

A regular meeting of the Albemarle County Broadband Authority was held on August 26, 2020. The meeting was held electronically using Zoom and telephone starting at 5:04 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 (Senior Assistant County Attorney), Mr. Mike Culp (ABBA, Chief Administrative Officer)

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

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

Mr. Culp announced the following for the record:

Everyone on the phone and attending via Zoom from the public is in listen only mode. During public comment period - please enter your comment in the Chat and it will be read into the record. Include your full name and the magisterial district in which you reside, if you don't know your magisterial district please provide a general location or your home/business street address. We will run through the chat comments first and then take comments by phone. For those on the phone, please use *9 to indicate you'd like to make a public comment. We will ask you to provide your full name and magisterial district or general location of your home or business and then allow up to 3 minutes for your comment.

Mr. DeLoria announced the following for the record:

Because of the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic and the limitations on group gatherings imposed by the Governor's Executive Orders, this meeting is being held by electronic communication means on the Zoom platform. It is authorized by the County's April 15th and June 17th Continuity of Government Ordinances, this Authority's Resolution of April 22nd, and the Virginia statute signed into law on April 24th permitting this Authority to meet electronically to discuss and transact business necessary to continue its operations.

The public has real time audio-visual access to this meeting over Zoom and real time audio access over telephone, both as provided in the lawfully posted meeting notice. The public is always invited to send questions, comments, and suggestions to the Authority through the County's Information Technology. This meeting is being recorded and will be made available on the County's website.

Mr. Walsh requested that each member and officer identify the location from where they were attending the meeting.

Mr. Walsh stated he was attending from home.

Mr. Henry stated he was attending from home.

Mr. Fritz stated he was attending from home.

Ms. Palmer stated she was attending from home.

Mr. Jaquith stated he was attending from home.

Agenda Item No. 2 Approval of Agenda

Mr. Walsh recommended that Brief Announcements from the Board and Public Comments be added to agenda.

Ms. Palmer **moved** to approve the agenda with the addition of Brief Announcements from the Board and Public Comments.

Mr. Walsh **seconded** the motion.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 3 Brief Announcements from the Board

Mr. Henry stated that the Albemarle County building posture remains in place until at least November 9th and may be continued beyond that date.

Agenda Item No. 4 Public Comment

Miles Smith provided the following written comments:

Hi I'm Miles Smith, the rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Keswick.

My church and I have recently become interested in learning more about how improvements in broadband happen in Albemarle County...so that we may advocate for the county...and especially our immediate community in Keswick.

I personally became more aware of this matter from young families...early on in the pandemic...who did not have sufficient internet access at home to be able to telecommute to school and office. So we shared our church Wifi system with them--even though our broadband capacity at church is not all that great itself.

So we would like to learn more about what the Albemarle Broadband Authority does--and how we may help you--as well as our community.

Thank you.

Mr. Walsh commented that the County is developing a database to identify where problems are. This information is shared with providers and we encourage them to work with ABBA and the State to develop projects.

Ann Marie Park stated that she lives on Dick Woods Road and has poor service.

Mr. Culp encouraged Ms. Park to fill out the broadband survey.

Donna Price arrived at 5:19 and stated she was attending from home.

David Ludwig asked if the County will be publicly posting responses to the ABBA RFP.

Mr. Culp stated that negotiations were ongoing and that staff will work to determine if responses can be released. Mr. Culp noted that it is likely that responses may not be published due to procurement laws.

Kathy Woods asked for broadband help for school children.

Mr. Walsh stated that ABBA is trying to assist with obtaining grants but that there aren't immediate construction plans.

Ms. Price noted that Senator Warner has stated that he believes the Federal government will release additional funds and relax timeframes for the money to be spent and areas where the money may be spent. It is possible that there will be a bill to make providers of broadband a utility like the rural electrification effort.

Agenda Item No. 5 Approval of Approval of June 24, July 22 and August 14, 2020 Minutes

Mr. Walsh **moved** for approval of the minutes.

Mr. Henry **seconded** the motion.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 6 Election of Officers

Mr. Jaquith **moved** that Mr. Walsh be elected as Chair.

Ms. Palmer **seconded** the motion.

Ms. Palmer **moved** that Mr. Jaquith be elected as Vice-Chair.

Ms. Price **seconded** the motion.

Mr. Walsh **moved** that Mr. Fritz be elected as Secretary.

Ms. Palmer **seconded** the motion.

Ms. Palmer **moved** that Mr. Henry be elected as Treasurer.

Ms. Price **seconded** the motion.

The motions were **approved** by roll call vote.

Agenda Item No. 7 Establish Schedule for Regular Meetings.

Mr. Walsh **moved** that regular meetings be held the fourth Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m.

The motion was **approved** by roll call vote.

Agenda Item No. 8 Adopt Rules and Policies (attached to published agenda)

Mr. Deloria described the proposed changes the Rules and Policies:

- Modernize the remote participation rule so that it does not qualify as an absence.
- Establish that the Secretary and Treasurer do not have to be Board members.
- Establish that if the Secretary and Treasurer leave the Board that their term as Secretary and Treasurer end.
- Updates the remote participation procedures to reference State law.

Mr. Walsh **moved** approval of the revised Rules and Policies.

Ms. Price **seconded** the motion.

The motion was **approved** by roll call vote.

Agenda Item No. 9 Old Business

Agenda Item No. 9a VATI 2020 and 2021 Updates

Mr. Culp stated that the 2020 VATI FAQ website had been updated.

Mr. Culp stated that the 2021 application has been submitted. The project provides service to over 2,300 homes. If the application is funded an FAQ website will be established for this project.

Agenda Item No. 9b CARES Act and CRF Update and Discussion

Mr. Culp stated that the County is still in negotiations and is working with schools. Because of the ongoing negotiations he was not able to provide any additional information.

Mr. Culp noted that CRF (Commonwealth Relief Fund) is being investigated to provide WiFi at the Greenwood Community Center and other sites are also being investigated.

Ms. Palmer asked what the process is for increased funding from the State.

Mr. Culp stated that the issue is currently in the Finance Committee.

Mr. Culp noted that he, Mr. Walsh and Mr. DeLoria were working on a letter supporting increased funding and that a draft would be sent out soon.

Ms. Palmer stated that the ABBA letter should be shared with the Board of Supervisors so that they could also submit a letter in support.

Agenda Item No. 10. Adjourn

With no other business before the Authority, Mr. Walsh adjourned the meeting at 6:05 PM.