

Commissioners Approve Broadband Action Plan

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LEONARDTOWN, Md. – The Commissioners Tuesday approved a Broadband Plan of Action proposed by Bob Kelly, Chief Information Officer, Department of Information Technology.

The plan summarized recent efforts to improve internet accessibility in St. Mary's County. Kelly told the Commissioners that in five months, more than 61 miles of cable infrastructure had been installed in the county, 267 homes served with cable plant expansions, and 286 identified addresses with students in the house have been connected.

Internet service for public school students has been supplemented this year with the purchase of 500+ hotspots and connectivity established at addresses located within 1,600 feet of the existing cable plant.

Wi-Fi infrastructure has been installed at the Leonardtown Library and Garvey Senior Activity Center site and the Lancaster, Dorsey, Bagget and Chaptico Parks. Activation of all Wi-Fi sites should be complete in March.

Dellicker Strategies and Lewis Strategic briefed the Commissioners on the St. Mary's County Broadband Assessment survey from October. The survey generated 2600 responses from households and 99 responses from county employers. Existing internet service options were evaluated and, based on the assessments, the consulting firms gave the Commissioners multiple recommendations for moving forward.

Commissioner President Randy Guy expressed his approval of the plan and the assessment and stated that many county residents would continue to telework for some time to come. "The progress made to improve internet accessibility has been tremendous."

Commissioner decisions and related public documents are available on the county government website in BoardDocs. St. Mary's County Commissioner Meetings may be viewed live Tuesday mornings on SMCG Channel 95 or as a replay Friday nights at 6:30 p.m. Meetings are also available for on-demand viewing on the St. Mary's County Government YouTube Channel.

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