



Minutes

Tuesday, July 22, 2021 – 12:00 pm

This meeting took place in person with a virtual option due to COVID. Everyone was in person.

Chairman Frankie Rigdon called the meeting to order. Those present were visitors Jamie Hensley (BOC Chairman) and Alex King and Erik Brinke with Blue Ridge Mountain EMC. Present from the board were Christie Gribble (Executive Director), Reagan York (intern), Jim McKnight, Frankie Rigdon, Lucas Roof, Lisa Hood, Richard York, and Johnny Chastain. Mollie Allen with the News Observer was also in attendance.

Agenda

Chairman Frankie Rigdon presented the agenda. Johnny Chastain made a motion to approve the agenda, and Jim McKnight seconded the motion - unanimously approved as read.

Minutes

Chairman Frankie Rigdon presented the minutes from the last quarterly meeting. Richard York made a motion to approve the minutes, and Jim McKnight seconded the motion - unanimously approved as read.

Financial Statements

Chairman Frankie Rigdon presented the financial statements. Christie Gribble explained the profit loss shows a small loss so far for 2021 and that comes primarily from roof repairs earlier in the year at BRI. Gribble explained the second page of financials and how these are somewhat restricted – OGA goes towards a cushion for OGA loan payoff, RLF is for gap financing to support a business, and GDOT funds are from the Right of Way purchase at the Ed's Supply/Spec property. Some of the funds might need to be used on the pond and/or landscaping after they start/complete their work. Johnny Chastain made a motion to approve the financial statements, and Jim McKnight seconded the motion – unanimously approved.

NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Grant Proposal

Christie Gribble introduced Commissioner Jamie Hensley and thanked him for being there. She also thanked Frankie (ETC) and Erik and Alex (BRMEMC) for all the help in explaining broadband as she has been working on Fannin becoming Broadband Ready. She said she has her last public hearing next Tuesday for the Broadband Ready Ordinance. Jim McKnight asked the meaning of Broadband Ready, and Gribble explained that simply it's passing the Broadband Ready Ordinance for permitting and amending the Comprehensive Plan to include a broadband

element. Gribble then explained that guests, Alex King and Erik Brinke, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, asked if Fannin would be a partner in a different broadband grant project (different from the Broadband Ready Program) through NTIA. She asked that they talk about this project.

Guests from BRMEMC explained the project. BRMEMC has experience with NTIA, the granting agency, after being awarded grant funds back in 2007. At that time, BRMEMC used grant money to build a fiber network. BRMEMC has shared services with ETC – they offer any of their customers telephone service with ETC. There is a map in the room that was presented, and the dots equate to households. The grant has potential to serve 3,500 homes. Brawley Mountain is also included in the grant, which has radio towers that serve Fannin County Emergency Services and other entities. The grant timelines is two years, and it could possibly be built in two years but will likely get extended. We should hear if we are awarded by mid-November.

Frankie asked for a motion to go into executive session. Johnny made a motion and Jim seconded. All in favor.

Executive Session


Frankie asked for a motion for the FCDA to proceed with the NTIA Broadband Infrastructure grant. Gribble explained that she has asked the County to pass a resolution in support of the FCDA's application. Frankie said he will recuse himself from the vote since he holds a position with ETC, another broadband service provider. Johnny made a motion and Richard seconded. All in favor, excluding Frankie's recusal.

Economic Development Report

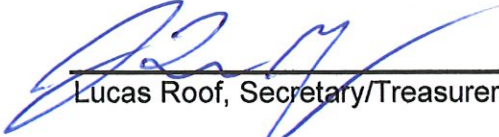
Executive Director Christie Gribble presented her report. See attached.

Adjourn

Chairman Frankie Rigdon asked for a motion to adjourn the board meeting. Jim McKnight made the motion to adjourn the board meeting, and Lucas Roof seconded the motion – unanimously approved.



Frankie Rigdon, Chairman



Lucas Roof, Secretary/Treasurer