

## MINUTES

### Work Session Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority

June 25, 2020

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

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

Members of the public attending were:

Ms. Meil called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm.

#### **AGENDA ADOPTION**

*Mr. Mason moved to adopt the agenda. Mr. Kolakowski seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

#### **BUILD STATUS**

Mr. Bridgham gave an update on the buildout.

He stated that he has a meeting with the town council for Chincoteague in July. The engineering for Tangier is underway.

Ms. Meil asked what sort of vehicle equipment is needed for Tangier.

Mr. Bridgham explained that the only equipment needed would be to service customers such as an extension ladder. A&N is willing to let the Broadband Authority use their bucket truck and golf cart on the island.

Mr. Kolakowski asked if there is a way to install everyone on the island at one time.

Mr. Bridgham stated that the town of Onancock was targeted and installed at one time and he plans on doing the same on Tangier.

Mr. Bridgham announced that they've turned up about 60 customers so far in June and plan on getting 80 done by the end of

the month.

Mr. Bridgham explained that he put a bid out for the boring machine and has reached out to a few vendors for quotes.

### **OLD BUSINESS.**

- a. **Consider closeout settlement-** Mr. Bridgham explained that a commercial customer is going out of business and would like to discuss a closeout settlement. The customer agreed to the number that the board discussed in Closed Session at the May meeting. *Mr. Kolakowski moved to authorize the settlement. Mr. Mason seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

- b. **FY21 Budget –** Mr. Bridgham stated that he spoke with Vacorp about insuring the boring equipment and the personnel and it would increase the annual payment by \$737.

Ms. Meil asked if there were procedures that would be put in place to avoid damages.

Mr. Bridgham replied that the in house contractor that's updating the safety manual is planning to add Underground Procedures.

*Mr. Kolakowski moved to approve the budget but freeze the expenditure increases for salaries of staff which will be reviewed at a later time. Mr. Mason seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Bridgham to bring back information on where commercial customers are in their contracts and how much time is left on their terms.

### **Work Session**

- a. **Discuss small commercial needs-** Mr. Bridgham presented a slide show to the board explaining the definition of small business and the needs of small business customers.

Ms. Meil asked what is the bandwidth for the circuit that the residential customers are on.

Mr. Bridgham stated that there is a Gig link to serve residential customers but about 3.5 to 4 Gigs have been sold.

2 different scenarios were presented to the board.

Mr. Mason asked what is the reasoning for customers purchasing 3mbs or lower.

Mr. Bridgham replied that for most of those customers, it's the highest price they could afford.

Mr. Mason stated that that group is the most at risk as more

services continue to become available.

Ms. Meil asked if any customers have paid an installation charge without signing up for a monthly service.

Mr. Bridgham explained that the construction costs were covered to have service installed at the Skeeter Lane community but the residents were still required to pay a small install fee.

Ms. Meil asked that Mr. Bridgham calculate the average installation cost to businesses vs the construction cost.

Ms. Meil asked if they would allow current customers to migrate to the small business rate.

Mr. Bridgham suggested giving commercial customers the option to migrate even if it means a decrease in revenue.

Mr. Kolakowski asked about a market plan to sign up the 137 commercial customers needed to make up the difference.

Mr. Bridgham explained that there are sales/marketing positions budgeted that haven't been filled yet that would help with signing customers.

Mr. Mason suggested scheduling a Rate Hearing at the July Meeting based on scenario B.

**b. Discuss current broadband climate on the Eastern Shore-**

**c. Discuss bandwidth & pricing of small business product-**


### **BOARD COMMENT**

None

### **ADIJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:42 pm.

These minutes were approved at the July 23, 2020 meeting of the Board of Directors of ESVBA.

  
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Presiding Officer

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*L Hoopes*

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Leah Hoopes, Secretary