



Albemarle Broadband Authority “ABBA”

Formed by the County of Albemarle, VA Board of Supervisors

Broadband Status Report **2nd & 3rd Quarter CY2019**

September 30, 2019

The Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) is pleased to present the 2nd and 3rd Quarter Broadband Status Report for calendar year 2019 (April 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019) to the County of Albemarle, VA Board of Supervisors. This report provides summary level information on all activities completed and underway by ABBA. The highlight of this report is the successful kick-off of the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) 2019 grant funded project with Central Virginia Electrical Cooperative (CVEC) / Firefly Fiber Broadband for the Midway section of Albemarle County.

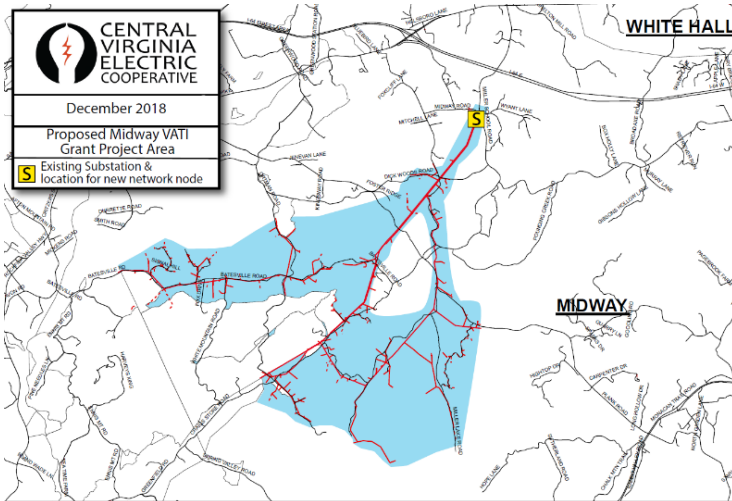
ABBA worked on four major projects in between April and September 2019. The first project included updates to the operating procedures and officers of the ABBA Board of Directors. With the guidance of the County legal team:

- ABBA amended and reapproved its Rules of Procedure. Available as a link from <https://www.albemarle.org/ABBA>
- At its Annual Meeting on August 20, 2019
 - ABBA re-elected Bucky Walsh as Chair, Rick Randolph as Treasurer, and Bill Fritz as Secretary
 - ABBA elected its newest member, Waldo Jaquith, as Vice Chair
 - & ABBA appointed Mike Culp as ABBA Chief Administrative Officer.
- As one of his first duties, the ABBA Chief Administrative Officer submitted the ABBA Annual Report to the State Corporation Commission.

The three other major projects include the kick-off of the VATI 2019 grant funded project with CVEC / Firefly Fiber Broadband at the CVEC Midway Electrical substation; the submittal of a VATI 2020 grant application with CenturyLink as co-applicant; and the submittal of a response to Dominion Energy’s Rural Broadband Request for Information (RFI.) Summary information for each of these completed projects can be found on subsequent pages of this report.

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The second project was the official kick-off of the CVEC / Firefly Fiber Broadband Project. The kick-off planning was a collaborative effort between the Albemarle County Communications and Public Engagement Department, ABBA, CVEC and DHCD. The kick-off occurred on August 1, 2019 was well attended with Senator Deeds and Delegates Bell and Farriss, joined by Supervisors Ann Mallek, Liz Palmer, Rick Randolph, Norman Dill, and Jeff Richardson and Trevor Henry from the County Executive’s Office. The midway kickoff had several press outlets, citizens, and all of ABBA there as well.





Join
**Central Virginia
Electric Cooperative**
and
**The Albemarle County
Broadband Authority**

for the official launch of the
Midway Fiber Broadband Project

August | 1st | 2019
11:00 AM

Midway Substation
754 Miller School Road
Charlottesville, VA 22932



*Made possible in part by the Virginia Telecommunications
Initiative and the Virginia Department of Housing
and Community Development*

The Midway Fiber Broadband Project is under way and ABBA will report on progress later this year. This project required a significant amount of pre-initiation support from the County Finance Department, County Office of Management and Budget, and Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The following team tasks were completed during the reporting period:

- ☒ Signed VATI contract between DHCD and ABBA
- ☒ Signed contract between ABBA and CVEC
- ☒ Broadband Grant Funds of \$301,748.00 transferred from DHCD to ABBA
- ☒ Completed Sole Source Procurement for the CVEC VATI Contract
- ☒ Issuance of Purchase Order to CVEC.

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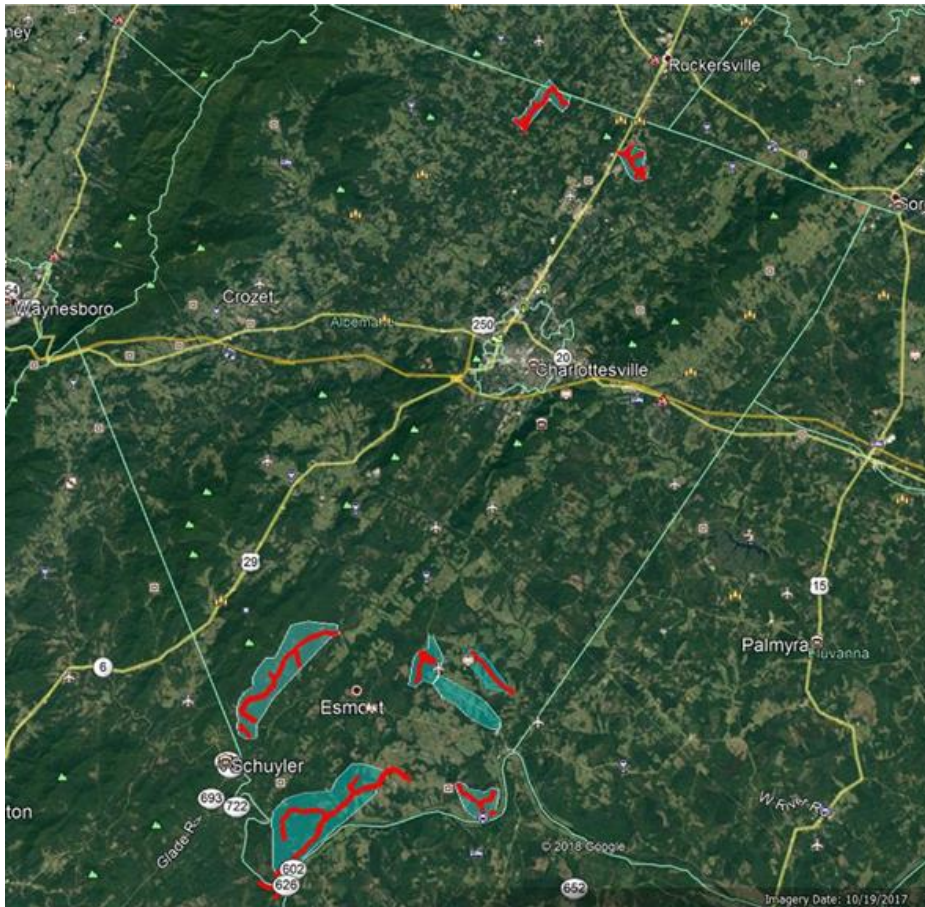
The third project was the submittal of a grant application with CenturyLink for VATI 2020 funds. The application was submitted on September 3, 2019. As part of the process ABBA was also required to post a public notice and this was done in partnership with the Clerk’s office. Thanks to Claudette Borgersen and Travis Morris for their help with the effort. The ABBA CenturyLink VATI 2020 grant application is significant in that if offered funds the project will pass by 837 locations in various unserved areas of the County with fiber to the home (FTTH). It is also significant in that amongst the 39 applications received; the ABBA CenturyLink VATI 2020 grant application is in the top 5 in lowest cost to the state per location. This bodes well for the application but doesn’t guarantee an offer of funds.

ABBA CenturyLink VATI 2020 Summary

Locality	Private Provider/Partner	Funding requested	Leverage/Match	Total Project Cost	% state match	Locations Passed	State \$ per Location
Albemarle County	CenturyLink	\$291,300.00	\$1,650,700.00	\$1,942,000.00	15%	837	\$348

ABBA is adding \$291,300 to the total project cost; matching the amount requested from the state.

County locations included in the ABBA CenturyLink VATI 2020 Grant Application



Project Area	~ Cost	Locations
Buffalo River Rd	\$288,000	170
Watts Passage	\$336,000	137
Coles Rolling Rd	\$114,000	46
Scottsville Rd	\$106,000	80
Hatton Ferry	\$148,000	48
Scottsville Rd to Keene	\$131,000	61
Howardsville	\$455,000	140
Green Creek Rd	\$364,000	155
Totals	\$1,942,000	837

The 8 project areas are shaded in lighter green. All project areas are submitted as fiber to the home (FTTH) projects with Gigabit Internet Speeds as one of the service options.



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The fourth project is the submittal of a response to the Dominion Energy’s Rural Broadband Request for Information (RFI.) This effort included the use of a mapping and data collection tool provided by IT employee Damon Pettitt; map creation by University of Virginia Intern, Trey Schulman; and map creation by John Norin who is a volunteer EMS first responder at the North Garden Volunteer Fire and Rescue Station.

From the Dominion Energy website: “Dominion Energy Virginia is developing a pilot program to help rural localities in the Commonwealth obtain broadband access pursuant to Virginia Code section 56-585.1:9.” & “We’re seeking to identify localities unserved by broadband and partner with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to provide rural broadband services to qualifying areas within our electric service territory. **Our goal is to provide the important “middle-mile resource” needed to extend service into unserved communities.**”

ABBA contacted the Dominion Energy program manager for the RFI to affirm the format and content of a response; then completed a response which included maps and data to answer the following questions:

- a. Which area or locality are you responding on behalf of?
- b. Please provide an overview of the Broadband availability for your specified area.
- c. Can you identify portions of your locality that are considered Unserved?
- d. Is your locality already working with a non-governmental ISP to expand Broadband coverage in your area?
Have you applied for or been awarded any grant rewards associated with the provision of Broadband internet services?
- e. Can you provide data to support the Broadband availability and level of service (Mbps)?
- f. Are there one or more existing fiber providers at all of your key economic development sites? (business parks, industrial parks, technology parks)
- g. Does your area or locality have publicly owned facilities or institutions that are considered Unserved?

The response was submitted on September 3, 2019. Dominion Energy thanked ABBA for submitting a response; ABBA is poised to help Dominion Energy reach its goal to assist in providing rural broadband services into unserved communities.

Plans for Next Quarter

ABBA continues work on a project in collaboration with CVEC, the Economic Development Authority, and the County Finance Department. This team will be responsible for developing the processes for managing a broadband fiber project for CVEC members in Albemarle County. The work is incorporated in a County wide effort intended to streamline how grant activities are managed. ABBA is planning a joint meeting with the EDA to finalize the CVEC process.

ABBA will continue work to identify ISPs willing to partner with us to address the unserved areas of Albemarle County. The ABBA mapping and data collection tool is frequently used and continues to help ABBA pinpoint unserved areas.



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ABBA will monitor the VATI 2020 process. The DHCD VATI 2020 schedule includes a challenge period which concludes on October 9, 2019. DHCD will have 30 business days to validate a challenge. ABBA and CenturyLink will be notified if the proposed project area(s) is being challenged. ABBA and CenturyLink will have 15 business days from notification of a challenge to provide any additional information to DHCD. The schedule indicates notifications of offers of funding will occur sometime in December 2019.

ABBA and CVEC will continue work on the VATI 2019 funded Midway project. Reports for the first three months were submitted to DHCD; and the reports for September, October, November and December will be submitted during the next reporting period. ABBA will continue to monitor federal and state funding options for broadband; including the FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (Connect America), and the USDA ReConnect Program. ABBA’s goal is to work with ISPs and agencies to submit applications for funding.

ABBA is monitoring the deployment of FirstNet (the US wide public safety network), 5G, and SpaceX’s low earth orbit satellite efforts.

We hope you continue to find this broadband report useful and informative.