



MATHEWS BROADBAND ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
30 November 2021 7PM - 8PM
in person at Fire Station One and
virtually on Zoom
MINUTES

Present in person: Judy Rowe, Greg Lewis, Willie Love,
Ronnie Lewis, Joe Syslo

On Zoom: Jeff Beekhoo, Donnie Lewis, Sandy
Wanner, Julie Kaylor

The Chair called the regular BAB meeting to order. Judy appointed Ronnie Lewis and Willie Love as substitute voting members to have a quorum, as noted in the bylaws.

MINUTES: The minutes from the 11/9/21 meetings were approved as emailed.

Sandy Wanner announced that he would be leaving for his position as interim county administrator as of next Tuesday, 7 December.

OLD BUSINESS:

VATI with ABB: Willie has agreed to step in for David Blanks until the end of 2021. Willie reported that the preliminary design work is complete for all four counties. Julie added that there would be invoicing soon.

VATI with OBB: Judy attended the last meeting in person to meet with the Gloucester staff and representatives from OBB. OBB is trying to get all the towers prepared and that they would get to Mathews last in order to bring the climbers in to do all the work at once. Jeff said he had spoken to Alan Fitzpatrick about the public wifi that is provided by their company. How will they get from the tower to downtown Mathews? Julie has asked Thomas to do a map 5 miles out from the tower. Can we identify another public area? They might be able to piggyback the service to get to another area. Julie is hoping to get measurements soon. Their next meeting at 9 December. Julie noted that the downtown area is pretty well covered.

Greg reported 25 new MiFis To Go in service. Greg is running meeting tonight on one. The Library is working to get the word out to the watermen about the VMRC mandatory reporting support available at the Library. Digital literacy equipment is in now. The Library purchased 12 laptops and software to do training. Greg is planning for early spring to begin.

Willie reported on the Radio System progress. All radio equipment is ordered. They are looking at the end of first quarter to begin the new system.

Information to the Community:

School Board presentation was well received. There are still people who have not heard about what we are doing.

NEW BUSINESS:

Smart Poles are reaching end of year service contract at end of December. Judy reported anecdotal evidence of usage of smart poles. Jeff and Judy will be examining how much bandwidth is being used. The cost is \$199/month/pole. Sand Wanner agreed that using ARPA funding to do the for six months will cost \$9,552.00. Jeff noted that they required a 4G modem to get the service along with a data plan. This cost is just for the data plan.

Joe asked Jeff if we should drop some poles now. With new variant we don't know what will happen over the next six months. They can be repurposed to use in public wifi areas or something else. Julie noted that repurposing doesn't have to happen right away. Willie moved that we continue the service at the poles for another six months. Greg seconded the motion.

Tower leases: Jeff thanked Joe and Sandy for all their work to get these completed so quickly. The BOS voted 3-2 to move forward with the leases. Sandy reported they were all signed.

Tower construction: Jeff has been talking with Sabre Industries about the cost assessment to build the towers. He presented a break down of the costs. Construction drawings must be done showing access roads and the size of the compound. Jeff is getting quotes to get RFPs out. Julie explained some of the ways procurement method options might save time and still make sure all is done correctly. Julie expressed interest in using state procurement, E-Virginia, procedures could save money. If another county has done the same procurement process, Mathews could piggyback on that process to save time. Jeff will talk to Sabre about all of this. Julie offered to work with them if they are not part of the E-Virginia system. Vendors have to be vetted through the E-Virginia system. With large projects like this it could help us. Sabre would be a bidder, as well.

Sandy reminded that the BOS was interested in plats as soon as possible. Construction drawings have to be done first and could be added as an addendum to the leases. September 2022 is conservative forecast to get towers built.

Back Haul:

Infrastructure and Jobs Act funding has just become available. Jeff and Judy met with Carol Steele from Gloucester and Chris Mitchell of Segra. With the right partnership we could get the back haul into this area. Cyber security and securing networks would be very important pieces. Chris will be looking to see if Segra can go forward with letters of support from the counties. Julie noted how important this would be. She noted the need for staffing for federal money. Julie also noted the need to examine the need for an authority.

Judy noted she will be meeting with the two new BOS members to discuss broadband. Julie said that she thought they would be supportive.

BOS Meeting will be at 3:00 PM today. Final 2021 BAB Meeting will be Tuesday, 28 December 2021 at 7:00 PM at FD Station One.

ADJOURN

There being no further business Willie Love moved to adjourn, Joe Syslo seconded the motion.

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