

**MINUTES
LOUISIANA OPTICAL NETWORK INITIATIVE
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

January 11, 2011

The Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI) Management Council (MC) met at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 11, 2011, in Room 137, 1st floor, Claiborne Office Building, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Mr. Charlie McMahon, Chair of the LONI Management Council, called the meeting to order. A roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

Council Members Present:

Mike Asoodeh
Rachel Finley
Laura Levy
Greg Speyrer
Brian Voss
Ed Driesse
Donnie Vandal
Les Guice
Michael Stubblefield
Todd Barre'

Council Members Absent:

Beth Courtney
Ed Driesse
Bradley Ebersole
Bob Fudickar
Joel Tohline

Guest:

David Lemoine, DOA
Lonnie Leger, LSU
Honggao Liu, LSU/LONI
Randy Ward, LPB
Mike Kline, CISCO
Angela Mastainich, BoR
Kathy Thomas, DELL
Micah Noble, HP
Brett Brock, CISCO

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 9, 2010 MINUTES

On a motion of Mr. Brian Voss, seconded by Laura Levy, the LONI Management Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2010 LONI Management Council meeting.

NLR AND INTERNET 2 UPDATES

Mr. Charlie McMahon asked that Mr. Vandal give an update on NLR. Mr. Vandal indicated that the NLR conducted a phone conference meeting last week but most of the time was spent by board members only discussing personnel issues. The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2011 in Washington. Mr. Vandal said that NLR continues to assess its financial status both current and long-term, as well as its operational model.

Mr. McMahon asked Mr. Voss to comment on Internet 2, but Mr. Voss indicated that since he is no longer on the board that he has very little specific information. He does know that Dave Lambert, the new I2 president, has been engaged in conversations and discussions concerning the direction that I2 will be going in the future. Mr. McMahon added that with the award of its BTOP grant, I2 will be reconfiguring their network by taking a circuit down through Memphis to Jackson to New Orleans. He also indicated that on January 19th I2 staff will be meeting in Jackson, Mississippi to have discussions with our sister schools in Mississippi. Mr. McMahon, Mr. Vandal, and Mr. Lonnie Leger will be attending that meeting. It was also mentioned that LONI currently has participation on the part of four Mississippi institutions on the network and as part of the LONI I2 connection, and the Mississippi institutions contribute a meaningful portion of those costs.

CHIEF ADVISOR REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. McMahon reminded the Council that Dr. Steve Landry, the Chief Technology Advisor, is no longer on the Council and then asked Mr. Leger to review his technology report (attached). Mr. Leger discussed the progress that has been made with the BTOP project. GEC, a Baton Rouge based company, was selected as the engineering firm, and also responsible for the environmental assessment due January 31st to the National Telecommunications Information Administration. Once the design work is complete, then there will be a construction firm selection and actual fiber work will ensue. Work is also underway on the environmental and engineering portion of the EPSCOR C2 project award to connect Xavier University to the network.

There has also been on-going work on preparing for conversion to IPv6 internet addressing, and Mr. Leger assured the council that there should be no shortages of addresses for the institutions. Also, there are continuing discussions with several research and technically-oriented entities, such as the Cyber Innovation Center and the Louisiana Cancer Research Consortium, who are seeking connection to LONI.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Vandal asked that everyone refer to the one page document in their packets (attached) which was provided by Division of Administration (DOA) staff regarding issues and concerns regarding LONI operations and with how the BTOP project will be operated once constructed. Mr. Vandal summarized major issues and concerns as compliance, governance, scope and sustainability. Dr. Michael Stubblefield asked if DOA was stopping any of the work and Mr. Vandal assured him that they are not. The biggest concern right now with regard to the BTOP project is the rigorous timelines that the BTOP project work must comply with.

Mr. Vandal indicated that he has discussed with Mr. McMahon the need to set up a work group to assist in reviewing and resolving any these issues. It was agreed that the Management Council must be engaged in the issues as they are addressed.

Mr. Vandal then reviewed with the Council the work it had done in November, 2008 in identifying strategic initiatives deemed of high priority. The Management Council had unanimously agreed that the following priorities be pursued: 1) have some long term financial plans for the LONI network, 2) define and refine the meaning of “economic development” for LONI purposes and how it will affect LONI, 3) how LONI can assist and serve the K-12 education community, and 4) pursue more federal funding for LONI while establishing a national prominence. Mr. Vandal suggested that the LONI Management Council needed to renew its focus on these priorities.

Mr. Vandal also mentioned recent work with the Board of Regents to get BTOP grant funds allocated to LONI operations based at LSU to assist in project management activities. And, he mentioned also that work was continuing on updating the LONI website, with a whole section dedicated to the BTOP project. That website work is about 85% complete.

CHIEF SCIENTIST REPORT

There was no report as Dr. Joel Tohline, Chief Scientist, was not available for the meeting.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There was no report as Mr. Bob Fudickar, Chief Economic Development Advisor, was not available for the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business to consider.

NEW BUSINESS

Carol Mosley, technology staff with the Department of Education (DOE), addressed the LONI Management Council on behalf of Jim Wilson, the new Chief Information Officer for DOE, who could not make it to the meeting. The request from DOE is for LONI to assist DOE and the K-12 community in procuring technology services in a more comprehensive, consistent and cost-effective basis. DOE is particularly concerned for the rural areas of the state which do not have meaningful broadband access for the delivery of a variety of educational services.

The DOE is exploring the possibility of designating LONI as an Educational Service Agency (ESA), which are entities that can assist in the procurement of services to the K-12 education community. Many of the small, rural school districts are not very knowledgeable in their use of technology and the federally available E-rate funding, which is dedicated to assisting schools in the procurement of technology services. The schools do not have large buying power individually, but could leverage the buying power of all schools if aggregated together. In Mississippi, for instance, the state serves as one applicant for the entire network and the Department of Education procures services from the providers on behalf of all schools.

DOE and the school districts are also in need of a wide-area-network (WAN) capability between all schools and DOE, which would provide for reliable services related to centralized student testing and tracking, including longitudinal student data and evaluation, deployment of electronic text books and electronic materials, professional development for teachers, and various other centralized services. By connecting all of the State's educational community to one network K-12 students would have more access to educational opportunities available from

colleges and universities such as the dual enrollment program and access to Internet 2 educational services.

Mr. Mike Asoodeh observed that LONI and DOE do need to work together but with the concerns coming from DOA about the BTOP Grant and the businesses concerned about the competition it might present, it needs to be done in steps and the concerns resolved before the Council should consider the services that would need to be provided for DOE. Ms. Mosley responded that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) has been in discussions with the department regarding this matter and that Superintendent Pastorek will be speaking to Mr. Paul Rainwater, Commissioner of Administration, about the need to pursue this designation of ESA for LONI. Mr. Voss expressed concern that the organization of LONI does not have the staff or the financial means at this time to support the kinds of services that DOE is requesting. He also emphasized that LONI is largely dependent upon the State appropriations available through BOR. Absent that support, LONI would become an added cost to institutions which would not likely be a viable approach.

Ms. Mosley explained that DOE is in the process of examining just what LONI can do and cannot do to assist DOE in these technology issues. The current plans are to start by procuring circuits to connect to the network, which the K-12 schools would support. This could also allow for connections to the internet at lower costs by centralized procurement of those services. Dr. Stubblefield questioned how the BTOP grant and the rural areas it targets relate to the DOE needs she is outlining. Ms. Mosley responded that the BTOP project would assist those parishes in their efforts to establish connections to the network.

Mr. Greg Speyrer said that what is needed from DOE is an itemization of the services that is being sought from LONI. There then needs to be a determination of the limits and boundaries that the LONI network would need to operate within.

Mr. McMahon suggested that there should be a broader effort at compiling information on these issues, including the ways and services available from LONI that could make this work. He further suggested that: 1) Mr. Leger should investigate how the Quilt organization and its services could be accessed on behalf of the K-12 community; 2) Mr. Vandal should engage Connie Koury, General Counsel with BOR, to determine what mechanisms would need to be in place to establish this kind of relationship; 3) Ms. Mosley should provide the information and analysis that Mr. Speyrer had requested. Ultimately then, the Division of Administration would need to assist in determining whether to move forward. Mr. Randy Ward, with LPB, offered to head up a group to pull together the information from K-12, OTM, DOA and all the stakeholders involved.

PUBLIC EVENTS

There will be a Higher Education Conference to be held at the Pennington Center on January 31st, 2011, and LONI may or may not want to participant in some way in this event. Mr. Vandal indicated that he would check BOR staff to see if LONI could assist in that event.

Mr. Honggao Liu, Director of High Performance Computing at LSU, reported that the supercomputing conference (SC'10) in New Orleans in November went very well and was successful. LSU sponsored a booth at the conference and suggested that next year it would be great if LONI could assist in sponsoring activities at the conference. Mr. Leger added that the supercomputing conference was a lot of work but was successful because of the support staff provided by the conference-sponsored SST group and the Internet 2 preparations that were done ahead of time. Mr. McMahon also recognized the Dell staff at the meeting and thanked them for the time that LONI had in the Dell booth. There was one presenter from Tulane and two from LSU which spoke on the oil spill and the use of computational resources to analyze and study that event and its repercussions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before LONI Management Council, the meeting was adjourned at 2:09 p.m.