



112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401

Phone: (540) 885-5174
Fax: (540) 885-2687

**Bath-Highland Network Authority
Organizational Meeting
Via Zoom Video Conference Call
Monday, April 12, at 1pm**

Authority Members in attendance:	Organization
David Blanchard	Highland County
George Hogshead	Highland County
Ronald Wimer	Town of Monterey
Others in attendance:	Organization
Robert Huff	MGW
Mike Bollinger	The Recorder
Grace Blanchard	CSPDC

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. David Blanchard called the BHNA meeting to order at 1:03 PM. Mr. Blanchard introduced the authority's newest board member, Mr. George Hogshead, from Highland County.

Elections

Mr. Blanchard announced that the first agenda item is to elect officers for the Authority, starting with a new Chair. According to the authority bylaws, the Chair needs to rotate to a representative from the Town of Monterey. Mr. Blanchard nominated Mr. Ronald Wimer for Chair. Mr. George Hogshead moved to elect Mr. Wimer as Chair for the Authority, and Mr. Blanchard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

As newly elected chair, Mr. Ronald Wimer led the meeting.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the past meeting on February 1, 2021 were provided to the members prior to the meeting by email. Mr. Hogshead noted an error on page two of the minutes. The minutes refer to a "Verizon" cellphone tower; this should be corrected to read "AT&T First Net." Mr. Blanchard moved, seconded by Mr. Hogshead, to approve the February meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.



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Insurance Renewal

Ms. Grace Blanchard shared an email message from Mr. Ashton Harrison reporting that current insurance coverage expires on July 1, 2021. Ms. Blanchard will contact Mr. Harrison and Ms. Roberta Lambert regarding the insurance renewal.

Cell Service Update

Mr. Wimer reported that he had heard no updates on neither the Bath nor Monterey cell tower sites. Mr. Hogshead shared that, regarding the AT&T Tower in Monterey, the contractor is waiting for official authorization from AT&T before moving forward.

Broadband Update

Ms. Grace Blanchard shared that VATI awards were announced on March 18th and congratulated Augusta County and MGW/Lingo for being awarded \$1,270,413 for connections to McDowell & Deerfield

Additionally, the state announced that DHCD will award up to \$49.7 million in Fiscal Year 2022 through the VATI program to eligible applicants for last-mile broadband services. VATI Public Input Sessions to discuss new guidelines will be on April 27 & May 4. VATI applications will open June 17th. Notice of VATI Applications are due July 27th, and final applications are due September 14th.

Ms. Blanchard also shared that broadband infrastructure is an eligible use of American Rescue Funds.

Mr. Robert Huffman reported that MGW had met with the state regarding the VATI grant award last week.

Provider Updates

Mr. Blanchard shared that the Highland Telephone Cooperative is in process of laying down fiber to the Mill Gap area.

Mr. Robert Huff reported that he will provide more updates on broadband construction as the VATI project progresses.

Other Business

Ms. Grace Blanchard asked the board for their preference regarding virtual or in person meetings. Mr. David Blanchard conveyed that for brief meetings, it is most convenient to meet virtually. If a project or particular conversation comes up, then the authority can schedule an in-person meeting. For now, the authority will plan to meet virtually in July.

Members discussed possible projects for the American Rescue Funds. Mr. Huff asked for the county to share information with him as additional guidelines on the recovery funds are provided.

Members discussed and decided to elect a Vice Chair when a representative from Bath County is present.

Adjournment

Mr. George Hogshead moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Mr. David Blanchard. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting concluded at 1:35 PM. Mr. Wimer announced that the next BHNA meeting will on July 12th at 1:00 PM.