



**MINUTES OF THE BROADBAND COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015**

In attendance: Will Caruana, Chairman; Nate DeLong, Anthony Aube, Tom Newton

Chairman Caruana called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

I. Update on MBI

Mr. DeLong mentioned he was queried by The Reminder Publications regarding MBI State Funding for underserved communities and how those funds might impact Wilbraham's plan to deploy broadband services; specifically, residential and/or business class service(s). Mr. DeLong indicated he responded to that request via e-mail.

Mr. DeLong mentioned he intended to request funds from the Finance Committee as part of the IT Department's Service Host Fees account to increase the Internet and Town Hall fiber circuits from our current 50 Mbps to 100 Mbps.

II. Meeting Minutes

Mr. Newton made a motion to accept the minutes from the Committee meeting on February 4, 2015, and Mr. Caruana seconded. The motion was approved (it was actually three years and 1 abstention) and the minutes accepted, as submitted.

III. Pilot Program

Mr. DeLong mentioned he spoke with AccessPlus and they installed a 12-count fiber run between the data room in Town Hall and the building behind Town Hall.

Mr. DeLong also mentioned he spoke with AccessPlus about a recent and successful wireless broadband test the company recently conducted, as they are one of the providers the Committee is interested in speaking with about conducting a similar test here in Wilbraham (in the Spec Pond/Industrial Park area). Mr. DeLong hopes to set up an initial meeting with Doug from AccessPlus in the relatively near future to determine initial feasibility and potential costs. He also mentioned he intended to bring this topic up during the next Finance Committee meeting to make the Members aware of the Broadband Committee's intentions.

Mr. DeLong mentioned our contract with AccessPlus has been completed and submitted to the interim Town Manager for approval. On a related note, Mr. Caruana indicated we still need to secure an "e-Rate" to be able to formally resell service to any municipal entities and that process is roughly three months away from completion.

The Committee also discussed the eventual funds the pilot program will produce and how revenues and expenses associated with this project will be reconciled for the benefit of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Caruana mentioned he hopes to be able to use Form A-2 to balance all related accounts. He indicated he would follow up with the interim Town Manager to ascertain who would be responsible for populating related data, but that this form should be used to detail revenues and expenses incurred in FY2015 as well as the projected budget numbers for FY2016

IV. Safety Net Update

Mr. Caruana mentioned he spoke with Ed Miga, DPW Director, about running conduit from the Fire Department to the DPW, but there are multiple routes the DPW will consider. The ultimate decision will more than likely be based on the lowest cost (as yet to be determined).

V. HWRSD Update

Mr. DeLong mentioned Bart Gilley responded to his request about the school district's RFP for broadband service. While stopping short of confirming any final decision, Mr. Gilley mentioned they favored service through Charter Communications due to costs and available bandwidth. While not stated within Mr. Gilley's response, Mr. DeLong does believe HWRSD has signed either a three or five year contract renewal with Charter Communications and intends on confirming current status with Mr. Gilley.

VI. Next meeting Date and Agenda

Our next Committee meeting will be conducted on Wednesday, March 11, 2015, at 5:30 pm, in the Town Hall.

VII. Open Session: For topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 hours in Advance of Meeting

VIII. Citizen's Open Forum

Mr. Robert Grove of 24 Merrill Road was in attendance and asked a variety of questions of the Committee, specifically focusing on our directives and ultimately, who holds us accountable for our decisions and actions. We explained to Mr. Grove that as an advisory committee, we report to the Board of Selectmen and, as such, it is ultimately their responsibility to oversee any/all decisions concerning broadband initiatives in the Town. As a Committee, we did agree with Mr. Grove's general assessment that a fair amount of research oriented work needs to be conducted, and some major decisions made based upon said research, to determine the overall feasibility of deploying a broadband network (whether wired or wireless) within the Town. In summation, we mentioned to Mr. Grove we intended to ask for a meeting with the Board of Selectmen in order that we may share our mutual concerns about a general lack of direction for the Committee and, ultimately, prod the Selectmen into deciding the next steps associated with this project.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:54 pm.

These minutes were submitted by Tom Newton and approved as to form and content by Broadband Advisory Committee vote on 3/11/2015 with Will Caruana as chairman.