



County of Augusta
Internet Initiative (Broadband Committee)
PO Box 590
Verona, VA 24482

Thursday, October 26, 2023 7:00 pm

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mr. Kirby, Wayne District
Mr. Powell, Middle River District
Mr. Miller, Beverly Manor District
Ms. Thornton, North River District
Ms. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator

ABSENT: Vacant, Riverheads District
Vacant, Pastures District
Vacant, South River District
Ms. Melton, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction & Technology

VIRGINIA: At the regular meeting of the Augusta County Internet Initiative (Broadband Committee) held on Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Call to Order

Meeting started at 7:00pm.

Adoption of the Minutes

Minutes of the October 27, 2022, January 26, 2023 and April 27, 2023 meeting were approved.

Comments by the Public

None

Special Presentations

None

Matters to be Presented by Sub-Committees

None

Matters to be Presented by Staff

Ms. Whetzel provided an update on the VATI 2021 grant that is under construction by MGW/Lingo Networks. Work continues in all four project areas:

- McDowell – UG fiber construction (main & taps) continues. Recent easement issue with new land owner.
- Deerfield – UG fiber construction (main & taps) continues.
- Middlebrook – No work in this project area recently; only 5 passings remain.
- Morris Mill – Easements finalized so permit application can be made. Will split permit into parts-one section (Frog Pond west to VATI boundary) does not require pole Make-Ready and can go to construction soon. The section requiring pole Make-Ready is the area around the intersection of Morris Mill and Frog Pond for the FTTH north, south, and east of that intersection. Project area - FTTH installs continue in areas where service is available.

A six month extension was approved by DHCD, with the new deadline of December 31, 2023. A summary of work to complete per project area was reviewed.

County staff visited the Deerfield project area in August and McDowell project area in September.

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the milestones have been completed to date.

Below is a summary of work to date. Please note that milestones are set on two month increments, so therefore the passings will be updated every other month.

Project Area	Total Passings	Passings to Date 10/31/2023
McDowell	235	567 MGW Projects
Deerfield	508	
Morris Mill	288	231 Lingo Projects
Middlebrook	142	
Total	1173	798
% Completed		68%
Subscribers to date		280

Total Project Budget: \$1,814,876

Spent to Date \$1,266,465

Grant to Date \$886,526

Locality Funds to Date \$151,976

Provider Funds to Date \$227,964

Ms. Whetzel updated the Committee on the status of the VATI2022 project. Low Level Design and materials procurement is underway. The Timmons Group and Davey Resource Group are in the field for pole fielding and make-ready engineering. Field data has been collected on 13,000 poles and 7800 pole attachment requests have been submitted to electric partners. Notice to Proceeds are starting to be issued but a significant number will be needed to reach a large queue of constructible fiber miles. Preliminary design ride out has been completed in Augusta, Rockingham, Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick and Warren counties. All inquiries and address checks should be directed to APBfiber.com. No funds expended to date from State or Local Match.

Ms. Whetzel reviewed the updated VATI 2024 Grant Guidelines and noted that the County submitted a placeholder in case an application was to be filed. The Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program will roll out in 2024. The Commonwealth received \$1.48 billion to finalize access to those who are unserved and underserved. BEAD utilizes the new FCC National Broadband Mapping and sets a new threshold for speed.

CAPSAW prepared a Digital Opportunity Assessment and a summary of the recommendations from the work was provided to the Committee.

Matters to be Presented by the Committee

Mr. Lawhorne resigned from the committee on October 18, 2023. The Committee will hold off on selecting officers until January.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be January 25, 2024. With no further discussion by the committee, the meeting adjourned.