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Board of Supervisors

Nick Asbury, Chairman
Seddon - District 2

Randy Johnson, Vice-Chairman
Mechanicsburg - District 3

Karen Hodock
Rocky Gap - District 4

Adam Kidd
Sharon - District 1

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BLAND COUNTY RECEIVES FUNDING TO EXPAND BROADBAND

Bland County was recently awarded a nearly \$200,000 grant for funding broadband deployment within the Hollybrook, VA community.

According to County Administrator Dr. Eric Workman, the Governor of Virginia notified county officials that they were awarded \$192,141 in grant funding.

“The Bland County Wireless Authority applied for grant funding through the Department of Housing and Community Development in the winter of 2016, through the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) program,” Workman said in a press release. “This grant application was in partnership with WVVA.net, with the goal of constructing the necessary infrastructure to provide high speed wireless internet to the Hollybrook community. This project is expected to provide high speed internet access to over 300 homes and businesses in that community as well as improve the county’s main broadband backhaul infrastructure. The Hollybrook community was selected for this grant over other communities in Bland County because the VATI program is restricted to those communities that are not included in the Federal Connect America Program.”

Workman said the project will construct the wireless internet infrastructure in Hollybrook that will provide broadband at a minimum of 25 Mbps download speed. “This is a tremendous project for the Hollybrook community,” Hollybrook District Board of Supervisor Randy Johnson said. “Many of the residents of the Hollybrook community either have limited or no access to high speed internet. This is true for other parts of the county as well. Hopefully, this project will be a catalyst for broadband providers to expand service throughout the county.”

Workman said the grant will cover the equipment which is needed for the project. WVVA.net and the County of Bland will work together to provide necessary construction labor, Workman said.

According to Workman, this project is part of a larger county wide broadband initiative. “In 2015, the Bland County Wireless Authority began working on a county wide wireless broadband plan that was funded by a grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development,” Workman said.

Workman states the county wants to recognize officials and agencies involved in the project. “As part of the announcement, the County of Bland recognizes the efforts of many organizations in the development of the county broadband plan as well as their support for improved broadband in rural Virginia: Mt. Rogers Planning District Commission, the office of Del. Morefield, the office of the Secretary of Commerce and Trade; Rural Development, WVVA.net and CHA Consulting.”

Board formed to govern Bland County Public Library

The Bland County Public Library turns a new page July 1 when it officially becomes an independent library after breaking away from the Smyth-Bland Regional Library system.

To help with the transition and oversee the library, county supervisors recently appointed a five-member library board of trustees. There is one member from each of Bland County's four voting districts, along with a representative from the board of supervisors.

The board members are Sharon Puckett from Rocky Gap district, Molly Thompson from the Seddon district, Tiffany Carter from the Sharon district, Laura Radford from Mechanicsburg district, and County Administrator Eric Workman, representing the Board of Supervisors.

The board will decide on library policies and procedures, such as approving the budget and applications for state aid. The board will also determine public services offered by the library and collection policies.

"They are a governing board, but will also work as an advisory board," said Cameron Burton, library director. "They are also a great sounding board for new ideas. We will bounce ideas off of them and get input on things."

The board of trustees will meet quarterly, in February, May, August and November.

"I think this is a positive change," Burton said. "I think it is a change in the right direction for Bland and will allow us to grow at the rate we have been growing. They have provided me with a fantastic group of people to work with."

Security changes come to Bland County Courthouse

In an effort to improve security for employees and visitors, the Main Street entrance of the Bland County Courthouse has been closed. People with business inside the building must enter through the Jackson Street entrance and pass through a metal detector, which was moved from the courtroom entrance to the Jackson Street building entrance.

County Administrator Eric Workman said that improving courthouse safety remains a goal for county officials, and the entrance change is part of a continuous review of operations.

"We've been talking about it for a number of years," he said. "We are one of a few courthouses left that doesn't have regular security. Unfortunately, in today's world, you have to be more cognizant of your surroundings, and that is the reason for the move."

Workman said that Sheriff Tom Roseberry will hire part-time personnel to man the Jackson Street entrance at a salary of \$10 per hour. The county has set aside \$32,000 in next year's fiscal budget for three part-time security officers, he said. The money will come from courthouse security funds, which are collected from court fees, which are not expected to increase, Workman said.

Workman said that although there have been scuffles and behavior concerns at the courthouse over the years, no one particular incident spurred the change.

"It would be great if we could have both entrances open, but on the financial side, it is more feasible to have just one entrance," he said, adding that a couple of hundred people visit the courthouse each day, depending on when court is in session.

"We want to make sure we have a safe environment for everybody," Workman said.

FIREWISE PROGRAM

Bland County is partnering with New River-Highlands RC&D to bring the community information on NFPA's Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program.

An individual will come out, at no cost, and review any community that has information requested. Then a plan of how to take care of those fuel sources is developed. Volunteer groups, with the owner's permission, will come and clean out any fuel sources to aid in preventing the risk of fire spreading to the home. Local Emergency Services agencies will be providing more information and attending training to help with this effort.

If you are interested in more information or would like to speak to someone regarding a site visit, please visit, <http://www.firewise.org/usa> and/or call Bland County Department of Emergency Services at [276-688-4641](tel:276-688-4641).



Bland County Farmers Market
opens every Saturday

June—October

For more information contact:
Tom Clark, Market Manager
[276-620-0553](tel:276-620-0553)



Seniors interested in the Farmers Market Fresh Fruit/Vegetables for Seniors Program can call District III to get an application mailed to them [276-783-8157](tel:276-783-8157)

Cooling Assistance starts June 15th
application can be picked up or mailed to
clients at this time.

Contact: Darlene Conley at

[276-688-4111](tel:276-688-4111)

or by email:

darlene.conley@dss.virginia.gov

County of Bland is working with Crooked Road to host a concert featuring Cox & Company and Country Boys Friday, June 16, 2017 @ 7:30 P.M. @ Bland County Fairgrounds.

Tickets can be purchased at Wolf Creek Indian Village or Bland County Courthouse Suite 204 or online at: <https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/6371415/cox-companycountry-boys-bland-fairgrounds-616-southwest-mountains-of-music-homecoming>.

The Bland Co. Public Library Presents

Build A Better World

Summer Reading Program 2017 Schedule



JUNE 9-July 22



Snakes Alive! Friday, June 9 @ 10:30 a.m.

Rom Comer returns with his slithery friends. Arrive early - this is always a popular event! www.snakesaliveprograms.com



Dare Devil Dogs Wednesday, June 14 @ 6:00 p.m. Fairgrounds

Action packed trick dogs will be sporting their best tricks. Sure to please every member of the family! www.frisbeedogshow.com



Teen Tuesday June 20 @ 6:00 p.m.

Get your nerd on with videogames and fun. Games and Snacks Provided! Prizes Given!! Sign up Required. For ages 13-20 yrs old.



The Balloon Lady Wednesday, June 21 @ 6:00 p.m.

Watch, learn, and be amazed when Donna Pruettt joins us for some balloon creations!!



Dino Parties Wednesday, June 28 @ 10:30 a.m.

An experience like none other! A volcano, a gang of moving blinking, skating Triceratops, a "real" baby Tyrannosaurs Rex! www.dinoparties.com



Professor Whizpop Thursday, July 6 @ 3:00 p.m.

A fast action comedy magic show! www.themagictomshow.com



Teen Tuesday July 11 @ 6:00 p.m.

Drone Races! Come out and learn to pilot a drone and maneuver through our obstacle course. Sign up Required For ages 13-20 yrs old.



Action Animals Wednesday, July 12 @ 6:00 p.m.

A showcase of interesting animals, see a Lynx, Burmese Python, Patagonian Cavi Serval Cat, Ferrets and Tropical Birds!



Library Celebration! Saturday July 22 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Food, Fun, and Prizes! Come out and celebrate our NEW Library! Cash in your Summer Reading legos for prizes galore!

Sign Up TODAY!

For More Information or a Complete Schedule
Call or stop by the Bland Co. Public Library (276) 688-3737

EVENTS CALENDAR

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JUNE 2017

June 3—Farmers Market Opens

June 3—Family Day at Wolf Creek Indian Village

June 3—Truck Pull at Bland County Fairgrounds

June 5—Planning Commission Meeting @ 6:00 pm

June 10—Bear Jam

June 13—Economic Development Authority Meeting @ 6:30 pm

June 15—Children's Services Act Meeting @ 9:30 am

June 16 —Crooked Road Concert @ 7:30 pm

June 17—Relay for Life

June 20—Service Authority Meeting @ 4:00 pm

June 20—Board of Supervisors Meeting @ 5:00 pm

June 26—DMV Connect at Bland County Library 9am-4pm

JULY 2017

July 3 & 4—County Administration Offices Closed for Independence Day

July 6—Wireless Authority Meeting @ 5:00 pm

July 8—Ceres Car Show

June 5—Planning Commission Meeting @ 6:00 pm

July 11—Economic Development Authority Meeting @ 6:30 pm

July 15—Truck Pull at Bland County Fairgrounds

July 20—Children's Services Act Meeting @ 9:30 am

July 21, 22, 23—Pow Wow

July 25—Service Authority Meeting @ 4:00 pm

July 25 —Board of Supervisors Meeting @ 5:00 pm

AUGUST 2017

August 7—Planning Commission Meeting @ 6:00 pm

August 8—Economic Development Authority Meeting @ 6:30 pm

August 17—Children's Services Act Meeting @ 9:30 am

August 19—Heritage Day @ Bland County Fairgrounds

August 22—Service Authority Meeting @ 4:00 pm

August 22 —Board of Supervisors Meeting @ 5:00 pm

August 23-26—Bland County Fair

Meeting dates and times are subject to change . Calendar will be updated on our website:

www.blandcountyva.gov