



**MATHEWS BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
3 AUGUST 2021 9AM - 10AM on ZOOM
MINUTES**

Present: Judy Rowe, Rob Quartel, Jeff Beekhoo, Donnie Lewis, Gary Crocco, Chris Mitchell, Molly Broderson, Joe Syslo, Willie Love, Debbie Falco, Amy Dubois, Sherry Hamilton, Thomas Jenkins, Michael Lesniak, Earl Adcock, and Julie Kaylor.

OPENER: Judy opened the meeting with information about today's presentation that will answer what a back haul will mean for Mathews. Jeff Beekhoo introduced our guests: Gary Crocco & Chris Mitchell from Segra. Jeff shared that the next step for BAB is getting a middle-mile provider into the area. Jeff has been working with Segra for two and a half years as a middle-mile provider (bringing back haul into areas). Gary Crocco began the presentation with a brief history of Segra and then explained Segra's involvement in pulling fibers to underserved areas. (See recording).

MINUTES: Minutes from the July 20, 2021 meeting will not be available until the August 17, 2021 meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Judy noted Cynthia Hayes wrote a letter to Mindy Conner in recognition of her retirement as Mathews County Administrator and her contributions to Mathews Broadband Advisory Board.

Judy noted she has written all members of the General Assembly's Senate Finance Committee and the House Appropriations Committee regarding the 700 million dollars to ensure it is obligated to broadband infrastructure.

OLD BUSINESS: Updates

VATI Grant with ABB – Julie Kaylor reported we finally received the contract back from VATI and we are ready to start construction. Julie received an email from Tammie Brenski who will be our contact for the next round of VATI grant applications. Joe Syslo asked Jeff who are Segra's competition. Jeff responded that Segra was just bought out by Cox, but Segra will continue their business as usual. Joe advised that we have one or two more come in to speak so that BAB looks like we know what we are doing. Judy noted we are at the beginning stage of this process, but she totally agrees with Joe's suggestion.

VATI Grant with OBB - There was not update.

Radio System – Willie had no further updates on the radio system.

MiFis To Go – Greg is not attendance this morning, but Judy reported the WiFis continue to be used and the Library is looking to obtain 25 more units to extend the service.

Smart Poles – There was no update.

Signs and Website – Judy noted that Julie Kaylor is now handling the website.

BOS Presentation and Requests -- Judy shared the PowerPoint presented at the last Board of Supervisors meeting. The presentation (titled Universal Broadband) included tower costs, the Not to Exceed Statement, tower maps created by Tyler Beekhoo, the Department of Housing and Community Development 2022 VATI Grant, much needed back haul into Mathews County, the Governor's \$700 million in American Rescue Plan funding. (See recording.) Judy noted we received strong support and approval from the Board of Supervisors. Unlike other localities, Mathews Broadband Advisory Board is made up of many members who jump in and lend their expertise. Judy recognized and welcomed new member Molly Broderson.

NEW BUSINESS:

Next 3 Projects: Judy noted these are three big projects.

Towers – Jeff stated we are looking at getting the geo analysis completed to send to the tower companies to gain more accurate costs before sending out the RFP.

Expansion of coverage from towers – This will be covered in the 2022 VATI grant application.

Back haul into Mathews – Jeff identified other back haul providers and explained how back haul works. The fiber providers actively work to build fibers connections coming from the Transatlantic fiber coming into Virginia Beach by taking those fibers and building paths to major (tier 4) data centers. Jeff noted it is critical that we get a decent back haul to this area because it opens the door for tying into schools and telehealth and opening up funding sources. Donnie Lewis expressed concern that Jason Hamil is pulling his RFP for the Bohannon Station tower. Jeff responded that Jason has had difficulty getting a commitment from Verizon on getting a leased space. Donnie stated the Bohannon Fire Station membership is unhappy because they have not received direction on where things are going with the tower (what's in it for the Station). Jeff responded there will need to be a meeting with the Bohannon Fire Station.

Hybrid Meeting: Judy noted the 17 August 2021 meeting will be 10:00 am at Mathews Memorial Library. Book your seat with Judy to attend the meeting at the Library. Greg will make it possible for others to attend virtually.

Market Days: Saturday, 11 September 2021

BAB Information Booth (Judy hopes to have some demonstration available)
Volunteers needed between 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Judy is also looking at the Farmer's Market on Saturdays as a means for having an information booth for one or two Saturdays.

ADJOURN There being no further business, Rob Quartel made a motion to to adjourn.

CALENDAR:

PLEASE NOTE CHANGES -

HYBRID BAB MEETING: TUESDAY, 17 AUGUST 2021 10:00 AM
ONLY 15 PEOPLE CAN BE AT LIBRARY. ANYONE CAN JOIN BY ZOOM
BOS MEETING: MONDAY, 23 AUGUST 2021 6:00 PM MHS Auditorium