

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Commission on Information Technology

MEETING MINUTES
March 12, 2018
IT Commission Meeting Minutes
7:00 – 8:10 PM
Room 2000, City Hall

Attending: Catharine Rice, David Baker, Brandon Mozoriak, Ed Ward, Forrest Wilhoit, Chris Lewis, Marjorie Conner, Sean Rough, Christopher Soghoian

Absent: Darlynn Franklin, John Szczech, John Scott

- **Welcome** -- introductions - included welcome to newly hired Deputy Director, Ryan Sawnz and new IT Commission member for Vice Mayor Justin Wilson: Chris Soghoian
- Call to Order/Roll Call/ **Approval of January 22 Minutes** - approved unanimously.
- **Briefing on broadband progress** –Vanetta Pledger, City CIO, Director ITS, City of Alexandria
Vanetta provided an update on her department’s involvement in the current budget process, meetings held last week and to be held going forward. Current budget requests can be found on the city’s website. She also reported on the City’s fiber backbone progress.
- **Update from Homework Gap Committee** - (Chair: Christopher Lewis)
Chris Lewis reported via Austin (SXSW) on the positive meetings the HG Committee held in the last three weeks with both ACPS and the Chamber of Commerce Government Relations committee. The Committee warmly embraced the idea of creating a public/private partnership by helping to promote a program for area businesses to sponsor an existing ACPS program - Kajeet devices that utilize cell phone spectrum for students who do not have internet at home (School cost: \$160/year/ student, currently for 500 students). Repeated characterization was “Yes! This is a no-brainer.” Chris Lewis will be taking that message of support back to ACPS by scheduling another meeting, with the goal of quickly designing a promotion and details for donations.

Chris Soghoian suggested Chris Lewis contact ACPS to see if they have a Comcast contact for the purpose of asking if Comcast would be willing to provide free access to their wifi hotspot networks for students without internet at home (each subscriber’s Comcast modem has a second wifi signal dedicated for Comcast use). This would require a special login. Chris will follow up. Others mentioned Comcast’s internet essentials program but noted it does not seem to be working.

On the issue of identifying which students do not have access to internet at home, Chris Sogohian suggested tracking use on students Chrome computers. No use might indicate no internet. Also might not. HG committee members will followup with ACPS. Catharine noted that HG Committee offered to identify how other communities garner higher response rates when sending surveys home with students. IT Commission members were again encouraged to join the HG committee.

- **Update from Future Workforce Skills Committee** -Video (Chair: Catharine)
Working Nation's video on the role of increased automation in our society was viewed. See it [here](#). Members of the Commission were encouraged to join this committee to do more research on programs within Alexandria and in other communities to provide advanced skills to young people to be best prepared for this changing environment.

- **Other Business**

Meeting attendance: The IT Commission meets five times a year. Catharine noted there is a waiting list for the IT Commission. She asked that Commission members who recognize that they cannot find the time to devote to the Commission meetings, consider releasing their seat so other Alexandria residents who want to can actively participate.

Catharine will followup with Chamber of Commerce again to fill that seat; and will ask Chris Lewis for name of a student to fill the seat for ACPS.

- **Adjournment:** Marjorie Conner made a motion, seconded by David Baker to adjourn at 8:10 p.m., approved with a unanimous vote.