

QAC Broadband Advisory Committee Meeting

April 2, 2020

4 – 4:40 pm

Attendees:

BAC/QAC

Megan Delgaudio

Ed Cummins – via phone

Ben Schaffle – via phone

Mary Ellen Sheffield

Scott Seaborn – via phone

Alison Davis – via phone

Joyce Jones – via phone

Ziggy Rivkin-Fish – CTC Technology – via phone

Motion to begin by Ben second by Alison at 4:03 pm

Megan is forwarding the past minutes to members during this meeting so they may be approved and posted.

Ziggy – Broadband Study Update:

There are a few interesting things to note though in regard to federal grant opportunities.

- 1) Congress added \$100 million to ReConnect as part of Covid-19 (will be relevant in next year's grant). More money could follow later as part of infrastructure/stimulus bills later
- 2) As you know, the initial RDOF areas just came out with to use for Phase I applications:
 - Partially eligible areas are postponed until Phase II – not relevant for QAC though
 - For Phase I they will use bulk of the funds about \$16 Billion, the other \$4 Billion for Phase II
 - In Phase II they expect to use updated, more accurate maps (Previously used 477 data – data provided by providers to the FCC – overstated coverage since one address in a census block required the block be shown as fully covered)
 - Phase II will be whatever didn't get awarded in Phase I + partial areas
 - I don't see any fixed wireless indicated in the eligible maps!!!
 - There is a short challenge period (until April 15) for providers to object and claim areas initially denoted as eligible they are covering, BUT
 - They can only claim areas they recently built out - since June 30, 2019
 - Or for which they have been awarded a federal or state grant
 - This COULD mean that there will be areas in the RDOF opportunity that will be immune from fixed wireless providers claiming 25/3!! This will position wired broadband as more favorable than wireless.
 - I generated a quick map to illustrate:

Queen Anne's County areas served with Cable and Fiber and initial RDOF areas



- 3) Met with Atlantic Broadband to review their infrastructure and compare their coverage are to CTP. Running cost calculations for report
- 4) CTC report – will be sending the draft by April 15th.
- 5) Grants
 - a. County can expect 1st grants to be available by the end of the year.
 - b. Reconnect – Provider applies for the grants; the County can work with them to support their application. These should have an October timeframe. Can only partner with one provider
 - c. RDOF – not sure when these will be available
 - d. The County has not passed or missed any grants; on track for available opportunities. Start applying for Federal Grants, then piggy back with State. The State opportunity will be with Choptank. Their legislation has been approved, they should be ready. **Megan and Ziggy** will reach out to Choptank to check on the status.

Alison interested to know when ABB will be moving forward with the build to Bulle Rock.

Megan – MOU with the State has been signed; MOU with Atlantic Broadband should be signed soon. Hoping installation does not take more than 6 months depending on the current situation.

Alison – Can we exclude any provider if we are not sure of the integrity of the provider?

Advice from CTC – You get more risk and limited value when working with wireless providers. If a wireless provider wins a Federal grant for an area, their equipment gets old and the decide to fold in 10 years you cannot get another Federal grant for the same area.

Ben motioned to adjourn second by Joyce at 4:40 pm