

# JACKSON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

## MINUTES

**Date:** May 18, 2023

**Time Begin:** 6:02 p.m.

**Time End:** 7:15 p.m.

**Location:** Department on Aging, Heritage Room

Members	Present	Absent		Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Emily Moss	X		Nathan Shepherd	X		Thomas Taulbee		X
Sandy Davis		X	Ollin Dunford	X		Beverly Crespo	X	
Brian Barwatt	X		Joyce Cooper	X		<i>Vacant</i>		
Adam Holt		X	Ken Brown		X			

### **Staff Present:**

Michael Poston- Planning Director

Anna Harkins- Planner I

Allison Kelley- Administrative Assistant III

### **Call to Order and Quorum Check**

Vice Chair Nathan Shepherd called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and a quorum was present.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

Ollin Dunford made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Beverly Crespo seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

### **Approval of the Minutes**

Beverly Crespo made a motion to approve April 13, 2023 minutes. Ollin Dunford seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

### **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

### **New Business**

#### **a) Broadband Presentation-Tiffany Henry**

Jackson County Economic Development Director Tiffany Henry presented to the Board. In 2021, the County was funded by the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF), which is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program that was done nationwide. The FCC is a reverse auction bid program that is awarded based on locations within the census blocks that show as being currently unserved. Jackson County was awarded 11,128 household locations (based on census block data), fiber to the home installation, \$16,978,566.10 award amount (largest RDOF award in North Carolina), required speeds 100Mbps symmetrical, and the County has a 7 year timeline that began in early 2022.

Ms. Henry stated the FCC obtained its data from existing providers to determine the number of households that are underserved, and those households are eligible for federal funding. In addition, internet service providers had the opportunity to go forward to bid on these projects. Charter Communications (Spectrum) won the RDOF grant for Jackson County as well as almost the entire state of North Carolina's census blocks.

Ms. Henry provided information of tools and resources to utilize:

- <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/>  
(Overview of all funding programs, county profile and more.)
- <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/north-carolina-broadband-survey>  
(Access to the Broadband Survey, you can also text or call to submit a response.)
- <https://www.nconemap.gov/pages/broadband>  
(Resource to view your address and see if it falls within RDOF/GREAT or if a survey has been submitted for the address.)
- <https://www.spectrum.com/cp/build>  
(Resource to use if the address is part of RDOF or GREAT with Charter/Spectrum.)

Ms. Henry stated another state funding source is the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) grant through the NC Department of Information Technology's Broadband Infrastructure (NCDIT) Office, and the County has finalized all agreements with this grant. In addition, she stated the GREAT grant would help those remnant parcels that were not included in the RDOF grant. Ms. Henry stated service providers went to the state to identify households that they could serve that are in an eligible census block, and they could not already be served or claimed by RDOF. The County has worked closely with different service providers and those in Raleigh encouraged counties that have ARPA funds that want to designate to help improve necessary infrastructure. Jackson County Board of Commissioners agreed to provide some matching funds in the GREAT grant applications. Ms. Henry stated if a provider had no county support they had to provide 25% matching requirements, no grant application could be more than \$4 million, and no County can get more than \$8 million on that GREAT grant cycle. In addition, she stated the County decided to provide matching funds and used ARPA dollars, which reduced the match to 15%. Charter (Spectrum) was the ISP awarded by the GREAT grant for Jackson County for 1,156 locations, \$4,497,486 award amount, 2 year timeline, \$300,000 matching funds from Jackson County, and a partnership agreement forthcoming from NCDIT Office.

Ms. Crespo inquired if these grants only focus on households and not of the potential future households. Ms. Henry stated the grants focus only on existing household address points. Ms. Henry provide materials to the Board of the Jackson County Broadband Profile from NCDIT. The profile showed the FCC report of unserved locations within the County with the following estimates:

- Unserved (No Service 25mb/s Download and 3mb/s Upload or Greater) = 32.27%
- Underserved (No Service 100mb/s Download and 20mb/s Upload or Greater) = 20.32%
- Fiber Broadband Available = 4.09%
- DSL Only = 46.31%
- Broadband Subscription = 52.65%
- No Internet Access = 17.52%
- No Internet Devices = 8.39%

Ms. Henry stated both RDOF and GREAT grants are tied to federal and state funding sources, and a part of the requirement was they had to participate in an Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The ACP allows those that are eligible to sign up for reduced rates for their internet. The ACP provides up to \$30 per month discount on internet services, up to a \$75 per month discount for households on tribal lands, and a \$100 discount for a laptop, computer or tablet bought through a participating provider.



Ms. Henry stated the next grant funding opportunity is the 2022-2023 Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) grant program that gives counties the opportunity to target specific eligible areas in partnership with NCDIT Office. The CAB program would give counties the ability to again partner with the state and service providers, and in theory, the County would do another Request for Proposal (RFP) for another project.

Ms. Henry asked the Board to share the NC Broadband survey for input from their community and to share the resource links for those that may have additional questions.

**b) Outdoor Lighting Discussion**

Ms. Harkins provided an update that staff is currently in the writing process and wanted to provide an outline to the Board regarding the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.

The following is the outline for the updated Outdoor Lighting Ordinance:

**Section 6.1 Development Standards – Outdoor Lighting Ordinance**

**6.1.1 Purpose**

- a) Intent
- b) Administration

**6.1.2 Applicability**

- a) This section shall apply to all the County except for
- b) Nonconforming Lighting
- c) Exemptions
- d) Compliance Required

**6.1.3 Prohibited Lighting Types**

**6.1.4 General Standards**

- a) Location
- b) Shielding
- c) Height
- d) Lighting of buildings
  - i. Location
  - ii. Direction

**6.1.5 Lighting for Residential**

- a) Single Family Residential
- b) Multifamily

**6.1.6 Parking lot lighting**

- a) Location
- b) Shielding
- c) Height

**6.1.7 Lighting for special applications**

- a) Gas Station/Convenience Store Canopies
- b) Outdoor Landscape Lighting
- c) Outdoor Sports Fields
- d) Signs

Ms. Harkins asked the Board for feedback and if they were missing anything. The Board had no further feedback and asked staff to bring back the draft ordinance. Ms. Harkins stated if Board members had additional feedback or questions to reach out to the department as they are now in the drafting phase of the update to the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.

Mr. Poston stated that at the next meeting staff would provide another update on the 2040 Jackson County Comprehensive Plan Update.

**Adjournment**

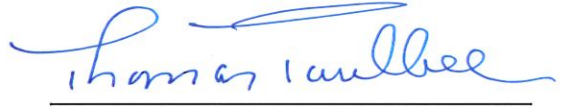
With no further business, Joyce Cooper made a motion to adjourn. Ollin Dunford seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

**Submitted by:**

  
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**Allison Kelley**  
**Administrative Assistant – Planning**

**Approved by:**

  
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**Thomas Taulbee**  
**Planning Board Chairman**