



MATHEWS BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

9 April 2024 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

In-person at Library and on ZOOM

MINUTES

ATTENDEES: *Judy Rowe, *Willie Love, *Marshall Ruffin, MD, *Greg Lewis, *Page Herbert, *Pearl Foster, Ramona Wilson, Deb Falco, Judi Green, Jeff Beekhoo, Tyler Beekhoo, Sherry Hamilton *Voting Members Quorum = 5

3/12/24 Minutes by email were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Monopole Towers: Jeff reported that Verizon is still working on the environmental requirements for Hudgins. Ramona reported switch over temporary power to electricity at Hudgins will be done soon. Dominion is doing design to bring power to the Bohannon Tower.

New BAB Website: broadband4mathews.info

All voting members listed on the website will receive emails through the website with a separate email address. Judy requested the two sets of VATI addresses be posted on the website. Greg asked everyone to look at the website and send any corrections to Page or to him.

VATI Grant with Gloucester and OBB:

Judy reported that Mathews' part is finished, however, those residents who have access can still request OBB to bring service to them.

Verizon Proposal:

Jeff DHCD still working on the final challenges. Application portal should be opening in a few months. Tyler reported on the squabble between NTIA and the states over what to do to replace the ACP. The low cost programs that are required butt up against the concept of a non regulated industry to be dictated a cost by the states. VA wants to leave it up to the ISPs to decide on their own rate. Louisiana has set a rate of \$30

and been approved. To get BEAD funding ISPs have to comply with that. Pearl asked if the governor had weighed on on this. It appears that he wants the ISPs to set their own rates. Marshall asked who will resolve this. The governor has this task.

NEW BUSINESS

Tyler's PowerPoint Presentation: Planning Grant possibility

DHCD has gotten permissions to handle Digital Opportunity Planning Grant program, aka Virginia Affordability and Adoption Planning Grant. It is \$25,000.00 for each locality for planning activities which will make us eligible for a Digital Opportunity Capacity Grant. Open window for applications is the 15th of every month. Tyler will apply by May 15th.

Planning Grants have four components:

1. Access: connectivity to residents and access to devices
2. Affordability: packages for low-income residents.
3. Adoption: education, digital literacy
4. Advancement: telehealth, monitoring sea level rise,

Capacity Grants (coming later) can be regional plans, not just for Mathews. The targeted populations include rural, with fits Mathews..

Steps:

Analyze	Strategize
Asset Inventory	Implementation and Monitoring
Needs Assessment	KPI=Key Performance Indicators
Extent of Digital Divide	Usage of Funding
Outreach Survey	

Activities that come out of the planning will be funded by the Digital Capacity Grants that will come later. We will need to create Project Team, start engaging stakeholders and

Judy asked where we begin today. Vote on it as BAB then present to Bob for approval to apply. Willie moved to apply. Marshall seconded. Unanimous approval to take it to the BOS.

Marshall noted it could end up as a lot of abstract gobbledygook. Jeff said get the team that will not create gobbledygook.

Tyler: Figure what programs we would like to implement.

Judy: Will Capacity grants require matching money? Tyler: Possibly.

Pearl: When will it be rewarded? Not sure. Is it competitive. Yes. When the money runs out, it is over. Vote is unanimous. Tyler will present this to the BOS for approval.

Public Safety:

Jeff updated public safety projects; Techs checked signal strength all over the county. Will install in Sheriff's cars to test the results. No drops now will ride with the deputies. Sheriff April Edwards cannot get service in some areas of the county. Report and map created to present to the Sheriff and the County.

Broadcasting/Streaming Public Meetings: Judy

Judy attended Town Hall Meeting and asked if it was being broadcasted. Judy is asking all to push public meetings to now be truly public by using broadband. Ramona said the schools do not have the equipment.

Willie moved to adjourn. Marshal seconded.