

## Broadband Advisory Committee Agenda – 8/20/2020

Attendees:

Ed Cummins  
Ed Clower  
Alison Davis  
Ben Schaffle  
Joyce Jones  
Scott Seaborne  
Andrew Costello  
Megan DelGaudio

Motion to begin– Ed Cummins seconded by Alison

- Welcome our new member Ed Clower – technical background – Cyber Security
- Meeting minutes approval for April and May meetings – June Executive Committee to talk to Think Big – Motion to approve - Ed Cummins Seconded by Alison
- Choptank Electric – Did they get enough votes to provide broadband? Yes – and submitted their short form – so they are applying for RDOF funding – Rural Digital Opportunity Fund - <https://www.choptankelectric.coop/broadband>
- CARES Act fund update
  - ThinkBig progress – More interest just a bit further down the road – Baxter road and a few blocks away on Peters corner – said I would discuss possibilities of expansion of this project if more money is available. They said they would provide costs of chunks. I passed this information along to Jonathan Seeman. He was receptive if there is money left over.
  - School hotspots with Skyline – contract signed. Schools also received \$700K of State money for take home hotspots for students
  - Hotspots with ABB – waiting for equipment
- Bulle Rock update - -also waiting for equipment – pushing date of completion into late Sept or October for equipment delivery
- EDA Grant update –Trying to determine areas of need for broadband in the rural community as it relates to businesses. –
  - As per CTC - \$ running out for current COVID EDA grant but may be more coming.
  - Good to have strategy ready – a place to pinpoint where 20 jobs can be created – as part of COVID.
  - Survey questions –
    - Joyce added - How would having access to broadband help improve your business, farming and personal life.
    - Alison added - Has the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected your business and economic viability, and would broadband make you more competitive
    - If you have any more questions, please get them to me by 8/31.
- Rumored that there will be State money available at end of September.

- Steps forward –
  - Extend a request to be a partner? Need to meet specific criteria – some listed in plan. We need to set – use caution to be sure we partner with entities that are sustainable – can we require financial disclosure – actual subscriber lists (not sure we'll get this from ABB) – not just a letter stating they have x subscribers – maybe a summary.
    - Surety letter – performance bond
    - Ask CTC how they have done this for others? How did they do this for Charles County? Do you put out applications for partners? How are they vetted?
    - Google what others have done

Here are recommendations for partnership from the BB Strategic Plan from CTC.

- First, capability and experience in cost-effectively building communications infrastructure. These capabilities can range from demonstrated experience to ownership of the poles (which conveys structural benefits and enables lower-cost construction) to existing communications infrastructure in the area, such as fiber optic or coaxial plant.
  - • Second, a partner with demonstrated experience as an internet service provider. Our experience is that USDA in particular requires a showing of such experience for funding grants—and it certainly conveys additional benefits for any state or federal grant application.
  - • Third, a strong and experienced management team.
  - • Fourth, a track record in successfully applying for state or federal grants or both. This is a demonstration of the fact that grant makers have already vetted the company and approved its capabilities.
  - • Fifth, experience partnering with local governments and a clear willingness to work collaboratively with a local government on grant applications and toward shared goals.
- Need to be sure partnership is setup correctly – issue in Fairfax County where some were called out where they said there was a partnership and there wasn't an official partnership.
  - Be sure nothing is arbitrary and capricious.
  - Work through criteria through email.
- FAQ sheet – Alison
    - Provide some info about what different options are – cable, fiber, fixed wireless, mobile
    - Put something together – you live here this is your option.  
<https://broadbandnow.com/Maryland/Queen-Anne> - uses zip code - Cambio not on there.

- Options link - <https://broadbandnow.com/Maryland/Queen-Anne> – possibly in GIS with DISCLAIMER or Broadbandmap.fcc.gov and Cellmapper.net (tougher to use so need instructions)
- Outside of the box options – trenching to your home with ABB – Megan to verify they still allow this.
- This is what the Broadband Advisory Committee has done and is doing
- Link to Strategic Plan
- Handout to be made available at Libraries or other public places
- Also include a survey – do you need broadband – benefit to you – what’s your story?

Executive Session – To discuss a matter that concerns the proposal for a business to expand.

Move to go into Executive session– Andrew Costello – Seconded by Joyce Jones

Move to leave Exec session – Joyce Jones – Seconded by Alison Davis

Joyce – went into exec session and no actions were taken

Back to Steps Forward

- New State grants will be available in September. Do we want to extend a Request for Information for anyone interested in getting a grant to submit a project for us to review? We have \$150K to use for matching or other.
  - Focus on Choptank for north and look for partners for areas outside of Choptank area? This can be part of the selection criteria
  - Other Criteria - CTC areas – numbers – more students – knock those areas out 1x1 – Sudlersville - # to quantify - identify neediest areas
  - ABB already a partner so no issue with them applying for grant without added partnership criteria
  - ThinkBig viable partner – Would Choptank be a willing partner?
  - Need to have partnerships nailed down in order to apply for grants – this is part of the State criteria.

Motion to adjourn - Ben Schaffle – Ed Cummins seconded.