

**LOUISA COUNTY BROADBAND AUTHORITY
LOUISA COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
1 WOOLFOLK AVENUE
LOUISA, VIRGINIA
August 7, 2019 7:00 P.M.**

Present: Mary Johnson, Melvin Burruss, Ed Jarvis, Paul Bradbury, Timothy Layne, Jim Ogg, Bernie Hill, Duane Adams, Jeffrey Zivick

Absent: Fitzgerald Barnes

Others Present: Bob Hardy, Louisa County Information Technology Director, Angela Daniels, County Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Jarvis called the August 7, 2019, regular meeting of the Broadband Authority (BBA) Board of Directors to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Jarvis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

On the motion of Mr. Hill, seconded by Ms. Johnson, which carried by a vote of 7-0, the Authority voted to approve the August 7, 2019 agenda, as amended.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On the motion of Ms. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Hill, which carried by a vote of 6-0-1 with Mr. Zivick abstaining. The Authority voted to approve the July 17, 2019, regular meeting minutes as amended, with changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Jarvis stated he received an email from the FCC willing to look into companies providing internet services to rural areas.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Discussion -Trevilians Tower and Holly Grove Tower

Mr. Boswell with SCS, joined the LCBBA meeting remotely by phone. Mr. Boswell stated the fencing at Trevilians is now complete and the generator is scheduled to be commissioned on August 8th. He stated the Holly Grove tower site plans are still in the works, but they anticipate completion of next week. Mr. Boswell said they gave Mountain Valley the approval to proceed and order the tower, and the tower is expected to arrive November 5th. Mr. Boswell said after speaking with Mr. Hardy about the fast track towers, it appears SCS computers are having a difficult time connecting through the County's switches. Mr. Boswell stated there will be work done in the morning on the backhaul to assist the County in making the connection so SCS can start to use the backhaul.

Mr. Hardy provided a brief update on the switches connected to the Jouett, LCHS, Moss-Nuckols and Chopping Road towers. He noted there was a malfunction with the virtual land setup with SCS. He said they believe they know what the issue is and will be working on it tomorrow morning. He indicated that once the issue is resolved, they should be able to start serving Jouett and Moss Nuckols.

Mr. Jarvis asked if all the schools were connected to fiber.

Mr. Hardy stated all the schools are connected to fiber at this moment.

Mr. Ogg expressed his frustration with the lack of internet service after being promised it would be available by July 15th. He talked about the processes he has gone through and his concerns with SCS. He stated he is just one person with unanswered questions, and questioned how SCS would be able to handle the concerns of others.

Mr. Hardy said he fully expected SCS to be hooked up to the radios, however there has been a significant number of issues, including technical malfunctions that caused the loss of a tower.

Discussion -Additional Location-Twin Oaks area and Buckner- Bumpass area

Mr. Hardy stated the County is going to apply for a VATI grant for the tower at Yanceyville that NCT plans to build. He explained the grant will help with the construction of the tower and also allow SCS to install their equipment. He noted the County is already committed to a prepaid lease on the tower and these funds will help satisfy the amount needed to match the VATI grant.

Mr. Jarvis asked if this was going to be an expensive endeavor.

Mr. Hardy explained how the funds will be matched through the VATI grant.

Mr. Adams said when the original broadband plan was proposed, it was designed for ten towers at 1.09 million dollars. He added none of this was included for the co-locating on private towers.

Mr. Hardy stated the original plan was to build ten towers at an estimate of 1.09 million dollars each. He said an RFP was sent out and the County held back on the Yanceyville Tower since NCT was going to build a tower in that location. Mr. Hardy explained that Yanceyville was an option in the RFP and Mountain Valley provided a quote, but it wasn't part of the six hundred

and thirty thousand dollar contract that was awarded to them. Mr. Hardy said Buckner-Bumpass Park was included in that amount.

Mr. Adams asked if this tower at Yanceyville is going to be built by NCT.

Mr. Hardy said that NCT is going to build the tower at Yanceyville. He stated after the RFP was awarded, NCT said they were interested in building a tower at Buckner-Bumpass Park, but decided against that and chose to build at Yanceyville instead.

Mr. Adams asked if the County could still build a tower at Buckner-Bumpass Park since NCT is no longer going to construct a tower there.

Mr. Hardy said the reason the County chose not to build at Buckner-Bumpass Park is because Verizon plans to construct a tower 1.7 miles away.

Mr. Adams asked if he is accurate by saying the real reason the County chose not to build in that location is because the Authority ran out of funding.

Mr. Hardy said the reason they chose not to build at Buckner-Bumpass Park is because the Authority would've ended up paying \$110,000 - 120,000 for a tower less than 2 miles away from a Verizon tower. He said it would have been a waste of money given the proximity of the Verizon tower.

Mr. Adams asked if they could still build a tower in that location. He said he understands the original plan was for the Broadband Authority to have a tower in that area, but because a private company decided to also construct a tower, the Authority decided to place their finds into other projects throughout the County.

Mr. Hardy explained that with the cost of the towers, equipment and radios, the Authority has been left with less funding. He said the Authority was faced with the decision to either build a tower for \$130,000-\$150,000, or prepay a lease and pay half of that amount for NCT to build in Yanceyville. He said because of that, the Authority recommended that the Board of Supervisors authorize them to enter into a lease agreement with NCT, which the Board approved.

Mr. Adams noted that with increased costs, the Authority is limited on funds. He said four towers have been built and there is one tower remaining at Holly Grove. He asked if money has been taken out of the budget from the original amount that was appropriated by the Board.

Mr. Hardy said no money has been taken from the original budget.

Discussion – Systems Operations (Towers, Backhaul, and Fiber)

Mr. Hardy said fiber is still not connected from the fibers to the schools or connected to the County building operationally.

Mr. Jarvis asked if there was a timeframe on this.

Mr. Hardy said they should be finishing up shortly, and once the fiber is complete, they will start to lay fiber for the District Court, Betty Queen Center, and possibly the airport.

Discussion – Co-location of Louisa County EMS Radio Towers

Mr. Hardy said the towers are constructed and Motorola has schedule their climbing and connections days through August and should be finished by the first of September.

Mr. Jarvis asked if they have a master list of when they are climbing.

Mr. Hardy said they do not have a list, but Wide Open is working on coordinating that information.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the climbing of the Co-location Towers.

TREASURER’S REPORT /APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

Mr. Hardy said he does not have any updates since the last meeting, but would be happy to answer any questions. He provided an estimate on the remaining balance of funds.

Mr. Adams stated back in December the Board voted to approve a \$550,000 grant to CVAC for them to put their footprint in Louisa County. Mr. Adams asked if this money came out of the Broadband Authority’s budget.

Mr. Hardy replied that the funds did not come out of the Broadband’s budget. Mr. Hardy stated its tax abatement of what they will owe in the future, there was no cash paid.

Mr. Adams said for clarification there were no funds withdrawn from the Broaband’s budget to fund CVAC to run fiber in the County.

Mr. Hardy stated no funds were withdrawn from their budget.

Mr. Hardy explained how the estimate was done back in 2012-2013 and it was based on assumptions for the locations of the towers.

Mr. Adams asked if the reason there was no further recommendations on tower locations is because the budget has been depleted.

Mr. Hardy agreed with Mr. Adams statement, stating it was correct.

Mr. Hill said when he was pushing for Wide Open Networks to get stuff done back in December, he was told by Mr. Hardy that once the Board approves a project, it becomes a part of the Capital Improvement Plan and from that point on funds are administered by the County which gives Mr. Hardy the authority to issue a PO without having to come back to the Authority.

Mr. Hardy explained that he only processes POs after the Board approves them based off recommendation by the Authority. He said all of the POs for this project are paid through Capital Improvement Project funds. He said the County gave the Broadband Authority \$110,000 as part of the operational budget, which was carried over from last year, to pay for electric service at each location, propane and maintenance, if needed.

Mr. Adams said his point for clarification was to verify that no money was taken or shifted from the Broadband Authority's budget. He said the Broadband Authority has ran the entire project and has made all of the recommendations to the Board. He said the Board has approved everything that been brought to their attention by the Authority.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Vicki Rader, Gammon Town Rd, asked if there was a reason the Holly Grove tower would not arrive until November 5th, and if there was a reason it could not be ordered from a different source.

Mr. Hardy stated the tower has to be engineered specifically for the location, construction, and they type of equipment to be installed on the tower. Mr. Hardy said one of the delays was the type of equipment SCS was going to put on the tower along with the equipment the Authority is going to put on it for their backhaul.

Questions and comments were addressed by the Authority regarding the delay of the tower.

CHAIRMAN/GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Jarvis said he would like to see members of the Authority articulate the facts because it is very easy for things to be spun a certain way and it is very important for the Authority members to know the facts to help relay proper information to citizens.

Mr. Hardy said in 2016, an RFP was issued to hire a consultant to guide this process for the towers. He said in 2017 and RFP was issued for the construction of the towers. He said with the fifth and final tower underway, the Broadband Authority is watching over Wide Open Networks to ensure that the last tower is being handled properly. He said now is the time for the Authority to decide if they need to hire a full-time or part-time manager.

Mr. Jarvis suggested making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors as to what the Authority thinks the best option should be

Mr. Hardy stated currently the direction has been that the County and the School's IT Department manage this network, and the Broadband Authority to manage the leasing of the tower and the backhaul radio leases.

Further discussion ensued regarding making a recommendation to the Board regarding hiring a full or part-time manager for the Authority.

DIRECTOR AND LIAISON REPORTS

None

CONSENT AGENDA

None

CLOSED SESSION

On the motion of Ms. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Bradbury, which carried by a vote of 7-0, the Broadband Authority voted to enter Closed Session at 8:16 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the following:

1. In accordance with §2.2-3711 (A) (29) VA Code Ann., for the purpose of discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

REGULAR SESSION

Roll Call

Vote

Mr. Ed Jarvis	Yes
Mr. Bernie Hill	Yes
Ms. Mary Johnson	Yes
Mr. Timothy Layne	Yes
Mr. Jeffrey Zivick	Yes
Mr. Paul Bradbury	Yes
Mr. Melvin Burruss	Yes

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Mr. Hill, seconded by Ms. Johnson, which carried by a vote of 7-0, the Authority voted to adjourn the August 7, 2019, regular meeting at approximately 9:00p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next Broadband Authority meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 4, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.