

Minutes of the Broadband Committee
Town of Charlemont
October 21, 2015

- The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.
- Committee members present: Bob Handsaker, Cheryl Handsaker, Ken Hall, Trevor Mackie.
- Others present: Doug White

- The minutes from September 19 were approved unanimously.
- Doug White was nominated to fill the currently vacant seat on the committee and approved unanimously.
- WiredWest updates. A draft operating agreement was approved by the WW board and will be circulated soon to the towns. They will include a cover letter with a summary. There will be a meeting about the agreement on November 6, noon to 2pm at the Old Courthouse in Northampton. They are hoping to have the agreement vetted by the towns by January. We may want to write an “executive summary” for our town, as it is a long document.
- WiredWest also approved releasing a financing analysis by Jim Drawe that suggests one year notes are a good financing option.
- Sign-up campaign. The urgency to get to 40% is increasing with the draft of the operating agreement. We agreed to set a “deadline” of Dec 31 to try to reach 40% signups in Charlemont. We likely cannot sign the WiredWest operating agreement until we reach 40%, and if this goes into effect in January we will not be able to vote or fully participate in WiredWest until we do.
- We have permission to use the Yankee Doodle man from Friends of the Fairground and permission of the selectboard to put him in front of town hall. We are scheduled to meet with the planning board for a temporary sign permit.
- Selectboard approved the letter to residents. We would maybe like to add a sentence about the December 31 deadline. Bob to follow up. Trevor with some help from Bob has been compiling the list of addresses for the mailing. WiredWest agreed to reimburse us for the mailing costs.
- We discussed talking points for the sign-up campaign. We are asking the selectboard to provide leadership and support (letter to residents, sign at town hall, allow sign-ups to be done at town hall). We need to communicate to residents that we need everyone to put down a deposit to keep this option alive for all of the property owners in our town.
- We discussed trying to create a separate fund to fully or partially subsidize landlords to put deposits on their rental units. Bob, Cheryl, Trevor will follow up.
- Cheryl has begun working to identify properties that are derelict or not habitable or incorrectly listed as multi-family so we can adjust for these in the 40% signup rate.
- We will give out Halloween candy at the Yankee Doodle man. We will plan to have a table at the special town meeting on December 22. We will all continue to reach out to residents one-on-one.

- Ken has made some progress trying to find someone to talk to about telemedicine at Franklin Medical.
- Bob and Trevor attended the Hawley meeting with MBI. The Hawley selectboard and telecommunication committee all seem very desirous of having fiber everywhere, the only issue in Hawley is the cost.
- The meeting between MBI and the selectboard went well. MBI and WiredWest appear to be working together well.
- Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.