

# MINUTES

## Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority

May 28, 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 2:14 pm.

Moment of silence for Peter Lalor

### **AGENDA ADOPTION**

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

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

### **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

*Mr. Mason moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from December, Work Session Minutes from February, and Emergency Meeting from March. Mr. Kolakowski seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

### **SYSTEM STATUS & BUILD REPORT**

1. Covid19- Mr. Bridgham explained to the board that the office is still closed to the public and a dropbox has been placed in the lobby for customers to drop off payments. Protective equipment has been purchased for employees and employees

- are able to telecommute when possible. The office is being disinfected daily and the staff is following VDH guidelines.
2. WiFi Hotspots- There are currently 13 hotspots in service. Exmore Town Park was disconnected by the town to limit people in the park. There is a new hotspot at ESO in Belle Haven.
  3. Residential Broadband- Mr. Bridgham reported that there are 49 customers in service in Harborton, 21 in Bobtown, 33 in Church Neck, 33 in Sanford, 2 on Cheapside, 2 on Cobbs Station, 57 in Accomac, 5 in Townsend, 10 in Greenbackville, 26 in Atlantic, 9 in Wattsville/Horntown, 32 in Oak Hall, 26 in Hallwood, 6 in Painter/Quinby, 24 in Eastville, 17 in Nassawadox, 5 in Oyster, 66 in Exmore, 21 in Belle Haven, 29 in Cheriton, 17 in Wachapreague, 133 in Onancock, 93 in Cape Charles, 24 in Parksley, 5 in Nocks Landing, and 1 in Chincoteague.

Mr. Mason asked what the wait time for underground install is. Mr. Bridgham stated that it could be as long as 3 or 4 months.

The ESVBA is still looking for an underground contractor.

Mr. Mason asked if we've seen any buy out payments from other service providers. Mr. Bridgham stated that very few customers have canceled service and most of the time it's due to relocating.

4. WISP EVPL Program- Mr. Bridgham informed the BOD that 54 sites are in service, 7 new sites on-order and underway.
5. Microcommunity Program- Mr. Bridgham stated that all 5 residents in Watts Bay have been completed and turned up. The Church Neck/Vaucluse microcommunity is underway. Wallops Millpond micro has been approved and was turned-up.

Mr. Bridgham gave a buildout update to the board that 125 miles have been built so far. A few towns have some underground that still needs to be completed. Engineering has been completed for Chincoteague and Tangier. The 20 mile build from Cheriton to Exmore will start soon. The buildout is expected to be completed by the end of this year. Ms. Meil asked if there were any funds budgeted for the operating costs for Tangier.

Mr. Bridgham stated that the install costs and any transportation costs of the contractors were all part of the bid.

Ms. Meil asked if there was an emergency and crews had to travel to Tangier what line item in the budget would cover the expense. Mr. Bridgham stated that there is a line item for transportation and that line item has had funds left over in the previous years.

**NEW BUSINESS.**

- a. **FY2021 Budget-** Mr. Mason asked if insurance for boring was budgeted. Mr. Bridgham replied that he would contact Vacorp and get a cost estimate.  
Mr. Mason asked if there were any increases to compensation. Mr. Bridgham replied that most of the existing positions are budgeted for a 3-5% raise.  
Mr. Mason stated that because of Covid, most of the local government put a hold on compensation increases for employees. Mr. Bridgham explained that the counties base their budgets on tax decreases, whereas ESVBA's revenue does not come from taxes.  
Ms. Meil stated that since ANPDC is a public body they also followed the counties.  
Mr. Bridgham asked to leave the compensation increases in the budget but put them on hold until the board decides otherwise.  
Mr. Kolakowski asked what if in 2 or 3 years contracting the underground jobs back out becomes more efficient.  
Mr. Bridgham explained that the jobs that will be done in house will pay back the boring machine in about a year. There are also many underground communities that will eventually need service.  
Mr. Kolakowski asked to have the budget approval added to the June Work Session Meeting agenda.

**BOARD COMMENT**

None

**CLOSED SESSION**

Motion to enter into closed session according to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended;) Paragraph 33: Discussion or consideration by a local authority created in accordance with the Virginia Wireless Service Authorities Act (§ 15.2-5431.1 et seq.) of confidential proprietary information and trade secrets subject to the exclusion in subdivision 19 of § 2.2-3705.6, made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Kolakowski. The following board members

were present: Mr. Kolakowski, Mr. Mason, and Ms. Meil and voted affirmative.

After closed session, the Chair reconvened the meeting. Motion was made by Mr. Kolakowski, seconded by Mr. Mason that the Board had entered the closed session for that purpose as set out in Paragraph 33 of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended. Roll call vote taken Vote was that no other business discussed than as advised in Paragraph 33. The following board members were present: Mr. Kolakowski, Mr. Mason, and Ms. Meil.

*Mr. Kolakowski motioned to have the June 25th meeting at the NHC Chamber. Mr. Mason seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 pm.

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

Frank Meil  
Presiding Officer

Copy teste:

Leah Hoopes  
Leah Hoopes, Secretary