



112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

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

**Bath-Highland Network Authority Meeting  
Monday, April 17, 2023 at 1pm**

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

Authority Members in attendance:	Organization
George Hogshead	Highland County
David Blanchard	Highland County
Sherry Ryder	Bath County
Michael Bender (Vice Chair)	Bath County
Others in attendance:	Organization
Chad Kimble	HTC
Tammy Minnigh	The Recorder
Hunter Moore	CSPDC
Jeremy Crute	CSPDC

**Welcome and Introductions**

With Chairman Mr. Ron Wimer absent, Mr. Michael Bender called the BHNA meeting to order at 1:04 PM and all attending introduced themselves.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes**

Meeting minutes of the past meeting on February 6, 2023 were provided to the members. The BHNA members reviewed the minutes. Mr. George Hogshead moved, seconded by Ms. Sherry Ryder to approve the February meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.



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### **Update on BHNA VATI Project**

Ms. Moore updated the group on the BHNA VATI 2022 project. The CSPDC continues to submit monthly remittances and reports to DHCD. From the March 2022 monthly report that was submitted in April, there are 482 current serviceable passings completed in Bath and Highland counties for this project, and 48 subscribers. About 23 miles of fiber for the project is completed. In March, work was completed in areas near McDowell, and work continues along the route 220 corridor. Ms. Moore also shared that the CSPDC and MGW are planning a site visit with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in May.

### **Provider Updates**

Mr. Chad Kimble gave an update on HTC activities. They plan to finish up their local 15-mile project this year and are almost at 100%. This project will connect 55 homes east of Route 250 to connect to MGW's service area, near Strike Creek. They completed a 25-mile project last year. Mr. Bender asked if the majority of the newly installed fiber lines will be buried. Mr. Kimble answered that it is a mix, but roughly 85% will be in the ground. He also pointed out that burying fiber lines is not a guarantee that they will be protected. Animals and other hazards can still damage buried lines. Mr. Blanchard asked if, in the case of a damaged fiber line, it is easy to pinpoint where the failure occurred. Mr. Kimble said that it is much easier with the new lines and new technology they are installing. The group also discussed the High Valley area, which is very rocky. HTC plans to tackle this problem and will go back to fill in the gaps once all other service areas are complete. Mr. Blanchard asked if the copper lines that are being replaced by fiber will be removed. Mr. Kimble responded that HTC's next phase, after installing the fiber, will be to remove the hanging copper wire. He said that the buried copper lines, will likely stay in the ground.

### **Cell Service Update**

Mr. Blanchard asked if there were any changes to the tower in McDowell, since there seems to be more service available. This may be due to network extenders in the area and it may change as leaf foliage comes in.

Ms. Ryder updated the group the tower coming to Millboro. Construction on the tower should begin soon in May. This is a Verizon tower on Crooked Spur. Mr. Hogshead may try to get Verizon contacts involved with this Millboro tower. He has had a hard time getting providers to entertain a discussion for Highland County needs. Unfortunately, there is little return for providers to come to the area, which is a major dilemma. Mr. Kimble added that even if there was an existing tower, it is still hard to find a provider to their hang equipment. McDowell area is in need of more cell service. Mr. Hogshead also mentioned there is an utility pole with a fiber connection in McDowell that may be a good location for small cell tower. Mr. Kimble added that installing towers west of Highland's existing towers would likely not be possible due to the quiet zone.

### **Other Business**

Ms. Ryder shared that BARC Electric is extending their fiber throughout Bath County and providing hookups. The group also discussed TDS service, communication, and ISP inaction.



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Mr. Blanchard asked about the Authority's policy on having zoom meetings. The BHNA would be allowed to have one zoom meeting a year, and this may be beneficial for the February meeting. Ms. Moore will put this on the meeting agenda for the next meeting in July.

Ms. Moore will start coordinating with coworker, Mr. Jeremy Crute on all BHNA business, due to her upcoming maternity leave that may begin in July. If she cannot attend July's meeting, Mr. Crute will be her replacement throughout maternity leave.

### **Adjournment**

With no further discussion, Ms. Ryder moved, seconded by Mr. Hogshead, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The BHNA meeting concluded at 1:35 PM. The next meeting will be held on Monday, July 10th, 2023 at 1pm at the Bolar Ruritan Club.

### **2023 Meeting Dates:**

Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup> at 1pm

Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 1pm