Executive Summary & Grant Rationale

Your response to the outline below should be no longer than two pages. This information may be made public.

After you’ve completed the preceding application and reviewed the AWARDING GRANTS – Selection Criteria & Weights pages that follow this page, please reflect on your application responses and provide a brief executive summary and grant rationale that includes:

- Brief project description/summary (less than 150 words)

In 2010 Swayzee Telephone Company, Inc. purchased multiple small cable television territories from Longview Cable. Swayzee continues to operate the majority of these territories to include broadband. Summitville being one of the smaller service territories has the lowest take rate among all of our towns. Since there isn’t a major fiber carrier within ten miles of Summitville we are forced to microwave a 50Mbps service in from our tower at Point Isabelle. While this works for now, it is not a sustainable model.

This grant will allow us to build a fiber from Swayzee to Summitville, via Fairmount and while it will cover about 151 rural households and farms along the way it is more about the citizens of Summitville. Without this grant it is very likely Swayzee Telephone Company will discontinue service in Summitville within the next five years.

- A general geographic location of the project (not census blocks) and total number of passings estimated to be made as a result of the grant project

Swayzee to the west side of Fairmount then south to Summitville. We estimate passing 151 homes and farms along the route.

- A brief description of the applicant’s involvement in the project to date and how the applicant (and/or partners) intends to manage and sustain the project

Swayzee Telephone has owned and operated the cable system since 2010 and ILEC facilities in Swayzee since 1901. We have planned this route for years, but we have never been able to consider it financially viable. Operations will be based from Swayzee with a minimum of five outside plant personnel.

A statement on how broadband improvements will advance the quality of life and strengthen economic development opportunities in the communities in the project area
When I bought Swayzee Telephone Company, Inc. from Mr. Sam Samuels in 2007, STC had about 1000 POTS lines and a little over 100 DSL subscribers with its highest speeds at 768 Kbps. Our entire backbone was a 5Mbps circuit and the first weekend I owned the company we had a complete Internet outage that hit on Saturday morning. I called the IT contractor we were using and I asked him to look into it. His exact words were, “Oh, you want me to come in and fix it on the weekend? That’s double time and Sam always told me that weekend outages can wait until Monday.” When I asked Sam about this he shrugged his shoulder and told me that he thought the Internet was just a fad.

Fast forward to 2019 and if the Internet so much as times out in five seconds customers are on the phone letting you know, or even worse, on social media leaving you a bad review. The Internet has infiltrated every aspect of our lives and will continue to do so in ways we have yet to understand.

My job is to get fiber to the masses. My personal philosophy, “The Company with the most fiber - WINS.” Cellular and wireless has its niche place and while we utilize them, nothing compares to an individual fiber connection now or in the future.

I’d like to imagine that someday a future Albert Einstein or Stephen Hawking will be able to develop his or her skills while utilizing the fiber optic, broadband network we have worked so hard to bring to rural Indiana.