



Lancaster County Broadband Authority
Minutes of Board Meeting
June 2, 2021

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1. Call to Order: Cassie Thompson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. in the Board/Commission meeting room of the County Administration Building. Cassie Thompson, Cherie Kiser, Michele Craddock, Dr. Gary Silverman, Kevin Bean, and Dr. Robert Westbrook were present. Nicholas Pascaretti attended by video conference.

2. Public Comment: Cassie Thompson invited the public to make comments.

Citizens of Lancaster from the Eagles Landing neighborhood provided an update on their experiences with BTS/Jeff Beekhoo with respect to the CARES Act wireless project:

- Charles Rusinak stated that at the May 19th LCBA meeting Jeff Beekhoo stated many areas within the CARE'S Act service areas would not receive service due to issues with the topography and trees. This is not a legitimate reason to deny service under the terms of BTS' contract. He asked the LCBA ensure that BTS complies with the terms of its contract. He expressed concerns that BTS may improperly shift costs to its customers and noted BTS' previous estimates for alternative services were over \$200 per month. Mr. Rusinak's home is supposed to be one of the CARES Act project test sites for BTS, but he still has not heard from BTS and BTS has never provided him (or others in the group) with any service agreement.
- Wallace Dawson added the topography and tree structure have not changed since BTS executed the contract with the County (recently assigned to LCBA). He reiterated Mr. Rusinak's concerns regarding the lack of a services agreement and expressed concern that when the CARES Act funding ends, BTS could dramatically increase the cost of services.
- John McCalla reported that BTS recently purchased SignaWave, which currently serves the Eagles Landing neighborhood at a rate of \$100 per month. Jeff Beekhoo now states that he will not be able to service the neighborhood through the CARES Act tower project (at the required \$50 per month rate).
- Mr. Rusinak submitted a document containing some of the citizens comments and a copy of alternative service solution BTS previously provided to him (attached).

Cherie Kiser advised the citizens that the LCBA will monitor BTS' compliance with its obligations under the contract and act accordingly.

3. Approval of Minutes: Kevin Bean made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2021 meeting. Cherie Kiser seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by a vote of 4-0 (Dr. Gary Silverman abstained because he was not present at the last meeting):

- Michele Craddock – voted in favor of the motion.
- Cherie Kiser – voted in favor of the motion.
- Cassie Thompson – voted in favor of the motion.
- Kevin Bean - voted in favor of the motion.

4. Discussions:

- a. Dr. Gary Silverman presented the revisions to the broadband paragraph for inclusion in the County’s comprehensive plan. Cassie Thompson made a motion to approve the paragraph with the revisions. Kevin Bean seconded the motion. The directors approved the motion by unanimous vote.
- b. Nicholas Pascaretti reviewed the revisions to the 5/19/2021 Memo to the BOS and attached business plan, which addressed the Chairman of the BOS request that we specifically mention fiber in the documents and Dr. Gary Silverman’s request that we include a paragraph addressing the shift in the LCBA’s strategic approach.

Dr. Gary Silverman presented a chart he prepared containing a non-exhaustive list of the pros and cons of the LCBA owning and operating a fiber network. He requested we discuss each item and attach the chart to the Memo to the BOS and business plan, which he stated would improve the document and create better understanding why the strategic shift was made.

Cherie Kiser expressed concern that the presentation/chart is potentially misleading due to the impact of unprecedented State and Federal funding of Broadband, legislative initiatives, and the investment of private companies such as APB/Dominion. Cherie Kiser stated that she disagreed with Dr. Gary Silverman’s suggestion that LCBA did not analyze the pros and cons outlined by Dr. Silverman in making the decision to enter into public-private partnerships funded by federal and state grants instead of the LCBA spending millions of taxpayer dollars to own and operate a broadband network. Ms. Kiser opposed Dr. Silverman’s request to add Dr. Silverman’s chart to the Memo as the LCBA’s decisions are set forth in the LCBA 5/19/21 Memo to the BOS and LCBA business plan.

Cassie Thompson also disagreed with the idea of revisiting the pros and cons chart and noted the documents are living documents that may be changed in the future. The LCBA must move forward with its decisions.

Michele Craddock noted the proforma in the business plan demonstrates it is not feasible for the LCBA to own a network and operate it as an ISP because the losses would be in the millions of dollars for years. Each of the pros and cons in Dr. Gary Silverman’s new chart were evaluated before the LCBA approved the Memo and business plan. The Memo and business plan were submitted to the BOS then the LCBA met and collaborated

with the BOS last week. The minor revisions Mr. Pascaretti presented at this meeting added a few paragraphs that addressed the revisions the BOS requested, and the changes Dr. Gary Silverman's drafted and requested. There is no reason to add the document since the assessment was completed before the informed decision made at the last meeting. If we need to update the Memo and/or business plan in the future due to a change of circumstances, such as new legislation or new funding opportunities, we can do so.

Michele Craddock made a motion to approve the revisions to Memo to the Board of Supervisors and the attachment. Cherie Kiser seconded the motion.

The directors approved the motion (3-2):

- Michele Craddock – voted in favor of the motion.
 - Cherie Kiser – voted in favor of the motion.
 - Cassie Thompson – voted in favor of the motion.
 - Dr. Gary Silverman – voted against the motion.
 - Kevin Bean – voted against the motion.
- c. Cassie Thompson led a discussion on potential funding by the Jessie Ball duPont Fund and the impact of the APB/Dominion project on the potential projects the LCBA considered discussing with the foundation.
- d. Cassie Thompson reported on the history and purpose behind the management team, which supported the LCBA's grant applications, and noted the purpose of management team is obsolete due to current circumstances. Dr. Gary Silverman made a motion to dissolve the management team. Kevin Bean seconded the motion. The directors voted unanimously to approve the motion.
- e. **Closed Session:** At 6:25 p.m., we entered a closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A) 29, discussion of public contracts. The specific matters discussed were limited to the discussion of public contracts. The closed meeting concluded at 6:58 p.m. Each member certified that the matters specified above were the only matters discussed.

4. Schedule next meeting and adjourned: Michele Craddock made a motion to adjourn the meeting Cassie Thompson seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:05. The next regular meeting will be held on June 16, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Secretary