



# Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

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Agenda Item #

**Requested Meeting Date:** October 23, 2018

**Title of Item:** Continue as Fiscal Agent for Aitkin County Broadband Community

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	<b>Action Requested:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing*
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<b>Submitted by:</b> Ross Wagner	<b>Department:</b> Economic Development & Forest Ind
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<b>Presenter (Name and Title):</b> Ross Wagner, Economic Development & Forest Industry Coordinator	<b>Estimated Time Needed:</b> 10 Minutes
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**Summary of Issue:**  
 IN 2017 and 2018 Aitkin County was the fiscal agent for the Aitkin County Broadband Community grants from the Blandin Foundation. These were the grants that went to organizations such as Aitkin Public Schools for portable WiFi units for school busses, the Community Interactive Centers in McGregor, Hill City and Aitkin, Wifi in Palisade and others. All told, these projects totaled \$101,874.09, IRBBC grants of \$76,845.09 were distributed with local matches of \$25,029.00.

In an effort to keep the momentum and efforts on broadband moving forward, the communities that make up the Iron Range Blandin Broadband Communities have been offered an additional \$50,000.00 in grants for community broadband projects. These funds are to be used for broadband access, education and utilization as opposed to putting fiber in the ground. So I anticipate projects being submitted that are similar to those that were funded during the "first go around" of this project.

The process for the community grants would be very similar to last time. A Community Listening Session will be held, scheduled for December 4th, to gather input and ideas from the community on possible projects and community needs. From those ideas and suggestions various organizations then submit an application for funding. A steering committee of community members is set up to review and recommend projects to be funded with a final approval from the County Board.

**Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:**

**Recommended Action/Motion:**  
 Continue as Fiscal Agent for the Aitkin County Iron Range Blandin Foundation Broadband Community Grants

**Financial Impact:**  
 Is there a cost associated with this request?  Yes  No  
 What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$  
 Is this budgeted?  Yes  No Please Explain: