

# MINUTES

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

December 3, 2020

Board members in attendance were: John Reiter, Mike Mason, Charles Kolakowski 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: Pat Coady, Paul Hoggard, Mark Tubbs, and Mike Zodun,

Ms. Meil called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

### **AGENDA ADOPTION**

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

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Zodun (Belle Haven) congratulated the Authority on reaching 1000 residential customers. He expressed his appreciation for the bandwidth increase during Covid and encourages the Authority to look for funds to finish the expansion of the Eastern Shore.

Mr. Hoggard (Coastal Contracting) asked to speak with the board privately to address some concerns.

Mr. Coady announced that the VA Broadband council meets on 12/4 and will be taken a vote on a request from the legislature for an opinion from the broadband council as to whether broadband authorities should be eligible for VATA funds without having a downstream private partner.

### **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

*Mr. Mason moved to approve the Meeting Minutes from September. Mr. Kolakowski seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

*Mr. Kolakowski moved to approve the Work Session Meeting Minutes from October. Mr. Reiter seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

## **SYSTEM STATUS & BUILD REPORT**

1. WiFi Hotspots- There are currently 16 hotspots in service. The Authority has 2 additional hotspots in Northampton County and 6 in Accomack.  
Mr. Mason asked if any of the hotspots won't get done before 12/31.  
Mr. Bridgham replied that Pine Street hotspot has underground and that's the only one that might not get done.
2. Residential Broadband- Mr. Bridgham reported the Authority broke the 1000 residential customer mark and currently have over 300 residents waiting to be installed. He stated that there are 57 customers in service in Harborton, 21 in Bobtown, 51 in Church Neck, 44 in Sanford, 2 on Cheapside, 3 on Cobbs Station, 76 in Accomac, 6 in Townsend, 16 in Greenbackville, 40 in Atlantic, 35 in Wattsville/Horntown, 50 in Oak Hall, 57 in Hallwood, 26 in Painter/Quinby, 43 in Eastville, 31 in Nassawadox, 6 in Oyster, 133 in Exmore, 39 in Belle Haven, 41 in Cheriton, 26 in Wachapreague, 222 in Onancock, 165 in Cape Charles, 67 in Parksley, 5 in Nocks Landing, 24 in Saxis, and 2 on Chincoteague.
3. WISP EVPL Program- Mr. Bridgham informed the BOD that 56 sites are in service, 8 new sites on-order and underway.
4. Microcommunity Program- There are 3 communities that are in service and 9 others that are in various stages of progress.
5. Audit- We received the draft final and are awaiting the final.

## **OLD BUSINESS.**

- a. **Discuss Service Extension Policy-** Mr. Bridgham presented the different scenario options.  
Mr. Mason stated that he understands the fairness issue but by trying to solve one problem, it creates another and therefore does not support changing the current policy.  
Mr. Reiter agrees with Mr. Mason.  
Mr. Kolakowski would like to come up with a plan of future expansion.  
Mr. Mason suggested waiting to see what comes from the Broadband Advisory meeting on Friday.

Ms. Meil asked what materials would be needed to have a productive discussion on future funds and plans.

Mr. Bridgham stated that he would look at additional factors from the ones that were used in the last metrics.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **2021 Board Schedule** - Mr. Bridgham presented the schedule and asked the board about adding Work Session Meetings.

Mr. Kolakowski asked when Mr. Bridgham would have the information for the Work Session.

Mr. Bridgham replied that February should be enough time.

*Mr. Reiter motioned to approve the schedule with the November Meeting being rescheduled to December 2nd and adding a Work Session Meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Mason seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

- b. **EDA & RUS Grant Applications** -

Mr. Reiter asked if there is any downside to applying to the grants.

Mr. Bridgham stated that they would possibly need to contract with PDC to help with the grant.

*Mr. Mason motioned for the Authority take the necessary steps to start the application process including submission. Mr. Reiter seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

- c. **Approve staff year-end bonuses of \$24,200-**

*Mr. Reiter motioned to approve the staff bonuses in the amount presented. Mr. Kolakowski seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

- d. **Resolution to update bank signature cards-**

*Mr. Mason motioned to update the signature cards. Mr. Kolakowski seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Mason presented the treasurers report.

### **BOARD COMMENT**

Mr. Mason wanted to thank Mr. Bridgham and the staff for the assistance in providing the ACPS with WiFi hotspots in a timely manner.

### **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. Kolakowski, seconded by Mr. Reiter. The following board members were present: Mr. Reiter, Mr. Mason, Mr. Kolakowski, and Ms. Meil and voted affirmative.

After closed session, the Chair reconvened the meeting. Motion was made by Mr. Reiter, seconded by Mr. Kolakowski 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. Reiter, Mr. Mason, Mr. Kolakowski, and Ms. Meil.

*Mr. Mason moved to schedule a Rate Hearing for 7-year pricing on 1, 2, 5 and 10 Gig bandwidth as well as 5-year pricing on 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 Gig. Mr. Reiter seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

*Mr. Kolakowski moved to schedule the Rate Hearing for February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 2pm. Mr. Mason seconded. Motion passed unopposed.*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

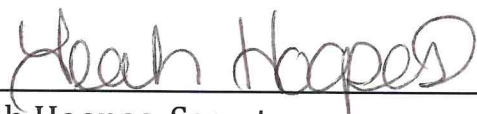
The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 pm.

These minutes were approved at the January 28, 2021 meeting of the Board of Directors of ESVBA.



Presiding Officer

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Leah Hoopes, Secretary