

A regular meeting of the Albemarle County Broadband Authority was held on September 26, 2018, at 4:00 p.m., in Room 235 of the County Office Building, McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

PRESENT: Mr. Mike Culp, Ms. Liz Palmer, Mr. Rick Randolph, Mr. Bill Fritz

ABSENT: Mr. Bucky Walsh, Mr. Landon McDowell,

Also Present: Mr. Richard DeLoria (Senior Assistant County Attorney),

Agenda Item No. 1. Establish Quorum and Call to Order.

Mr. Culp established a quorum and called the meeting to order.

Agenda Item No. 2 Approval of Agenda

Public comment was moved to 5 p.m.

Ms. Palmer **moved** to accept the agenda.

The agenda was **approved** by a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item No. 3 CVEC Presentation and Discussion

Mr. Gary Wood, CEO Central Virginia Electric Cooperative stated that CVEC was originally looking for 20-25% support from counties. This has been reduced to around 5% because of the success getting support from other sources.

CVEC has secured a loan for \$66.5 million for the first three years of the project. The total project cost is \$110 million. CVEC may try some off-system installations, however the cost of installation almost doubles when outside of the system.

Mr. Wood spoke about the impact of 5G. Due to its limited range, it is unlikely that it will be deployed in rural areas except possibly along high volume road corridors.

The CVEC project has started with the first fiber being installed in Appomattox last week. Design work has started in Nelson County which will extend a bit into Albemarle County.

The Zion substation design and work will start after the Martin Store substation work with first connections coming in June or July of 2019.

Mr. Wood stated that he cannot speak about CAF funding until awards are made in December.

Mr. Wood stated that the estimated cost for Albemarle construction is \$11 million instead of \$10 million based on additional work that has been done taking into account density and pole replacement. The estimate is that the project will be cash positive in 2 to 3 years with break even in 7 years or less.

CVEC or Firefly, a division of CVSI, will seek some VATI grants.

Mr. Culp asked if CVEC would be able to complete a project within one year of getting a grant.

Mr. Wood stated that build out within a year can be difficult because they don't find out until January about the awards and CVEC may have already made commitments elsewhere.

Mr. Wood stated that using contractors aids in keeping the project going even in the event of disasters such as hurricane Florence. Any new projects would need new contractors. This is a big project for CVEC but not a big project for the industry which helps in making timelines.

CVEC is still looking for tax relief to aid construction in Albemarle. CVEC eventually will get everywhere in their system but will build first where they have support.

Ms. Palmer asked how does the County figure out what would happen if different incentives were given.

Mr. Wood stated he has a template that has been used in other locations which links construction with incentives. \$550,000 is a ballpark number that is being requested from Albemarle County. This is spread out over a maximum of 10 years. CVEC does not have a schedule for buildout. Mr. Wood will send Mr. Culp copies of agreements with other localities.

Mr. Wood noted that the lowest cost areas to serve will be the first areas to build out. If CVEC gets a grant and money from Albemarle County they would come and build even if it wasn't part of the original plan or order.

Ms. Palmer asked to see maps with number of homes served before making any decision or having more discussions.

Mr. Randolph stated that there is a need to look at VATI grants/applications and cost per house and how much public money per house was invested. Also need to look at how much these projects might be improving service for people that already have service and leaving other areas unserved.

Mr. Wood state that the \$550,000 is a delay in collection taxes and is not taken from the general fund.

Agenda Item No. 4 Approval of July 25 and August 22, 2018 Minutes

Ms. Palmer **moved** to approve the August 22 minutes.

The minutes were **approved** by a unanimous vote

Ms. Palmer **moved** to approve the July 25 minutes.

The minutes were **approved** by a unanimous vote

Agenda Item No. 5 Public Comment

Mr. Culp asked if there was any public comment.

No public comment was offered.

Agenda Item No. 6. Old Business

Agenda Item No. 6a Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) Update

Mr. Culp stated he was starting with Green Creek Road/Century Link. Signal Hill project does have some service from Verizon WiFi and SCS. Mr. Culp is working on a grant with the residents of the area who have provided good information. ABBA does not yet have a partner.

Mr. Culp will ask CVEC if they want to apply and will make others aware that we are doing grant applications.

M. Randolph noted that we need to be careful about staff and Mr. Culp's time constraints. We do not want a deluge of people requesting Mr. Culp's assistance.

Agenda Item No. 6b Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) Project Sites Display

Mr. Culp hasn't received any negative feedback. Mr. Culp proposed to send out an A-mail to encourage people to use the site. There was consensus for this approach.

Agenda Item No. 6c. ABBA Project Site(s) Selection Process

There was no discussion of this item.

Agenda Item No. 6d/ Action Required: Vote on process for regular BOS updates

By consensus the Board decided not to do formal regular updates. Updates will be provided when necessary. Informal communications will continue.

Mr. Culp **moved** that ABBA provide quarterly updates on the consent agenda for the Board of Supervisors. These updates will be prepared by the Chair.

Ms. Palmer **seconded**.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 6e. CenturyLink Issue Resolution Strategy Discussion

Mr. Culp noted that CenturyLink seems to be resolving the service issues they have had. Mr. Culp will contact the SCC to see if any penalties have been imposed.

Agenda Item No. 7 New Business

Mr. Fritz provided an update on the work taking place at the General Assembly with the Wireless Infrastructure Work Group. The group is discussing several issues including what constitutes service, how to facilitate deployment, and how to remove barriers. The group will have additional meetings with a report due in December

Agenda Item No. 7a. County Cell Tower Ordinance

Mr. Fritz stated that information will be provided to the Board of Supervisors discussing processes and prioritization for amending the cell tower ordinance.

Mr. Fritz noted that the policy has not been changed since the original adoption in 2000. The ordinance has been amended several times for various reasons.

Ms. Palmer asked what the focus of the policy is.

Mr. Fritz stated the focus of the policy is visibility. The policy can be changed to say whatever goals the County has for visibility and service. The ordinance would then be amended to reflect any changes in the policy.

Agenda Item No. 8 Other Matters

Mr. Fritz provided an update on his discussions with Greene County. Mr. Fritz relayed that Greene County asked if Albemarle would be interested in participating in efforts to improve broadband service. Mr. Fritz told Greene County that ABBA would be interested in any discussions that would improve service for Albemarle. The members of ABBA stated support for working with Greene County or anyone else towards the goal of achieving improved broadband for the residents of the County.

Mr. Culp stated that Mr. Walsh was preparing a letter to Gov. Northam in support of funding for broadband.

Agenda Item No. 8. Adjourn

With no other business before the Authority, Mr. Culp adjourned the meeting at 6:30 PM.