



Board of Supervisors

1800 Sandy Hook Road
Goochland, VA 23063

Meeting: 09/06/22 02:00 PM
Department: County Administration
Category: Presentation
Prepared By: Paul Drumwright
Department Head: Vic Carpenter

**SCHEDULED
INFORMATION ITEM**

(ID # 5465)

**FIREFLY FIBER BROADBAND REGIONAL INTERNET SERVICE
EXPANSION (RISE) PROJECT PRESENTATION AND UPDATE**

Strat Goal 1	Efficient, effective, and transparent government; emphasis on customer service excellence	
Strat Goal 2	Balanced development that contributes to the welfare of the community and preserves its rural character	
Strat Goal 3	Excellence in Financial Management	X
Strat Goal 4	High Quality Core Services including Education, Public Safety, and Community Health	X
Strat Goal 5	Positive Work Environment with a Highly Qualified, Diverse Workforce	

Authority Action Requested

No Board action is requested, for information only. The Board will receive a presentation and information update from Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM regarding their Regional Internet Service Expansion (RISE) project including their 2022 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) and USDA ReConnect broadband grants.

Summary of Information

Representatives from Central Virginia Electric Cooperative (CVEC) and Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM, a wholly-owned subsidiary of CVEC, will give a presentation and information update to the Board regarding their Regional Internet Service Expansion (RISE) project including their 2022 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) and their USDA ReConnect broadband grants.

Goochland County, CVEC, and Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM have collaborated and partnered on broadband expansion efforts both within and outside of CVEC’s service territory since September 2019. This includes pursuing federal and state broadband grants in 2020 and 2021.

Dominion Energy Virginia, Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM, Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC), Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), and 13 counties including Goochland County partnered to apply for a VATI program grant for the RISE project that aims to deliver fiber-optic broadband service to unserved and underserved households and businesses in areas of Central Virginia. This partnership was enabled by bi-partisan legislation adopted during the 2021 General Assembly Session.

On December 13, 2021, the VATI program awarded Firefly \$79 million in grant funds to support the \$288 million RISE project. The RISE project incorporates a previously awarded United States Department of Agriculture ReConnect grant that was awarded on August 11, 2021.

Goochland County’s pledged match of \$3,437,500 towards the successful VATI RISE project was appropriated on March 1, 2022. The VATI RISE pledge is part of the larger RISE project and an overall pledge to provide local match funding not to exceed

\$3,637,500. Goochland County's pledged match of \$200,000 towards the Firefly ReConnect portion of the RISE project was appropriated on February 1, 2022.

A three-party agreement between TJPDC, Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM, and Goochland County was negotiated and executed on June 8, 2022. On August 24, 2022, TJPDC and Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM announced that they had officially signed a contract with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) marking the official start of the VATI RISE component but design and pre-construction tasks, as permitted by the DHCD, had already been underway.

As of August 2022, work has begun on all components of the RISE project in Goochland ranging from "field data collection" to "service drop construction" and ultimately "in-service" connections. This work is being done by Dominion Energy Virginia, Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM, CVEC, REC and their contractors.

Representatives from CVEC and Firefly Fiber BroadbandSM will provide a presentation and information update on the status of the RISE project components including the VATI and ReConnect grant areas. A copy of the presentation will be posted on www.goochlandva.us after the meeting.