

Broadband Committee, Town of Mason, NH

Meeting 3/5/2020

Approved Minutes

**Present:** Broadband Committee members Bill Schongar, Lee Lemoine, Joe Havens, Mike Judge

**Called to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Bill Schongar

**New Business:**

- Meeting minutes from the February meeting were voted on and approved
- Members discussed that the NDA was signed with Consolidated (CCI).
- Discussed how we can work with CCI to get proactive on outages so town residents know before hand
- Members discussed the best way to address mass outages, should they all be reported by individual residents?
- Bill discussed DSL updates on the north end of town but it also involved coordination with Eversource for the poles
- The survey map was discussed, specifically how some residents in town don't have service but other residents on their road do. This could be that CCI is at max capacity at those locations. Bill indicated he would reach out to Jeff from CCI to ask about this and Mike said he would give him the exact address in question.
- Mike discussed that an individual from Matrix Design Group reached out to open a discussion with Mason about running fiber. The members agreed to follow up and have a discussion with him.
- Members discussed that AT&T and T-Mobile were competing to improve service to the area, which could bring 5G connectivity to Mason.
- Mike discussed that base on feedback from Rindge, Dublin, and Chesterfield, towns were averaging about \$10 a month on their bill to pay back the fiber bond.
- Mike stated that he would reach out to the Rindge committee to see if they had an RFI template.
- All members agreed that the next step was to get an RFI to CCI.

**Open Floor Discussion for Public:**

- Answered grant question regarding federal funding by resident
- Explained to resident Northern End DSL installation, internet coming soon
- Answered resident question about federal money as Peterborough has done, we don't know as of yet.
- Resident asked who holds the bond? answered that whoever is voted on will hold the bond.
- Resident asked how long the bond is typically? answered 20 years is typical life span of bond.
- Resident asked when the bond kicks in, when will we have to pay for it? Answered, when you get internet, that's when you pay.
- Resident asked what the surcharge will be? Answered, we don't know but by the looks of other towns it will be \$10 rough additional cost to the monthly internet bill.

- Resident asked if this will be included in the town meeting? Answered, we will host a special town meeting before March if necessary.
- Resident asked if Mason has options like Comcast, Charter, or other providers? Answered, we are accepting anyone who is willing to bid, and the town will vote when the time comes.
- Resident asked if residents have the option, can they purchase the best internet available if they want, or can they opt out if they want? Answered, yes they can choose the best or choose none at all.
- Resident suggested to educate the public on the benefits of fiber.
- Talked about cost to taxes to residents.
- Resident asked about T mobile hanging lines? answered yes they are in process of hanging lines in town currently.
- Resident explained he had Verizon with fast internet, lost it and did not come back.
- Explained that fiber has reliability options.
- Resident suggested we attend the town meeting coming up to better explain our goal
- Resident asked who is building the towers in town? answered T Mobile
- Resident asked about time frame? answered it's based on when we can provide the RFI, no time frame at all.
- Resident asked if other towns sought out other bids? answered that the broadband team will try to find out.
- Resident asked if it's even worth looking elsewhere other than Consolidated? answered it's comparing prices, car shopping.
- Resident asked who would run the wire? answered it would be owned by whoever wins the bid.
- Resident asked how much the RFI will cost? answered there is no dollar figure for the RFI.
- Resident asked what is the cost we would need total? Answered 250,000 per mile to run Fiber as a basic ball park figure, based on other towns.
- Resident asked who makes the decisions? Answered it's all voted on by the tax payers.
- Resident asked do we know who TDS has serviced? Answered, there are some residents that have TDS, some neighboring towns.
- Resident asked how long it will take to run lines? Based on TDS in the past, 2 months maybe, we don't really know.
- Resident asked if bandwidth would be an issue with Fiber? answered no Fiber would not have a bandwidth issue.
- Resident asked what the next step is? Answered RFI finalization, reach out to TDS, Matrix, fact finding stage, hopefully more facts to come.

**Adjourned:** There being no further business, Bill motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Lee. Four votes to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 PM.