

AT A MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX BROADBAND AUTHORITY HELD ON
THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2021, AT 5:00 P.M. AT THE HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

Present: John Koontz, Chairman
Carrie Dos Santos, Vice Chairman
Greg Grichtmeier
Steve Barnette
Kevin Gentry, Executive Director
Peggy Jordan, Secretary/Treasurer
Heather Lewis, County Attorney

Elizabeth Young, Consultant

Absent: Chris Henley
Peter Martin, Consultant

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 April 8 and April 15, 2021, minutes. There were none.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report will be submitted at the June meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Broadband Telecom—Oversee Internet Connectivity Project

Mr. Jeff Beekhoo, with Broadband Telecom presented information on his Grant Management services that he was currently working with counties on the VATI/ABB application. Mr. Beekhoos' company submitted the VATI grant for all of the participating

counties. He will now be working with ABB and project managers in each of the 4 counties verifying information and submitting it. This management of the project will last for 18 months and each county is paying \$2,000 per month for the 18 months. Mr. Koontz asked for a recommendation to approve sending this request for funding to the BOS.

Mr. Barnette made a motion to recommend requesting funding in the amount of \$2,000 per month for the 18 month project to the Board of Supervisors, seconded by Mr. Grichtmeier and carried unanimously.

B. Nominate Treasurer/Grant Fiscal Agent Position

Mr. Gentry asked the Board to split the treasurer/secretary duties and combine the treasurer position with fiscal responsibilities and oversight of grants awarded to the MBA and also to oversee an audit that was just scheduled for the MBA. Mr. Gentry stated that when Ms. Ann Marie Ricardi was approached, Ms. Ricardi was willing to take on this responsibility. Mr. Gentry asked the board to consider appointing Ms. Ricardi to that position at a stipend of \$250.00 per month.

Mr. Grichtmeier made a motion to appoint Ann Marie Ricardi to the position of Treasurer/Grant Management fiscal agent in the amount of \$250.00 per month, seconded by Mr. Barnette and carried unanimously

INFORMATION ITEMS

C. VATI Update—Kevin Gentry

Mr. Gentry reported met with stakeholders and ABB to get revised plans and timelines and stated they were in the process of securing contractors. When they begin in Middlesex, once the passes are completed, we will get billed. At this point they are on schedule for the 18 month timeline, however, no date has been set as to when they will break ground, which would be two counties at once. Middlesex is not scheduled to be one of the first two counties to break ground. Mr. Grichtmeier asked if instead of verbal updates, would it be possible to set up a dashboard with information being updated as received and members could access that information as soon it was updated as a means to keep up with the project. Mr. Gentry will check into this possibility.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Gentry gave a staff report stating that he and Ms. Ricardi sat in on a meeting of Commonwealth Connect in which the learned billions of dollars will be available to be sent to localities to help with broadband.

Mr. Gentry reported that Starry, the company that had purchased a track in Jamaica to provide services, may be among many companies looking to provide services our area. Mr. Gentry asked them if providing wireless services up there would prevent any future fiber projects, he did not get an answer. Instead, he was asked to speak with them individually to talk this through.

Mr. Grichtmeier asked if we knew what the schools were doing with all of the hot spots, etc. that they had obtained for those students and staff who needed help connecting during COVID. Mr. Gentry thought the majority of the technology included cromebooks that had the access built in instead of purchasing a large quantity of hot spots. Mr. Grichtmeier wanted to make sure we were not overlapping coverages.

Mrs. DosSantos reported the Library of Virginia had funds for technology that would include hot spots, tablets, laptops and improved WiFi, but at this point the information on what the funds would be for each local library had not been released.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned until the next meeting set for June 17, 2021 at 5:00 p.m., by motion of Mr. Grichtmeier, seconded by Mr. Barnette; carried unanimously.

John Koontz, Chairman