Koochiching Technology Initiative

Regular Meeting Minutes

3/4/2026

Attendance: Members- Wayne Fuller, Tim Gerlach, Paul Nevanen, Jaci Nagle, Jason Sjoblom, Philip Nolan (V), Justin Obert (V). Others present- Cori Horton and Kyle McCallum

Guest Speaker: Elly Burroughs

Elly briefly talked about the many construction projects that are ongoing for Midco, including the fiber hook-up in our area. Midco is expecting to have government funded line extension projects soon, as applications are open to people in areas that are underserved. BEAD is still an ongoing process; Midco stays in close communication with the NTIA to ensure what BEAD projects will look like in the future, but things are still very much up in the air. Hopefully, within the next six months there will be more concrete plans Midco can move forward with. Elly informed the group that she is aware of the KTI grant application and will let us know if she hears anything about it.

Call to Order: Regular meeting was called to order at 9:12 AM by Chair Jason Sjoblom.

Administrative Business

1. **Agenda:** Agenda approved on a Paul/Tim motion.
2. **Approve Minutes from February 2026:** Minutes approved on Tim/Wayne motion.
3. **Financials:**
    a. Jaci was not present for this segment of the meeting to discuss financials in depth, so the group quickly looked over the account information and talked a little about the 2026 budget and how grants will play a big role in funding this year. Financials approved on Wayne/Philip motion.
4. **Strategic Planning:**
    a. May 6th will be the strategic planning meeting. Jodi from the Extension office will facilitate.
    b. Grant ideas
        i. Tim talked with Todd Kruse from Verizon/Frontier about applying for a grant through Verizon. Todd said he'd help however he could. Further discussion on hold until the strategic planning meeting.
        ii. Jaci confirmed the Midco grant was submitted, and she will be working on the Marshall Knutson grant.
        iii. Northstar Electric has a small grant/award we can apply for

iv. Jason has not yet reached out to Paul Bunyan, but he has a connection he will get in touch with soon to talk about potential funding.

5. **Roberts Rules:** suspended on Wayne/Tim motion

Ongoing Business:

1. **E-waste:** Wayne and PCs for People have worked out a deal; they will take a shipment of ewaste from us at no cost as long as we provide the trucking. Maybe we can plan for an ewaste collection event towards the end of summer.
    a. Motion by Wayne to reinstate Roberts Rules of Order and approve the purchase of laptops from PCs for People to be picked up at the end of March, if funding allows. Seconded by Tim. Motion carries.
2. **Area Broadband projects:** Jason still plans on trying to contact Lumen to see what they are doing in our area or if they plan to do anything in the future.
3. **Cell infrastructure:** Matt Gouin talked with Verizon about the cell tower in Ranier and they said they will have some kinf of equipment on it this year or the next.
4. **LFA/ACC-** Kyle is in Arkansas for Winter Institute. Justin informed the group that he will soon have about 20 computers to donate to KTI from the county. Kyle will be able to distribute those later.
5. **Member Updates:**
    a. Paul- The Extension office is having a webinar about using AI to evaluate community initiatives on March 5th.
    b. Jaci- she is focused on getting the KTI finances cleaned up and working on grants.
    c. Tim- he got a discount from Midco because he complained. Huzzah!
    d. Gary- Learned that his real name is Cori, everyone was equally shocked. “Cori” made a Facebook post about cell service in the area, and it got a lot of reactions with people responding that Ranier is a particularly bad reception area.
    e. Wayne- Plead the fifth
    f. Jason- no comments at this time
    g. Philip and Justin- they left
6. **Publicity/outreach:** Skipped for time
7. **Future Guest Speakers:** Skipped for time

Adjournment of regular meeting approved unanimously on Paul/Jaci motion.

Next Meeting: April 1, 2026 @ 9:00am (or is it...?)

Next guest speaker: TBD