

**ORIGINAL**

**WEAKLEY COUNTY, TENNESSEE  
FIBER RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING  
Thursday, September 17, 2020 – 10:00 AM – Board of Education, Dresden**

**Fiber Research Committee Members Present:** Commissioners David Bell, Gary Eddings, Roger Donaldson, Dennis Doster, and County Mayor Jake Bynum

**Fiber Research Committee Members Absent:** None

The Weakley County Fiber Research Committee met on Thursday, September 17, 2020, at 10:00 AM in the conference room at the Board of Education and Department of Finance in Dresden. Others present included Director of Finance John Liggett, WK&T CEO Trevor Bonnstetter, WK&T Operations Manager Stacey Riley, and Commissioners Eric Owen and Beth VanCleave.

**I.-II. CALL TO ORDER – APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairperson Bell called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Commissioner Donaldson made the motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on May 14, 2020, and with a second by Commissioner Doster, the motion passed unanimously.

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. DISCUSSION**

Chairperson Bell began by telling WK&T representative that the committee has been bombarded with telephone calls from citizens asking if they are inside the next fiber project buildout. Chairperson Bell asked the reps for a solution such as a map available to place on a website or a phone number to direct these individuals. CEO Bonnstetter explained some gray area situations such as a road dividing a census block. He expressed the importance of looking at the 477 map, considering where we are with the federal government, and how that feeds into what the state says. Bonnstetter said that he believed the best practice would be relay to questioners that they can call a number and verify if they are inside the build.

CEO Bonnstetter spread out a map on the table for the committee to study. Mr. Riley said that the federal government has defined unserved areas to have broadband speeds as 10/1 [download/upload], but the state has shifted to defining that speed as 25/3. With that in mind, he showed the committee the areas on the map that were eligible within those conditions. There was some talk about another grant through COVID-19 and emergency funds to supply a 90-day educational service to underserved areas inside the City of Dresden. There was some discussion regarding the EDA grant, other grant application opportunities, reconnect grants, and stipulations of certain grants.

There was more conversation that continued on a variety of topics including letters of support process, the positive perspective of the state and federal governments on Weakley County's cooperation and partnership, environmental studies, hypothetical timelines, the importance of relaying the county's need to local representatives for the state, engineering and timing, materials acquisition, and the complicated nature of purchasing.

Discussion moved to the county's overall obligation if all grants were awarded and financial concerns. There was some talk about withdrawing an application verses turning down an award. Mayor Bynum explained that the ECD grant requires a resolution.

Chairperson Bell made the motion to that a resolution be drafted and presented to the full county commission to apply for the ECD grant with the understanding that the EDA application would be withdrawn if the ECD grant was funded. After a second by Commissioner Donaldson, the committee voted and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion continued on the WK&T magazine, patronage card, and the fact that WK&T is a co-op.

**V. - VI. OTHER BUSINESS AND ADJOURN**

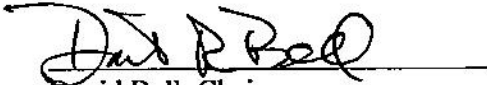
Having no other business, Commissioner Doster made the motion to adjourn, and with a second by Commissioner Donaldson, the meeting was adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Erica Moore, Secretary  
Fiber Research Committee

Approved:



David Bell, Chairperson  
Fiber Research Committee

Date: 3-1-21