



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

Thursday, January 26, 2023 7:00 pm

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mr. Lawhorne, Chairman, Riverheads District
Ms. Thornton, North River District
Mr. Kirby, Wayne District
Ms. Melton, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction & Technology
Ms. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator

ABSENT: Mr. Powell, Middle River District
Mr. Miller, Beverly Manor District
Mr. Henderson, Vice-Chairman, Pastures District
Vacant, South River District

VIRGINIA: At the regular meeting of the Augusta County Internet Initiative (Broadband Committee) held on Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 7:00 pm in person.

Call to Order

Meeting started at 7:00pm.

Adoption of the Minutes

Minutes of the October 27, 2022 meeting were not approved due to lack of a quorum.

Comments by the Public

None

Special Presentations

None

Matters to be Presented by Sub-Committees

None

Matters to be Presented by Staff

Ms. Whetzel provided an update on the VATI 2021 grant that is under construction by MGW/Lingo Networks. Work continues in all four project areas:

- **Middlebrook:** Underground section is about 90% complete. Cables were spliced where construction was complete which resulted in fiber being available to 18 new locations.
- **Morris Mill:** Provider is reviewing revised SVEC pole attachment permit and making final adjustments to design in order to send back for approval, splitting permit into multiple permits based upon whether make ready work is needed or not to allow provider to begin construction in portions of the project area. Additional DOM permits submitted and received and those areas are nearing construction. VDOT permit received for community of 30-35 homes where no OH utilities exist and all fiber will be UG. Additional Dominion permits submitted in this project area to facilitate last-mile fiber deployments. Make ready estimate or timeframe on construction will be determined when permits are received.

- **Deerfield:** Construction of service taps and drops continue on several side roads in the immediate area of the main line construction.
- **McDowell:** Main line construction and long service taps occurred north and south of the intersection of Bullpasture River Rd and Davis Run Rd.

DHCD has added Quality Assurance and Inspection Report requirements for VATI2021. Included in your packet is a report prepared by the County for quarterly visit on 12/14/22.

A six month extension was approved by DHCD, with the new deadline of June 30, 2023..

DHCD completed a desk audit in January.

Forty -eight percent (48%) of the milestones have been completed to date.

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 12/31/22 |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| McDowell | 235 | 415 MGW Projects |
| Deerfield | 508 | |
| Morris Mill | 288 | 158 Lingo Projects |
| Middlebrook | 142 | |
| Total | 1173 | 573 |
| % Completed | | 49% |
| Subscribers to date | 149 | |

Total Project Budget: \$1,814,876

Spent to Date \$893,801

Grant to Date \$625,661

Locality Funds to Date \$107,256

Provider Funds to Date \$160,884

Ms. Whetzel updated the Committee on the status of the VATI2022 project. Low Level Design and materials procurement is underway. The Timmons Group has been added as lead vendor for pole fielding and make-ready engineering to increase productivity and improve Quality Assurance and Quality Control. Please refer all inquiries to APBfiber.com. Augusta County is slated for make ready work (pole upgrades) beginning in quarter two of 2023. No funds expended to date from State or Local Match.

Ms. Whetzel noted that she has received several inquiries about the BARC project. The County is not directly involved in the project, but Ms. Whetzel will reach out to get more information as to the status of completion.

Ms. Whetzel noted that DHCD sent out an e-mail regarding the updated FCC maps, but Augusta did not get one. Upon review of the locality challenge process, the County cannot respond in a bulk challenge. The parameters of what is considered "unserved" in this process is hard to define. For example, there are areas that have come to light as not being served and not included in a VATI grant. However, these locations are shown as served as Starlink may be available (after households apply and wait). Not knowing the parameters, staff did not submit a challenge for this area as it could be served, even though it is not a wireline service, which is required under our VATI2022 grant. DHCD did not require that localities respond and had e-mailed the localities that had the highest discrepancies under the new reporting model.

Ms. Whetzel met with the Director of CAPSAW to provide background for a grant that CAPSAW was to submit related to monitoring health after release from the hospital.

Matters to be Presented by the Committee

The Committee discussed their continuation. Consensus was to continue for now as there may be more activity that drives questions as the large projects continue.

Old Business

None

New Business

Mr. Henderson previously submitted his resignation from the Committee.

Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be April 27, 2023. With no further discussion by the committee, the meeting adjourned.