

**LOUISA COUNTY BROADBAND AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LOUISA COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
1 WOOLFOLK AVENUE
LOUISA, VIRGINIA
January 3, 2018 7:00 P.M.**

Present: Melvin Burruss (arrived at 7:12 pm), Steve Duren, Bernie Hill, and Mary Johnson

Absent: Mark Luttner, Brian Sullivan, Garth Wermter, and Fitzgerald Barnes

Others Present: Bob Babyok, Green Springs District Supervisor; Sandra Robinson, Louisa County Attorney and Bob Hardy, Louisa County Information Technology Director

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Johnson called the January 3, 2018, regular meeting of the Broadband Authority (BBA) Board of Directors to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Hill led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda. A quorum was not met in order to officially adopt the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

December 6, 2017- Regular Meeting

A quorum was not met in order to officially adopt the December 6, 2017, minutes, however, a correction on page eight under “Final Comments” was noted. The amended minutes would be reviewed and approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting on February 7, 2018.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Tyler Adams, Mineral District, stated that he was concerned that there was a lack of communication between the LCBA and the Louisa County Board of Supervisors regarding the broadband project and that some of the Louisa County Board members were not in complete understanding regarding what they were voting on. He stated that during the presentation to the Louisa County Board of Supervisors, the LCBA project consultant was unable to answer some questions. Mr. Adams expressed his concern as a taxpayer, that the County was approving a plan and project without fully understanding the project itself.

Ms. Johnson thanks Mr. Adams for his comments and his time.

Mr. Tim Lane, Mountain Road District, stated that he had created a Facebook page called the “Louisa Citizens for Internet Service”. He stated that currently, the page had about 160 followers. He stated that the goal was to get all Louisa County residents on the same page regarding the broadband project. He noted that the disconnect seemed to be between what was actually happening with the LCBA and what they were actually looking to provide to Louisa County. He stated that he liked to attend the LCBA meetings when he could in order to inform citizens. Ms. Johnson thanked him and stated that the Authority welcomed any assistance regarding getting information out to the public regarding the project.

Ms. Lee Mussleman, Cuckoo District, stated that she found Mr. Lane’s Facebook page and had since then, tried to find out more information regarding the LCBA’s project. She stated that the lack of internet in Louisa County had hindered her children’s ability to get on the internet and complete the LCPS school projects in a timely manner. She stated that many of her friends, who were parents of students, were also disgruntled about the state of internet in Louisa County. She stated that she had tried to locate the minutes from the December 2017 meeting regarding the 4-3 vote to approve the project but could not find them. She stated that it seemed that there was a lot of emphasis in the western end of the County and that there was a lack of interest in the eastern portion of the County.

Ms. Johnson thanked those who spoke and stated that it was helpful to the Authority to hear public concerns.

Mr. Hardy made a comment about the minutes in regard to Ms. Mussleman’s comment and stated that minutes were not posted on the website until they were officially approved by the governing board. He stated that this procedure was the case for the LCBA as well as the Louisa County Board of Supervisors. He stated that once the minutes were approved, they were posted in their approved form on the Louisa County website.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion- Propagation Map

Mr. Hill commented on the confusion regarding the propagation maps that had existed regarding the color codes. He advised that it would be more useful to indicate the location of the towers with the realization that the coverage was dependent upon the internet service providers that located on each of the towers and the propagation network that they built around those towers. He stated that if the ISP did not build out the network to the individual homes through wireless towers, the Authority could not truly determine in advance what the coverage would be. He stated that perhaps they should abandon the color coded maps since the Authority would not be broadcasting through the towers but rather the ISPs.

Mr. Bussing stated that they had also noticed that there had been confusion regarding the propagation maps. He stated that WideOpen Networks would send out new formats to the Authority and would continue the discussion at an upcoming meeting. He stated that they could still use the same tools, and hopefully make it better and easier to understand.

Mr. Hardy stated that someone at the December 2017 meeting had made the comment that the larger area could be served better with a community pole but in actuality, all of that area would be served by LTE if they used that technology for the ISP. If they used a newer technology, the difference in the colors were those that had signals lower than 55 decibels and anything less than -75 decibels. He stated that those coverage areas were technically areas that could be served by an ISP on that tower if they used LTE communication (many ISPs were switching to do that).

Mr. Hill stated that the term “coverage area” inadvertently misled people to believe that they could automatically receive coverage broadband. He stated that they needed to continually make that clarification that it would be provided by the ISP.

Mr. Burruss suggested that they add a note to the maps that labeled what the coverages were truly explaining. Mr. Hardy stated that the legend had been on the maps. Mr. Burruss stated that the legend should be more distinct.

Ms. Johnson stated that this discussion item would be added to the February 7th agenda and agreed that somehow they had to convey a certain level of expectation from the Authority’s work. She stated that it was a good point that communication with the public had not been very effective and that the Authority needed a better vehicle in order to do that. She stated that hopefully with Mr. Lane’s help and coverage from the press, the Authority could communicate the information effectively to the public.

Mr. Hill inquired as to whether it was not true that through the propagation networks, they could cover any area of the County.

Mr. Bussing stated that depending on what equipment was used, they might have to add a neighborhood pole, but that the point of the project was to lower the barrier to entry to the service providers and spur them to continue building into the community.

Mr. Hill stated that, for clarification, they could reach any area of the County.

Ms. Johnson stated that it was fairly broad-reaching if the monopolies that were allowed under recent changes to the Louisa County Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Duren stated that it was theoretically possible with those towers, to have coverage provided to 90-95% of Louisa County.

Ms. Johnson allowed Mr. Tyler Adams to address the Authority. He referenced Mr. Wermter’s comments during the LCBA presentation to the Louisa County Board of Supervisors’ meeting in December. He stated that Mr. Wermter had commented that he did not want to make assumptions about what the private entities or cooperatives would do. Mr. Adams stated that he wanted to point out that the current discussion that the Authority was having was completely supposing that the WISPs would build towers to reach every corner of Louisa County. He stated that they were completely relying on someone else to build the secondary towers.

Ms. Johnson stated that it was a good point and that this would come up further under discussion.

Mr. Hardy clarified that Mr. Hill's point was that in theory, every parcel in Louisa County could be covered. He stated that this did not mean that a private entity would ever do that.

Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Bussing to create a new format for the propagation maps and asked that he send them out well in advance of the February 7th meeting so that the Authority would have time to review the formats.

Mr. Burruss inquired as to how many households could potentially be serviced and asked Mr. Bussing if this was something that could be displayed on a propagation map.

Mr. Bussing believed that this was something that could be provided via the software. He stated that they would also try to combine the households and whatever they published for the coverage areas.

Discussion- Wireless Broadband Plan

Ms. Johnson stated that she wanted to discuss where they were on the ISP engagement process.

Mr. Bussing stated that he had asked for meetings with each of the WISPs they had identified. He stated that he was scheduling meetings and would be meeting with them sometime in January 2018. He stated that once he received availability from the WISPs, he would send the Authority a notification as it would be imperative that a member of the Authority attend those meetings as well.

Ms. Johnson asked that Mr. Bussing give the Authority as much advance notice as possible and reminded him that he also had a list of other outside WISPs to reach out to. She asked that Mr. Bussing have results for commitments to locate on one or more towers at the next meeting.

Mr. Hill asked what form this commitment was anticipated to be in. Mr. Bussing stated that it would be in written form.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Authority had at one time talked about an incentive that for one ISP to guarantee that they would go on all the towers, the Authority would provide them with the most advantageous position on those towers. Ms. Johnson stated that she would really like to see some results to talk about at the February meeting. She stated that the ISP engagement discussion would be continued in February.

She stated that with the fiber going to the school, the Authority needed to discuss a fiber tie-in management plan and who would manage it. She stated that this was more of a responsibility of the Board of Supervisors, although it still fell in the charter of helping to provide citizens with internet service. Ms. Johnson stated that it was important to start the conversation regarding whether the LCBA was willing or should manage the fiber tie-in.

Mr. Hardy gave a brief summary of the project description at LCPS. He stated that he assumed that the Louisa County Board of Supervisors would assign the management to the Authority but that it had not been discussed. He stated that before it was discussed, the Authority should

decide whether they wanted to take on the responsibility. He stated that there were three components of internet service and were as follows:

1. Internet connection to the worldwide web
2. Transmit connection to tower or fiber
3. Transmit connection to household or via fiber to the household

He stated that the ISPs were going to do some of that but that the Authority was counting on some of the transmission between the towers. The concept of doing the nine or ten towers was to have one monthly fee and that they would get the signal to all nine or ten towers so that they would not have to put up backhaul radios or pay for fiber to each of the nine or ten towers. He stated that the school fiber plan was now at a much reduced cost (\$136,000 rather than the \$5-6 million as previously anticipated). He stated that the long-range plan that still needed to be decided upon was what to do with the fiber.

Ms. Johnson stated that the fiber was a Capital Improvement Plan Project.

Mr. Hardy stated that it was a proposed CIP project for FY2019.

Mr. Burruss asked Mr. Bussing if they should upgrade to coincide with what LCPS was doing, so that they would have a more comprehensive plan. He asked if Mr. Bussing had spoken with Mr. Outten at LCPS.

Mr. Bussing stated that they had not spoken since LCPS had received the E-Rate funding.

Mr. Burruss stated that he thought that would be a priority and that it should be part of the marketing plan when talking with the ISPs not only for the towers but also for the fiber.

Mr. Hardy stated that the school district was very much in favor of having wireless towers on school property because it helped them serve students and their families.

Mr. Bussing asked what operational requirements they would have for the Authority. Mr. Hardy stated that he was currently not sure.

Mr. Bussing stated that he would reach out to Mr. Hardy, that way if the Authority took on the operations of the fiber, they would know the operational implications.

Ms. Johnson stated that an action item regarding the management of the fiber tie-in network would also be discussed at the February 7th meeting.

Ms. Johnson stated that after the Authority decided what they wanted to, they would then take it to the Board of Supervisors to see if it was something that the Board even wanted the Authority to manage.

On the motion of Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Duren, which carried by a vote of 4-0, the Authority agreed that they were interested and willing to operate and maintain the fiber tie-in network and requested that the Board of Supervisors assign the management of the fiber tie-in with the school

project to the LCBA.

Mr. Hardy stated that he would put together the resolution request to the Board of Supervisors.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Discussion- Construction Update

Mr. Bussing stated that since the previous meeting, they had gone to the Board of Supervisors and had executed the contract with Mountain Valley. After the contract was executed, Mountain Valley had begun construction activities at Moss Nuckols Elementary School. He stated that he had a meeting with Mountain Valley on January 9th or 10th to discuss additional details on the project. He stated that he had talked with them some about their timeline and updates to the project timeline. He stated that they were ready to move forward with the project.

The Authority reviewed the project timeline that Mr. Bussing provided.

Mr. Bussing stated that there were going to be quite a few meetings with the contractor and advised that it might be good to have a list of members on the Authority that would be readily available to meet when these meetings occurred. Ms. Johnson appointed Mr. Duren as one member to attend. She asked Mr. Bussing to send the list of meeting dates to the Authority as soon as possible, that way another member of the Authority would be able to attend the meetings if Mr. Duren was unavailable. Mr. Hardy would also be available for those meetings.

Mr. Bussing stated that in regard to the fast-track sites, Mountain Valley expected to have all of the site work done in early March, construction complete in late March, and a couple of things after construction that would go into April. He stated that this timeline projection was all based on favorable weather. He stated that he would be going through the timeline frequently and sending it out to the Authority via email.

Discussion- Colocation

Ms. Johnson stated that the National Tower Corporation had some planned cell phone towers in close proximity to where the Authority was planning to construct a tower. The company had expressed interest in inviting the Authority to collocate on their tower. She said that they did not have the terms of that opportunity yet. She asked Mr. Hardy if this was a meeting that needed to be set up.

Mr. Hardy stated that they had initially met with the Louisa County Community Development Department, and that he had also been present for the meeting. The National Tower Corporation had a signed ground lease agreement for property within about a half mile of the Twin Oaks Community and had offered that the County put up a broadband tower and the corporation would put up a cell tower that would serve broadband and provide cell service to an area that currently did not have good cell phone coverage. Mr. Hardy stated that the corporation had proposed some sort of arrangement that would cost the County less than the \$100,000 for the tower and in return would get free use of that tower for the County forever and free use of that tower for an

ISP. Mr. Hardy stated that Mr. Bussing had instead suggested that the County retain the use of that free space and instead charge the ISP the same thing they were charging on the other towers. He stated that the concept was that it would be a public-private project.

Mr. Duren stated that the corporation was asking for money for maintenance of the tower for a period of five (5) years. He stated that if the County gave them the money up front in a one time fee, the space would always be there for the County.

Ms. Johnson inquired as to where the other cell phone tower locations were proposed to be.

Mr. Hardy stated that if the LCBA wanted to consider the proposition, then they would enter into the agreement with National Tower, help them build a tower, and accomplish the County's same needs. He stated that the second ISP on that tower would have to pay the same rates that all the other ISPs currently paid to locate on towers, and the fee would be up to the National Tower Corporation. He stated that the company researched areas where they thought they could attract more than one cell carrier. He stated that in a lot of ways, the proposal was a win-win and could be expanded into other areas of the County.

Ms. Johnson stated that she would love to see more cell phone coverage in the lower portion of the County and would love to see more expansion.

Mr. Hill asked if they wanted to take action at the present meeting.

Ms. Johnson stated that it was just a consensus of the Authority regarding whether they would like to proceed on the proposal, but that as soon as additional details were received, they could take action. She stated that personally, she would love to collaborate with the company.

Mr. Duren stated that essentially the Authority could be looking at initial costs of half of what they had been talking about and in the future no maintenance.

Mr. Burruss inquired how they would forward. Mr. Hardy stated that he and Mr. Duren would get in touch with the corporation regarding the next steps.

Ms. Johnson stated that the general consensus of the Authority was to proceed on with the proposal.

Mr. Burruss asked that Mr. Bussing be invited to upcoming meetings with the corporation so that there would be an integrative process.

Mr. Hill requested that Mr. Massie provide a timeline.

Mr. Bussing stated that he did not have an update on the RFP for the point-to-point equipment. He stated that he was finishing a draft and would have it ready for the Authority at the next meeting.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the details of the RFP.

Mr. Burruss asked that Mr. Bussing add upcoming dates to his status report. Mr. Bussing agreed that he would add this to his status reports.

Ms. Johnson stated that she was unsure what the status was regarding the location change to the Twin Oaks Community. Mr. Bussing stated that he had an upcoming meeting scheduled with Twin Oaks in order to discuss this further and that he would ask for updates on the other locations.

Ms. Johnson stated that this item along with the Trevilians Elementary School, Cross County Road site and Buckner-Bumpass Park site would be added to the February 7th agenda.

Mr. Bussing requested that a meeting regarding the two public safety towers be held. Ms. Johnson stated that the Authority would facilitate that meeting.

Mr. Bussing also suggested asking if they would have a use for lease equipment.

Mr. Burruss asked about the number of fast-track towers.

Mr. Bussing stated that there were three (3) approved in the last CUP process so they would be under construction within the same time frame.

Website Updates

Ms. Johnson stated that she had noticed that many sets of the LCBA minutes listed online were in draft form, and that they had since been updated to their approved forms.

She stated that she would begin to keep a Chairman's notebook and would leave it for Mr. Hardy in case any members wanted to review the information.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

CHAIRMAN/GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Johnson thanked the Authority for the work they put in as well as thanked the Board of Supervisors for approving the contact with Mountain Valley Tower for the construction of the three towers at the schools although it did not go as well at the meeting as she had hoped.

Mr. Burruss suggested holding a worksession in future situations before presenting to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Johnson concurred. She encouraged Authority members not to lose focus. She stated that there were opportunities available. She asked each of them as well as Mr. Bussing to be prepared to discuss these upcoming items in detail.

Mr. Hill inquired as to whether the Authority had to go into Closed Session to approve an RFP.

Ms. Johnson stated that if they were not negotiating terms of the RFP, then theoretically, there was no need to go into Closed Session.

The Authority decided to hold a worksession on January 17, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Burruss stated that with the three new towers going up, it might be beneficial to meet more than once a month to continually get updates. He suggested that the Authority try to meet on the third Wednesday for the next three months.

Ms. Johnson concurred.

CONSENT AGENDA

There was none.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

There were none.

CLOSED SESSION

There was none.

FINAL COMMENTS

There were none.

NEXT MEETING

The next Broadband Authority meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 17, 2018, at 7:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Duren, which carried by a vote of 4-0, the Board voted to adjourn the January 3, 2018, regular meeting at approximately 8:22 p.m.

BY ORDER OF:

MARY JOHNSON, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LOUISA COUNTY BROADBAND AUTHORITY