently as our customers will allow. On February 19 our team completed another core upgrade at our site in Boone.

**Aggregation project:** We have an RFP out on the street for our next bulk purchase. The bidding period is set to close at the end of the month, and we're awaiting the results from that.

**Path to Denver:** Contracting received one of the final pieces for a path to Denver. This was a series of agreements with various vendors to get a new, bigger pathway to Denver. This will be at 100GB than our 4x10GB links.

**State Firewall:** We have begun the process of migrating the last customer off the state firewall.

**North Central Iowa Enhancements:** Engineers have been working on a couple of areas in North Central Iowa (Humboldt, Fort Dodge, and Pocahontas). Each one of those areas had previously been on a stick, and we are building in redundancy and resilience for them. This project is nearing completion, giving that part of the state more robustness.

### COMMENTS

None

## Facilities and Inside Plant (TAC) Updates – Connor Kuehl

### Facilities

- We have made significant progress on power updates to the datacenter at JFHQ.
- Received equipment for the Lucas Building.
- Supported some moves out of the Hoover datacenter.
- Operationally, we have revised our power and standard categories for facilities.
- We continue to refresh contracts.
- COOP COG plan is about 95% completed.
- In the Network Operations Center (NOC), we have begun to evaluate our internal procedures with the intent of increasing accountability and collaborate.

### Inside Plant (TAC)

Inside Plant team has completed several projects including:

- Cabling for 13 workstations supporting the DAS move to the Jessie Parker Building.
- More than 200 wired stations in DAS' new space in Hoover.
- Extended services to DPS District 12.
- Continue to work on fiber infrastructure to support server room and camera network at Cherokee Mental Health Institute.

- Copper infrastructure to support wireless network for LSA.
- Work for the Department of Inspections, Appeals, & Licensing on the fifth floor and the basement.
- Extending LEC circuits for Department of Corrections.
- New projects for the Department of Education and the State Treasures Office.

**FirstNet:** We continue to support adding two sites in Clinton County and two additional sheriffs to the list this month.

### Outside Plant (OSP)

In January, there were 12 new OSP projects opened. Of those projects, two were billable.

The team continues to use our escalation process for outstanding invoices. We currently show a little over \$304,000 in outstanding OSP invoices, the majority of which are USIC and Executive Council claims. Invoices over 90 days old shrunk by \$12,000. We made minor progress on cost recovery, meeting \$3,000 in FY24 expenses and \$36,000 in FY25 expenses.

### COMMENTS

Scott Pappan noted that TAC will now be referenced as Inside Cabling.

### Legislative Update – Executive Director Mulhall

We are approaching the first funnel deadline on March 7<sup>th</sup> where Senate bills must be voted out of Senate Committees and House bills must be voted out of House Committees. There are about 20 pieces of legislation the ICN is tracking that may directly or indirectly affect the ICN and the ITTC.

- House Study Bill 104 passed subcommittee. This bill tasks the ICN with building a next-generation 911 network utilizing new technology to replace the state's 911 legacy call routing infrastructure based on an FCC order. The ICN is registered undecided on the bill. There is some work to be done between the local government and public safety entities, HSEMD, and the telecom industry around funding to ensure that 911 calls get from citizens to the public safety answering points.
- Other items we are monitoring include a couple of bills based around open meeting requirements and public notices as well as state contracts. The main one of note for the ITTC is House File 416 relating to open meetings. It does include penalties of up to \$2,500 for violations, increased by up to \$500, and up to \$12,500 if knowingly violate open meeting laws. There would be some mandatory training from the Public Information Board implemented the ITTC would need to take. Similar legislation was passed last year, but was ultimately vetoed by the Governor. The Commission has done a great job of following the law and expects you will all continue to regardless of if this passes and is signed.
- Currently, the only bill that the ICN is registered For is House Study Bill 78, which is Governor Reynolds bill that creates State paid time off for maternity/paternity leave and allows State employees to start converting accrued sick time to vacation time much sooner. It passed out of House State Government Committee 23-0.

FCC - The US Supreme Court will hear arguments on March 26<sup>th</sup> on the lower court's ruling that the Universal Service Fund is unconstitutional. This directly relates to the eRate and Rural Healthcare Programs our customers used to pay for services. It also relates to the telecom industry in Iowa, where

companies received \$193 million last year from the High-Cost Service Area program and it has been as high as \$220 million within the last 5 years. We will continue to monitor and update the Commission on this.

## COMMENTS

Commissioner Boal and Director Mulhall discussed House Study Bill 104.

## Other Business:

### ITTC Committee Updates – Staff/Commission

### Personnel Committee – Executive Director Mulhall

There was no personnel committee meeting for February.

### Finance Committee – Mike Cruise

Meeting Date: February 17, 2025.

Attendance: Commissioner Holz, Director Mulhall, Patricia Townsend, Brian Clayton, and Mike Cruise.

Topics Covered:

- Brian Clayton gave the update from contracting.
- The FY25 budget-to-actual as presented today.

### Customer and Services Committee – Stephanie DeVault

Meeting Date: February 19, 2025.

Attendance: Commissioner Mason, Commissioner Boal, Stephanie DeVault, Patrick Kazeze, Connor Kuehl, Scott Pappan, and Lori Larsen.

Topics Covered:

- Presented what was listed today.
- Items in funnel and closing.

### Technology/Operations Committee – Patrick Kazeze

Meeting Date: February 19, 2025

Attendance: Commissioner Mason, Commissioner Boal, Scott Pappan, Patrick Kazeze, Stephanie DeVault and Lori Larsen.

- Challenges we are facing with modernizing the Network, and the costs associated with it.

## Public Comment:

Executive Director Mulhall added that the leadership team will be starting the planning process for FY 2026. The leadership team will be meeting in mid-March, and updating the agency's 5-year plan and priorities.



**Adjournment:**

The ITTC meeting adjourned at 11:28 AM.

**ATTESTED TO:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Olson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

*Steve Olson – Chair, Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission*