

BROADBAND ADVISORY COUNCIL
UNAPPROVED MINUTES

August 16, 2024

10:00 AM

Fredericksburg Branch Library Theater

1201 Caroline Street

Fredericksburg VA 22401

Virtual Option provided via Microsoft Teams

Members Present

Tamarah Holmes, Ph.D.
Delegate Herring
Delegate Willett
Delegate Srinivasan
Senator Boysko
Casey Logan
Rich Schollman
Senator Hackworth
Steve Sandy
Jimmy Carr
Ray LaMura
Delegate Leftwich
Kristie Proctor

Members Absent

None

Call to Order	Senator Jennifer Boysko, Acting Chair of the Broadband Advisory Council, called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.
Roll Call	Chandler Vaughan, Associate Director at the Office of Broadband, called the roll and stated that a quorum was present.
Approval of Minutes: January 9, 2024 Meeting	A motion was made and properly seconded to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2024, meeting of the Broadband Advisory Council. The motion passed to adopt the minutes as presented.
General Remarks	Acting Chair Boysko provided an opportunity opening remarks, to come before the Broadband Advisory Council. Dennis Clark, Librarian of Virginia, advocated on behalf of the library system as a longstanding beacon and community institution which advances digital equity and access across the state.

	<p>Bryan Horn, VA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) provided remarks on the recognition Virginia has received in efforts to bridge digital divide (e.g. BEAD, Makeready, Digital Opportunity).</p>
<p>Overview of Discussion</p>	<p>Tamarah Holmes Ph.D., Director of the Office of Broadband provided brief verbal updates on the Office’s work, including last-mile deployment program the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI), Broadband Equity and Access Deployment (BEAD) program, and Digital Opportunity. Detailed how we are moving slowly from infrastructure to affordability and adoption of broadband via Digital Equity administered through National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).</p>
<p>Office of Broadband Updates</p>	<p>Caroline Luxhoj, VATI Program Manager, presented on: historical funding of the program (FY17-FY23), the risk determination process in light of new language added to FY2025 and FY2026 biennium budget, and the most recent round of awarded programs announced by Governor Youngkin this past July.</p> <p>Chandler Vaughan, Associate Director of the Office of Broadband presented on other initiatives to streamline federal project delivery. Utilizing FCC’s 214 process to take defaulting projects under CAF-2 and RDOF and leverage the transfer process to keep federal dollars in Virginia and deliver connectivity to unserved regions.</p> <p>Chadler Vaughan, Associate Director of the Office of Broadband provided an overview of the Virginia Make Ready Initiative (VMRI) regarding key budget language for \$30,000,000 to provide supplements to eligible FY2022 VATI projects for make-ready costs regarding those determined to be at-risk for completion by December 31, 2026. He also provided an overview of federal last-mile deployment program, BEAD, to close the availability gap because “access to affordable, reliable high-speed broadband is essential to full participation in society.”</p> <p>Kalya Bravo, Intern in the Office of Broadband, provided a high-level overview of Virginia Digital Opportunity Initiatives: (1) Virginia Affordability and Adoption Planning Grant Program; (2) State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program; (3) Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program. VAAPG helps cities, counties, and tribal governments understand broadband affordability and adoption needs in their jurisdictions, better preparing them to address these needs.</p>

	Chris Glover, Assistant Director for IT, at Central Rappahannock Regional Library presented on the technology timeline of early broadband extending to the contemporaneous moment.
Public Comment	<p>EJ Scott, Chair of Virginia Economic Justice Committee of the NAACP, wants to inquire and ensure we are addressing equity in the advancement of broadband. Ms. Scott asked the following:</p> <p>Any demographics for the survey?</p> <p>Are there parameters set for low-cost options? What might be low-cost to you, may not be to others?</p> <p>Quality of connection to the home once established?</p>
Adjournment	Upon a motion made and properly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:01pm.

APPROVED