

**VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
ANNUAL BUDGET COMMITTEE**

Agenda

Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Vigo County Government Center

1. Call the meeting to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Calling of the roll
4. Public comment
5. Communications from elected officials, other officials and agencies of the County
6. Discussion/review of Broadband Project
7. Discussion/review regarding CARES Act
8. Adjournment



THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF VIGO COUNTY

Commissioners

Brendan Kearns, 1st District
Judith A. Anderson, 2nd District
Brad Anderson, 3rd District

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Dear Members of the Vigo County Council,

The Vigo County School Corporation recently received \$1.4 million through a GEERs grant through the Governor's office to expand access and connectivity to the students of Vigo County by identifying 244 community access locations where Joink fiber would be terminated on school corporation equipment. The Vigo County project was one of the highest funded projects in the state – a huge win for our students. Although we're grateful to be one of the highest funded projects, the construction costs required to create the most comprehensive strategy possible, providing the best outcome to all Vigo County taxpayers, requires additional funds.

Therefore, the project has focused in on 84 of the 244 key connectivity points across the City of Terre Haute and Vigo County that the Vigo County School Corporation believes provides safe zones for children and families to visit, get online, and enjoy school corporation and guest wifi access.

To our knowledge there is no other community looking at this type of comprehensive approach in collaboration with their city, county, school corporation, higher education institutions and provider. This approach, utilizing local, state and private dollars, would position Vigo County in a unique driver's seat for future broadband grants and overall infrastructure for more and enhanced connectivity. With commitments from the City of Terre Haute, Vigo County, the Vigo County School Corporation, and Joink, the collaborative outcome could create immediate results for the students and citizens of Vigo County. Although we always knew broadband deserts existed, COVID-19 drew new attention to the connectivity concerns impacting households in Vigo County. In the survey (5,212 responses) taken over the summer as part of the VCSC GEERs grant application, it was learned that nearly half of respondents indicated that their service was not fast enough nor reliable enough for distance learning and 14% did not have access at all.

The Vigo County Commissioners request the Vigo County Council to utilize monies and request an appropriation out of the edit fund to cover \$2,844,943 of the total project cost. This, combined with the City's commitment and the state grant dollars will provide much-needed access to broadband for the citizens and students of Vigo County, enhancing quality of life, infrastructure development, economic development, quality of education, and access to broadband.

Best regards,

Judith A. Anderson
Brendan Kearns

Vigo County Commissioners