

MINUTES OF THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dwayne Umbarger at 10:40 A.M. on January 30, 2006, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:
Senator Donald Betts- excused

Committee staff present:
Jill Wolters, Revisor of Statutes Office
Michael Corrigan, Revisor of Statutes Office
Alan Conroy, Director, Kansas Legislative Research Department
J. G. Scott, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Reagan Cussimano, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Audrey Dunkel, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Julian Efird, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Debra Hollon, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Judy Bromich, Chief of Staff
Mary Shaw, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Hal Gardner, Director of Kan-Ed
Larry Gates, City of Chanute, Kansas
Ben Smith, Dean of Planning and Operations, Neosho County Community College
Sam Budreau, City of Chanute, Kansas
Stephen Parsons, Superintendent of Schools, Chanute USD 413
Tim Rogers, President, Kansas Library Association
Jennifer Findley, Kansas Hospital Association

Others attending:
See attached list.

Bill Introductions

Senator Teichman moved, with a second by Senator Schodorf, to introduce a bill concerning the criminal justice coordinating council; establishing a sex offender policy board (5rs1871). Motion carried on a voice vote.

Briefing on Kan-ed

Staff provided information regarding Kan-Ed regarding its history (Attachment 1). Chairman Umbarger welcomed the following conferees:

Hal Gardner, Executive Director of Kan-ed, who presented an overview and distributed the Kan-ed Annual Report from 2005 and describes the role of Kan-ed throughout the past year month by month. Copies of the Kan-ed 2005 Annual Report are filed with the Kansas Legislative Research Department. Mr. Gardner noted that they have moved from their initial phasing of thinking about interactive distance learning and the K-12 community. These existing networks would have a means of communicating and sharing their resources together and combine their efforts and have a greater impact on the entire state by collaboration. Mr. Gardner explained that hospitals are their focus for this year in terms of getting connectivity program up and running. They have seen upwards of 70 hospitals that have indicated an interest in being connected with the network, but about 15 have been connected to date. Committee questions and discussion followed.

Larry Gates, City of Chanute, Kansas, explained that the City of Chanute has created a community-wide communications network for the benefit of the community (Attachment 2). He mentioned that the City of Chanute has operated a fiber optic control network since 1984 for the benefit of critical electric operations for the City's Municipal Electric Department. In 1991 that original network was upgraded and expanded to

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form the core infrastructure facilities of the community's network in 2001. Mr. Gates noted that network participants are connected to extensions of the existing core infrastructure.

Ben Smith, Dean of Planning and Operations, Neosho County Community College (NCCC), Chanute, Kansas, provided information that NCCC is just one of the hundreds of institutions of higher education, unified school districts, libraries, and hospitals throughout Kansas that are currently members and receiving services through the Kan-ed network (Attachment 3). In his closing testimony, Mr. Smith explained that the Higher Education Strategic Connectivity Task Force (HESCT) was formed by the Kansas Board of Regents to discuss and guide a long range strategic planning effort for higher education networking in Kansas. It was noted that the Task Force is recommending that the Legislature review Statute 75-7223(b) specifically, and modify the statute to allow consortial membership; revisit the Kan-ed membership definitions; and delete unnecessary restrictions on network development as established in the current statute.

Sam Budreau, City of Chanute, Kansas, mentioned that the City of Chanute has created a community-wide communications network for the benefit of the community (Attachment 4). He noted that public safety has been and continues to be at the forefront of concerns for not only their citizens, but also from a regional concept that must interact on a state and national level as well. Mr. Budreau explained that should a disaster of pandemic proportion present itself, it would be essential that their public safety departments be able to communicate with each other and their critical infrastructures.

Stephen Parsons, Superintendent of Schools, Chanute USD 413, spoke about three objectives regarding Kan-ed (Attachment 5):

1. Build a private, secure network to which members can connect for access to high speed content and services and a stable platform for video conferencing.
2. Provide members with subsidies to help reduce their fees with internet access from local providers.
3. Seek quality content and services that enhance the private network and that Kan-ed members can use through their commercial or private internet connections.

Tim Rogers, President of the Kansas Library Association, addressed the library community's relationship with Kan-ed (Attachment 6). Mr. Rogers highlighted information regarding libraries and their roles, library perspective of Kan-ed and action for the future of Kan-ed. It was noted that the Kansas Library Association Kan-ed Position Paper laid out specific responses that could be enacted to resolve some of the issues mentioned in Mr. Roger's written testimony: communication, connectivity and content.

Jennifer Findley, Kan-ed Liaison, Kansas Hospital Association, explained two specific hospital related Kan-ed projects that were highlighted and noted that hospitals of all sizes have enjoyed many benefits from their participation in Kan-ed (Attachment 7). She noted the following information:

- First, Kan-ed has provided hospitals access to EMSsystem, a trauma diversion and resource tracking system that has been used in Kansas to address trauma care, emergency preparedness, and statewide communication; and,
- Second, the rural nature of Kansas coupled with the anticipated health care workforce shortages in future years make expanding telemedicine programs in Kansas imperative.

In closing, Ms. Findley mentioned that in light of all the pressures currently placed on the State General Fund, they are very concerned about the future of Kan-ed and urged what can be done to find a stable funding source for this program.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for January 31, 2005.