



MATHEWS BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD

12 March 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, *Pearl Foster, Deb Falco, Marge

Terry, Ramona Wilson, Jeff Beekhoo

*Voting members - quorum = 5

OPENING: Chair called the meeting to order 9:00 AM.

2/13/24 Minutes: approved as emailed

Warning on emails alegendly from Judy that are not from her.

OLD BUSINESS

Power and lights on the Monopole Towers: Jeff, Ramona

Once they have a draft of the lease they will send it to Jeff. It should be ready in a couple of weeks. Power completed at Rescue Squad Tower. The work order is in. Power will go on Bohannon Tower when equipment goes up.

Website Live!: Greg

Up and running on the new server. Still making a few changes.

URL: broadband4mathews.info Send submissions go to Page or Greg. Greg created more professional email addresses for the Voting Board members. Judy has an article to submit to try format from Gazette-Journal.

Smart Poles:

Tim Tillage had asked about possibility of using smart poles for some things in the county. Photo PowerPoint showed ride-about with first responders and with T-Mobile. A second ride-about was about the installation of cameras for vandalism. Trip to look at 8 locations to place cameras.

Jeff had lots of ideas of how to get the job done without the smart poles but with digital/solar cameras. Ramona reiterated that when on public/county property no-one has rights to privacy. There could be signage or not. This will come from the sheriff.

Telehealth Presentation by Marshall Ruffin, M.D.: Greg

It was well attended and well received. It got people talking. Judy and Marshall had also met with members of PATH to further discuss the possibilities of telehealth. They are making plans to have a presentation at one of their meetings in the fall.

OBB: Judy

They are still marketing and connecting customers.

Verizon Proposal: Jeff

Hopefully the challenge process is finished. 1550 will probably be the actual number for the Verizon Proposal. The application portal should be opening up soon.

Judy has the version 3 map on her phone to show people the coverage coming. Jeff suggested to wait to put a map on the website for version 4.

Questions and comments:

Willie: wouldn't it be a good idea to go ahead with the work order since it took so long for the power at Hudgins. Ramona: The work order has already been issued. Hudgins was more complicated because it had to go under the road.

Willie: AT&T and First Net did go down. It was affected. It is supposed to be a hardened network that does not go down but it did in the recent event.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Safety: Jeff:

There are different types of band that operate among the providers. T-Mobile has Band 71. Verizon works on 800 megahertz. We are gathering data and testing to make decisions. Sheriff had reported to the BOS about the issues she was having issues in deputies' cars.

Step One: Test signals strength testing the T-Mobile 5G network. Only had one drop for about 10 seconds. Even on Gwynn's Island where pulling 200 Mbps. Tested 4G network was not getting anything. First test went great.

Step Two: Man coming in to install equipment on cruisers to test that effectiveness. We will wait for report from deputies on current performance, how it is working and go from there.

Budget: Judy, Ramona

Moved all items under IT Department.

Ramona is working with Angela at T-Mobile. Jeff has used both Verizon and T-Mobile for the Smart Poles, now mostly T-Mobile. Switching to Mathews County should bring cost down to \$34/month under public safety instead of \$150/month. There will be substantial savings which will help fund the MiFis ToGo Program. Bette says we will need at least another year on MiFis. BTS consulting contract is now under IT, as well. Work Force Development is funded at \$4,000.00 instead of \$6,800.00. Judy will look into the viability of this training at RCC. Ashley Hubbard will be sending us monthly trial balance statements. We will be looking at the budget items more now because the money is going through the county budget whereas everything we have done has been either grant funded or supplied by providers. Our only expenditures have been a few signs and information material.

Public Information:

Requests for workshops outside of the Library have come from the West Mathews League and possibly the Gwynn's Island Civic League. Greg has laptops that can be used for events away from the Library. PATH meets next to the Library and will possibly want some training related to Telehealth. Small sessions might be the best way to go.

Judy contacted Randy Applegate, tech teacher at Mathews High School to see if we could possibly bring back the Broadband Moments videos that we used pre-pandemic to tell our story. Phil Dunn has agreed to do the first one.

Anywhere we can still our story: Pearl's update on broadband to the Mathews Resources Council was recorded in their minutes that were sent out.

Questions:

Marge Terry: in looking for places to put cameras, have you looked at the Lookout at New Point? A lot of equipment damaged or stolen. Judy will let Tim Tillage know.

Willie moved to adjourn. Greg seconded

9:43 AM ADJOURNED:

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