



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMISSION  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 314, Arlington, VA 22201

**JOINT MEETING  
OF THE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (EDC)  
&  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMISSION  
(ITAC)  
February 18, 2015**

Walter Reed Community Center  
Multi-Purpose Room B&C  
2909 16th Street S.  
Arlington, VA 22204

**MEETING MINUTES**

**In attendance:**

**Chair:** Frank Jazzo, Chair  
**Vice Chair:** Vacant

**ITAC Members Present:** Phil Caughran  
Anita Nolen  
Larry Mayer  
Martha Moore  
Mary Crannell  
Kenneth Cohn  
Kevin Robins  
Robert Schill

**Members Not Present:**  
Ben Faatz  
Tyler Carlin  
Joseph Pelton  
Sal d'Itri

**EDC Members:**  
Sally Duran  
Nick Stone, Virginia Tech  
Peter Greenwald, Penzance  
Jim Archey

**County/Schools Staff:**  
Jack Belcher, CIO  
Lou Michael, DTS  
George Parr, DTS  
Laura Szlaven, DTS  
Mark Levine  
Chris Conley  
Rob Billingsley, Cable Administrator  
Cynthia Richmond  
Marc McCauley  
Matt Smith, Arlington Public Schools

**Other Guests:**  
Marie Schuler, Comcast

1. **Meeting called to order by Frank Jazzo, ITAC Chair**

7:00 pm; Quorum Present.

2. **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:** Minutes of the January 2015 meeting were approved.

3. **Administrative and Other Issues.**

Mary Crannell was nominated for Vice Chair, vote moved by Member Moore and Seconded by Ken Cohn. Vote unanimously in favor.

4. **Presentation by Staff on the Board Report to be considered on Feb. 21.** (George Parr, Lou Michael, Cynthia Richmond, Marc McCauley)

Lou Michael started the presentation stating that the County recognized the confluence of several developments that enabled fiber optic communications:

- The Comcast agreement that provides fiber connecting County buildings and schools was coming to an end with not guarantee that the company would continue to provide this infrastructure
- There is a series of antennas that wirelessly link a Public Safety Network across the County that needed a redundant communications path
- The County was building a new fiber network connecting all the traffic lights
- Dominion Virginia Power was constructing some high power lines underground in several areas and was willing to provide fiber pathway for the use of the County

With these events coming together, the County recognized the opportunity to combine all these into an integrated shared network.

There are communities across the country who have had success in developing their own fiber networks and in leasing some part of their infrastructures and have demonstrated that it has been good for economic development.

The purpose of the ConnectArlington fiber that will be leased is to enhance economic development by running “middle mile” fiber down the commercial corridors. The first phase of 10 miles is from Ballston to Rosslyn along Wilson & Clarendon Blvd, Glebe Road from Fairfax Drive to Columbia Pike, and from Glebe Road along Columbia Pike to the Air Force Memorial down to Crystal City. These commercial areas are where the greatest demand is for dark fiber.

The role of the County is to act as facility manager of the fiber, and the role of the Licensee is to facilitate access from the “middle mile” fiber with “last mile” services to those needing the broadband communications.

The Licensee must terminate the leased fiber at least in one location within Arlington.

Licenses can be for one or as many as 48 fibers at a monthly rate for three, five, and ten year terms.

There is a rate sheet subject to market adjustments in the future, but the present fees are set from \$7200 per strand per year for three years up to \$4800 per strand per year for ten years.

Cynthia Richmond and Marc McCauley emphasized the following points:

ConnectArlington will contribute to economic development by attracting and retaining businesses in Arlington

While ConnectArlington is not THE defining tool for attracting and keeping businesses, it will definitely make a difference

Arlington has a 23% vacancy rate in commercial real estate and needs more amenities like ConnectArlington to reduce that.

Sally Duran of the Economic Development Commission made the following points:

The EDC supports any efforts that will create a 21<sup>st</sup> Century infrastructure

ConnectArlington can pave the way for an Innovation Economy in Arlington

Because of Arlington’s proximity to Washington, DC and the Pentagon, the fiber infrastructure can facilitate cybersecurity developers and expand security business

Attracting more businesses can broaden the tax base and shift dependence on revenue away from residents.

ConnectArlington has the potential of being a game changer for Arlington Economic Development.

5. The **following** comments or points were made at the Joint Meeting in the discussion period:

### **Business Considerations of ConnectArlington**

The process of licensing will be public, and actually benefit from openness.

Virginia Tech Representative, Nick Stone, said that if ConnectArlington was available when they were building their research center, they would not have spent the millions of dollars needed to build their own access to broadband fiber.

Nick Stone: "For people who have been through the process of getting such dedicated broadband access, ConnectArlington is a 'no-brainer'."

The County exercised considerable due diligence in communicating with industry, government and academic representatives to determine the best business model.

In the Request for Information process, a number of potential licensees responded with interest in participating.

### **General Advantage for Arlington**

Other jurisdictions in the region are either creating ConnectArlington counterparts, or wish they could. In time, other nearby communities will catch up and compete to attract businesses also.

While there are other large middle and last mile services in Arlington, they do not saturate Arlington's geography as much as ConnectArlington

### **ConnectArlington supports the County Vision and Purposes**

Expansion of fiber broadband access helps support the County's official vision statement.

ConnectArlington creates a 21st Century infrastructure

The flexibility of the rate sheet and terms is more attractive to the ways businesses work today, without being tied down to long term commitments, eg. 3 year, 5 year, 10 year options.

### **ConnectArlington supports general Economic Development**

Nick Stone said Virginia Tech likes being in Arlington due to attractiveness with public transportation, location, but also suitability for similar research organizations -- public and private.

Peter Greenwald of Penzance said, "In Real Estate, such amenities as access to transportation and communications are anecdotal, but important, palpable parts of the package in real estate decisions."

The County will rely on the private sector to market and install last mile connections to smaller businesses.

### **ConnectArlington Fiber Broadband strengthens Economic Development**

Having more fiber in the County contributes to Economic Development Generally -- More is better

Greater availability of fiber and broadband communications not only attracts, but also retains businesses and agencies in the County

There are many factors important to businesses and agencies in their decision to move or stay in the County, the expansion of fiber broadband increases the attractiveness

ConnectArlington supports an Innovation Economy

Bringing more high speed communications to new areas of the County increases potential locations for new commercial areas.

ConnectArlington's contribution in economic development is not only for "net new" businesses coming, but also to retain those who are already located in the County.

### **Financial Considerations**

While some Commission members have concerns about the return on investment over time, others recognize that this is infrastructure investment with broader economic development returns.

Return on Investment and profit are not part of the financial picture, the payback is from Economic Development in the marketplace and a broadened tax base.

### **ConnectArlington has a role in Cyber Security/Public Safety**

Cybersecurity developers will be more likely to establish research and business centers where high speed broadband is available.

7. **Public Comment:** None.

8. **Joint Resolution:** Moved by Member Moore; Seconded by Ken Cohn

Resolution: The Economic Development Commission and the Information Technology Advisory Commission jointly support the Arlington County Board's adoption of a policy statement regarding ConnectArlington as an economic development tool, approval of a standard form Dark Fiber License Agreement for implementing of ConnectArlington, and approval of a Schedule of Rates and Fees and related authorizations concerning ConnectArlington.

9. **Adjournment:** Joint Commission meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.