Oconee broadband open for business

BY CARLOS GALARZA-VEVE
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — Oconee County gave the green light this week to six Internet service providers (ISPs) to begin offering services through its 252-mile broadband network.

The terms between the county and the ISPs were not disclosed in a news release put out Monday by county administrator Scott Moulder's office. Oconee now has contracts with seven providers on its network. A year ago, Oconee announced its first broadband deal with DukeNet Communications, a former Duke Energy-owned company that was acquired earlier this year by Time Warner Cable. According to zacks.com, Time Warner Cable paid $600 million in cash for DukeNet.

Moulder told The Journal this week that the county's contract with DukeNet is not affected by the Time Warner Cable deal.

Joining DukeNet on Oconee's fiber-optic trunk line are Family Cable Vision, M2P Net, Technology Solutions, Net Drs., Golden Corner Internet Services and OneTone Telecom, Inc.

Scott Loggins, president of OneTone Telecom, said Monday the company has been working with the county for more than a year.

"Personally, I know there is a lot of demand for the types of services we will be offering," Loggins said.

OneTone Telecom, at 100 Century Plaza Drive in Seneca, has been doing business locally since 1996, according to its website. The website — www.1tone.net — also provides information about Oconee County broadband.

"OneTone Telecom, Inc., has spent the last several years positioning itself to become a last-mile telecommunications provider in Oconee County ... We will be providing broadband services to the residents and businesses of Oconee County via the new fiber network known as Oconee FOCUS," the website states.

Another Seneca-based ISP in Oconee's fold is Technology Solutions. The company's principal, Richard Ellison, was on the ground floor of the Oconee FOCUS project as a consultant when the county received a $9.6 million federal grant in the summer of 2010 to establish a broadband backbone of fiber optic.

The total cost of the FOCUS project is $14.3 million and includes $4.7 million in local matching funds, according to information provided by the county to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

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To contact service providers:

For quotes and service areas from Internet service providers approved to operate on Oconee County's broadband network, contact:

- FamilyView Cablevision — (864) 356-9789
- M2P Net — (805) 459-4771
- Technology Solutions — (864) 882-9194
- Net Drs. — (864) 506-3076
- Golden Corner Internet Services — (864) 723-2392
- OneTone Telecom, Inc. — (864) 985-1735

Source: Oconee County government