

A regular meeting of the Albemarle County Broadband Authority was held on June 23, 2021. The meeting was held electronically using Zoom and telephone starting at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT AND ATTENDING REMOTELY: Mr. Bucky Walsh, Mr. Waldo Jaquith, Ms. Liz Palmer, Ms. Donna Price, Mr. Trevor Henry, Mr. Bill Fritz

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Richard DeLoria (Assistant County Attorney), Mr. Mike Culp (ABBA, Chief Administrative Officer), Robert Rejonis (Albemarle County Public Schools), John Norin (Broadband Office)

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

Mr. Walsh establish quorum and called the meeting to order.

Mr. DeLoria announced the following for the record.

Because of the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting is being held electronically over the Zoom platform. It is authorized by the County's continuity of Government Ordinance, this Authority's Resolution, and Virginia statute.

The public has real time audio-visual access to this meeting over Zoom and real time audio access over telephone. Everyone on the phone and attending via Zoom from the public is in listen only mode. The following instructions apply those that wish to speak during public comment. If you are listening on Zoom, please use the raise hand feature to notify the meeting facilitator. For those joining by telephone please use the *9 to indicate you would like to comment. Tell the Board your full name and the magisterial district in which you reside, before getting into the substance of your comment. If you don't know your magisterial district, provide a general location for your home or business, street location or neighborhood name will suffice. Each speaker will be allowed no more than 3 minutes to comment. This meeting is being recorded and will be made available on the County's website.

Mr. Deloria then asked the Board members to identify themselves and their general location.

Mr. Walsh stated he was attending from Middleboro, Massachusetts.

Mr. Jaquith stated that he was attending from his home in Stony Point.

Mr. Henry stated that he was attending from his home in Albemarle County.

Mr. Fritz stated that he was attending from his home in Charlottesville.

Ms. Palmer was present by video but having microphone problems. Ms. Palmer indicated that she was present via the chat feature.

Ms. Price stated that she was attending from Victory Hall in Scottsville.

Agenda Item No. 2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Walsh **moved** to approve the agenda.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 3. Brief Announcements by Authority Members.

Mr. Walsh announced that he had been reappointed by the Board of Supervisors to a new 4 year term on the Broadband Authority.

Mr. Jaquith announced that he had also been reappointed.

Agenda Item No. 4. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Fritz left the meeting at 5:05.

Agenda Item No. 5. Approval of April 26, 2021 and May 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Henry moved to approve the minutes.

Mr. Walsh seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 5:0. (Mr. Fritz was absent.)

Agenda Item No. 6. Old Business

Ms. Palmer left the meeting at 5:08.

Agenda Item No. 6a. VATI 2020 Update

Mr. Culp stated that DHCD can appropriate funds across fiscal years. DHCD will be able to move 2020 funds into 2021 and that will allow CenturyLink to submit one large invoice drawing down the DHCD and ABBA funds.

Ms. Palmer returned to the meeting at 5:09.

Mr. Fritz returned to the meeting at 5:09.

Mr. Derek Kelley from CenturyLink stated that all the VATI projects have been launched. The Preddy Creek road project has difficult terrain and no shoulder on the road. Boring had to be done for approximately 7,000 feet and one stream will require poles and an aerial crossing. This area has approximately 28 homes. Goal is to have service by July 9th.

Mr. Kelly stated that the Coles Rolling Road is having some additional fiber installed. All other areas are taking on customers.

Mr. Kelly noted that the company name of the fiber to the home brand is changing to Quantum Fiber. This change from the CenturyLink copper line service to Quantum Fiber fiber service should improve some of the customer sign up and installation problems that are being experienced now.

Mr. Kelly stated that he was aware of customers that had scheduled installation service and when the installer arrives the necessary equipment is not in place and is not ready to be installed. To address this, they will be breaking the VATI 2021 projects into smaller projects so that they do not have to go out to a bidding process and can use the in-house contractor. This will allow space out construction of the projects so that they are not trying to bring everything online at one time.

Mr. Kelly stated that the staffing changes being made by Lumen and CenturyLink will improve customer service.

Mr. Walsh noted that we all are learning from experience.

Ms. Price stated that she appreciates CenturyLink working with the County.

Mr. Culp noted that installing the VATI 2020 projects did not go as well as it could.

Mr. Walsh stated that there has been some negative news generated by the problems and the project has also generated a lot of good. Mr. Walsh noted that we have a plan and are applying what we have learned.

Ms. Palmer asked if ABBA needs to do anything to approve the 2020 plan.

Mr. Culp noted that this really is an internal operation of the Broadband Office and how it works with CenturyLink.

Mr. Walsh noted that none of the information about how the Broadband Office and CenturyLink are working together has been shared with the Board and nothing really needs to be done by ABBA.

Mr. Culp stated that more attention by the County in the future VATI programs will benefit the community.

Agenda Item No. 6b. VATI 2021 Update

Mr. Culp stated that DHCD has made a funding offer. The contract materials have been delivered and we need to have an agreement with CenturyLink which will be operating under the name Quantum Fiber for the project. Mr. Culp noted that the 2021 project is significantly larger than 2020.

Mr. Kelly stated that they may do a mix of awarding to inhouse contractors and going out to bid. Approximately one-half of the projects have completed network planning and have been moved to engineering design. The first projects to be designed are Jones Mill Road, Old Garth Heights, Tillman and Merriwether. One of these will be launched before the end of the year. The next round of projects includes Snow Hill, Gilbert Station which are planned for the first quarter of 2022. Followed by Advance Mill/ Fray Road, Milton Hills, Box Holly/Taylors Gap and Cambell/Cobham.

Mr. Walsh asked if the contract with CenturyLink or Quantum Fiber.

Mr. Kelly answered by saying that Central Telephone Company of Virginia is still the official name of the company. The other names are only "Doing Business As".

Ms. Palmer asked what launch meant.

Mr. Kelly stated that is when they start accepting orders and market launch is when they start scheduling installation.

Mr. Henry asked if Mr. Walsh will be signing the necessary agreement or if the Board needs to do anything.

Mr. Walsh stated that he had just forwarded information to Mr. Culp and the Board does not need to do anything.

Mr. Walsh noted that Quantum Fiber is a fiber company. Mr. Walsh asked if they will also offer phone over fiber.

Mr. Kelly stated that they would offer that service.

Agenda Item No. 6c. VATI 2022 Planning

Mr. Culp stated that work is ongoing and that applications are due on September 14. Mr. Culp noted that no decision had been made yet on the best approach to making an application. The Broadband office will work with ABBA to make the best application possible. The multijurisdictional proposal is still moving forward, and it is possible that the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) will be the applicant.

Mr. Walsh noted that the intent to apply deadline is July 25th.

Mr. Culp noted that the intent to apply application is non-binding.

Ms. Palmer asked what interaction is taking place with TJPDC.

Mr. Culp stated that there is a group of people being coordinated by David Blount at TJPDC. They have been brought together to discuss what is going on in a regional basis. Mr. Culp noted that applications for larger projects has come from Planning District Commissions in the past.

Mr. Walsh asked if ABBA could say that we intend to apply even if it is the same area the TJPDC may intend to apply for.

Mr. Culp stated that this can be done.

Mr. Walsh stated that ABBA should state our intent to apply to make sure we have the opportunity to make the best application possible. Mr. Walsh stated that part of what needs to be decided is who eventually makes the application and manages the project after it is awarded.

Ms. Palmer stated that we should get an idea of who else intends to apply.

Agenda Item No. 6d. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Updates

Mr. Culp stated that there are two different funding sources, a local fiscal recovery fund and the state fiscal recovery fund. Mr. Culp noted that the Board of Supervisors has discussed how to use local fiscal recovery funds most efficiently. ABBA will likely be getting funding from the BOS from this source. Mr. Culp noted that no schedule is available yet, but more information may be available in July. Mr. Culp stated that funds from ARPA can be included as matching funds for VATI applications.

Mr. Culp outlined the information received from Commonwealth Connect on the use of state fiscal recovery funds including that the speeds need to be 100/100 mbps symmetrical, the focus is delivering a physical broadband connection, projects owned by governments, nonprofits and co-ops are encouraged. Mr. Culp noted that the funds can be used to subsidize the cost of end user equipment and pay for low income household long drops.

Mr. Culp stated that the state fiscal recovery funds is \$3.8 billion and using the State wants to think big and prioritized projects that achieve universal broadband. The funds must be expended by December 31, 2026.

Agenda Item No. 6e. ABBA Financial Report (Appendix A)

Mr. Henry stated that there have been no changes since last month.

Agenda Item No. 7. New Business

Agenda Item No. 7a Commonwealth ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Fund and Broadband

Mr. Culp stated that this had been covered in the prior conversation.

Mr. Henry stated that during the Board of Supervisors discussion of ARPA funds one member wanted information on how these funds will be spent. Mr. Henry stated that he and Mr. Culp will be at the meeting to provide information to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Fritz stated that Mr. DeLoria had contacted him regarding the April 26 minutes. Mr. Fritz stated that Mr. DeLoria wanted to add the following additional comment to Item 7b, "although ABBA does not have grant authority, the EDA does if consistent with economic development and the Board of Supervisors can donate to charitable organizations and direct funds to the EDA for designated purposes". Mr. Fritz noted that these comments had not been added to the April 26 minutes because they were not made at the meeting. However, they would be added to the minutes of this meeting.

Ms. Palmer clarified that she was attending the meeting from Blacksburg.

Agenda Item No. 8 Adjourn

Ms. Palmer **moved** to adjourn.

Mr. Henry **seconded** the motion.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Appendix A ABBA Financial Report ABBA Budget 6/23/2021

Update 6/16/2021

4-4300-91097-491097-950030-9999 (EXPENSE CODE)					
BROADBAND INCENTIVES					
	Fund Balance	Commitment/ Projected Expenses	Paid Expenses	Remaining Project Funds	
Initial FY21 Balance (includes deposit of VATI 2019 award and reappropriation of unspent FY20 funds to FY21)	\$1,306,415.16				
VATI 2019 Project at Midway Commitment (PO 2021-7298 CVEC)		\$0.00	\$373,248.00	\$0.00	PROJECT CLOSED OUT AND PAYMENT MADE
	\$933,167.16				
VATI 2020 Project at 8 locations Commitment (PO 2021-7747 CenturyLink)		\$291,300.00	\$0.00	\$291,300.00	*CenturyLink prerogative to bill quarterly or in one single invoice
	\$641,867.16				
VATI 2021 Project _____ Commitment (Funds Offered in March, paperwork is in progress)		\$640,000.00	\$0.00		
	\$1,867.16	\$931,300.00	\$373,248.00	\$1,867.16	
Appropriation of \$3,715.00 PT Wages and \$285.00 FICA moved to 950030 Broadband Incentives on 11/4/2020.					