

8D.3 Iowa telecommunications and technology commission members duties.

1. *Commission established.* A telecommunications and technology commission is established with the sole authority to supervise the management, development, and operation of the network and ensure that all components of the network are technically compatible. The management, development, and operation of the network shall not be subject to the jurisdiction or control of any other state agency. However, the commission is subject to the general operations practices and procedures which are generally applicable to other state agencies.

The commission shall ensure that the network operates in an efficient and responsible manner consistent with the provisions of this chapter for the purpose of providing the best economic service attainable to the network users consistent with the state's financial capacity. The commission shall ensure that educational users and the use, design, and implementation for educational applications be given the highest priority concerning use of the network. The commission shall provide for the centralized, coordinated use and control of the network.

2. *Members.* The commission is composed of five members appointed by the governor and subject to confirmation by the senate. Members of the commission shall not serve in any manner or be employed by an authorized user of the network or by an entity seeking to do or doing business with the network. The governor shall appoint a member as the chairperson of the commission from the five members appointed by the governor, subject to confirmation by the senate. Members of the commission shall serve six-year staggered terms as designated by the governor and appointments to the commission are subject to the requirements of sections 69.16, 69.16A, and 69.19. Vacancies shall be filled by the governor for the duration of the unexpired term. The salary of the members of the commission shall be twelve thousand dollars per year, except that the salary of the chairperson shall be seventeen thousand dollars per year. Members of the commission shall also be reimbursed for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of duties as members. Meetings of the commission shall be held at the call of the chairperson of the commission. In addition to the members appointed by the governor, the auditor of state or the auditor's designee shall serve as a nonvoting, ex officio member of the commission.

The benefits and salary paid to the members of the commission shall be adjusted annually equal to the average of the annual pay adjustments, expense reimbursements, and related benefits provided under collective bargaining agreements negotiated pursuant to chapter 20.

3. *Duties.* The commission shall do all of the following:

a. Enter into agreements pursuant to chapter 28E as necessary and appropriate for the purposes of the commission. However, the commission shall not enter into an agreement with an unauthorized user or any other person pursuant to chapter 28E for the purpose of providing such user or person access to the network.

b. Adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A as deemed appropriate and necessary, and directly related to the implementation and administration of the duties of the commission. The commission, in consultation with the department of administrative services, shall also adopt and provide for standard communications procedures and policies relating to the use of the network which recognize, at a minimum, the need for reliable communications services.

c. Establish an appeal process for review by the commission of a scheduling conflict decision, including a scheduling conflict involving an educational user, or the establishment of a fee associated with the network upon the request of a person affected by such decision or fee. A determination made by the commission pursuant to this paragraph shall be final.

d. Review and approve for adoption, rules as proposed and submitted by an authorized user group necessary for the authorized user group's access and use of the network. The commission may refuse to approve and adopt a proposed rule, and upon such refusal, shall return the proposed rule to the respective authorized user

group proposing the rule with a statement indicating the commission's reason for refusing to approve and adopt the rule.

e. (1) Develop and issue for response all requests for proposals for any construction, installation, repair, maintenance, or equipment and parts necessary for the network. In preparing the request for proposals, the commission shall do all of the following:

(a) Review existing requests for proposals related to the network.

(b) Consider and evaluate all competing technologies which could be used in any construction, installation, repair, or maintenance project.

(c) Allow flexibility for proposals to be submitted in response to a request for proposals issued by the commission such that any qualified provider may submit a bid on a site-by-site basis, or on a merged area or defined geographic area basis, or both, and by permitting proposals to be submitted for use of competing or alternative technologies in each defined area.

(d) Ensure that rural communities have access to comparable services to the services provided in urban areas resulting from any plans to construct, install, repair, or maintain any part of the network.

(2) In determining which proposal to recommend to the general assembly to accept, consider what is in the long-term best interests of the citizens of the state and the network, and utilize, if possible, the provision of services with existing service providers consistent with those best interests. In determining what is in the long-term best interests of the citizens of the state and the network, the commission, at a minimum, shall consider the cost to taxpayers of the state.

(3) Deliver a written report and all proposals submitted in response to the request for proposals for Part III to the general assembly no later than January 1, 1995. The commission shall not enter into any agreement related to such proposals without prior authorization by a constitutional majority of each house of the general assembly and approval by the governor.

f. Include in the commission's annual report related to the network the actual income and expenses for the network for the preceding fiscal year and estimates for income and expenses for the network for the two-year fiscal period that includes the fiscal year during which the report is submitted. The report shall include the amount of any general fund appropriations to be requested, any recommendations of the commission related to changes in the system, and other items as deemed appropriate by the commission.

g. Review existing maintenance contracts and past contracts to determine vendor capability to perform the obligations under such contracts. The commission shall report to the general assembly prior to January 1 of each year as to the performance of all vendors under each contract and shall make recommendations concerning continued funding for the contracts.

h. Pursue available opportunities to cooperate and coordinate with the federal government for the use and potential expansion of the network and for the financing of any such expansion.

i. Evaluate existing and projected rates for use of the system and ensure that rates are sufficient to pay for the operation of the system excluding the cost of construction and lease costs for Parts I, II, and III. The commission shall establish all hourly rates to be charged to all authorized users for the use of the network and shall consider all costs of the network in establishing the rates. A fee established by the commission to be charged to a hospital licensed pursuant to chapter 135B, a physician clinic, or the federal government shall be at an appropriate rate so that, at a minimum, there is no state subsidy related to the costs of the connection or use of the network related to such user.

j. Make recommendations to the general assembly, as deemed appropriate by the commission, concerning the operation of the network.

k. Provide necessary telecommunications cabling to provide state communications.

94 Acts, ch 1184, §5; 95 Acts, ch 210, §1; 96 Acts, ch 1200, §1; 99 Acts, ch 207, § 8; 2000 Acts, ch 1141, §12, 19; 2003 Acts, ch 145, §286; 2005 Acts, ch 178, §39; 2006 Acts, ch 1126, §1

Footnotes

Confirmation, see §2.32