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COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

September 9, 2022

COVID

Our active COVID cases continue to fluctuate, as of today there are 330. Of course, these numbers only reflect reported positive cases and do not include any unreported home tests. There are also 120 deaths reported.

AccessOn Networks

I contacted several people about any experience or knowledge they have of AccessOn Networks and they had not heard of them.

However, Thursday I received an email from Butch Mabry, Risk & Compliance Manager with Zirrus (Yadtel), requesting that we submit a letter of support for AccessOn Networks' grant application for middle mile broadband. The way he explained it to me is that all of the cooperatives in North Carolina, including Zirrus (Yadtel) created AccessOn Networks to connect all of the cooperatives across the State to help provide redundancy and enhance the reliability of the cooperatives' networks.

Therefore, I recommend submission of the letter of support for their Federal grant application. This does not require any financial commitment from the County.

Board of Adjustment and Planning Board

The Board of Adjustment was scheduled to meet Monday, September 12, 2022 and hold a Quasi-Judicial Hearing on an application. However, the legal notice in the advertisement did not include the time of the meeting and the required signage had not been posted.

The Planning Board had two resignations this week: Teresa Swaim and Jerry Hutchens. However, they will still have a quorum to meet Monday night. There were issues with their agenda packets, but they were resolved late this week.

Telephone System

In July 2017, the Board of Commissioners approved a \$290,000 contract with ePlus Technologies to replace the County's phone system with a Voice Over IP (VOIP) system. The contract included 5 years of maintenance. The maintenance for those 5 years was included in the price paid during installation of the phone system. This contract expired in July 2022.

In July 2022, Steven was notified by ePlus Technologies that it was time for a new maintenance contract and that the Cisco licenses for our phones would be changed to Flex Licenses (an annual cost of \$13,600) and our annual maintenance in FY2023 would be \$10,503. During budget time, Steven was told we would only have to pay the license costs of \$13,600 in FY2023.

ePlus also told Steven that in May 2024, we would have to upgrade our system and their service fees would be an additional \$24,812 (a one-time fee). Then, in May 2025 a new law goes into effect that makes 911 calls from a computer go to the location of the computer rather than the base phone the number is assigned to. This would require a payment of \$8,568. Lastly, he was told the maintenance would increase to \$46,703 per year and they would handle everything.

Steven has confirmed that the Flex Licenses and the system upgrades are a requirement of the Cisco system we have, regardless of the vendor providing the services.

This will impact our budget in the future, so Steven started researching other options. Davie County and Yadkin County Schools both use Carolina DigitalPhone for their phone systems and they are a NC company based in Greensboro. They use Yealink phone system and can replace our system, including phones for \$40,605. This system would be cloud-based versus the need of our current system to have 2 servers on-site. The annual maintenance cost for this system will be \$30,960 and they will maintain the entire system, including programming the phones and adding/removing employees.

Holcombe House

The Historical Society still intends to relocate the Holcombe House to VanBuren Street. Our architects suggested I have someone check the health of the trees on the corner of Jackson and Elm Streets to determine if they need to be removed or should stay. I met with Kellee Payne (Cooperative Extension Horticulture Agent) and John Kessler (NC Forest Service). The maple tree needs to be removed, the cedar tree can be removed and it would be great if we had someone who could make benches out of the wood. The southern magnolia is healthy and is fine to stay, however, it would help the tree to add soil on top of the uncovered roots.