



## MATHEWS BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD

9 January 2024 at 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

In-person at Library and on ZOOM

### MIINUTES

INTRODUCTIONS: \*Judy Rowe, \*Greg Lewis, \*Willie Love, \*Page Herbert, \*Marshall Ruffin, MD, \*Rob Quartel, Pearl Foster, Deb Falco, Judi Green, Jonathan Morr, Greg Reid (OBB), Curtis Hill (OBB), Jeff Beekhoo

\* Voting members - quorum = 5

**OPENING:** Chair called the meeting to order.

#### **Report from Open Broadband:**

Greg Reid described the line of sight signal from the North End Tower as being robust in most places. He noted the problems with the Nokia equipment staying connected so he stopped installing non-line-of-sight because of frustration. Terranna does better at capturing the signal all the way done to the end of Mobjack Bay Estates. Will have to come up with some other solutions, such as putting poles in some neighborhoods. 25 installed.

Marshall Ruffin asked what the speeds OBB can get. 100/20 but may be more like 80/60, but consistently over 50.

**12/12/23 Minutes:** Approved as emailed with a motion by Willie Love and a second from Greg Lewis.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

The PowerPoint of the BAB Parade Float, "CONNECTING MATHEWS", recognized the work done to make it happen for the Christmas Parade. Deb and Steve Falco put in many hours making our banner visible from far away. Jeannie Bass, Greg Lewis, Willie Love, and Judy Rowe constructed models of towers and MIFIs To Go on the float. Donnie Lewis constructed the sides and built a model of the North End Tower complete with a flashing red-light at the top and provided music to

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play along the route. The float was received well by the public as they cheered, applauded and gave many thumbs up as it passed by.

Power and Lights on Monopole Towers: Jon Morr

Jon got in touch with Douglas Holmes, Dominion engineer, on the Hudgins tower. LOA of actual cost Nov 20 agreement of service signed and sent over to him along with the agreement of underground service and scaled map. Holmes had not received inspection report and had not received the payment. Jon is checking on this and reaching out to other contractors about quotes for the Bohannon tower - to get light installed at the same time. Jon reported that Dominion was going to install power at the Hudgins tower site in March.

RFPs for providers on towers: Jeff

Jeff had a call with Ramona that since RFPs for providers went out twice with no responses, he is now doing a sole source that would go out to the Verizon cellular team that we are working with so we do not have to do another RFP.

Website: Page Herbert

Recordings would need to go onto another source such as You Tube. Need to make transition, possibly with Page/s company. Labels on photos already in gallery. Any package format for Verizon news to send to Page. He would like to have reviews from at least three people. Board members need to go onto web page to update their personal information. Greg said he would look into hosting with links to recordings.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Nomination and Election of MBAB Voting Board & Officers: Greg

The Chair asked for the Nominations for the Voting Board Members and Officers. Greg Lewis presented the proposed slate, stating that all were willing to continue except for Secretary, Phill Dunn, who had to leave because his business had increased so much. Pearl Foster, local business owner, has agreed to run for that office. With no additional nominations, Judy asked for a vote on the entire slate. Willie Love moved that the slate be accepted with the correction of Pearl's last name (Blake to Foster) and Marshall Ruffin seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The vote was unanimous from the present voting members (Judy Rowe, Willie Love, Greg Lewis, Page Herbert, Rob Quartel, Marshall Ruffin) Quorum = 5

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### Verizon Project with BEAD Funding: Jeff

Verizon is working on the numbers to finalize the count for unserved and underserved to determine the amount of money for Mathews. Once they have the final number we will have the amount of money for Mathews from BEAD funding.

### Budget: Judy

Judy reported that the budget for July 1 2023 - June 30, 2024 was thought to be approved as written. Judy found out in mid-December that they only approved the BTS contract for 6 months, meaning that it ended December 31, 2023. Until last July BTS was paid by grants that they applied for. They have brought us million of dollars in grants and have gone way outside their scope of work. On contract since July of 2020. Jeff is here today as a courtesy. We do need the IT guys to help us, for instance, with a telecommunications audit.

Judy, Willie and Jeff will meet with Ramona, two of the new supervisors, the two IT guys, Patrick Depumpo and Daniel Champion. Misinformation at organizational BOS meeting 1/3/24 saying that the county was paying BTS for the past 24 months. That is not true. Grants paid them through 6/30/24. BTS is infrastructure. IT guys are inside.

Jeff: Breezeline would have asked for 25% match of any grant we might have gotten moving forward. Everyone ones needs to realize how much is being saved. Verizon saw our past performance as being very proactive. Judy quoted Mark Warner about using county staff without expert help in infrastructure. We do need the help of the IT with collecting the data we need for the Anchor Institutions. We built the towers because we did not think we would get an offer such as Verizon has now brought us. Marshall Ruffin offered to come before the BOS to help validate the need for expertise on the infrastructure. The county needs to understand where the money is actually coming from. Judy said she had always been notified of such a change in the budget. She was told, "The BAB budget had been moved under the IT budget and that is why she did not get a letter".

### 2024 Draft Timeline

1st 6 months of 2024:

Smart Poles, MIFIs: what will we do with these as we finish 100% coverage of the county. Use the analytics to determine usage. Both are paid for in the budget and by the county through June 2024. Maintenance will have to be decided. We can cut the service off and just have a light.

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There would be no cost. Weather sensor installed on one at VA Beach to keep track of all the goes on.

What applications can be used over the network? Telehealth and all the many applications. How do we measure the usage of the network and how are they being used. Control center is a data analytics platform that is free. Jeff is going to demonstrate this to Marshall for potential use for Mathews and even Three Rivers Health District.

Verizon timeline: Jeff

February March application

June find out the funding

2024 BOS Liaison: Judy

Tim Doss is BAB Liaison from BOS. Tom Bowen is alternate. Willie, Jeff and Judy met with the three new BOS members. They were very supportive of broadband.

Telehealth information: Greg

Sessions for the pubic at the library will be planned by Marshall, Greg and Bette Dillehay.

ADJOURN: Willie moved, Greg seconded. Vote unanimous.

*Submitted by Judy Rowe, on behalf of Pearl Foster, BAB Secretary*