



**MATHEWS BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
5 October 2021 9AM - 10AM on ZOOM
MINUTES**

Present: Judy Rowe, Rob Quartel, Greg Lewis, Jeff Beekhoo, Willie Love, Donnie Lewis, Julie Kaylor, Sandy Wanner, Joe Syslo

Judy Called the regular Broadband Advisory Board meeting to order and welcomed everyone. The 9/7 & 9/21 BAB meeting minutes approved as emailed
OLD BUSINESS:

Judy seed for updates on current projects. There is nothing new on ABB grant project. OBB: permitting in Gloucester now. Everything is on schedule. Willie Love reported the radio system project is waiting on getting agreements. ordering materials. They are moving forward. Greg Lewis, reporting on MiFis To Go program, is waiting on grant info. He also said that all equipment is checked out all the time

Digital Literacy Program at Library is waiting for funding through the General Assembly. Can we meet to discuss the help that we might eventually be able to provide? Joe Syslo reported that GoVA committee wants to know hat is next. We need help from Jennifer Morgan with developing a project.

Jeff updated the board on the Board of Supervisors meeting. Both MOUs are signed. They approved 5 - 0 for Sandy Wanner to sign for the county. We will need site surveys for the two properties, then approval of surveys. Next is the geo analysis. Both rescue squad and fire department are ecstatic about this. Donnie, "Can I get my backhoe out there and start digging?" Jeff, "No."

What should we call the tower properties? Jeff said when we get surveys back there will be proper terminology for each property. Judy thanked all parties concerned for their lightening speed in getting this done. Thanks to the depth and expertise of this advisory board. Before we can do lease agreements we have to know exact type and height of towers and what is required by the carriers. Then there will be two RFPs to go out: RFP for construction of the tower and RFP for the carriers. Sandy Wanner said that the County attorney is prepared to write the lease when appropriate.

Affordability: EBB program which provides \$50/month and \$100 for a device is being offered by ABB on their website. There is the possibility of Line Extension Customer Assistance Program (LECAP) program with the General Assembly. See Vermont's program. Judy is writing to the General Assembly to support Virginia adopting such a program. Judy cited Phil Dunn's and Deb Falco's situations.

NEW BUSINESS

Getting information out to the public:

Waterman's letter to Editor of Rappahannock Record: VMRC Mandatory Reporting requirements for crabbers beginning in January 2022. Writer notes: Many crabbers do not have internet or reliable cell signal. Why didn't VMRC consider this?

Give VMRC information about the library the Smart Poles for Mathews and the possibility for other counties. Watermen are being penalized for not doing this.

Telemedicine: patients in Mathews struggling with the need for telemedicine; give info to the doctors and facilities A different approach to get the word out.

Jeff asked if there might be grant funding. Rob said it will go to the creative ideas.

Things are so much in flux. Tyler is working on identifying funding opportunities that will apply to this area, especially marine reporting.

Businesses losing revenue which equates to losing tax dollars.

Rob says there is a huge federal requirement. Wondering whether they connected with NOAA. Rob is working with a couple start up companies using artificial intelligence for fisherman to take a picture with a cell phone to identify and report their catch.

Meeting schedule for remainder of the year. Judy suggested go Zoom through 2021. Rob questioned needing to go in person as state board requirement because we are an official advisory board of the county. Julie will have the county attorney check on it. They could rescind any decisions made. We will meet via Zoom for last meeting in October and decide then after that if we have any mandates.

Jeff to meet with Nancy about back haul. Governor's \$700 million still under discussion.

BOS Meetings changed for holidays in November and December: Thursday 11/18 and Monday 12/13.

ADJOURN There being no further business Rob Quartel moved to adjourn, seconded the motion.

Submitted by: Judy Rowe, serving in place of Cynthia Hayes.