



112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

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

**Bath-Highland Network Authority Meeting  
Monday, October 18, 2021 at 1pm**

**Bolar Ruritan Club  
38 Bolar Ln Monterey, VA 24465**

Authority Members in attendance:	Organization
David Blanchard	Highland County
George Hogshead	Highland County
Ronald Wimer (Chair)	Town of Monterey
Ashton Harrison (Vice Chair)	Bath County
Others in attendance:	Organization
Robert Huff	MGW
Hunter Moore	CSPDC

**Welcome and Introductions**

With Mr. Ronald Wimer absent at the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Ashton Harrison called the BHNA meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the past meeting on July 12th, 2021 were provided to the members. Mr. David Blanchard moved, seconded by Mr. George Hogshead, to approve the July meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**2022 VATI Application**

Ms. Hunter Moore discussed the DHCD's 2022 VATI program and BHNA application. The State received 57 applications this year representing 84 localities. Over \$900 million in grant funding was requested with over \$1 billion in matching funds. The CSPDC applied for VATI funds on behalf of the Authority, with MGW as the internet service provider co-applicant. If funded, this \$10,990,000 project would bring universal coverage to Bath and Highland counties, serving about 2,470 locations. Any challenges to VATI applications are due on October 21<sup>st</sup>. DHCD will notify challenged applicants on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Challenge rebuttals are due on November 18<sup>th</sup> and challenge determinations will be notified on December



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3<sup>rd</sup>. Award announcements are expected to be made by the end of December 2021. Discussion ensued about fiber upgrades from copper infrastructure and VATI award announcement timing.

### **Cell Service**

Mr. Hogshead gave an update on cell service for Highland County. He met with a T-Mobile's Senior Sales Manager and discussed the lack of cell coverage in Highland County. Highland County is trying to find a cellular partner that was willing to look at a multi-tower approach to fill coverage gaps in the county, starting with McDowell. Mr. Hogshead shared with the T-Mobile representative that these were low population areas but that a location is near US250 and would catch tourist, commuter, and commercial truck traffic. T-Mobile agreed to pitch the idea to their engineering person for their assessment. T-Mobile's head of engineering for Virginia plans to look at the overall area and see if they could come up with a proposed solution that could be phased in over time. Mr. Hogshead hopes to get an update from T-Mobile soon.

### **Provider Updates**

Mr. Robert Huff with MGW reported on the 2021 VATI project in Highland County. MGW entered into contract with the State in July 2021. Augusta County is handling the grant administration, including uploading documents in CAMS. MGW handles reporting and invoices the project activities in two-month periods. For July and August, MGW completed 30 of the 235 passings in the McDowell portion of the project. In September and October, work continued in the McDowell area and fiber is now available on Cowpasture River Rd South, Jack Mountain Rd, Keister Hollow Rd, and portions of Seldom Seen Rd and other roads off Doe Hill Rd. MGW plans to move to the Grant Lane and Davis Run area of Rt. 250 for the 2021 VATI project next.

### **Electronic Participation Policy**

Authority members reviewed the Electronic Participation Policy provided by Ms. Moore. Mr. Harrison suggested adding a number to the resolution, such as 2021-01. Members agreed. With that change made, Mr. Harrison moved that the electronic participation policy to be approved, seconded by Mr. Hogshead.

### **Proposed 2022 Meeting Dates**

Ms. Moore included proposed 2022 meeting dates on the meeting agenda. Members discussed the first meeting in February and elections. Three members terms will technically be ending according to the bylaws including, Mr. Blanchard, Mr. Wimer, and Mr. Fry. Ms. Moore will send a reminder to Authority members in mid-December about upcoming 2022 elections and board member replacements.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Wimer asked if there was any other business to discuss. Ms. Moore asked members about a meeting location in February. The BHNA will plan to meet at the Bolar Ruritan Club unless there is bad weather.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Blanchard moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Mr. Harrison. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting concluded at 1:30 PM. The next BHNA meeting will on Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 1:00 PM.



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**2022 Meeting Dates:**

Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 1pm (Elections)

Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at 1pm

Monday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 1pm

Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 1pm