



County of Augusta
Internet Initiative (Broadband Committee)
PO Box 590
Verona, VA 24482

Thursday, June 25, 2020 7:00 pm
In Person and Via Electronic Means Due to COVID-19

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mr. Henderson, Pastures District
Mr. Journell, Beverly Manor District
Ms. Thornton, North River District
Ms. Carter, Board of Supervisors Liaison
Mr. Morelli, Board of Supervisors Liaison
Ms. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator

ABSENT: Mr. Lawhorne, Riverheads District
Mr. McHaffa, South River District
Mr. Craig, Wayne District
Mr. Powell, Middle River District
Ms. Susie Miller, Sub-Committee

VIRGINIA: At the regular meeting of the Augusta County Internet Initiative (Broadband Committee) held on Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 7:00pm via electronic means. The Government Center was open to the public on the date of the meeting but some attendees participated through electronic means due to COVID-19.

Call to Order

Meeting started at 7:00pm. A quorum was not present.

Adoption of the Minutes

Minutes from the January 23, 2020, February 27, 2020, and May 28, 2020 meeting were not approved due to the lack of a quorum.

Comments by the Public

Bill Bushman noted frustration with providers who expand for larger customers but don't continue expansion for other customers in the rural area.

Special Presentations

None

Matters to be Presented by Sub-Committees

None

Matters to be Presented by Staff

Ms. Whetzel reviewed the final VATI 2021 grant guidelines. The County issued an RFI to see proposals from local providers to partner on the grant. The RFI is due July 10, 2020 at 11 am, with a notice due to DHCD by July 13 and applications due August 17. One inquiry was received from Commscope.

Ms. Whetzel shared that the Augusta County Public Schools were partnering with Governor's Schools and Secure Futures on a USDA grant for STEM learning with an equipment component. Information

regarding broadband service in the County was provided to the grant writing group for the application. Investment in broadband infrastructure or increasing bandwidth was not allowable under the grant.

Ms. Whetzel updated the Committee on additional guidance received from the Department of Treasury regarding CARES funding, which stated that long term projects were not allowable.

Ms. Whetzel noted that Comcast extended their Internet Essentials program for students by 60 days.

Old Business

None

New Business

The Committee had previous conversations regarding how to bring the need for internet to a higher priority at the local level. Further discussion resulted in drafting a report to Board of Supervisors with a deadline of September 1, 2020. The following to-do list was established: Review grants available for broadband, involve State public officials, update maps of unserved areas, marketing tool (design flyer). Goal is to better define the need vs. filling the need.

Adjournment

The next meeting will be held July 23, 2020 at 7 pm in a format to be determined. With no further discussion by the committee, the meeting adjourned.