

AT A MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX BROADBAND AUTHORITY HELD ON
THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021, AT 5:00 P.M. ELECTRONICALLY THROUGH ZOOM

Present: John Koontz, Chairman
Carrie Dos Santos, Vice Chairman
Greg Grichtmeier
Steve Barnette
Kevin Gentry, Executive Director

Peter Martin, Consultant
Elizabeth Young, Consultant

Absent: Peggy Jordan, Secretary/Treasurer
Heather Lewis, County Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

John Koontz, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no statements from the public.

MINUTES

Mr. Koontz asked if there were any additions or corrections to the March 18, 2021, minutes. There were none.

A Motion was made to approve the minutes by Mr. Grichtmeier; seconded by Mr. Barnette and carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Koontz asked if there were any additions to the Treasurer's Report presented; there was nothing new to report.

A Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented was made by Mr. Henley, seconded by Mr. Barnette and carried unanimously.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

Mr. Gentry reported that Mrs. Dos Santos brought to the Authority's attention that the Emergency Broadband Benefit information was just released. Mrs. Dos Santos reported the program provides discounts up to \$50 a month for residential internet service so ETC carriers are automatically eligible to participate, however non-

ETC carriers, such as Atlantic Broadband, would have to apply to be eligible for participation. Mr. Gentry reached out to ABB and they reported they are in the process of completing that application and they would reach out as soon as they heard back.

Mr. Gentry reported that Mr. Grichtmeier, Mr. Barnette and he had met with two respondents to our RfP and they would be making a decision in the next two weeks on the vendor.

INFORMATION ITEMS

A. VATI Update—Kevin Gentry

Mr. Gentry reported he will be meeting with the regional committee and he would be reporting back on that process. Mr. Koontz asked if we could post the information on social media, as an effort to increase the pass rate and promote Middlesex Surfs to do so.

B. Hill Crest Project Update—Chris Henley and Greg Grichtmeier

Mr. Grichtmeier and Mr. Henley reported no updates at this point on the project. Mr. Koontz asked if they wanted to provide an update next month or if we need to table the idea for now; Mr. Henley stated he has someone interested in working with them so he would like to keep it on for next month. Mr. Grichtmeier stated they had been waiting on a piece of equipment, and access plate that has now been delivered. Mr. Grichtmeier stated it would be a good investigative project to check on the feasibility of moving forward.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Gentry introduced Ed Diggs with Dominion Energy and Jimmy Carr, CEO of All Points Broadband, regarding fiber to home build, in conjunction with Dominion and All Points in unserved Jamaica and other areas across our county, addressing. Mr. Carr spoke on a proposal to use universal fiber to home broadband. Their approach includes feasibility, design, regularity approvals, construction and ongoing maintenance. The company is based in Virginia and has been successful in the Northern Neck and in King William meeting their unserved needs. Mr. Carr pointed out that they are working to enhance the “last mile.”

Mr. Carr showed a video that Dominion Energy produced to explain the project using a partnership with All Points using maps to show where they are working to have universal access to broadband. They are looking to provide over 200 miles of fiber in the Northern Neck. In Middlesex, as in the Northern Neck and in other rural counties,

they give very detailed map of those not served in order to connect them. If there were able to get the MOU signed by May, they would be able to start in the fall to identify those who are unserved and then move forward with the design, funding and build.

Mr. Diggs with Dominion, explained the timeline for Middlesex if we move forward. If we can get the MOU signed before May, we would be in for a fall start time on the petition cycling period. Dominion has infrastructure in place however, since this is something a little different than just power, they are securing supplemental communication easements. Those easements will be time consuming, but Dominion is working through that process with landowners. Mr. Diggs added that by 2021, they expect they will have surpassed the goal of 600 miles of fiber being laid in the area.

When asked if there would be possible folks that would be missed in the "last mile" process, Mr. Diggs went over the very detailed was, even measuring in feet how far each unserved home would be from the closest source so that when the information is detailed to the SCC, it is correct and very precise so that none remain unserved. It was estimated that there were more than 1,000 but less than 1,500 unserved locations. The county would be responsible for about \$400,000 if it were \$350 per pass as an estimate. The more passes, the less the per pass costs would be.

Discussion included rates for broadband once the project is completed; problems with service of fiber in the event of weather related issues to fiber since some of it would be on power poles; would there be a loop or just and end.

A Motion was made to review the MOU by counsel with the understanding that we meet sometime next week for pending counsel approval by Mr. Henley, seconded by Mr. Grichtmeier. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Grichtmeier, AYE; Mr. Barnette, AYE; Mr. Henley, AYE and Mr. Koontz, AYE. Mrs. Dos Santos was absent for the vote.

A Motion to Adjourn until next week was made by Mr. Grichtmeier, seconded by Mr. Henley, and carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned until the next meeting set for April 15, 2021 at 5:00 p.m., by motion of Mr. Barnette, seconded by Mr. Henley; carried unanimously.

John Koontz, Chairman