

Lancaster County Broadband Authority



Report to the Board of Supervisors

October 25, 2018

During the month of October the Broadband Authority received approval of its Articles of Incorporation. The Authority continues to follow through on its initial activities. Complete minutes of the Authority's meetings are available, but this report will highlight several important items that are currently in process.

1. The Authority is continuing to pursue discussions with the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) about the timing and content of our access and utilization survey. Unfortunately, CIT is behind schedule on making our survey instrument available. The survey will be a key element in determining the most appropriate way to scope and schedule future broadband expansion projects.
2. The Authority is focusing on budget concerns, and in this regard is preparing to apply for a planning grant from the federally-funded Community Development Block Grant program administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. The Authority will also be approaching the Lancaster County Economic Development Authority for planning funds. The CDBG grant application is due in January and the EDA request will be submitted in November.
3. The Authority further evaluated the proposal from homeowners at Eagle Landing to apply for a grant from the Virginia Technology Initiative (VATI) to underwrite 80% of the construction cost for Atlantic Broadband to install its cable and bring service to their homes. Eagle Landing homeowners initially proposed a project to serve 26 homes in their development and another 28 on the route for a total of 54 homes. The Authority felt that project was too small to warrant serious consideration by the VATI funders. Accordingly, we recommended expanding the project to reach 199 homes. Eagle Landing HOA was in favor of the larger project, but Atlantic Broadband declined to participate, citing a lack of resources. Without Atlantic Broadband's participation, the project cannot proceed and will be shelved.
4. Finally, prior to formation of the Authority, the Board had requested its informal advisory group to provide a briefing on issues surrounding the renewal of the County's cable television franchise. The Authority is continuing to pursue the information necessary to properly advise the Supervisors. We are in touch with Fran Bradley of Atlantic Broadband to obtain mapping and rate information and we are in the process of obtaining information from the towns of Kilmarnock Irvington and White Stone about their respective contracts with Atlantic. When we have the necessary information, we will schedule individual meetings with each of the Supervisors to prepare you for a meeting with ABb.