

7. DISCUSS AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION TO SEND OUT A COMPETITIVE BID FOR FIBER BROADBAND, LAST MILE INTERNET SERVICE IN VARIOUS PARTS OF MILAM COUNTY, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 262 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE

Motion by Commissioner Neal to send out a competitive bid for fiber broadband, last mile internet service in various parts of milam county and to include qualifications, Pursuant to Chapter 262 of the Local Government Code, Seconded by Commissioner Shuffield and approved unanimously

Motion by Commissioner Muegge to convene into Executive Session at 10:35a.m., Seconded by Commissioner Shuffield and approved unanimously

Reconvened from Executive Session at 10:49a.m.

8. DISCUSS AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING HIRING AND/OR REHIRING OF A MAINTNANCE EMPLOYEE FOR THE COURTHOUSE AND OTHER BUILDINGS/PROPERTY

Motion by Judge Young not to hire and/or rehire a maintenance employee for the courthouse and other buildings/property, Seconded by Commissioner Muegge and approved unanimously

9. ADJOURN- Motion by Commissioner Neal to adjourn at 10:50a.m., Seconded by Commissioner Muegge and carried unanimously.

Judge Young- We have another Grant Opportunity; 288 Billion in National Telecommunications & Information (NTIA Grant Priorities). I have been talking to ConnectNation about providing Broadband to households.

The service is designed to counties under 50,000 population. Projects that are the most cost-effective, prioritizing projects in areas that are most rural.

Looking to bring Broadband Fiber to every city in Milam County with speeds of 100 mb down and 25 mb up.

Projects that have ability to evolve, sustain & scale for the future- "fiber"

Work Deadline:

One year from date of the award

Extension for project that is underway

Extenuating Circumstances

Grant Deadline is August 17, 2021

What can we do that will help everyone? Broadband-Fiber not wireless. That would be running an actual cable to these cities.

Buckholts

Cameron

Gause

Milano

Rockdale

Thorndale

Most of our service in the County is fixed point wireless

25 Providers

Disrupted by weather

Wind

Rain

Trees

Receiver Issues

Estimated 4 annual service calls per customer

The cheapest way to run fiber is on the power lines;

Bartlett Electric is running on power lines because they have an inside track; they own the power lines. Their plan is primarily for wireless.

Big expense in getting in, once you get it in, you are done. The only exception to that is if you cut the line, being that it is underground. Above ground the biggest problem is squirrels. We have had this problem at the courthouse. There is a fiber optic that they claim is squirrel proof.

Fiber is more reliable

No weather issue

No obstructions

No costly to install

No service calls (unless cable is cut)

Estimated Cost

About \$7 million

Cameron & Rockdale- \$4 million

48% of the households in the county, about 4,000 household

Buckholts, Gause, Milano & Thorndale

Cost \$3 million

25% of the households in the County

2,000 households

We will bid out the project

Per Chapter 261 of the Government Code we send out the project for bids. Publish in the paper for 2 consecutive weeks

We will publish June 23, 2021

Bidding over July 7, 2021

Take Court Action afterwards

If no bids; we may procure per Local Government Code 262.0245

Milam County, Texas seeks bids, pursuant to Chapter 261 of the Local Government Code from broadband internet providers to provide fiber optic broadband internet, last mile connection service to the cities of Buckholts, Cameron, Milano, Gause, Rockdale and Thorndale, Texas. The request specifically includes providing broadband fiber optic service to any household and/or business within the city limits of the above referenced cities that request such service and that further the broadband speed be not less than 100 Mbps download and 25 Mbps upload. Finally, this request anticipates completion of the service no later than August 1, 2023.

We need an assessment; we have a partnership with ConnectNation.

We need to know what we have?

We do not know what service is available

For any given household

For any given business

We need to know for our grant request

What do we really have

Per FCC-as of June 20, 2020

Courthouse Service

ViaSat 100/3

AMG 50/3-fixed point wireless

Hughes Net 25/3

Unified Communications 25/25-fixed point wireless

ATT-ADSL 18/.768

Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line

ATT fixed point wireless 10/1

ConnectNation will come in and they do come in and do a street by street, road by road; they begin July 1, 2021

Will have some information ready by August 17, 2021

Cost of about \$100,000.00

Paid for by American Rescue Plan Act Funds

10% Match- A 3rd party can provide an in kind match

Commissioner Muegge- When you say go out for Bids does that include qualifications?

We went through that with FEMA, where we went out for bids then had to go back out for qualifications because of the engineering firm.

Judge Young- Bids; FEMA is more complicated than this; NTIA just says we have to have a partner

Kyle Nuttall- Difference is that engineering is a specialty service, this is officially just a normal service not a specialty

Commissioner Shuffield- How do we know if they are qualified?

Judge Young- Good question, I think its going to just be up to us. We can add in qualifications, I have been thinking all along, there will only be 2 companies that will apply which I think that to be Zochnet and maybe Bartlett. If we get an application and if I am not comfortable and if you are not comfortable, we can always get them in here and do whatever. We can amend this to provide their qualifications in the bid.

Kyle Nuttall- Like construction contracts you can look at their track record

Commissioner Shuffield- We know Zochnet, other companies what would we compare to?

Judge Young- We can put qualifications in there

Commissioner Hubnik- There are two grants? American Rescue Grant for \$100,000 now?

Judge Young- Yes, and we have the money in the bank now, we got that 10 days ago. We would use that to pay for the assessment

Commissioner Shuffield- How close does this bring the cable to the individual?

Judge Young- The proposal says within the City Limits of Cameron. So if you say you want it, they run the fiber to your house

Commissioner Shuffield- They don't have to pay?

Judge Young- No, its free, You will only pay for the service. They will run the service to your house at no charge, but you pay the monthly fee.

This will not run fiber to your house if you live out in the country; rural will be off the towers. Zochnet has 16 towers and 5 more on the books to be built, costing around \$100,000 each. Bartlett Electric has plans to build 12 towers to serve 4,800 people.

If we do what we are talking about we would cover almost 75% of the county.

The above and foregoing Minutes for Monday, June 21, 2021 having been examined and approved in Open Court this _____ day of _____ 2021.

County Judge

State of
Texas:
County of Milam:

I, Jodi Morgan, County Clerk, Milam County, Texas, attest that the foregoing is a true and correct accounting of the Commissioners' Court authorized proceedings for June 21, 2021.

County Clerk and Ex-Officio Member of
Commissioners' Court, Milam County, Texas

STATEMENT OF APPROVAL

Commissioner PCT #1

Commissioner PCT #2

Commissioner PCT #3

Commissioner PCT #4