

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Commission on Information Technology

AGENDA
October 14, 2021
IT Commission Meeting
ZOOM CALL
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

1. Introductions & welcome
2. Approval of September 16 Minutes (below)
3. **Digital Equity Plan Committee** (Co-Chairs: Michelle Rief/Catharine Rice/)
 - Update on City's ARPA funds for Digital Equity Plan (Guest: Dana Wandeles, *Special Assistant to the City Manager*)
 - FCC Emergency Connectivity Fund – extends deadline window:
[A Second ECF Application Window Will Open on Sept 28 and Run Until October 13](#)
4. **Update on City's Fiber Backbone project** - (IT Staff, City of Alexandria)
Coverage:
5. **Legislative Committee** (Chair: Sara Crifasi)
 - State & federal legislation/Regulatory
VA ARPA Broadband Funds Announcement:
<https://www.vaco.org/700-million-in-american-rescue-plan-act-arpa-funds-to-go-to-virginia-telecommunications-initiative-vati-and-other-broadband-updates/>
 - American Rescue Act: See Treasury Dept. [website](#)
-ARPA Capital Fund Project (\$10 billion) – [Website](#), [Treasury Guidelines](#)
 - Federal Infrastructure Bill includes \$65billion for broadband (as of August 23):
<https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/28/politics/infrastructure-bill-explained/index.html>
 - FCC Seeks Comment on Broadband Access to Multi-Tenant Buildings:
https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-seeks-comment-broadband-access-multi-tenant-buildings-0?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletters&utm_source=sendgrid
 - FCC EBB Program – How is this being promoted in Alexandria?
6. City Manager's Request for Budget Comment (draft recommendation attached)
7. Other business?
8. Next meeting –November?

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Commission on Information Technology

September 16, 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), J.D. Maddox (JM), Michelle Rief (MR), Steve Davidson (SD), Sundar Kanagarajan (SK)

Staff: Vanetta Pledger, Steve Chozick, Smail Farid, Tori Butler

Absent: John Szczech, Marcus Washington, Darrlynn Franklin, Lynda Bennett

- 1. Welcome/Introductions**
- 2. Approval of May 17, 2021 minutes w/Amendment requested by VP**
 - >> The E-Rate funding will be addressed once the network is completed. The City will have to bid on the ACPS RFP when it is released – in order to provide Internet services to the schools.<<
- 3. Update on City's fiber backbone project (Vanetta Pledger)**
 - There is a protocol in place with P&Z to review building plans.
 - City can't force builder to accept conditions. However, there hasn't been much pushback from builders so far regarding City requests.
 - RA: Concerns about citizen choice and equity. We want to have as much competition as we can have.
 - CS: We're a resource the City can use, but only if we're asked to help.
- 4. Digital Equity Plan Committee**
 - City is working with Computer Corps to provide help desk support to the schools
 - Dana Wedeles will give an update at the next meeting.
- 5. Legislative Committee**
 - Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) may potentially decreasing monthly amount from \$50/month to \$30/month.
 - City Manager's request form budget comment (FY23) is open.
 - CS: asked if ITS can get us a rough draft of their wish list so we can support it.
- 6. Adjourn by unanimous vote at 8:30pm. (Next meeting is October 14, 2021).**

Draft Recommendation to City Manager on IT Budget

COVID exposed how access to modern broadband and broadband choice is a significant need in Alexandria. The city's reaction includes not only building its own municipal fiber backbone and spare conduit to stimulate competitive choice and the deployment of modern infrastructure, but applying ARPA funds to identify our digital equity and training needs. At the end of the day, the City's IT department has been made responsible for operationalizing all these projects, and so the IT Commission fully supports increasing IT staff in the FY23 budget with 4 FTE staff to help the IT Department fulfill these promises to the community. Such full-time staff would be allocated to:

City Fiber/Conduit deployment

- staff to build centralized GIS map to have a record of location of all city fiber and equipment and private sector fiber.
- staff to help the city maintain its new network, restore the network and validate
- funds to hire -Broadband Analyst devote to broadband deployment issues

Digital Equity

- Hiring a Broadband Strategist to ensure the multiple ARPA digital equity projects move forward and to track funding options as they continue to unfold.
- Staff to work with City's Digital training efforts to ensure all elements of the community's unserved, unemployed or unskilled become digitally savvy