



## MATHEWS BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD

10 September 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, Tim Doss, Ramona Wilson, Judi Green, Jeff Beekhoo, Tyler Beekhoo, Joni \***Voting members - quorum = 5**

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

8/13/2024 Minutes: not approved without quorum  
(5th member joined later)

### OLD BUSINESS

Verizon FTTH Proposa: Jeff

Jeff noted that the proposal was still in the final draft stage and that the numbers for the unserved and underserved areas were unlikely to change significantly. In a meeting with the Verizon partners, we were told that the engineers would be able to complete the design in six days once the addresses and the mapping was released by the NTIA.

Monopole Towers: Ramona

To make sure everyone knew which tower was under discussion, J

udy asked that everyone refer to them by location: Hudgins, Bohannon, Cobbs Creek and Gwynn's Island. At the moment Verizon Wireless has plans to install cellular equipment on the county owned Hudgins and Bohannon Towers. Paperwork on the easement for the connection to the fiber on route 223 at Hudgins is in the County Attorney's hands. We are awaiting that to move forward. Rui had stated that he needed to keep the Hudgins tower equipment on schedule to meet 2025 timeline.

The other two towers being built by Verizon Wireless (VZW) at Cobbs Creek and Gwynn's Island: the property for each location is being sought and is being negotiated by Rui DaSilva, Sited Unlimited, on behalf of VZW. Zoning details differ for each. Ramona Said that the GI Baptist Church was

zoned R2 and would not allow a tower. She noted, as had Rui, that the waterfront around the island was zoned R1 would allow a tower. She remarked that it could not happen. It is not listed that it could not get a CUP. Judy commented how strange this is.

Judy noted how important this was for Gwynn's Island. Judy responded that this was a typical response from the County to GI, noting previous matters. She noted that in her opinion this would be a utility at some point and that GI should not be cut off and left out.

Digital Opportunity Planning Grant Application: Tyler

Tyler referenced a survey questionnaire that he was preparing to be posted on a website. He also noted the ongoing partner engagement and the need gather as many voices as possible. He is creating a list of available assets, including device programs and public services, from feedback. We will have a community organization meeting. Once a date is set, he will let us know.

Public Safety: Jeff vendor for call boxes

Jeff reported progress in finding a suitable vendor for call boxes and cameras for nine locations. Quotes will be finalized soon. He also discussed the challenges of integrating technology and budget considerations. Judy acknowledged his work on this and his efforts to find the affordable equipment that would still deliver what is needed.

Website: Page, Greg [broadband4mathews.info](http://broadband4mathews.info)

Judy and others commented on the website noting its ease of navigation and the inclusion of the VATI addresses from both Breezeline and Open Broadband.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

BEAD Funding: Tyler

Tyler reported no significant updates on the Bead Funding, with the main issue being the certification of the final challenge and location list by the NTIA.

Digital Equity Plan/Capacity Grant: Tyler

Jeff noted that the BAB needed to vote on accepting the \$24,000.00+. Then the BOS needs vote to accept the money and place it in the budget of the BAB.

Judy gave examples: high-tech school busses; Governor's School for Marine and Environmental Science buses need service to do their work going and coming to RCC. Field trips with a bus that would be a rolling lab. Devices for places like Williams Wharf, GI Civic League and Ruritan Club. Home monitoring equipment and teaching people how to use that equipment. BAB to create an outreach like a Common but with technology. Set up conference for people to visit all kinds of technology. This was in our resolution do be done quarterly.

Tyler suggested a brainstorming session to collect innovative ideas. Parts of the application are available online and Verizon ia working on them. DHCD said in their newsletter that they could not wait to see what Mathews was going to do. Now have to live up to that.

**ADJOURNED 9:43AM**

*Submitted by Judy Rowe, with the help of AI*