

networkMaryland™ Advisory Group  
January 16, 2007  
Annapolis, MD

Next meeting to be held  
March 20, 2007 10 AM to 12 PM  
45 Calvert Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401



**Attendees:**

**Advisory Group**

Sidney Drake  
Chuck Bristow  
Ron Brothers  
Norwin Malmberg  
John Gallagher  
Dean Zarriello  
Barb Pivec  
Nate Archey  
Michael Walsh  
William Donadio

**Guest**

Dan Vestal  
Robert Bowman

**DBM**

Ellis Kitchen  
Greg Urban  
Tim Kwong  
Gary Moulton  
Tia M. Johnson

## **Welcome & Introductions**

Greg Urban called meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

Introduced himself, Ellis Kitchen Tim Kwong, Gary Moulton, Tia McCoy  
- Johnson and reviewed agenda.

## **Welcome from Ellis Kitchen**

We are all very saddened to hear about the loss of Richard Rose. He was an original. His funeral services will be held at Arlington National Cemetery on Thursday January 25<sup>th</sup>. He gave many many great ideas and left an excellent legacy and we need to continue to follow that.

I had the opportunity to meet with the IT Transition team for the incumbent administration for a couple of hours about two weeks ago. I am convinced at this point that they clearly see networkMaryland™ as an extremely valuable asset that's delivering on the promises of the network. As a project that needs to continue to get support and funding. I believe that they are also looking for us to find some innovative and additional service that we can put on the network. I think that aligns perfectly with where we are trying to take the network. And with your continued support and contributions I think we'll be able to do that.

## **Approval of minutes from November meeting**

Quorum not reached.

## **State of the Network**

Operational Customers

66 Subscribers today

A change of one since the last meeting.

Circuit Breakdown

73 ISP Circuits

76 SwGI Circuits

1056 Layer 2 Circuits

A change of close to 30 since the last meeting.

10 VPN Connections

There have been a reduction since the last meeting due to customers migrating off of the VPN and onto the SwGI network.

## **Executive Branch**

There is no change since the last meeting.

Per a conversation with Agriculture, they have said they are definitely committed to migrating to networkMaryland™ they are just waiting for funding. This will probably be in the next fiscal year. There are no anticipated changes in the near future.

## **Non Executive Branch**

There are constant changes with this group. This is where additional Counties and other organizations of interest that are wanting to subscribe to networkMaryland™ services.

The Caroline County Government has expressed a huge interest in utilizing a combination of fiber resources and wireless connections to connect the government offices in the Denton area. We are going to call that the DMAN for the Denton Metropolitan Area Network. So we anticipate a lot of opportunities to pick up State agencies at the DMAN. Is that going to be done through an MOU?

Yes, absolutely. That will be covered later in the meeting.

The Office of the Public Defender has migrated off of the Legacy/FMIS onto SwGI

Anne Arundel and Howard Counties recently turned up their SwGI connections.

We are beginning to see County governments slowly coming to get services for inter-county communications.

## **Operations**

Milestones\New Business

Legacy FMIS migration

Only 1 remaining customer

Remaining Agency waiting for their circuit to be ready

We are expecting that their Verizon circuit will be ready and the migration will have been completed by the next Advisory Group meeting.

Baltimore ISP bandwidth upgrade completed

This was completed last month (December). We continued to utilize the service from Qwest. The physical handoff was upgraded from an OC3 to a Gigabit Ethernet handoff. The bandwidth provision hasn't changed; this allows us more future growth, more scalability in terms of high-speed bandwidth at the Baltimore PoP.

Initiated Engineering Resiliency study on the network

Intend to achieve redundancy\diversity at key sites

This requires our engineers to look closely at our existing PoPs and make suggestions as to how we can improve the resiliency of our network. Things like adding additional network cards trying to distribute the network load onto various devices with intentions to eliminate those single points of failure.

Bearing Point completed Disaster Recovery Planning document

This was presented at the end of last month. (December) it is now in final form.

DNS for SwGI

Reserved "swgi.state.md.us" domain name from SAILOR

Once we offer DNS services from SwGI neither existing customers nor new customers will have to worry about IP address resolutions.

DC Power plant maintenance for UMCP & 6 St. Paul awarded to SEI, Inc. SEI, Inc is based out of Frederick.

## Upcoming Tasks

### Customers on the Horizon

Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office (depending on fiber connections within 6 St. Paul)

Currently attempting to finalize the path of the fiber from their offices at the Clarence Mitchell Courthouse. We anticipate the turn up of that circuit relatively soon.

SAILOR Ethernet hand-off @ Elkton (pending PoP completion)

WCC (Ready to transition from leased line to direct fiber connection – Spring 2007)

They are located in the building adjacent to 6 St. Paul. The fiber installation is complete. In the past the WCC has been using a leased circuit for their services. It is networkMaryland's belief that by building fiber from 6 St Paul to their building the WCC will realize a lot of cost savings, their leased line can be eliminated and they can transition over to a fiber based connection.

St. Mary's County – ISP & SwGI (pending MOU)

Caroline County – ISP & SwGI (pending MOU)

Garrett County – ISP (pending MOU)

We are in the process of provisioning service to these Counties. We are waiting on final signatures on the MOUs. We anticipate everything to be relatively smooth.

VoIP trial with MSP (Northeast to Easton)

Router is in place and ready to deliver services

Test date for MSP: Jan. 23, 2007

The Circuit is provisioned and the equipment is in ready mode, we anticipate a really successful test.

This is just something to think about and that we need to keep on our radar screens, with the current Federal legislation on discovery, were capturing transmissions under VoIP technology for measuring quality of service for things like latency, jitter and things of that nature. There could be implications on discovery issues where we have to turn over telephone conversations like we do emails.

In this specific trial the networkMaryland™ portion is a Layer2 circuit between the two, as we go forward into different types of VoIP implementations that is something that we'll have to keep our eyes on.

We are already experiencing that with video and beyond just emails and attachments and it will be voice.

As a result of keeping track of performance criteria, that qualifies as discoverable?

Under the current Federal regulations, anything that could potentially have an impact on any potential litigation. There is a ruling from the AG's office that taped back ups being used for the purpose of systems restoration in the event of major systems failure does not have to be used under the Public Information Act. That is considered recreation of a document and not providing them with an existing document. However under Federal regulation and any court orders the tape backups will be required. So it is assumed that any monitoring tools or

history or archive that have been captured to maintain and measure will also be susceptible under the Federal regulation of discovery.

If we had a substantial VoIP network that would be an enormous storage problem.

Exactly, right now it is an enormous storage problem just for email. You've got ten thousand customers and you're retaining daily, weekly and monthly backups it's a tremendous storage issue. And the media that's being used is not made for records retention. It's done typically for systems restoration.

On the upside the Attorney Generals for a lot of the State agencies have gotten together and are starting to draft what they believe is the State interpretation of the policy.

A good thing that they are doing, which they have not done in the past is involving the IT community.

No matter what they decide it's going to be a huge cost on the backside. Some of this stuff is going to be stored for seven or eight years. And, how do you know you are going to have a device that is going to read that tape in seven or eight years?

## **VPN Pricing**

### VPN Pricing Model

Two types of VPN offerings

IPSec LAN-to-LAN (firewall-to-VPN Concentrator)

IPSec Remote VPN Client (VPN client-to-VPN Concentrator)

The software is installed on the customer's PC.

Is this running over SwGI?

Yes, the VPN Concentrator is on SwGI, so when the customer makes the connection they become a customer of SwGI.

The VPN circuits that were shut down, is there encryption there or was it determined that those applications or data didn't require encryption?

The reason for the reduction in VPN customers was because those customers were actually in the process of bringing up their own dedicated SwGI connection. They just needed an interim stop-gap solution to migrate off of the legacy network and onto the SwGI network. We had two or three customers that were in that situation, once they turned up their regular SwGI connections they didn't see a need for the remote VPN solution so they turned down their VPN connections.

The VPN connections are for customers that don't have a direct circuit to SwGI and want to use SwGI. So they provision a VPN through the internet from their network to SwGI and that's how they attach to SwGI. Once they got their direct connection to SwGI they no longer needed the VPN.

My understanding of the VPN and the use of the VPN was that it was creative solution to get them to networkMaryland until they could migrate to SwGI.

There are some scenarios, for example the Canal Authority based in Cumberland, where there are only three or four office users yet they have a need for FMIS connectivity, but in terms of cost, for them to get a leased line, even a 56K leased line to SwGI would still be cost prohibitive for them. Since their only access to the internet was through dial up, we figured that they could still use that resource, and install the VPN Client on their computer and they could eliminate their Legacy FMIS connection and be able to access FMIS via the VPN Client. It has benefited some agencies like that.

VPN provides access to only SwGI-hosted resources

Flat fee of \$500 per month

Remote VPN clients – up to 20 connections. If more connections are needed, additional charges will apply.

No agency has gotten close to that 20 connection cap so far.

Do you have bigger VPN clients than 20 connections?

No we do not. Our largest right now is probably nine connections.

It seems the flat fee of \$500 per month is geared toward smaller agencies. Have you found that it's cost prohibitive for them or is it a cost savings?

I can say it's a cost savings. The alternative of a leased line would most certainly add up compared to the VPN offering.

So far we have not heard any objections to this pricing.

Has anyone spoken with them about it?

They have been notified of the charge; however, most of the notifications have gone to the tech folks not the finance people so we don't know how they (the finance people) are responding to it.

nwMD did have one customer who wanted two VPN connections but to only pay for one. However we scratched that, there is a real cost of delivery and it needs to be recouped. They ended up ordering just one VPN connection and solving their redundancy problems in a different way.

How does the cost of delivering the service compare to the \$500 per month?

Based on the number of customers we have it's recovered.

There are small incremental costs to provisioning new VPN connections but ongoing maintenance is pretty flat.

### **Circuit Provisioning and Acceptance**

180 circuits are currently in the customer's testing/implementation phase

55 new circuits have been provisioned since the last meeting

30 circuits have been accepted by the customer since the last meeting

## **Growth Chart**

We've recently broken through the thousand circuit mark. This is a major milestone. There is continuing growth for our circuits.

Our total count is 1056 Layer2 circuits

If you are going to reconfigure this chart, it may be helpful to pull out the counties and the municipalities to put them on one sheet and put the agencies on another. This way we can have a clearer snapshot. We know we have 23 counties but we only have eight represented, we can see which ones are coming on.

We talked a number of years ago about municipalities and the availability of networkMaryland™. Because municipalities are usually outside of the county seat where the PoP is in the Government service center, typically, it may not be possible to deliver services to municipalities.

We'll deliver to whatever municipalities that wants the service but they are obligated to provide the connectivity to the PoP it's not a networkMaryland™ expense. So for those municipalities that are not geographically near the service delivery point, it's often not going to be economical for them, particularly as it relates to ISP services because there are so many companies that can do that now at such low prices. The primary reason for building networkMaryland™ was to serve State Government, and that when it was mutually agreeable and beneficial then certainly we wanted to include the counties and municipalities. We will certainly look at all the opportunities as they come along, but that's not something we're going out and intentionally stirring up interest to do. The municipalities that are interested we certainly would like to talk to them.

Some of the municipalities seem to be migrating on the county intranet system. But if the county intranet system is then connected to networkMaryland™ it doesn't really serve them any value because they don't really have to access things to which nwMD provides access.

They don't have to access for the most part; State records or they can access them over the internet. It's probably not a big value for the municipalities, if you had more metropolitan areas or if you had a municipality near Towson, for example, they might want to take advantage of it.

networkMaryland™ is discussing a connection to the City of Annapolis. But one of the other things that happens is, using Frederick County as an example, Frederick County has the K-12 school system on the County network, and their ISP service comes

through networkMaryland™ via the County network, so we serve other parts of Government and municipalities sometimes through the county network. In the Capital build portion of this discussion we will discuss areas we are looking at that have a high density of State circuits and it's one of those situations where if there is a municipality close to this cluster of circuits that we have there is a possibility to leverage as well. We haven't identified any of the municipalities yet.

### **Approval of minutes from October meeting**

Quorum now reached with the arrival of two more voting members of the committee.

Chuck Bristow motioned to except the minutes as written

Mike Walsh seconded.

Minutes unanimously approved.

### **Project Status**

DWDM Ring (Partnership with USM, MDOT)

Fully Operational

Provisioned two fully redundant OC-48 circuits between UMCP and 6 St.

Paul

They are on a redundant path

East path via Annapolis

West path goes up via UMBC/UMB

This is an improvement, in the past we had a single path OC-48 on the old Cienna gear. We have an additional redundancy based on the system.

Legacy Cienna DWDM ring

Only used by MAX

They plan to decommission by the end of January, by the end of the week of January 15-19.

Set to decommission in February

networkMaryland™ is planning to decommission in February.

Elkton SONET PoP

Partnership with Sailor

Located at Elkton Library

Shelter is on site, requires assembly

Construction has begun.

The digging has begun but Miss Utility miss labeled the powers lines so the power lines were blown. They also miss labeled the phone lines so all the Telco was cut to the library. Now waiting on Verizon to come reroute the circuits before construction can continue.

Towson POP

Baltimore County is building a fiber route to County Data Center

Installation has started on the northern portion (I-83)

Permit applications have been submitted for the southern portion (Bosley Ave)

There will be a networkMaryland™ PoP in the county building.

## Denton MAN

Met with Caroline county to review fiber plant

Via the MOU networkMaryland™ is getting some of the County fiber that runs from the tower site into the Data Center and throughout the City. It attaches to every State agency, with the exception of one. The issue may be that not all of the copies are signed but it has been through Legal. +

Engineering design and overall layout completed

Product specification underway

The goal is to get the County up with the equipment that we have today, then to deploy new equipment to get the State Agencies. This will potentially drop 10-12 leased circuits that we have with Verizon.

## Elkton MAN

Fiber build from SONET node to MSC

Path determination in progress

A prospective path has been outlined and is now being reviewed with the other stakeholders who would be the route owners and the right of way owners. To see if it can be built the way it is thought it can be built.

Investigating options for redundant wireless link

Sailor has offered a small amount of space on there tower. We are looking for a small two foot dish or a panel antenna that we can do a radio shot to the MSC as our second path.

## **networkMaryland™ Overview**

The only change is the inclusion of the Denton MAN.

Because Talbot County has got such a large amount of fiber, and the proximity between Easton and Denton, has there ever been any conversation about or a need to do a link between those two?

I don't know if the specific fiber resources that we have in Caroline County is just in Denton and I don't know how far they extend beyond. The question is; how close do they get to each other? I know there have been some conversations up in the northern counties, Carol, Harford and Cecil and West between Frederick Carol and Howard trying to see how close the INET fibers are. To get the combination and hook the two up then we can do the same with Frederick.

From a non techie perspective, what is the benefit of doing something like that?

Just not having to build it yourself, to not build it yourself, instead of just laying a whole new path it's a, it's exactly what you want to do. If you talk about Easton and Talbot county fiber is this far, and Denton is here, you can just build a bridge between the two and then utilize the.

This is actually something that Caroline county is interested in, is because they have an initiative with the surrounding counties, I believe it's Talbot and Dorchester to do some back up for each other, just a DR planning. They have a set up where Caroline backs up Talbot and Dorchester backs up...I'm not sure what the matrix is of who does what but they have an agreement so to connect those two areas of Easton, Denton, and Cambridge is something they would be interested in as well.

328, which is the Easton / Denton Road is not that, I think its 15 miles.

We have fiber as a result of an MOU coming across the bridge at Cambridge, in Choptank, right?

We have that going between Easton and Cambridge. We are working on that deal, it should be, we're hoping that it get finalized in February.

Your connection between Easton and Cambridge is still a resource sharing connection with one of the, It's a wireless resource sharing connection with one of the ISPs Cambridge?

Its cable right?

The current Easton to Cambridge connection is a wireless. It's a microwave. We run a 3 DS-3 microwave radio and it's all ours. It is a State asset.

When we pushed to get the network complete that's when we did that Microwave build on the Eastern Shore. I believe that in two and a half to three years that's going to be full, it's going to be at capacity. So I'm very interested in anything we can do in that regard as far as resource share, the concept you're talking about. The other thing we're doing, we need to start doing more of, is I sit on the advisory board for the rural broadband network, and they've got funding they've and aggressive build schedule and they are putting fiber in the ground. I believe that they'll be done from Wallop's Island to Salisbury by the end of March and by the end of this year from Salisbury to the Bay Bridge. So we be very anxious in striking any arrangements we can with them. If that occurs, if we are able to figure out how to bridge Caroline and Talbot counties, we already have a way to Cambridge, that's about half of what we need.

The Rural Broadband and the backbone which is, there is an opportunity for resource sharing between networkMaryland™ and that backbone that's on it. There is a collaborative approach isn't it?

Yes, the difficulty we are having is that the law was written so that the State has to give those rights of way. So from our perspective we don't have a great deal of bartering because they've already gotten what they need, which is State dollars, Federal dollars and State rights of way. We may even wind up being a customer of their's and in fact reselling their backbone services, we would prefer to do resource share.

We continue to negotiate with them in determining what assets we have that would help them achieve their strategic goals.

I heard that the State is being held hostage to that bill to give them the rights of way, when the money that funding the build is the State's money as well. It's tax payer's money, whether it's coming from the Federal pocket or whether it's coming from the State pocket. It's still coming from the citizen's pocket. I would think that although networkMaryland™ was never designed nor should it be delivered or compete with the private sector, nor will it, I think that certainly you shouldn't be building multiple roads when you can legally share.

I'm not going to build a separate fiber optic network. I'll never get the funding for that. When the dust all settles, that will be about a 25 million dollar build for them over a period of about 4 years. I can't get 25 million dollars, wouldn't even ask for it.

But if you could pay them real dollars for a couple of the fibers that they build, that might be worth it.

We may get to that point. I do believe that Transportation has arranged for two or four fibers in that build for networkMaryland's™ application, if you have one active and one backup, then you're done. I don't have an answer to all these things today but I wanted to let you know that these are the things that we are looking at and what we are trying to accomplish, so in your roles and your discussion with people, anything that you can help us with or advise about us about to help get to that point we'd certainly appreciate it. That's part of the role of this group.

Years ago we talked about, I think, what a great change in networkMaryland™ because we had communication between all these different groups. One time we talked about we had five different groups, now we have representation that funnels information up, funnels information down. The make up of this rural broadband group is, I know that John Dillman in the Upper Shore, he's like the lead?

Actually Virgil Shockley is. There are two bodies, there's the Rural Broadband Cooperative, which a legal entity. The officers of the organization it's modeled after is the Tri County Council; Virgil Shockley is the president of that. They hired a project manager and are about to hire a marketing person to both build and sell the network, and then the legislation also established an oversight board, Transportation is on the board, I'm (Ellis Kitchen) on the board, and the gentlemen who runs Rural Legacy is on the board. This would be a good thing to discuss the next time we get together. I will come more prepared to tell you who has what responsibility. Those are open sessions, anyone can attend I would advise you to attend. They meet quarterly the last meeting was a week or so ago down in Cambridge. They gave us the status of the project and they are making a lot of progress.

After the bill was signed the offer was made for the IT community would come and sit down with them to offer assistance in understanding how Richard Rose had done a lot of this stuff.

The person we need to sit down with in a pre-meeting to do some potential sharing of resources is Patrick Mitchell who is the project manager. Would anyone else like to be involved in that?

(All members indicated that they would like to be involved by raising their hands)

As you well know, digging dirt and sticking cable in the ground can be the easy part. They have yet to sign a contract, but they will need to sign a contract. Somebody's going to do the O&M, send the trucks and somebody puts a back hoe through it. The back office support, billing and the customer satisfaction, the order processing. Those things are not done and that's why they are beginning to add staff. They are getting a lot of interest from people that want to either buy services or also do some bartering of their services to help build it out. They have not solved, and I don't think that they will solve themselves, the last

mile connectivity issues. For the most part, for the rural areas and first the Eastern Shore they're gone to they are going to be wireless. The wireless companies are looking to get space on State assets, which we would like them to have, but we can't give them the access because we have hundreds and hundreds of leases with common carriers and others. So if you go in and allow this private entity last mile wireless service provider a rate that's different or pro bono then you are going to have everybody else who's on State property coming saying I need that deal too and by the way I want my money back that I've been paying you for the last 20 years. That is a decision we have to make in the next two or three weeks. Those things are all to be determined but, I believe that once you get the backbone in that it will begin attracting customers. And they are focusing initially on broadband ISP.

Is there still a lot of overhead?

There is still a lot of overhead. It really is not a project that was built on a business model. It was built on a need. You also run the risk that so far the Federal dollars have been earmarks out of the NASA budget. NASA isn't particularly desirous of continuing that relationship, so you have the risk that in tight budget years, either State or Federal dollars might not appear. Then you are going to be stuck with a partially completed network. There is still a lot of risk there but they have made a lot of progress in 7 or 8 months.

When we meet again in two months and you come back to this subject, would you consider letting us know if there are like projects going on in the State? I mean such as Allconet and the like?

Allconet was sold and the county now gets a piece of the action. They have customers they don't have anywhere near the customers that they thought they would. I believe, and I think we've had this discussion before, if you're in business today, other than your people, the most important asset that the business has is its IT infrastructure. It's the lifeblood of an organization. And if you had to make a decision between buying from and 120 year old established common carrier with a proven track record as the lifeblood of your business and pay it 30% premium or buying your services at a 30% discount from a government entity that's been in business maybe a year or two and may not be in business next year with unknown service delivery capability, you are going to pay the other 30%. That's always been the issue as to why it's been difficult for these things to work. There are some instances around the country, there's a town in Indiana that hired a company to come in and build there own competitive local exchange services and that worked really, really well for them. But those instances are few and far between. Also those government operated and subsidized networks under perform what you can get from the private sector.

## **Potential Projects**

### Fiber Projects

Frederick MAN: Add an additional PoP in Frederick and build a diverse fiber path to the city. Partnership with Frederick County Government  
The goal would be to provide redundancy to the county and to pick up additional state agencies located within the city of Frederick.

Oakland MSC: Resource Share agreement to bring fiber from Oakland to Cumberland. Agreement is under review by the State

A cable company has submitted a resource sharing agreement to the committee and is under review by the state. It runs fiber from Oakland to Cumberland via the southern route. It runs along the MD/WVA boarder then goes up north. This is a longer path. They have already applied for permits from SHA.

MSCs that do not have a networkMaryland presence

Arbutus	Hagerstown
Centreville	Patapsco Ave
Denton	Salisbury
Essex	Wabash
Glen Burnie	

networkMaryland™ will be evaluating these MSCs to determine get cost effective builds to the MSCs and pick up some state and county customers. We are at a point were we have to go out to some of the agencies and poll where they are and what they need to see if we can match that up with some of our build strategies going forward. This phase of the project, which is phase 2, is to do that, to build the access out for the state network, so the agencies can come on board then build a highly redundant, resilient network. Some of the agencies had some very high availability requirements.

Where is Wabash?

It's in Baltimore City.

What is the service center there? What agencies are on it?

We believe DHR is there.

MTA is there but MDOT did not know of any other agencies.

What constitutes an MSC, two organizations or more?

It's typically more then that. There are eighteen where we have installed multi-service center PBXs and there are a lot more then two agencies on those.

One of the things that networkMaryland™ did was go to DGS and pulled the MSCs that they run, to do an evaluation on these to determine if it makes financial sense to go in there.

Areas with a high density of private line circuits Possible MAN builds

Bel Air	Easton
Cambridge	Elkton
Centreville	Ellicott City
Chestertown	Frederick
Cumberland	Hagerstown

La Plata  
Leonardtwn  
Oakland  
Prince Frederick  
Princess Anne

Rockville  
Salisbury  
Snow Hill  
Upper Marlboro  
Westminster

We've done some research into Hagerstown and Cumberland. With our circuit database from Verizon we can map where they congregate and identify areas we need to investigate. One of them is Hagerstown. We know we have fiber resources in that area, we know we have a collection of sites, we know we have a library, and we know there is a fiber network that runs around it and that the county is willing to participate with us.

What is meant by "Areas with a high density of private line circuits"? Take the Denton MAN, the fiber in the ground around Denton is Caroline County's fiber. Easton's fiber in the ground is Easton Utility's, which is private. Centerville is dark, they may have some Verizon fiber but they don't have anything that is Centerville built or Queen Anne's County built.

It's a Verizon circuit center. We look that Verizon database of circuits for state agencies. Then we map them out in specific areas. In the case of Denton, we map it out and it turns out that there are six buildings and of those six buildings five of them have county fiber into them, one of them is across the street. We can pick up all but one of the agencies that currently have at T1 to Verizon and offer them the same connectivity to what ever they are using that circuit for.

Would that be connections to metropolitan and county networks?

If possible, yes. We don't often go into private fiber carriers, Carroll County is one and Frederick County where the county has an agreement with some private carriers. It's a little more complicated from a legal MOU perspective, it's hard to get rights from someone who doesn't own rights so it makes the build out a little more complicated, but we are willing to explore those options. We are very cost conscience when it comes to capital build out.

How does something like this benefit some of the other stakeholder representatives like for instance, Chestertown?

The challenge networkMaryland™ has with the Eastern Shore is the backbone issue. The University traditionally requires high bandwidth; they would take our whole backbone.

What have we done with telemedicine?

The PSC would never rule on it. Those that are state hospitals are potential networkMaryland™ customers those that are not state hospitals are viewed as private sectors and we are not going to be able to serve them.

Has networkMaryland™ spoken with anyone at Snow Hill?

No, we haven't spoken with anyone. This is just a little research identifying target areas. Now we have to go into each one to determine if it even looks feasible.

In this legislative session do you see budget things that are of interest that we should know about? As far as requesting funds or whether the Legislature is happy with what we've done so far?

Based on the few hours spent with the transition team they are indeed happy with what we've been doing for the last number of years. In general, existing projects will continue to be looked upon favorably and continue to receive funding. New projects are going to be really difficult for which to get support. The incoming administration has committed to \$400 million in new school construction alone and fully funding the Thornton Education Act. The 08 budget at the moment is balanced, 09 is not. One of the biggest challenges we are going to have in the future is that the IT community of the state has gone through 22% cut in dollars and a 12% cut in staff over the last four years. It is believed that if that trend continues things start to break. One of our biggest challenges will be convincing this administration to look upon information technology as an investment and not as an expense. We have a compelling story to tell and if you look at the State's IT budget we have \$750 million that will be spent in this fiscal year and of that 1/3 comes from general fund sources. The remaining 2/3 comes from special funds, grants and federal dollars. That's a remarkable number.

**Other Business**

nwMD Engineering Committee meeting  
February 12th, 2006, 1:30 PM @ UMBC Technology Center  
Merged with UMATS engineering meeting  
Items for discussion from the Group  
Closing Questions or Comments

**Meeting Adjourned.**

Greg Urban adjourned the meeting at 11:05 AM