

DakotaLink Advisory Council
Quarterly Zoom Meeting
Meeting Notes
December 11, 2023

Members Present: Richard Moeller, Kendra Gottsleben, Eric Weiss, Amy Scepaniak, Kayla Kane, Gloria Pluimer, Keith Bundy, Bill McEntaffer, Lyle Cook, Matt Cain, Mollie Keating, Beth Schiltz

Members Absent: Mary Sjerven, Sarah Rush, Gaye Mattke

Staff Present: Page Hudson, Andrea Steele, Brett Burden, James Honomichl

Guest Present: Jessica Sehnert

Meeting Start

Richard's mic was not working so Kendra called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm MT, 2:03 pm CST.

Agenda

There were no corrections to the draft agenda. Eric motioned to approve the agenda. Gloria seconded.

Meeting Notes

There were no corrections to the September 25th meeting notes. Gloria motioned to approve the meeting notes. Bill seconded.

Site Focus

James Honomichl, a rehabilitation technician who works out of the Brookings DakotaLink Office, discussed his experience at the CSUN conference. CSUN stands for California State University Northridge. It is held in Anaheim, California annually. CSUN primarily focuses on blind and low vision accommodations. There were several booths focused on creating websites that are accessible to all people. He talked about several topics such as a morpich toolbar, an interesting cane, GoodMaps app, QD laser, and Seeing AI.

Richard's mic began working. He called the next topic to order.

2023 Annual Progress Report

Page discussed the 2023 annual report page by page. It was approved at the state level and will be moved on to the federal government now for approval. It will be posted on the DakotaLink website as soon as it is federally approved.

ACP: Affordable Connectivity Program

There was some discussion about this program. This program was discussed at the last meeting and is a government program that helps provide people with affordable internet services.

Richard shared his testimonial on signing up. He said his experience with using the website was

smooth. He started saving money each month right away on his internet services. You may go to this website www.getinternet.gov to see if you qualify.

DakotaLink Outreach Efforts

DakotaLink is still advertising through social media, KELO, and Midcontinent.

Brett shared information on how the TIE office created a short sixty second video for DakotaLink. This video is viewable on DakotaLink's website. A longer video is being generated and will be viewable soon.

Brett also shared an internet viewing of the Midcontinent ads to the council members.

DakotaLink Low-Interest Loan Program

DakotaLink is advertising and telling people about the loan program. There have been no applications completed since the last meeting. DakotaLink can be more flexible than most banks. The interest rate is usually five percent but there is flexibility with that. The loan program can be used to purchase vehicles, vehicle modifications, and various equipment. Please spread the word if you know of anyone. There is a link to the application on DakotaLink's website.

Next Meeting

The next virtual meeting is set for Tuesday March 12, 2024, at 1:00 pm MT, 2:00 pm CST.

Page is arranging to have an in-person meeting in June 2024. Stay tuned for more information.

Meeting End

Amy motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kendra seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:01 pm MT, 3:01 pm CST.

Notes taken by Andrea Steele