

Telecommunications Commission Minutes - April 23, 2009

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Thomas Kimbrell called the meeting to order at 7:14 p.m. in the County Administration conference room in the Administration Center, located at 1300 Courthouse Road.

II. Roll Call

The following members were present: Terry Lottes, Thomas Kimbrell, Alicia Knight, Danielle Davis, and John Johnson, Jr. Also in attendance was Marie Schuler representing Comcast, Paul Miller from Verizon, and Gwen Sparks with Cox. Michele Lansford, Public Information Office, and Jason Hill, Information Technology Department, represented the County.

III. Presentations by the Public

There were no members of the public present.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Davis moved to approve the March 2009 minutes; Mr. Johnson seconded the motion; the motion was approved with two corrections.

V. Members' Concerns

Mr. Johnson said he undertook some "marketing" for the commission at his neighborhood's annual homeowners' association meeting – he passed out his business card and discussed cable issues with anyone who was interested.

Ms. Davis said that Mr. Miller is looking into providing service to 2070 Courthouse Road because the property is on the edge of the service area.

Mr. Kimbrell asked what the Planning Commission discusses when they approve housing developments, especially how they work with cable providers to ensure that service is available, especially in the smaller developments. Ms. Lansford said she will contact staff in Planning for that information.

VI. Agenda Additions

Mr. Lottes asked if any stimulus/grant money had been found for broadband service. Mr. Hill replied that he had watched a Webinar on this subject, and that so far Virginia has not been awarded any money yet. He said that the Department of Economic Development is tracking developments.

VII. New Business

Broadband

Ms. Davis said that Pew Research conducted an Internet survey, and determined that less than 14% of citizens don't have broadband, and of those, 9% don't want it. She said that Stafford is different because so many homes are built on three-acre lots.

Ms. Davis said she will talk further with the Commissioner of the Revenue about sending a broadband questionnaire with the personal property tax bills. A discussion ensued about how to print the questionnaire, how it should be returned. Ms. David moved to table the issue until the details can be worked out; Mr. Johnson seconded; it passed unanimously.

Ms. Davis reported that she has received very few complaints about Verizon construction or service.

Mr. Hill reported that School Board meetings will be broadcast live within two to three months. Verizon has agreed to run and connect fiber for a link from the Bandy Complex to the Administration Center, from which point the County's contractor will aid the meetings. He said that new equipment has been purchased to accomplish the "switching."

Public Access

Discussion was tabled until the May 2009 meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

At 7:35 p.m., Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Davis seconded the motion; it passed unanimously.