

**City of Alexandria, Virginia**  
**Commission on Information Technology**

**April 19, 2021 IT Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**7:00 – 8:30 PM**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**In attendance:** Catharine Rice (CR), Chris Soghoian (CS), Brandon Mosoriak (BM), Ricardo Alfaro (RA), Sara Crifasi (SC), Marcus Washington (MW), J.D. Maddox (JM), Chris Lewis (CL), Darrlynn Franklin (DF)

**Staff:** Steve Chozick, Smail Farid, Tori Butler, Patrick Eze

**Absent:** Lynda Bennett, Sundar Kanagarajan, Michelle Rief, John Szczech

**Guests:** Members of Public attended.

- 1. Welcome/Introductions**
- 2. Approval of February 22, 2021 minutes** – Motion by RA, seconded by CL, minutes approved by unanimous vote.
- 3. Update on City’s fiber backbone project (Steve Chozick, Patrick Eze and Smail Farid)**
  - Currently in contract phase, finalizing the budget.
  - Per RA, the vendor is Jones Utility Construction Inc.
  - Consists of two 3-inch conduits: one full conduit for City use, one empty conduit for private sector use under sidewalks and roads.
  - City has negotiated with developers located east of Potomac Avenue to put two 4-inch conduits going into all buildings as buildings are being constructed. There are a couple of buildings already built that don’t fall under this.
  - (East of Potomac Avenue is currently under construction, west of Potomac Avenue there is nothing under construction yet.)
  - CoA doesn’t have a ‘dig once’ policy.
  - CS: Can it become a City policy for City digs? ITS will see if P&Z is available for the May meeting to discuss.
  - CR: Would possible federal funding speed up the project? ITS is looking at it to see if there are any opportunities.
- 4. Digital Equity Plan Committee**
  - CR: Shared draft document for Digital Equity Plan outline along with matrix from the Comprehensive Health Improvement Plan which lists digital access as a tool in eliminating poverty. CR signed up the IT Commission to work on the Digital Equity Plan among other topics.
  - CL: Check National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA): they have workplans for starting up digital equity plans; and approaching with a cross-community Broadband task force
  - Should we have a subcommittee meeting to flesh this out for funding?
  - MW: Have the schools been surveyed? There was a quick survey of teachers to see who needed internet access.
  - MW will reach out to some principals/recent grads to see what the needs are.
  - CR will discuss ‘task force’ concept w/ Vanetta Pledger.
  - RA: Has anyone talked about this initiative with Jacqueline Tucker, the City’s Race and Social Equity Officer. CR will run idea past Vanetta Pledger.
  - CR: Somebody in the City needs to own this so it can gain some velocity.

- DF: Can we invite Jacqueline Tucker to one of meetings to discuss? CR will talk to Vanetta Pledger about this.

**5. Legislative Committee**

- CS: Everything is on hold, currently under period of comment.
- CR: There is a one-year pilot for Public Broadband Authorities to apply for VATI funding.

**6. Outreach to Council and Campaigns**

- CR: Suggests we reach out to Council and candidates during the election season to discuss the importance of the fiber project.
- Why should we ask? To get candidates thinking about the project and get an idea of where they stand on it; to inform them on about it prior to them being elected

**7. Adjourn by unanimous vote at 8:15pm. (Next meeting is via Zoom May 17, 2021.)**