



Prosperity & Livability Committee

Chaired by Councilman Hudson

Committee Members: Hudson, Holmes, Jefferson, and Peters

February 9, 2022 –9 :00 a.m.

3rd Floor, Council Chambers

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wesley Hudson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Following a virtual roll call, the following attendance by Committee Members was duly noted.

Present (3):

Chairman Wesley Hudson, Committee Member Monica Peters, and Committee Member Michael Holmes

Absent (1):

Committee Member Cyril Jefferson

Staff Present:

Greg Ferguson, Deputy City Manager; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Eric Olmedo, Assistant City Manager; Ryan Ferguson, Communications Manager; Steve Lingerfelt, Information Technology Director; Lisa Vierling, City Clerk; and Mary S. Brooks, Deputy City Clerk

Also Present Remotely:

Guidehouse Team: Emily Toland, Project Manager; Mike Tosh, Engagement Partner; and Shaun Fernando, Engagement Director

The following documents associated with the presentations, are hereby attached as a permanent part of these proceedings:

- 1. Presentation-Guilford County Broad Band Briefing.*
- 2. Hand-Out-Special Events Update.*

PRESENTATION OF ITEMS**2022-60 Update-Guilford County Broadband Strategy**

Emily Toland, Guidehouse, will provide an update on the Guilford County Broadband Strategy.

Emily Toland, Project Manager, extended greetings; introduced the Guidehouse Team that was virtually present; and recognize Shaun Fernando, Engagement Director to give a presentation on the collaboration with Guilford County regarding the Broadband Strategy (Strategy).

Mr. Fernando explained what the strategy was; said it was to identify high-speed internet gaps and opportunities in Guilford County and to develop a plan to optimally identify and allocate funds to plug the gaps; explained the process for developing a strategy that was based off of assessment findings that included objectives, activities, and stakeholder engagement; said there were four main areas to help understand the broadband gaps as related to availability, affordability, and adoption as followed: legislation and policy-impacts broadband availability, market structure-impacts broadband availability and affordability, infrastructure-impacts broadband availability and adoption, and socio-economic factors and needs-impacts broadband affordability and adoption. Mr. Fernando provided and explained the components of the Guilford County Broadband Strategy that included: strategic recommendations, funding opportunities, broadband typologies, portfolio of recommendations, implementation roadmaps, and a broadband taskforce.

Ms. Toland provided a data analysis map view that showed the disparities and gaps in Guilford County; the map was organized by commissioner districts and municipal boundaries from lowest to highest quality of broadband services as follows:

- *Districts 3, 5, 6: Areas that have the greatest consumer choice and highest quality broadband in terms of number of provider options and internet speeds available*
- *Districts 1, 2, 7, 8: Areas that have less consumer choice and may face affordability barriers*
- *District 4: Rural areas in the east appear to have less consumer choice and the lowest quality broadband*

Ms. Toland said that the areas with the highest need in the City of High Point had low affordability and low adoption according to the Broadband Index that was developed for the Gaps & Needs Assessment and was currently under review; spoke to methods of public engagements that included surveys, and in person meetings that provided feedback from the public; and spoke to potential federal and state funding; and explained the next steps as followed:

- *Collaborate with the County to implement the recommendations once the Strategy is developed and this engagement concludes*
- *Be an active supporter of the Broadband Task Force and other partnerships that may be necessary to apply for grant funding*
- *Publicize and participate in the North Carolina Broadband Survey, which is run by the North Carolina Department of Information Technology*

Chairman Hudson asked for clarification on the term 'low affordability'. Ms. Emily said that low affordability was considered a barrier.

2022-61 Discussion-Special Events Policy and Affirmation of City Sponsored Events

Staff will be discussing the Special Events Policy and Affirmation of City Sponsored Events.

Eric Olmedo, Assistant City Manager, provided an updated City Sponsored Events list; said that some internal city events were removed; said that staff is recommending allocating \$30,000 for special events outside of this list to be planned for by Visit High Point or Forward High Point; these events would be brought back to the committee and city council for approval once they were planned; and spoke to staffing challenges to cover events that relied on the city's public safety staff.

Committee Member Holmes asked if adjustment would have to be made for the \$30,000 once events were added. Mr. Olmedo responded that the events on the list were in-kind services; and if requested events were to exceed requested funding that a request would be brought back to council for approval.

Chairman Hudson moved to forward this matter to the City Council with a favorable recommendation to allocate \$30,000 for special events outside of the list to be planned by Visit High Point or Forward High Point. Committee Member Holmes made a second to the motion. Following a roll call vote by Chairman Moore, the motion carried by the following 3-0 unanimous vote:

Aye (3): Chairman Hudson, Committee Member Peters, and Committee Member Holmes

Absent (1): Committee Member Jefferson

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Prosperity & Livability Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Wesley Hudson, Chairman

Attest:

Mary S. Brooks, CMC
Deputy City Clerk