

AT A MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX BROADBAND AUTHORITY HELD ON  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022, AT 5:00 P.M. AT THE HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

Present: John Koontz (participated electronically)  
Carrie Dos Santos  
Greg Grichtmeier  
Steve Barnette  
Casey Mewborn (participated electronically)  
Ann Marie Ricardi, Treasurer  
Kevin Gentry, Executive Director  
Heather Lewis, County Attorney  
Peggy Jordan, Secretary  
Elizabeth Young, Consultant

Absent: Peter Martin, Consultant

**CALL TO ORDER**

Kevin Gentry, Executive Director, called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

**ANNUAL MEETING**

A Motion was made by Mr. Grichtmeier to Nominate John Koontz as Chairman; seconded by Mr. Barnette. Motion was carried by the following Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; and Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**.

Mr. Mewborn asked the board to participate electronically from 3820 Tidewater Trail in Jamaica, VA because of another meeting conflict.

A Motion was made by Mr. Grichtmeier to allow electronic participation to Mr. Mewborn; seconded by Mr. Barnette. Motion was carried with the following Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; and Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**.

A Motion was made by Mr. Grichtmeier to Nominate Steve Barnette as Vice Chairman; seconded by Mrs. Dos Santos. Motion was carried with the following Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**; and Mr. Mewborn, **AYE**.

A Motion was made by Mr. Barnette to Nominate Ann Marie Ricardi as Treasurer and Peggy Jordan as Secretary; seconded by Mr. Grichtmeier. Motion was carried with the following Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**; and Mr. Mewborn, **AYE**.

A Motion was made by Mr. Grichtmeier to set meetings every other 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month in the Historic Courthouse at 5:00 p.m.; seconded by Mrs. Dos Santos.

Motion was carried with the following Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**; and Mr. Mewborn, **AYE**.

### **STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no statements from the public.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Barnette asked if there was a motion to approve the November 18, 2021, minutes.

A Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented by Mr. Grichtmeier; seconded by Mrs. Dos Santos. The Motion was carried by Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**; and Mr. Mewborn, **AYE**.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Barnette asked if there were any additions, changes or questions on the Treasurer's Reports for December; there were none.

A Motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented by Mr. Grichtmeier; seconded by Mrs. Dos Santos. The Motion was carried Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**; and Mr. Mewborn, **AYE**.

### **REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND STAFF**

Mr. Gentry reported on the 4 Counties VATI, stating he attended a meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup> in Middlesex. It was reported that in Middlesex there had been a slight delay because of acquiring pole permits and a lot of the workforce has been affected by COVID. Mr. Gentry added this should have no impact on the final completion date though. Mr. Gentry added there will be door hangers for the start of construction to homeowners with information on how to sign up for service. We should be receiving an invoice soon for the first milestone payment. There was no information on the line extension customer access program. There is pending legislation that may allow localities to require new residential and commercial development to have broadband service and associated infrastructure. There is other pending legislation that, should it pass, would allow broadband access at a cost of less than \$50 per month for low income households.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. Post VATI Award

Mr. Koontz joined the meeting at 5:19 electronically on General Puller heading west, stating his work had run late.

A Motion was made by Mr. Barnette to allow electronic participation to Mr. Koontz; seconded by Mr. Grichtmeier. Motion was carried with the following Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; Mr. Mewborn, **AYE**, and Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**.

Mr. Tom Ennis, from All Points Broadband gave an update on the project which was fully funded in December 2021 at 2.5 million coming from All Points Broadband and Dominion is contributing around 4 million and Middlesex County's share is a little under 2 million, which is being funded under the American Rescue Funds Act. All of the Middlesex project fiber manufacturing has been acquired and is being produced close by.

The contract will start next week. Fiber will be provided to 970 unserved locations that were identified in the grant, for about 20% of the total cost and includes 140 miles of fiber. Residents are now able to pre-register for service at [www.allpointsbroadband.com](http://www.allpointsbroadband.com) and already there have been 570 registrations completed. All homes that are qualified for free or reduced meal plans can access the service at a discount of \$30 under the Affordable Connect Program. Installation is \$199 for a length drop of mainline fiber to customer location.

Next steps include the DHCD meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup> which starts the 90 day timeline for the punch list. An authorization letter from DHCD allows All Points to incur match-eligible expenses. A primary regional office is being opened in Warsaw on February 1<sup>st</sup>. All Points will be hiring local field techs, customer support reps and field sales reps as well as other jobs in the construction. Applications are being accepted for these positions and for information on the application process, emails can be sent to [HR@allpoints.com](mailto:HR@allpoints.com).

Mr. Grichtmeier stated here was a good response on the pre-registration process, but asked about the places that were not included in the original 970. There may have been some locations left out.

Mr. Gentry added that because the VATI regulations were so strict on including sites that may have overlap coverage, there were many "broadband deserts" within our county that were not included in this grant award. How do we meet the need for Universal Coverage? Mr. Ennis asked Mr. Gentry to share the addresses and locations for future opportunities.

Mr. Koontz asked for Mr. Gentry to get the word out on Social Media for not only the pre-registration process but how to qualify for discounted costs as well.

Mrs. Lewis suggested we have an inspection service providing oversight on each phase making sure the work is being completed as reported. Dominion will be doing a great deal of oversight especially on their work and equipment. All Points will have an outside

inspector go over all of the work they are completing. Mrs. Lewis suggested based on the water project, we need a man on the ground insuring the projects being funded are being done to our standards.

Mr. Ennis stated that at each level of invoicing for work that has been completed, details of the work performed will be in each invoice.

Mr. Gentry asked if someone on the Board would like to take on the social media role for the authority. Mr. Gentry indicated it was not an area of his expertise. Mr. Grichtmeier agreed to take on that role as soon as trucks are on the road and the project is in the public view.

#### B. Update on ABB Project

Mr. Gentry reported work should be completed by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

#### C. New Mission/Direction for MBA Discussion

Mr. Grichtmeier asked if we would see the invoices as they started to come in make sure the work that is being billed for was completed. Mr. Gentry noted that when the invoices started coming in they would be substantial and yes, we would have them on the agenda for the board to review. Also, because our meetings only take place bi-monthly, it would be a 60 day invoice delay. Mrs. Lewis will make a decision after their meetings to see if there is a requirement there and we may need to meet monthly to do this, but it will just depend. Mrs. Lewis will get back to the board on that question.

Mr. Grichtmeier mentioned the possibility of big businesses coming into the county because of broadband and if we are the group that needs to be looking at that or not.

Mr. Koontz had questions about those identified as not being included and if we need to work on their behalf. Also, helping the households that are on free and reduced meals to work through this process. Mr. Barnette also thought it was necessary to help those households to even know about the opportunities for them.

Dr. Young asked if her ideas were circulated throughout the board and maybe could be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Grichtmeier in the future possibly offering WiFi to public areas, like the ballfield and if there is some way to get that funded through federal monies; our mission ought to be to seek those opportunities.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no New Business

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned until the next meeting set for March 17, 2022 at 5:00 p.m., by motion of Mr. Grichtmeier, seconded by Mr. Barnette. Motion was carried with the following Roll Call votes: Mr. Grichtmeier, **AYE**; Mr. Barnette, **AYE**; Mr. Mewborn, **AYE**, Mr. Koontz, **AYE** and Mrs. Dos Santos, **AYE**.

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Steve Barnette, Vice Chairman