

**Henderson County
BROADBAND TASKFORCE
April 12, 2022**

Taskforce Members	Present	Not in Attendance
Commissioner Daniel Andreotta	√	
Commissioner David Hill	√	
David Davidson - Citizen	√	
Jason Alfrey – Henderson County Public Schools	√	
Sara Nichols – LOSRC	√	
Jimmy Brissie – Henderson County Emergency Management	√	
Johnny Duncan – Henderson County Sheriff’s Office	√	

Also present: Chris Todd, Business & Community Development Director, and Planner, Grayson Taylor

Public Comments:

There was no public comment.

GREAT Grant Overview:

- North Carolina is putting ~\$1 billion of ARPA funds (and \$30 million of state funds) towards broadband and County Commissioners met on March 22, 2022 to review provider GREAT Grant Applications
- Application Specific details are confidential until after the grants have been submitted to the State for review
- GREAT Grant Application Due Date – May 4th

The Taskforce asked for a meeting to be scheduled once the GREAT Grant recipients have been determined.

Fixed Wireless:

Stagg Newman, was invite4d to speak on fixed wireless as a potential solution to Broadband in Henderson County. Mr. Newman, was actually Chief Technologist at the FCC (rather the CIO) in 1998-1999. He then returned to the FCC for a temporary assignment as Chief Technologist for the team that wrote the *Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan* for Congress and the Administration in 2009 and 2010. Mr. Newman was tasked with providing objective technical advice to all of the FCC Commissioners of both parties and translating the technology concepts into terms that lawyers and non-technical types could understand.

Mr. Newman discussed with the taskforce that fixed wireless technology is continuing to improve and expand in Western North Carolina. The technology requires the installation of fiber optic cabling to tower locations in order to provide a sufficient signal. Topography and vegetation can create challenges in Western North Carolina as well, as the fixed wireless signal is strongest with direct line of site. Due to these limitation fixed wireless is part of the long-term broadband solution but is only one factor.