



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

Tuesday, August 24, 2021 7:00 pm

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mr. Lawhorne, Chairman, Riverheads District
Mr. Henderson, Vice-Chairman, Pastures District
Mr. Powell, Middle River District
Ms. Thornton, North River District
Mr. Kirby, Wayne District
Ms. Carter, Board of Supervisors Liaison
Ms. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator

ABSENT: Mr. Journell, Beverly Manor District
Mr. Carter, South River District
Ms. Kiracofe, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction & Technology

VIRGINIA: At the regular meeting of the Augusta County Internet Initiative (Broadband Committee) held on Tuesday, August 24, 2021 at 7:00 pm in person. The Government Center was open to the public on the date of the meeting. Members of the Committee may participate in a meeting through electronic communication means in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3708.2.

Call to Order

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

Adoption of the Minutes

Minutes of the June 24, 2021 and July 22, 2021 meetings were approved.

Comments by the Public

Mr. Barley discussed the South River Association for Broadband survey efforts and the need for them to get input from Comcast on potential expansion, as they are in the area.

Ms. Arehart noted that the Sangers Lane area of the County has limited to no access. She shared a petition with Mr. Kirby, Wayne District rep.

Special Presentations

None

Matters to be Presented by Sub-Committees

None

Matters to be Presented by Staff

Ms. Whetzel noted that she made a presentation to the Voices of Business Committee at the Greater Augusta Chamber of Commerce. A copy of the presentation is included in the agenda packet for reference.

Matters to be Presented by the Committee

The Board of Supervisors was presented with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a partnership with Dominion Energy, Shenandoah Valley Electric (SVEC) and All Points Broadband to provide broadband to SVEC customers. MOU included two Phases: Phase I was gathering info to present to localities in order to proceed to Phase II for grant applications. Dominion Energy and SVEC will provide fiber to their assets and All Points Broadband will provide last mile fiber utilizing the middle mile fiber. The issue with the MOU is that it includes a non-compete clause, which turns other providers away from government funds and the County can't work with those providers on projects as long as it is a party to the MOU. The Committee discussed the MOU at length and will provide a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the MOU. Mr. Powell motioned and Ms. Thornton seconded: The Committee recommends the Board vote no to proceed to Phase II of the MOU. Further, the Committee would like to ask that prior to voting on any future broadband related matter and binding the county in a legal agreement, the Board seek a recommendation from the Committee. Members will attend the Board meeting tomorrow evening to express their concerns.

Old Business

None

New Business

Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be September 23, 2021 at 7pm in the Smith West Room. With no further discussion by the committee, the meeting adjourned.