

A regular meeting of the Albemarle County Broadband Authority was held on October 28, 2020. 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, Mr. Trevor Henry, Mr. Bill Fritz

ABSENT: Ms. Donna Price

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. DeLoria 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.

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, June 17th, and September 2nd 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. With that explanation, I ask the board members attending to identify themselves and their current location in general terms.

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

Mr. Henry stated he was attending from home.

Ms. Palmer stated she was attending from home.

Mr. Fritz stated he was attending from home.

Mr. Jaquith stated he was attending from home.

Mr. Walsh stated he was attending from home.

Agenda Item No. 2 Approval of Agenda

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

Mr. Walsh **seconded** the motion.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 3 Brief Announcements from the Board

Mr. Henry stated that he will be speaking before the Board of Supervisors on November 18th to discuss the proposed budget for the Capital Improvements Project program. Mr. Henry noted that broadband is in the Board of Supervisors' strategic plan.

Ms. Palmer recommended that the presentation include some discussion of factors beside money that may be limiting deployment of broadband.

Agenda Item No. 4 Public Comment

Dan O'Dea provided the following written comments:

hi there, I'm seeing some kind of cable burying activity on Green Creek Rd. is that the fiber?? we're very excited!

Mr. Culp stated that it is fiber being installed.

Tim Higgins provided the following written comments:

Tim Higgins [Rio District, Mallard Lake]: Are there any later than May 27 posted? If not, when will they be posted?

Mr. Culp stated that the minutes will be posted soon.

David Ludwig provided the following written comments:

I would also like to know where to find minutes, if that's something you follow up on later.

Mr. Culp stated that he would follow up with him.

Agenda Item No. 5 Approval of September 23, 2020 Minutes

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

Ms. Palmer **seconded** the motion.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 6 Old Business

Agenda Item No. 6a VATI 2020 and 2021 Updates

Mr. Culp introduced Mr. Derek Kelly of Century Link. Due to technical problems this discussion was delayed until later in the meeting.

Mr. Culp stated that a budget has been proposed to the General Assembly that includes \$50 million for VATI funding. This is up from \$19 million. By early January we should expect an announcement and approval of grants.

Agenda Item No. 6c CRF Update

Mr. Culp stated that a project is being done with Shentel. Two fixed wireless projects have been activated and four more projects are planned.

Ms. Palmer asked if a public announcement has been made for the sites that are up.

Mr. Culp stated that he will work with Shentel to make an announcement.

Mr. Henry recommended that Mr. Culp coordinate with the CAPE office.

Agenda Item No. 6a VATI 2020 and 2021 Updates

Mr. Derek Kelly of Century Link was able to reconnect to the meeting.

Mr. Kelly stated that the 2020 project, Buffalo Hills has started construction and the 2020 project, Watts Passage project will start soon. A March finish is expected. Mr. Kelly stated that the first customers may come online before the holidays. Mr. Kelly stated that the FAQ site will be updated with new information.

Mr. Kelly stated that the 2021 project will hopefully be funded with the increase in state funding levels.

Mr. Kelly stated that the work being done in the Green Creek Road area is not the VATI work but may be related to other work that CenturyLink is doing.

Agenda Item No. 6b CARES Act through Commonwealth Connect

Mr. Culp stated that \$30 million had been added to the funding. The funds must be spent by the end of the year. Mr. Culp stated that he is working with CVEC to expand broadband beyond their electrical

service area. Mr. Culp noted that an application was awarded \$230 thousand for 62 locations in the Midway area. Mr. Culp stated that the end of the year deadline to spend the funds makes applications difficult.

Mr. Henry asked if any effort has been made to extend the deadline and if ABBA should send a letter.

Mr. Culp stated that efforts to extend the deadline have been made.

By consensus the ABBA Board directed Mr. Culp to prepare a letter supporting an extension of the deadline. The letter should be sent to Senator Kaine, Senator Warner and Governor Northam.

Agenda Item No. 6d ABBA Financial Report

Mr. Henry shared a PDF. (Copy attached)

Mr. Walsh noted that moving funds from one account to the other is within the scope of the Treasurers authority.

Ms. Palmer asked what the COVID budget is for broadband.

Mr. Henry stated that the revised budget does not have any funding for broadband.

Ms. Palmer stated that CARES money should be tracked so that total broadband spending can be tracked.

Mr. Henry stated that this can be done.

Ms. Palmer stated that ABBA may want to discuss what funding is needed from the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Walsh stated that ABBA would need to look at what can be done and what areas to serve and come up with a number.

Mr. Henry stated that he will work with Mr. Culp to come up with some numbers for the November 18 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Agenda Item No. 7 New Business

Agenda Item No. 7a Regional Broadband Partnership (RBP) Exploratory Committee Update

Mr. Culp stated that the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission had started an effort to identify regional projects. One meeting has been held. When more information is available it will be shared with ABBA.

Agenda Item No. 7b CenturyLink Service Discussion

Mr. Kelly stated that he had meet with Mr. Culp, Mr. Henry and Mr. Jaquith.

Mr. Kelly stated that the primary reasons for outages were accidents and weather. The goal of CenturyLink is to respond in 24 hours, but that time has increased over the summer to 2 days. Mr. Kelly stated that COVID has impacted this time and in September the response time had increased to 4 days. CenturyLink brought in additional resources and is back to a 24-hour response. Mr. Kelly stated CenturyLink is using an online chat feature to try and help provide service and that a Citizen Advisory Group is being engaged and working with customers including following up after closing work.

Ms. Palmer asked if CenturyLink had a transformation budget to offset aging infrastructure.

Mr. Kelly stated that they have put systems in place to replace repair plant infrastructure and to try and fix areas where problems exist.

Agenda Item No. 7c Adjust April 28, 2021 ABBA Regular Meeting

Mr. Walsh noted that this meeting conflicts with a Board of Supervisors meeting.

Mr. Walsh **moved** that the meeting be moved to Monday April 26, 2021.

Ms. Palmer **seconded** the motion.

The motion was **approved** unanimously.

Mr. Walsh asked if a request can be included in the tax mailings to encourage people to fill out the broadband report.

Mr. Henry stated that this may be possible in the future.

Agenda Item No. 8 Adjourn

With no other business before the Authority, Mr. Walsh adjourned the meeting at 6:19 PM.

BROADBAND BUDGET

4-4300-91097-491097-950030-9999 (EXPENSE CODE)

	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)	\$1,302,415.16				
VATI 2019 Project at Midway Commitment (PO 2021-7298 CVEC)		\$0.00	\$373,248.00	\$0.00	PROJECT CLOSED OUT AND PAYMENT MADE
	\$929,167.16				
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
	\$637,867.16				
VATI 2021 Project _____ Commitment (not yet awarded, with CenturyLink)		\$640,000.00	\$0.00		
	-\$2,132.84	\$931,300.00	\$373,248.00	-\$2,132.84	

Request to appropriate \$3,715.00 from 130000 Part-Time Wages to 950030

\$3,715.00

Broadband Incentives to cover resulting negative fund balance