

MINUTES

Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority

November 20, 2018

Board members in attendance were: Mike Mason, Elaine Meil, Charles Kolakowski, and Scott Webb.

ESVBA management participating in the meeting who were in attendance: Robert Bridgham and Leah Hoopes (Secretary)

Members of the public attending were: Pat Coady

Ms. Meil called the meeting to order at 10:30 am.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Mr. Webb moved to amend the agenda to add a New Business item for the meeting with DNG. Mr. Kolakowski seconded. Motion passed unopposed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

OLD BUSINESS

a. Review and accept the Engineering RFP and Construction

IFB for the ESVBA Expansion- Mr. Bridgham provided summaries for the RFP and IFB and stated that there were 6 bidders and 4 that were responsive to the Engineering RFP. The committee agreed that The P Smith Group was the best contender.

Mr. Webb moved to select The P Smith Group for the Engineering RFP. Mr. Kolakowski seconded. Motion passed unopposed.

Mr. Bridgham stated that there were 4 bids for the IFB and they were all much higher than expected. Mr. Bridgham commented that he was going to withdraw the bid and resubmit it because it was not responsive enough. The lawyers agreed that this was appropriate.

Mr. Bridgham believes that more of the construction will be able to be done in house than what was expected.

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Bridgham to clarify the ESVBA current pricing on the IFB summary.

Mr. Bridgham stated that when the large bid was put out years ago, Mastec was the responsive bidder and the Authority has been working under that contract for eight years. The “ESVBA’s Current Pricing” shows Mastec’s current pricing under the existing contract.

Mr. Webb asked if the bidders did not have time to bid due to other jobs.

Mr. Bridgham replied that that was correct and he believes if they’re given more time, they will have better bids.

Mr. Webb suggested Mr. Bridgham reach out to Knight Communications.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Meeting with DNG-** Mr. Bridgham stated that he was approached by the Chief Broadband Advisor to the state to have a discussion with DNG. The discussion would be regarding complaints that DNG has that they would like the state to assist with on Wednesday at noon. Mr. Bridgham stated that the agenda for the meeting did not specify the issues they wanted to discuss.

Mr. Webb commented that before going into the meeting he would ask that the issues be stated in writing and sent out at least a week in advance so that the lawyers can review it.

Ms. Meil went over the agenda and stated that it started out as a meeting but turned into a discussion/mediation.

Mr. Bridgham stated that there is an Arbitration clause in the contract.

Mr. Webb responded that all of the Authority’s Minutes, maps, and plans are public.

Ms. Meil pointed out that all the rates and rules are public and any changes made have always been to benefit and make things easier on everyone.

Mr. Webb commented that if DNG has issues they should come to the Authority first, without a mediator.

The board agreed that they need full disclosure on what the

issues are that will be discussed.

Mr. Webb stated that the bottom line is that the Authority is trying to provide broadband to the residents on the shore. He feels that if the Authority doesn't do it then no one will.

Ms. Meil spoke about her concerns for the WISP program. She feels that the pricing structure is too low and it's going to affect the Authority's ability to get to everyone. She mentioned that the residents are paying more for service than the service providers are paying for WISPs and eventually the Authority will have to stop expanding.

Mr. Bridgham stated that the program was originally meant to be a trial and the cap of 10 sites was eventually discarded without the program being modeled first.

Ms. Meil stated that the average WISP site is equivalent to one high value residential customer and there are cases where the Authority has built 2 miles for a WISP site.

Mr. Mason suggested incentivizing areas where there is no coverage instead of an incorporated town.

Mr. Bridgham said he'd go back and work on enhancing the initial analysis he did.

Ms. Meil stated that she's also asked Matt about information on usage.

Board Comment

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am.

These minutes were approved at the _____ meeting of the Board of Directors of ESVBA.

Presiding Officer

Copy teste:

Leah Hoopes, Secretary