

Broadband Action Workgroup

October 5, 2023

4:00 pm

Minutes

CTO: Tim Kotas, vice chair, at 4:00 pm

Present: members Beltman, Williams, Buursma, Storey, Kotas; project manager Jill Dunham. Steve Sedore, county executive staff.

Public Participation: No one seeking recognition

Presentation/Conversation: Anthony Smith, of Tilson Corporation, Virginia. Company well known in the wireless community for cell towers. Smith said that in rural America if you don't have broadband, you also don't have cell service. Tilson proposes to lease county property to build towers. Said company would focus on unserved areas. Dunham asked what happens if the county doesn't have strategically located properties? Smith: would go to other land owners and propose leases. Dunham also asked if Tilson could help find the dead areas. He said it is a propagation map. Tilson does that. Smith said he was looking for non-exclusive lease agreement. Beltman asked how big a property Tilson needs and lease length. Smith 100'x100' space, and 30 year lease. They are negotiating with Ottawa County for a lease. Smith said a propagation study would cover two to three miles if flat terrain. Said arrangement with Tilson would allow towers to be built in six weeks from conclusion of a signed lease.

Communications: None.

Reports: Dunham said approval to proceed (with money from MIHI) is close. A map was shown depicting addresses that were dropped in the challenge period. Overisel Twp Hall location didn't show up on the list of service addresses, it will be picked up in the BEAD program. Dunham also described the situation with Osterhout Lake.

Dunham said that the local municipalities have been publicizing the address look up maps.

A mailing to county residents will invite recipients to advise whether or not they have high speed internet service. It is estimated 42,000 cards will be mailed.

Members discussed the construction timing of various broadband projects around the county.

Beltman suggested that a proposal be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners with Tillman. BAW members discussed seeing the agreement with Tillman first.

Public Participation: None

Meeting adjourned at 5:06 pm

Next meeting is October 19 at 4pm.