

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Commission on Information Technology

October 14, 2021 IT Commission Meeting Minutes
7:00 – 8:30 PM
Virtual Meeting

In attendance: Catharine Rice (CR), Chris Soghoian (CS), Brandon Mosoriak (BM), Michelle Rief (MR), Steve Davidson (SD), Sundar Kanagarajan (SK)

Staff: Vanetta Pledger, Steve Chozick, Smail Farid, Tori Butler, Patrick Eze, Dana Wedeles

Others: Donna Walker James, Computer CORE

Absent: Darrlynn Franklin, Ricardo Alfaro, Sara Crifasi, J.D. Maddox, Christopher Lewis

1. Welcome/Introductions

2. Approval of September 16, 2021 minutes

3. Digital Equity Plan (Dana Wedeles, Special Assistant to the City Manager)

- City received \$59.6 in ARPA funding in two equal allotments: one in May 2021 and one in May 2022.
- Spending period for these funds is 3/3/21-12/31/24.
- \$420K has been set aside for Digital Equity Plan, Broadband Strategist and Policy Analyst.
- \$60K has been set aside for a partnership with Computer CORE to develop a community call center. The call center is not up and running yet.
- City is seeking a contractor to create the Digital Equity action plan. Hoping to have the contractor on board by the end of the year.
- \$300K has been set aside for a two-part grant-funded Broadband Strategic position.
 - Expand opportunities and define broadband strategy
 - Manage current relationships and facilitate new partnerships
- SR: Are conduit installation digs coordinated? To an extent, yes. There is coordination between City departments.
- CS: What is the expectation after the two years is complete? The expectation is to make the position permanent.
- BM: ECF second wave: The Library has applied for additional equipment.

4. Update on City's fiber backbone project (Vanetta Pledger)

- Things are progressing well, there are no major issues at this point.
- There will soon be a status map available.
- There is no economic incentive to finish early, only penalties if they finish late.
- CS: If project is completed faster will we save money by turning Comcast off? Yes.
- City has interest from companies who don't want to use City's backbone.
- 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.
- City is looking at various 'angles': franchise agreements, other possibilities
- Internet connectivity issues reports at ACHS
 - Hardware money was rerouted to Chromebooks due to COVID

- City I-Net is last-mile, but ACPS has separate internet connection
- Smail: no-LTE in the middle of the building

5. Adjourn by unanimous vote at 8:30pm. (Next meeting is December 9, 2021).