

November 29, 2016

Clarke County Board Of Supervisors  
Special Meeting  
Main Meeting Room

7:00 p.m.

At a special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Clarke County, Virginia, held in the Berryville Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Berryville, Virginia conducted on Tuesday, November 29, 2016.

Board Members Present

Mary L.C. Daniel – Berryville District; David S. Weiss - Buckmarsh / Blue Ridge District;  
Terri T. Catlett - Millwood / Pine Grove District; Barbara J. Byrd – Russell District; Bev B.  
McKay – White Post District

Board Members Absent

None

Staff Present

David Ash, Gordon Russell, Brandon Stidham, Lora Walburn

Constitutional / State Offices

Tony Roper

Planning Commission Members

Robina Rich Bouffault, Randy Buckley, Doug Kruhm, Frank Lee; Gwen Malone, George Ohrstrom, II

Press

Cathy Kuehner - The Winchester Star

Others Present

George Condyles, IV, George Archibald, Robert Stieg, and other citizens

1) Call to Order

At 7:02 pm, Chairman Weiss called the meeting to order.

2) Telecommunications and Broadband Study Presentation by George N. Condyles, IV –

Brandon Stidham introduced George Condyles, President and COO The Atlantic Group of Companies.

Highlights of Mr. Condyles' presentation of the comprehensive draft document outlining organizational structures and funding strategies for improved telecommunications infrastructure in Clarke County include:

- Engaged by Clarke County over the last six months to perform the broadband and telecommunications study.
- Company has no affiliation with equipment manufacturers or service providers.
- Focus is on working with counties.
- Broadband truths:
  - No “one technology” for all. No one product that will make all others obsolete. Needs vary by function – choice and selection is the goal.
  - All networks are hybrid in nature.
  - Future network will go from stovepipe to mesh-type / horizontal for transmitting and receiving.
- Subscribers-per-mile is a critical measure for providers in rural counties nationwide.
- County might consider contacting persons interested in running fiber optic cable.
- County does not have a significant amount of fiber.
- County is vertically asset challenged. Currently, can only add to seven of ten towers. New technology will not make towers obsolete; however, tower heights are being reduced.
- Typical tower costs approximately \$250,000.
- Fiber optic is approximately \$70,000 per mile.
- Recommendations:
  - Continue with the Broadband Advisory Committee organizational structure.
  - Continue to provide County web space for providers.
  - Continue to provide GIS Map layer for towers and structures.
  - Continue open dialog with service providers.

- Approve the recommendations as per “Telecommunications Infrastructure and Produce and publish two (2) RFP/RFIs for industry response for infrastructure and Broadband services.
  - Eleven (11) PCTDA Towers
  - Fiber Optic Cable (approx. 10 miles)
- Seek Grant Funds or “self-fund” for one (1) tower and one (1) fiber optic backhaul location to property owned and controlled by the County. (The one area of greatest need for school aged children with least likelihood of commercial service as the criteria.)
- Vice Chair McKay
  - Partnering with WISP providers was recommended by a local citizen. Mr. Condyles agreed that this was one method.
  - No silo inventory conducted. Mr. Condyles indicated that silos are good assets and very popular in Fauquier County.
- Supervisor Daniel:
  - Mr. Condyles confirmed that he was confident that providers would respond if Clarke solicited interest.
- George Ohrstrom, II – Planning Commission Chair
  - Internet over the powerline aspect – is that the answer since everyone has power? Mr. Condyles opined that this option would be more feasible for long distances. He noted that this option was not as fast as wireless; therefore, it might not have a large market.
- Joan Newman, Citizen Western side of Route 601
  - Number of subscribers per mile – will there ever be enough to cover rural areas? Mr. Condyles commented that the fiber optic option was the preferred. He also noted that the billable revenue for a tower exceeded \$200,000 per month.
- Chairman Weiss
  - Reminded that the study was a planning tool and would require consideration.
  - Supervisors are interested in a private sector solution.
  - Number one topic citizens put forth to their supervisors.
  - County strives to balance aesthetics with needs.
- Supervisor Byrd
  - Can electric poles be used as towers? Mr. Condyles advised that electric towers could be used; however, there could be restrictions.
- George Archibald

- Shentel was not on the list of fiber optic providers. Mr. Condyles explained that Shentel is one fiber provider but his study did not attempt to recommend a specific provider.
- Man Last Row Fifth Chair from Outside Aisle
  - Partnering with an unlicensed WISP vendor may cause complications. Mr. Condyles advised that guidelines are provided by the FCC; and, local government does not have the authority to interfere.
- Mr. Levi
  - ComCast and fiber footprint on maps does not represent reality.
- Woman In Back – Meeting Room AB
  - Service on ridgeline. Mr. Condyles explained that placement of additional towers as recommended should improve service to these areas.

Brandon Stidham advised that the Board could consider action if it was satisfied with the recommendation.

Supervisor Byrd urged the Board to delay action pending further review.

#### Next Regular Meeting Date

The next regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors is set for Tuesday, December 20, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in the Berryville Clarke County Government Center, Main Meeting Room, 101 Chalmers Court, Berryville, Virginia.

#### 3) Adjournment

At 9:06 pm, being no further business, Chairman Weiss adjourned the meeting.

ATTEST: November 29, 2016

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David S. Weiss, Chair

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David L. Ash, County Administrator

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Minutes recorded and transcribed by: Lora B. Walburn, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Supervisors