

BROADBAND ADVISORY COUNCIL

APPROVED MINUTES

June 9, 2023

10:00 AM

Virginia Housing Center

4224 Cox Road

Glen Allen, VA 23060

Virtual Option provided via Microsoft Teams

Members Present

Delegate Kathy Byron, Chair  
Senator Ghazala Hashmi  
Senator Lynwood W. Lewis  
Delegate David Reid  
Delegate Thomas Wright, Jr.  
Delegate James Leftwich  
Secretary Matt Lohr  
James Carr  
Mike Culp  
Kristie Proctor  
Casey Logan  
Steve Sandy  
Richard Schollman

Members Absent

Senator Jennifer Boysko, Vice Chair  
Ray LaMura  
Secretary Caren Merrick

Call to Order	Delegate Kathy Byron, Chair of the Broadband Advisory Council, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.
Roll Call	Chandler Vaughan, Senior Policy Analyst at the Office of Broadband, called the roll and stated that a quorum was present.
Approval of Minutes: January 20, 2023 Meeting	A motion was made and properly seconded to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2023 meeting of the Broadband Advisory Council. The vote was unanimous to adopt the minutes as presented.
Office of Broadband Updates	Dr. Tamarah Holmes and Office of Broadband staff presented an update, including: the announcement of FY2023 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative awards, and the Office's activities under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, including common themes from listening sessions hosted by the Office and an overview of the components of Volume 1 of Virginia's Initial Proposal under the BEAD program, which includes the challenge process to identify all remaining unserved locations in the Commonwealth.

<p>State Digital Opportunity Plan Work Session</p>	<p>Office of Broadband contracted support provided an overview of ongoing and upcoming efforts under the federal Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act’s State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program. This presentation included an overview of research and preliminary findings regarding gaps in broadband affordability and adoption for specific populations in the Commonwealth. The presentation also outlined upcoming stakeholder engagement activities, all of which play a critical role into understanding the entirety of the digital divide. These efforts will inform the development of Virginia’s Digital Opportunity Plan.</p>
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>Bob Nichols of Declaration Networks discussed challenges faced by his company on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. These challenges noted in expanding broadband access includes access to backhaul service and the cost prohibitive nature of connecting to existing fiber optic networks to build last mile broadband networks, especially when only one backhaul option is present.</p>
<p>New Business</p>	<p>Delegate Byron offered the Broadband Advisory Council explore some of the challenges faced in broadband deployment. Mr. Carr offered to convene other council members to offer a presentation on the make-ready process at the next council meeting.</p> <p>Mr. Sandy requested an update on the Line Extension Customer Assistance Program. Delegate Byron noted the importance of this request also requested an update at the upcoming meeting.</p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Upon a motion made and properly seconded, the meeting was adjourned.</p>