

BROADBAND COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

***CONFERENCE ROOM 302 – ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, COUNTY COMPLEX
255 CLAY STREET, LAPEER, MI 48446***

Chairman William Hamilton called the meeting to order at approximately 11:03 p.m. in the Conference Room 302 in the Administration Office.

Members Present: Commissioners William Hamilton, Tom Kohlman, and Truman Mast; Moses Sanzo, Administrator/Controller; Jackie Arnold, CFO; John Bustle, Parks/Building & Grounds Director; and *Joe Suma, Drain Commissioner.

Others: Doreen Clark, Administration Office Manager; Bethany Schroeder, Lapeer County Road Commission.

MINUTES

The minutes from the September 7, 2023 were reviewed.

Motion by Kohlman, supported by Mast, to approve the minutes from the September 7, 2023 Broadband Committee meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA

Motion by Kohlman, supported by Mast, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

DRAFT BROADBAND RESOLUTION

The draft Broadband Resolution as was discussed at the last meeting was reviewed and discussion followed. Commissioner Mast expressed that he agrees that it is essential but does not feel this is something that government should be providing to the public.

Motion by Mast, supported by Kohlman, to recommend to the Full Board that the draft Resolution in support of affordable Broadband be brought forward, as attached.

**Joe Suma arrived at 11:07 a.m.*

Commissioner Kohlman expressed his concerns and stated that while water, electricity and gas services are essential, he does not feel broadband is essential.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that we would not be creating it for government, but as a service to the people of Lapeer County.

Mr. Sanzo stated that Lapeer County showing support of broadband would help for any future grants. He stated that the County did not get the BEAD grant because we didn't have everything in place for getting funding options.

Mr. Suma stated that he feels it would be good in order to collaborate amongst public safety service providers, schools, etc. as a benefit to everyone.

It was noted that not having internet access at our own County Parks is a hinderance for both the public and workers' safety, but also not being able to take credit or debit card payments, which would greatly help their sales. Mr. Sanzo reported that Starlink reached out to him and they may be able to get a non-profit rate but he will report back later.

Mr. Sanzo also stated that putting out the RFI and seeing what ISP's are interested in possibly partnering with the County in the Middle Mile project is important.

Lengthy questions and discussion followed.

Vote on motion: 5 Ayes, 2 nays. Motion carried.

ISP RFI

Lengthy questions and discussion followed regarding the proposed RFI that was drafted to see if we can identify any ISP partners on the broadband/Middle Mile project. Commissioner Mast stated that he is in favor of finding out if there's any interest for partners now that we have the report back from EntryPoint. Ms. Schroeder reported that they are seeing the number of new vendors requesting permits for similar services and there are at least 10 new providers getting active permits. Further discussion followed.

Motion by Kohlman, supported by Suma, to recommend to the Full Board to authorize the release of an RFI (Request for Information) to potential ISP providers (internet service providers) in order to determine interest in the proposed broadband project. Motion carried unanimously.

DIG ONCE POLICY

Discussion was held regarding the need to look into having a Dig Once Policy for the County to avoid having the same roads or areas dug up by multiple service providers. Lengthy questions and discussion followed regarding the need for better collaboration for utility and conduit installation. Mr. Sanzo reported that he has a few sample policies that are quite extensive and are being challenged legally. He also recommended a legal review of any draft policy once proposed. Mr. Sanzo reported that he is still working on a more simplified version geared towards communication lines so they all use one dedicated conduit.

Motion by Kohlman, supported by Mast, that the Administrator continue to prepare a draft Dig Once Policy and bring it back to the next Broadband Committee Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

Motion by Mast, supported by Kohlman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. 11:50 a.m.

William Hamilton, Chairman
Lapeer County Broadband Committee

Minutes prepared by: Doreen Clark, Office Manager