



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ROWAN COUNTY BROADBAND TASK FORCE
OCTOBER 18, 2018 8:00AM
STANBACK ROOM, ROWAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Rowan County IT CIO Randy Cress, Commissioner Judy Klusman, IT Administrative Secretary Jane Moore, Citizens Nicholas Kluttz, Lee Simmons, Jonathan Justin and an additional Citizen, Emergency Services Chief Chris Soliz and GIS Analyst Columbus Hawks were present. Jim Corrin and Angie Bailey from the State Broadband Office are on conference.

Meeting called to order by Randy Cress. Commissioner Klusman made a motion to approve the August minutes and Chris Soliz seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Randy Cress asked if there were any additions or deletions. Randy Cress advised that Time Warner or Spectrum had contacted the County Manager. Commissioner Klusman moved that we approve the agenda and Mr. Soliz seconded.

Follow up Items from last meeting

Mr. Cress advised that we have survey results back and wanted to involve EDC for key areas & Commissioner Klusman states that she is moving forward with that. There are areas in the County we need to look at for development and EDC will be involved in identifying the areas to give a priority as we move forward.

Chris Soliz sent the survey to Fire Stations and was disappointed that he only has received two results. He will send those results. There has not been much success for identifying tower type locations.

Jim Corrin was to provide Broadband provider list and did mail out the vertical tower assets. Mr. Cress asked Mr. Corrin if he has a Broadband provider list he can send. Mr. Corrin advised the list is being updated and when finished will be sent at the appropriate time. Mr. Cress advised we have the Vertical Broadband Asset Sheet and Mr. Hawks has the tower locations and site and height on our

data, Mr. Hawks advises that the FCC has most of that.

Goal Setting Recap

Main goal is to review the survey findings.

We have our maps and can identify areas to focus on as we can't ask for everything. We can utilize the survey results to help with that. Jim and Angie are getting the Provider Lists together so we can invite Providers. We will get information from the Providers asking what they can provide using input from the citizens. We will provide the Providers with additional comments that came in and also areas that need service so they will know what we are seeing. From that the group needs to request qualifications and ask what the Providers would like to address coverage we are interested in. That could lead to grant funding opportunities and requests for build out.

We have a total of 1,300 surveys from the electronic and mailed surveys. There were more but some only filled out one side so data couldn't be added on those. The informal part will be walking thru the map. Every green point represents responses we received back so that is better than our 200 responses two years ago. Randy asked Jim, Angie from what you have seen from other counties receiving results, how does that compare? Angie replied 1,300 results are really great and Jim stated the dispersion is very interesting and results are very uniform and 1,300 are fantastic. Randy stated it is a really good push from everybody to get the results back.

Let's look at a couple of different pieces and explain that the role of this map is to have it for the public and the Broadband providers. Columbus has been a rock star in creating the maps and we want to give him credit for this. We would like to have everything electronic for the providers and as we have meetings if they ask for additional information we can provide that. The goal of the map will be for public and Broadband Providers moving forward. We have wireless towers that are identified and those are with locations so if we need to identify any areas for the providers it will be representative. We also have Fire Station boundaries and Chris this goes to the point of their coverage needs. Chris said in looking at the towers in the Liberty area there is a void there and hopefully that will be filled in relatively soon. Randy states this will be an attention area. We already knew that this representation would show that from what Mr. Simmons had advised. Mr. Simmons advised that the fiber is out there, they refuse to identify that I have

fiber out there and AT&T won't turn it on. I have had it in my equipment room for 9 to 10 years.

We don't have Clark here from the schools but Columbus did add locations and this shows the school Districts. Looking at where the schools are will help us identify key points and relate that to School Districts, High School, Middle School and Elementary and their needs. Mr. Justin advised that he lives in Woodleaf and that around the School, Fire Station and antennae zone is a dead zone. Mr. Kluttz advised it is the same way around West Rowan High and Mt. Ulla. There is no DSL in this area. Randy advised that one of the points as we speak with the providers is to identify these points. This is the mapping of the results and the Broadband Task Force will need to prioritize so that when we go to the Provider meetings we can put this up and that will be the Homework for the team to identify areas. You could say Woodleaf in the upper left and the reason is we have schools, community space and fire Departments that need access. Amy Lynne from 4H Extension Office would be able to identify areas she has worked with. Citizen stated that Dan Nicholas Park area is not well represented with cell towers; there are people who can't even make a phone call to 911 if needed. Randy advised that more has been learned about that, there is a tower on the back of the property at Dan Nicholas Park. The only provider on that now is T Mobile so we will be providing that information to AT&T and Verizon. That impacts public safety and citizens as well. Commissioner Klusman asked is the goal is for all Fire Stations to have service. Mr. Soliz advised it is because they have a lot of reporting needs that are electronic and digital. The map includes some of the satellite stations where they have vehicles in storage. Randy stated that from our stand point that could be a building that could be utilized and stated to the provider as a building for grant funding, we need to know the contacts. We will ask the providers what they have to offer for these facilities. Mr. Soliz advised that the Fire Departments received the same mailing as the citizens. Citizen asked if it is cell towers or fiber. Randy replied that it is a mix but all schools have Fiber from Spectrum. Mr. Justin states that no private party can access that. Randy replied that they have a different connectivity map but it is important to identify these areas. Woodleaf Elementary will be going away. Clark would have to answer that because it all depends on if they ran fiber up there as well. Even if Woodleaf goes away the assets are still there. Citizen asks what the

Rowan Salisbury Schools plan is. I know they have wanted to close Rockwell Elementary also, it's a 1920ish building.

Randy, we will look at DSL and Cable responses and this is from the survey results we received back. Clearly if we look at it we have an area that was unsatisfied in the West area, it is the same way in the River Road area. This is what helps the Committee to identify the areas. We have provided the Broadband Carriers the information and that is the best we can do. Our job is to facilitate the information; we are looking at this as demand aggregation. Jim, Angela this is based on the information we used from the Broadband Office, is this helping paint the picture for the Broadband providers. Jim, it does paint a distinct picture, this is the kind of information these providers need. Angie, you have done an amazing job of mapping it all together like this.

Randy, let me ask you guys this, I think I would like to see some action items, I would like to ask the Fire Departments and let them know we really do need this information for representing the communities you serve. We have citizen results, school districts and current assets. Is there anything you have seen from other Counties that would be beneficial for us to have before we have a Broadband Provider meeting? Angie, I think if there are any other County Facilities that would be relevant. I think you said you were going to seek info from EDC, Yes, Commissioner Klusman replied. Jim, when I hear the word towers, are you also accounting for the water tanks, too? Randy we don't have that and that is why I wanted to talk thru this and have those action items. Mr. Hawks advised some of the towers have antennas so they may or may not be represented but I will look into it and make sure. We need Salisbury Rowan Towers, County and municipal buildings. Commissioner Klusman advised that along I-85 East side, West side and along Cleveland, Highway 70 is the areas that had or are having growth right now.

Newest Citizen, what about Airports. Randy advised that Mid Carolina Airport is a Rowan County Facility and it now has Metro E which is Spectrum. Gold Hill has an airport, small private. Mr. Simmons states that over in Stanly County they are moving the Air National Guard from Charlotte to Albemarle. They are digging dirt there now. Would that be a connection point?

Mr. Soliz, asked what's useful height in a tower, how about a two story Fire Department building? Randy asked, Jim, do you have any answer on that. Angie replies, it depends on the provider, they like to be creative. Jim, it is terrain driven.

Mr. Simmons states that providers say this is my territory, you can't cross the lines. The large providers have no competition. Mr. Simmons asked could we petition the commission to remove the 1932 rule of wireless. Angie, it's up to the County to bring in new providers and ask that this be changed or the new providers ask. Jim, I agree there are a couple WISPs that will spur the wireless providers to go where business is. Commissioner Klusman advises it's time to separate those rules, this is a new era. Randy advised that responses will show alt resources by surveys.

Citizen asked, do you have mapping of speed. This is what we collected for desired speeds and do you have fiber locations? Angie, we will check and see if we have a map but Randy states that if not we have it in PDF form and can provide but if we can incorporate it in a map that would be better.

Randy, are there any other questions on the mapping. Mr. Justin asked are you still taking new surveys. Randy advised we have closed the survey but if someone clicks on the link they can take the survey but I think we should also close that now.

Next task for the Broadband Task Force is to identify what areas based on maps by each team member so when we come back to the next meeting we can go thru and prioritize and put these in numerical order based on the needs of what everybody needs and a priority list. Jim, Angie that will get us into our Provider meetings and next step will be to get them in and let them know these are the areas we have identified and priority listings so please work with us to identify what you have, are you interested in serving this area and from our standpoint what else do you need from us.

Next step is for the map to be sent to all task force members, we will also put this on a Broadband page so everyone is aware. One thing I did want to add about the competition is that our County Manager sent me an email saying that Time

Warner (Spectrum) wanted to meet with us so the County Manger and I met with Time Warner and they did want to be included in anything we have going forward. Jim asked was it Mike Tank you met with. Randy replied yes. Jim stated that is very interesting and very encouraging. I would assume that the County is willing to list them in the Provider listing. Good news. Randy stated he wanted to let everybody know about that as it is encouraging. We let them know where we are with the survey results and meetings and that they would be included in the Provider Meetings. We did let them know there will be questions for them about some build outs to answer and to be prepared for that. I think it will be good to have some explanation from them on build outs.

Citizen Simmons asked what time frame are you looking at and the reason I am asking is they are at the end of their FY and this would be a good time to get in as they are starting to make their plans for next year. Randy stated he isn't sure what their FY timeframe consists of. We are in October now and we had originally said we were going to look for a Broadband meeting in November. Jim, Angie based on what we need to do and go thru our priority list, I think we at least need to wait another month. I wouldn't want to go in a Provider Meeting prematurely. What are your thoughts on that based on what you have seen? Angie agreed she thinks that would be a better idea. I know bigger companies plan far in advance for their major projects and I think at the provider meetings if you are going to share data you have collected you should be prepared as much as possible. You may have providers that want to meet with you on a one to one basis. Jim, they are going to want to do that in a one off and I can tell you that since I have been working with them for 16 years Charter is well under way with their 2019 Capitol funding, they have been budgeting for 2019 since late August. Randy, so based on that what I am hearing in addition to posting on Broadband, would it be advisable since we have Time Warner and Hot Wire interested, when I send out this map link for our task force I will also bcc or include the providers letting them know our next step in the event they want to go ahead and start looking at the data and let them know we will have a priority list. I think that would kind of meet some of the needs they would have so we can get information to them in case they do want to meet one off and have discussions for further input. Jim, you will certainly have your priority list inside of your RFP, correct. Randy, oh yes that is one of the reasons for identifying and if you are getting the Broadband list together I would like to coordinate thru your office

taking the priority list we have and I would really love if you guys could help facilitate the Broadband Provider meeting based off your past. Jim replied sure and Angie states we do have the list and we could call you on Monday as this is a lot of information. Randy replied if you have some time tomorrow or Friday we could at least get together the map and information we have collected today and get that out to the initial set of providers we have received information from. We can use the next two days to get that list and I will send it out to the group the first of next week. Chris stated, Randy, I completely agree that we need to keep their budget timeline in mind, however I don't necessarily want us to rush and put out something prematurely, I want us to drive this and not rush to meet their dates. As a matter of fact as management I just want us to keep that in mind and make sure we have everything we wanted before putting that out. We want a solution but the best solution is going to come with great planning. Randy stated that I am thinking that we are at the beginning of 2019 for a Broadband provider meeting. I want us to have good representation at our November meeting and make sure we have schools involved even if they have to send another representative to be able to participate.

Commissioner Klusman stated if FCC is not listening, I believe we need to start talking to our Senators. If anybody has connections start with their offices and talk to their staff here locally. Randy states that you can do public comment to FCC for particular projects. We could do a letter that would be submitted as public comment to send and it could be from the Senators or Congressmen. Mr. Simmons states the FCC will listen to a Senator or Congressman before they will listen to us.

All agreed to try for this location and meet November 19th as the Wednesday is the day before Thanksgiving. Next meeting is Monday, November 19th @ 8AM at the Rowan Public Library, Stanback Room if available.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Jane H. Moore

