

## QAC Broadband Advisory Committee (BAC) Meeting

January 17, 2019 | 4 pm - 6 pm

Discussion of letter of recommendation to Commissioners

### Attendees

#### BAC/QAC

- Ben Schaffle
- Ed Cummins
- Alison Davis
- Megan DelGaudio
- Jacob Wargotz
- Scott Seaborne
- Andrew Costello
- Adam Weinstein
- Jack Wilson
- Jonathan Seeman

### 1. Letter Discussion

- One RFP for Consulting – another separate one for Engineering
- First RFP will provide a reasonable impartial way to prioritize future work and will rank the order of potential projects. Spec out needs. Review need and determine if there is low hanging fruit to serve first. Roadmap will consider possibility of meeting multiple needs. Present priority recommendation to CC for review.
- Second - sequential RFP will provide the engineering of the network. Spec out technology. **Will we send multiple requests for engineering due to multiple technologies?** Possible partnerships developing in a variety of companies (technologies).
- As per Jack the new Commissioners are adamant about doing something and would like a pathway/roadmap to move forward.
- If there is a monetary attachment to a project the Commissioners have to approve it. They assign people they trust to make recommendations and argue for those recommendations. Commissioners do not typically take issue with recommendations unless there is something glaring.
- Need to add comments regarding that we not only want to accommodate the unserved and underserved, but also work to keep technology current. Service provided in existing areas is on aging technology and may need to be replaced to keep up with demand.
- County would prefer to keep the number of RFP's to a minimum due to the amount of effort it takes to process them.
- RFP will be issued by County IT
- Letter will be the basis of the presentation to the Commissioners on 2/26 at 6:45pm – 7pm
- Jack will be asking “So what do you want us to do now?” Need to have a game plan outlined for BAC and Commissioners.

- Jon Seeman and Megan to determine what type of help – administrative and/or consultant - will make working through the first RFP easier?
- Jack mentioned grant money available from Upper Shore Regional Council if we wrap this around economic development.
- First RFP estimated by group to cost between \$70 – 85K
- In our plan – be sure to outline how long each RFP is expected to take to complete – 1<sup>st</sup> – 6 – 9 months?
- In presentation – crystalize the scope and complexity of the issue for both those that don't have broadband and those that do.
- Best marketing arm is QACTV and Social media sites.

## *2. ABB/Franchise Discussion*

- Jack suggested that we build the 3.5 miles of fiber for Colby project to get within the requirements of the Franchise agreement where ABB is required to build. County would give them the conduit and fiber if installed. Not sure of legalities of this. BAC would like to check with Cohen Law group for some guidance. Also curious about the timing that they are required to build in when density requirements are met.
- Franchise Agreement funds will continue to shrink over the coming years.
- Jack mentioned that he had met someone from Comcast that he was interested in having speak to the group. Comcast runs up 213. Would they consider building out internet so they wouldn't have to go through franchise agreement process?
- Franchise agreement does not prohibit competition from coming into the County.
- 5G wants to come into high density areas – will not help rural parts of the County.

## *3. Other Business*

- Brief overview of Connect America Fund. This was an auction of funds from carriers that were available to any company that wanted to provide broadband to underserved areas (I believe based on census block). The last auction took place in July – Aug 2018 where no carriers bid on any of the census blocks in QAC. Not well advertised – no press releases on the FCC site.
- Jacob Wargotz term on the BAC is ending at the end of March. Jacob was amendable to remaining on the committee. Everyone voted unanimously (informally) to keep Jacob on the Committee. All that needs to be done is a letter to Lynda Thomas (Commissioners Office) stating the Board is recommending that Jacob's term be continued for another three year term.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Next meeting on 2/7 – 4-6pm 110 Vincit Street, Suite 100 to finalize the letter and presentation.
- Megan to send out Franchise agreement to BAC.

- Megan to send addendums to Adam to put on Google drive for Ben to start putting a presentation together.