



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

Thursday, February 24, 2022 7:00 pm

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mr. Lawhorne, Chairman, Riverheads District
Mr. Powell, Middle River District
Ms. Thornton, North River District
Mr. Kirby, Wayne District
Mr. Carter, South River District
Ms. Carter, Board of Supervisors Liaison (phone)
Ms. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator

ABSENT: Mr. Henderson, Vice-Chairman, Pastures District
Vacant, Beverly Manor District
Ms. Kiracofe, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction & Technology

VIRGINIA: At the regular meeting of the Augusta County Internet Initiative (Broadband Committee) held on Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 7:00 pm in person.

Call to Order

Meeting started at 7:00pm. A quorum was present.

Adoption of the Minutes

Minutes of the October 28, 2021 meeting were approved.

Comments by the Public

Several members of the public attended and expressed interest in the grant awarded projects.

Special Presentations

None

Matters to be Presented by Sub-Committees

The Committee discussed the list of talking points provided by Mr. Henderson. 1) An update on the VATI2022 grant (All Points) is under matters from staff. SVEC and Dominion Energy are building backbone for their secure networks. Mr. Powell noted that all info provided for the contract be provided to the Committee. He suggested the Board of Supervisors prepare a statement regarding the project. The Committee expressed frustration with how the Board of Supervisors handled the VATI2022 grant process. Mr. Carter suggested that the concerns be shared at a Board meeting and Ms. Whetzel suggested that the Committee members contact their respective Board of Supervisor member. 2) Nelson County will be providing gigabyte service by the Central Virginia Electric Cooperative providing economic development opportunities to residents. 3) Personal example: MGW has provided service to neighbors to the east and west. Mr. Henderson has unsuccessfully tried to ascertain how to get a line run on existing telephone poles across an open field to his house. Providers need an easement to be on these poles if they are owned by an electric or telecommunications company. 4) The Committee discussed the role of the Broadband Committee in the future. Monitoring of the grant and providing GIS information on service areas were noted.

Matters to be Presented by Staff

Ms. Whetzel provided an update on the VATI 2021 grant that is under construction by MGW/Lingo Networks. The McDowell area construction progress was affected by rock. Easements are being obtained in the Morris Mill area. There was a river crossing in the Deerfield project area. There were delays due to snow in January, COVID and supply chain issues for getting equipment fixed. The provider is doing rolling marketing as the project progresses. Below is a summary of work to date. Please note that milestones are set on two month increments, so therefore the passings will be updated every other month.

| Project Area | Total Passings | Passings to Date 12/31 |
|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| McDowell | 235 | 81 |
| Morris Mill | 288 | 64 |
| Deerfield | 508 | 40 |
| Middlebrook | 142 | |
| Total | 1173 | 185 |
| % Completed | | 16% |

Total Project Budget: \$1,814,876

Spent to Date \$287,076

Grant to Date \$200,953

Locality Funds to Date \$34,449

Provider Funds to Date \$51,673

Ms. Whetzel reviewed the VATI 2022 Contract Negotiation Record (CNR) provided by Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission (NSVRC) for the regional grant with All Points, Dominion Energy and Shenandoah Valley Electric. This is a list of items needed for DHCD to finalize an agreement for the project. Ms. Whetzel reviewed a comparison to the VATI 2021 CNR and timeline for completion. New items include compliance with federal funding requirements, preparing a communications plan, RDOF outcomes and preparation of a fiscal agent agreement between NSVRC and localities. The deadline to return the required documents to DHCD is May 5, 2022. A flowchart of funding and reporting was provided.

The CARES Project reporting for New Hope Telephone Coop and MGW Networks was filed and accepted by DHCD.

Matters to be Presented by the Committee

None

Old Business

A copy of the 2022 meeting schedule was distributed.

New Business

The Committee suggested a GIS layer that show the internet service provider for each household in the County.

Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be March 24, 2022 at 7pm in a room to be determined. With no further discussion by the committee, the meeting adjourned.