



Lancaster County Broadband Authority
Report to the Board of Supervisors
December 10, 2020

Complete minutes of the Broadband Authority's meetings are available online at www.lancova-broadband.org, but this report will update you on important items that are in process.

1. One bidder responded to the advertisement for the CARES Act project. Broadband Telecom Systems of Hampton Roads was awarded the contract. The equipment is currently on order, and it should be installed by the end of the month. As approved by the Board at its October meeting, a wireless broadcast array will be mounted on the privately-owned tower located on County land behind the Sheriff's Office. There will be no net cost to the County for the use of the tower. Total cost of this project will be funded by the \$300,000 CARES Act grant from the state.
2. After careful consideration, the Authority has determined that it is not feasible to pursue a Community Connect grant. This federal program is intended to fund the building of community centers where publicly available computers can be installed and maintained. The length of fiber run that would be required to reach a location in the County where a community center would be useful is so long that our grant request would need to be for the program maximum of \$3 million. Our grant request would consume nearly 10% of the funds allocated for the whole US, and on reflection, we believe this is unrealistic.
3. We have received a response from USDA RUS about our ReConnect grant application. Our original application was for approximately \$22 million to connect some 2600 homes. RUS has requested that we make changes in our financial projections and that we modify the service areas that will be connected. When this is done, they will re-evaluate our application. The modified grant application is due no later than January 19, 2021.
4. As we work through the changes requested by RUS, we will also engage with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to determine how those changes might impact our VATI grant application, which is also pending. We filed that application jointly with Mathews, Caroline and Middlesex Counties. We had promised to withdraw from the VATI plan if our ReConnect grant came through first. We will continue to monitor the VATI status and keep the Board informed.
5. The Authority acknowledges the exceptional service of Margie Armen. Margie is one of three founding members of the Authority, and her term expires at the end of the month. She has served as Secretary since July 2018. Her position will be taken up by Cherie Kiser, whose appointment the Board approved last month. Michele Craddock will assume the duties of

Secretary beginning on January 1.