

A regular meeting of the Albemarle County Broadband Authority was held on April 18, 2018, at 5:01 p.m., in Room 241 of the County Office Building, McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

PRESENT: Mr. Bucky Walsh, Mr. Mike Culp, Ms. Liz Palmer, Mr. Rick Randolph, and Mr. Bill Fritz

ABSENT: Mr. Landon McDowell

Also Present: Mr. Richard DeLoria

Agenda Item No. 1. Establish Quorum and Call to Order.

Mr. Walsh established a quorum and called the meeting to order.

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Agenda Item No. 2 Approval of Agenda

Ms. Palmer **moved** to accept the agenda.

The agenda was **approved** by a unanimous vote.

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Agenda Item No. 3 FirstNet (Public Safety Broadband Network) Presentation and Discussion

Bill Tegethoff of AT&T introduced himself.

Mr. Tegethoff stated that FirstNet is the national safety broadband and communications network. In 2012, the Federal government committed funding for the network. AT&T won the bid in 2017 to construct FirstNet. Virginia was the first state to opt in. All states have now opted in. AT&T has a 25-year contract with the Federal government. The FirstNet Authority provided 20MHZ spectrum and \$6.5 billion in funding to begin the project. AT&T announced publicly that they are investing \$40.5 billion over the life of the contract.

Mr. Tegethoff noted that when FirstNet spectrum is not used for public safety it will be available for commercial uses. Public safety has priority and preemption on the network. Commercial users will be moved to other spectrum to allow public safety access.

Mr. Tegethoff stated that new FirstNet towers will be necessary to fill voids for public safety. These towers will also allow commercial use.

Ms. Palmer asked if the \$6.5 billion value of additional spectrum will be used in conjunction with existing spectrum used by AT&T.

Mr. Tegethoff noted that the new spectrum is referred to as the Band 14 spectrum and is in addition to existing spectrum used by AT&T.

Ms. Palmer asked if the existing bands were available for public use.

Mr. Tegethoff confirmed that public safety will be able to use all AT&T LTE bandwidth. AT&T has exclusive use of Band 14.

Mr. Tegethoff stated that a 5-year build plan started in March of 2018. Small Cell technology will be used to address some of the topographic challenges.

Mr. Tegethoff noted that the State gives feedback on where the gaps in service are and then AT&T works to fill them.

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#### Agenda Item No. 4. Approval of January and February, 2018 Minutes

This was moved to later in the meeting.

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#### Agenda Item No. 5. Public Comment

Michael Paine spoke about the lack of coverage for police in the Appleberry Mountain area. He would like a tower on Appleberry Mountain. The tower regulations should be reviewed.

Ken Klotz spoke. He lives on Green Creek Road. Internet service is terrible in the area. He has contacted Embarq, now Century Link, and given them a petition signed by 50 people. More houses have been constructed since the petition was signed. Service is not improving.

Kathy Hedian spoke. She lives on Green Creek Road. She is a doctor but cannot work from home to update encrypted medical records. 1 Mbps to 3 Mbps speed is what she gets. When on call, it takes a long time to do any work online. Satellite does not provide adequate speed.

Cheryl Hedgman spoke. She lives on Green Creek Road. She moved here from Northern Virginia and went from fiber to Hughes. Gets less than 12 Mbps but often only 5 or 4 Mbps. She cannot do online banking or submit documents online and has limited cell service.

Gail Epps spoke. She is a retired teacher. She has limited cell service. She stated that kids not testing well are those that are poor and white because they have limited internet service. The work done at school has flipped. Part is done at school and part is done at home. They are testing poorly because they don't have adequate service at home.

Marcelle Morel spoke. She lives on Green Creek Road. She has poor internet and cell service. Even the landline service does not work well. Electric power also fails more often than it should.

Margaret Faison spoke. She had good service with Nextel, but Sprint took over and the service is gone.

Bill Wood spoke. Sprint service is not good. It was good with Nextel. Century Link is not upgrading in the area. Broadband over power lines has not worked in Nelson. US Cellular was a little better at providing service. Boosters help, but only slightly.

Denny Camner spoke. He works for UVA and cannot do necessary work at home or do continuing education.

An unidentified speaker spoke. They asked if a map exists that shows fiber or how many people have fiber.

Mr. Culp stated that no map like that exists.

Ms. Palmer stated that by the County getting lists of people that want service it makes it easier to work with providers to identify areas to provide service.

Mr. Culp pointed out that he has and will distribute a questionnaire to residents for them to fill out and return. This makes it easier to talk to providers.

Ms. Palmer left the meeting at 6:06

Mr. Randolph stated that the Board of Supervisors decided that the County would not be a service provider. No magic wand exists to provide service. Getting the information on the questionnaire puts people in the front of the line when any actions or decisions are made. ABBA has limited resources but will help as it can.

Ms. Palmer returned at 6:14.

Mr. Randolph recommended that a template for data gathering be prepared and used to gather information. The Board of Supervisors made a part-time position full-time to help in the processing of information.

Mr. Walsh recessed the meeting at 6:15.

Mr. Walsh called the meeting back to order at 6:20.

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Agenda Item No. 4. Approval of January and February, 2018 Minutes

Ms. Palmer **moved** for approval of the minutes

Mr. Walsh **seconded**.

The motioned **passed** unanimously.

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Agenda Item No. 6. Old Business

Agenda Item No. 6a. Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) Update

Mr. Culp stated that he was still in negotiations with the Department of Housing and Community Development. However, we are ahead of last year but we are still not done. He is trying to figure out how to get us in front with FirstNet.

Agenda Item No. 6b. ABBA Fiscal Agent Resolution

Mr. DeLoria noted that Board has approved the resolution. He did not know if an account has been opened.

Agenda Item No. 6c. Legislative Update and Recommendations to Board of Supervisors

Mr. Fritz provided an update on Senate Bill 405 and House Bill 1258 recently signed by the Governor. This included a requirement that an annual report be submitted showing areas with enhance wireless

service capacity and expansion into unserved areas. It also required the development of a plan to identify barriers to wireless service and ways to encourage service in unserved areas.

Mr. Walsh stated that he have reviewed the County's regulations for Personal Wireless Service Facilities. He noted that these regulations are based on visibility which competes with and complicates provision of service.

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Agenda Item No. 7. New Business

Agenda Item No. 7a Review and Approve Guidelines for ABBA's Evaluation of Broadband Project Proposals.

Mr. Randolph and Mr. Fritz both recommended removing numbers and clarifying that the issues identified are a list not a prioritization.

Mr. Randolph **moved** for approval of the Guidelines with the changes mentioned.

Mr. Fritz **seconded**.

The motion **passed** unanimously.

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Agenda Item No. 8. Other Matters

None

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Agenda Item No. 9. Adjourn

Mr. Walsh adjourned the meeting at 6:45.