

## CHARLEMONT BROADBAND COMMITTEE

April 17, 2019 at 6:00 pm at Charlemont Town Hall

Attending: Doug White, Bob Handsaker, Trevor Mackie, Cheryl Handsaker

Missing: Mary Ellen Banks, Ken Hall, Bill Tucci

**1. Approval of minutes from 4/10/2019**

a. **ACTION TAKEN:** Minutes have been approved unanimous.

**2. Status of Make-Ready**

a. **Discussion of the annual fees for railroad crossing outside of the public way.**

i. Railroad crossings that are not on the public way are subject to an annual license fee that is dependent upon the fiber count of the cable. This fee is owed by each entity trespassing the railroad property, such as the utilities whose poles we are sharing to make the crossing. In addition, these license prices rise at 3% each year.

1. 0-144            \$1668.73 annually
2. 145-288        \$3234 annually

ii. Discussed an easement (or lifetime license). These are typically calculated at the current rate \* 20 years. We understand the state run network may have benefited from a discounted rate and you agreed to ask about a reduced rate for a lifetime license if I can provide a copy of this agreement as an example. Bob thought it's possible that the cost was prorated by number of fibers. Bob will follow up with MBI to confirm this item.

iii. Broadband committee will consider redesign to avoid the railroad crossings not on the public way.

1. 288 cable crosses before long bridge and could be moved to a public way by setting a single pole. Bob will ask WG&E to consider redesign at this junction.
2. South River Rd, 30 fiber crossing - Consider a redesign to avoid the cost of crossing off a public way. One potential

alternative is a route along South River Rd for 0.8 miles, either on Verizon poles or new construction. We should do a cost/benefit analysis.

3. West Hawley Rd - Crossing is 0.35 miles from Tower Rd. which appears to be the closest utility pole that would not require a river crossing. Alternative options: river crossing at \$1600/year, 0.35 miles of new construction, or do not service this house. There are also other undeveloped lots along West Hawley Road.
4. Tower Rd. - Current design calls for a 30 fiber cable. An alternate route would avoid the river crossing but require approx. 1650 feet (0.3 miles) of new construction. The river crossing is currently the route followed by MBI-123. Another option might be to lease a single dark fiber from MBI and use a field split cabinet.

### **3. Status of NEE**

- a. Doug will update the scope of work for the broadband committee to include in the folders.
- b. Bob will ask
  - i. Selectboard approval for the NEE bid through FRCOG
  - ii. Procurement body - should this be the town or the MLP? This is a question for Andrea Wood.
  - iii. External site plan approval and review from the Selectboard.
    1. WG&E says pole risers do not need special permission from the utilities.
    2. WG&E approved the use of a local contractor for site preparation and vault.
- c. Set meeting with the EMD to discuss timing of the NEE external site preparation for broadband and generator plans. Perhaps shared procurement?
- d. Broadband committee will develop the details of the building entry from the external conduit at the next meeting.

- e. External site prep for the conduit and vault will be procured separately from the internal NEE.
- f. ConCom and Historic Commission will be approached following the final exterior design approval from Selectboard.

#### **4. Status of Distribution Network**

- a. Slack Loops were recommended by DOT that it would be in the town's best interest at stream crossings as items need to be replaced and maintenance costs.
  - i. Trevor will identify all the stream crossings in the plan
  - ii. Bob & Trevor will ask for additional slack loops on all these locations from WG&E.
  - iii. Doug and Trevor will look at the slack loop length.
- b. Hawk Hill - doing the one section was not too expensive but other areas are likely to be more expensive to go completely underground.
- c. Heath stage terrace - WG+E will give us an estimate for an underground solution as well as the estimate they have generate for an aerial solution.
- d. Rowe and Heath edge cases: no new progress.

#### **5. Continue Drop Policy Discussion**

- a. Cheryl will continue to crunch numbers

#### **6. Status of Wired West Refunds**

- a. Cheryl will continue to look for refunds

#### **7. Status of additional funding sources**

- a. **Reconnect grant** - Cheryl will continue to determine eligibility
- b. **CDBG** - Cheryl will continue to follow up
- c. **TV Ad revenue** - Cheryl has had a call with NY TV advertising firm to see about the revenue generation.

#### **8. Selectboard Update**

- a. No additional comments from the committee on Bob's report to the Selectboard.

#### **9. Any other business not reasonably foreseen 48 hours in advance of meeting**

- a. Hawley wireless project is moving forward.

- b. Call from a resident about “how can I prepare my driveway for the fiber install?”. Ask WG&E about next actions for materials and training.
- c. How can we get more energy into the broadband effort?

Next meeting: April 24 @ 6PM

Meeting adjourned: 8:15