



Governor Pawlenty Appoints Twenty To High-Speed Broadband Task Force

June 30, 2008

Saint Paul – Governor Tim Pawlenty today announced the appointment of Stephen Cawley, Brent Christensen, Thomas Garrison, Dr. Jack Geller, Ph.D., Barbara Jo Gervais, John Gibbs, JoAnne Johnson, Richard King, Tim Lovaasen, Mike O'Connor, Dr. Kim Ross, Ed.D., Vijay Sethi, Richard Sjoberg, Karen Smith, John Stanoch, Chris Swanson, Craig Taylor, Mary Ellen Wells, Peg Werner, and Robyn West to the High-Speed Broadband Task Force. All 20 are appointed to terms that expire on March 2, 2010.

Cawley, of Plymouth, is vice president for information technology and chief information officer with the University of Minnesota. Cawley is appointed as the representative of higher education systems.

Christensen, of Madelia, is the general manager of the Madelia Telephone Company. Christensen is appointed as the representative of telephone companies with 50,000 or fewer subscribers located outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Garrison, of Eagan, is the communications director for the city of Eagan and the founding editor of Minnesota Technology magazine. Garrison is appointed as the representative of metropolitan area Minnesota cities.

Geller, of Mankato, is a professor and head of arts, humanities and social sciences with the University of Minnesota, Crookston, and past president of the Center for Rural Policy and Development. Geller is appointed as the representative of rural residential citizens at-large.

Gervais, of Tofte, is a senior investment associate and associate vice president with RBC Dain Rauscher in Duluth. Gervais is appointed as the representative of rural business citizens at-large.

Gibbs, of Bloomington, is vice president of state government and regulatory affairs with Comcast Corporation in Minnetonka. Gibbs is appointed as the representative of metropolitan area cable communications systems providers.

Johnson, of Eden Prairie, is the manager of government and external relations for the central region states with Frontier Communications. Johnson is appointed as a representative of telephone companies.

King, of Eden Prairie, is executive vice president and chief operations officer for Thomson Reuters North American Legal. King is appointed as the task force's chair as well as the representative of metropolitan area business citizens at-large.

Lovaasen, of Bloomington, is the president of the Minnesota State Council of the Communications Workers of America. Lovaasen is appointed as the representative of the Communications Workers of America.

O'Connor, of Falcon Heights, is a semi-retired entrepreneur who serves on a number of high-speed internet advisory boards. He co-founded gofast.net and was the founding president of the Minnesota Internet Services Trade Association. O'Connor is appointed as the representative of metropolitan area residential citizens at-large.

Ross, of Houston, is the district superintendent of the Houston Public Schools. Ross is appointed as the representative of K-12 institutions.

Sethi, of Moorhead, is the Clay County administrator. Sethi is appointed as the representative of rural area Minnesota counties.

Sjoberg, of Thief River Falls, is president and CEO of Sjoberg's, Inc., a cable television business that operates in 33 Minnesota towns and townships in Northwestern Minnesota. Sjoberg is appointed as the representative of rural area cable communications systems providers.

Smith, of St. Paul, is the public relations manager for the great plains region of Verizon Wireless. Smith is appointed as the representative of wireless Internet service providers.

Stanoch, of St. Louis Park, is the president of Minnesota operations with Qwest Communications. Stanoch is appointed as a representative of telephone companies.

Swanson, of Two Harbors, is a co-founder and partner with Wi-Fi Guys, LLC, and a member of the Two Harbors City Council. Swanson is appointed as the representative of non-metropolitan area Minnesota cities.

Taylor, of Inver Grove Heights, is director of information systems and technology with HealthPartners in Bloomington. Taylor is appointed as the representative of health care institutions located in the metropolitan area.

Wells, of Hutchinson, is president and CEO of Hutchinson Area Health Care. Wells is appointed as the representative of health care institutions located in rural areas.

Werner, of Fergus Falls, is the director of Viking Library System, a regional public library system that serves six west-Central Minnesota counties. Werner is appointed as the representative of regional public libraries.

West, of Blaine, is a member of the Anoka County Board of Commissioners, serving as a county commissioner in District 3. West is appointed as the representative of metropolitan area Minnesota counties.

The High-Speed Broadband Task Force was created by the 2008 Legislature to make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature regarding the creation of a state high-speed broadband goal and a plan to achieve it. The task force consists of 26 members, including 20 appointed by the Governor.