



BROADWATER COUNTY BROADBAND **BOARD MINUTES**

*Vic Sample; Chair ~ Roger Flynn; Vice-Chair ~ Joe Gill ~ Spencer Sellay ~
Adam Six
Lindsey Richtmyer; Commission Liaison (absent) ~
Melinda Banks; Admin/Contact*

Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023

Time: 4:00 PM

Chairman, Vic Sample called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Adam Six was absent. Commissioner Richtmyer was also present.

There was no public comment and role was taken.

There were not any minutes to approve

The webinar for the challenge process for BEAD was a recap of what the board has learned at the Advisory meetings in Helena. The submission for the app seems straightforward but had little information. The portal will be open the week of January 8th. The window for the challenge process will be thirty (30) days.

Vice Chairman Flynn suggested that the objective of this challenge period is to challenge Montana Internet at 125/5 speed. The main goal is to see which polygons are unserved vs. underserved.

Chairman Sample suggested asking the public through media if they would like to challenge the map. This could be on social media, the paper, and the local radio station. The board discussed a call-to-action type of ad for the public. Challenging the map can only come from entities.

There is a total of 5 (five) census blocks in the county, two of which are in the city limits. The other three would be considered underserved. Discussions about who is going to apply for BEAD money. A few companies will not because of the many loops to go through. It may be possible to concentrate on the Connect 5 program.

The Board discussed a form that the public can fill out and the information gathered can be put into a statistical spreadsheet.

A meeting with Great West to help with the planning grant paperwork for the feasibility study went well. The estimated bill would be \$3,400. This will include a Task Order. The board discussed the importance of a feasibility study.

There were no other updates on other providers at this time.

Chairman Sample and Commissioner Richtmyer met with VisionNet and Mitch Drake. Mitch would be interested in bidding in the RFP (Request for Proposal) process.

It was brought up that the board would need to find who owns the conduit west side of the Missouri River.



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It is positive to have a presence at the CAC meetings. The next CAC meeting is scheduled for January 9 in Helena, MT.

The Advisory Board will be having an extra meeting on January 11, 2024, at 4 pm. for a CAC meeting update and the launch of the challenge process. The Regular Advisory Board meeting will be on January 25, 2024, at 4 pm. These meetings will be held at the Flynn Building.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Melinda Banks
Melinda Banks, Assistant

1/18/24
Date

Approved:

Vic Sample
Vic Sample, Chair

1/18/2024
Date