

**Town of Greenfield**  
**7 Sawmill Road, Greenfield, NH 03047**  
**Public Benefit Hearing - Broadband**  
Sunday, January 31, 2021 – 2:00 PM

**Selectboard:** Selectwoman Karen Day, Selectman Michael Borden

**Staff:** Aaron Patt, Town Administrator; Katherine Heck, Treasurer

**Broadband Volunteers:** Tom Bascom

**Consolidated Communications:** Jeff McIver

**Public:**

- Diane Boilard
- Heather Wilson
- Kate Dean
- Amelia Reynolds
- Richard Spencer
- Jeff LaCourse
- Jack Moran

**2:00 PM: Virtual Meeting Open – ZOOM Meeting 845 442 9808 653cuG**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00pm. Chairman Robert Marshall has a prior engagement so Selectwoman Day is running the meeting today. Selectwoman Day welcomed everyone to the virtual Broadband Public Benefit Hearing. She opened the meeting and read a statement provided by the Attorney General’s office regarding virtual meetings. “As member of the Selectboard, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor’s Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, which has been extended, this public body is authorized to meet virtually.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor’s Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are providing public access to the meeting by telephone. We are currently working on providing additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means, however, we are a small town and that is not feasible for tonight’s call.

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the access number posted online or by following the directions on the Meeting Instructions link from the Selectboard’s page on the website. The Website address is [greenfield-nh.gov](http://greenfield-nh.gov).

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting telephonically. If there are problems with access, please email the Town Administrator and he will attempt to help you in real time. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll-call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll-call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

Each selectperson noted that they were alone. The Selectboard members are each home and their spouses are in the house, the Town Administrator is in his office at home and is alone.

The Chair stated: "If there isn't time for your questions tonight, you can email the Town Administrator and request a response. If you have technical difficulties on your end with your computer, laptop, or other electronic device email the Town Administrator if you having trouble connecting in real-time and we'll try to be of help.

## **2:00 PM: Public Information Hearing**

Selectwoman Day welcomed the participants and thanked them for joining the Zoom session. She thanked Mr. Bascom and the volunteers for their hard work to bring everyone together. Selectwoman Day then turned the session over to Tom Bascom, Chair of the Broadband Volunteers. Mr. Bascom provided a slide show presentation on Broadband and why Broadband is important to Greenfield including:

- The possibility of impact on property values and the ability to attract new people to live in town – without Broadband or internet access people will find it harder to engage in
  - remote learning,
  - telehealth,
  - remote work.

Mr. Bascom stated that the COVID pandemic has highlighted the need for families and homes to have the capability to engage in these remote services. Mr. Bascom provided an overview of the Broadband Volunteers and the work that the volunteers have provided; from a survey of Greenfield residents; to supporting an RFI from the Selectboard; to reviewing the response to the RFI; to drafting and reviewing responses to the Request for Proposal that was issued. Mr. Bascom explained that the survey showed that Greenfield is not only underserved in a significant portion of the town, but also that the satisfaction from people regarding internet access in Greenfield in general is very low overall. Some people have DSL and some of those people are happy with the service, but the majority of people are not served and have had issues with the alternatives such as hot spots and other forms of internet.

The town received three responses to its RFP: one from Consolidated Communications, one from the Matrix Group, and one from Comcast. Mr. Bascom provided a slide on the comparison between the three providers, noting that the quickest to market, with the least cost to Greenfield and the lowest fee schedule, as well as the highest investment component in the project came from Consolidated Communications. Mr. Bascom stated that Consolidated has some update pricing to go over. At 2:32pm, Mr. Bascom explained the next steps that the town and Consolidated will engage in. This includes Town Meeting, which is being moved to May 1<sup>st</sup> where it will be held outside at Oak Park. Mr. Bascom turned the presentation over to Jeff McIver of Consolidate Communications.

Jeff McIver of Consolidated Communications provided an outline of the Broadband offering. Mr. McIver is a Project Manager at Consolidated Communications (CCI).

Mr. McIver provided a slideshow of the Consolidated Communications Broadband offering. He explained the difference between the fiber offering and copper line DSL that is currently in service. It was noted that Consolidated is out of DSL facilities and cannot provide any more DSL service in Greenfield. Mr. McIver provided an overview of the timeline for the installation, which is around ten months once the contract is approved (after Town Meeting). Mr. McIver provided updated slideshow of possible pricing and explained the costs are projected costs of what is likely to be available in a year or 18 months from now. He stated that there would be no contract required. If people preferred their current DSL service, they would not have to change to a different service. Mr. McIver stated that the goal of CCI is to have a promotion for pricing every year.

Diane Boilard asked if the pricing from CCI is going to include taxes, and actually be more than what the slide is showing, or could residents be assured that the \$45 monthly fee wasn't going to change. Mr. McIver stated that the actual cost and any taxes is not known at this time.

Ms. Boilard asked a question regarding the Bond. Mr. Bascom explained that the State now allows the town to bond for this infrastructure whereas in the past the towns were not allowed to bond so the costs were beyond most communities to install Broadband.

Jack Moran stated that he was originally on the Economic Development Committee and that committee had really worked hard to try and bring Broadband to Greenfield, but there was no bonding capacity back then so the project never got off the ground. He thanked the volunteers and the Selectboard for all their hard work. Mr. Moran has a couple of questions.

- Is the bandwidth quote Synchronous or Asynchronous? (is there an upload that is significantly lower than download speeds, or is it an open pipe both ways?)
- Is the bandwidth allocation a "best effort" or are there any guarantees or minimum guarantees. Are there any caps on the bandwidth?

Mr. McIver stated that this was a good question and he would provide some data on that through Mr. Bascom. He stated that while its says it's a "gig", the actual speed is going to be something like 978mbs.

Mr. Moran asked if the contract would have documentation to this effect.

Richard Spenser asked about the promotional rate term. Would that be something that would increase after the first year and every year after?

Mr. McIver stated that the 1<sup>st</sup> year is the base rate and he stated that the company's goal is to have a promotion going every year. The first year would be an "introductory promotion".

Diane Boilard asked a question about whether there would be any promotions for people on a fixed income. Mr. McIver sated that we have a low income plan and the rates are for a year in advance, so its still an unknown. He said that he would try to get more information to the Selectboard. He stated that "you don't have to switch over from your DSL".

Jeff Moran asked if there would be any escalators or cap clauses in the contract.

Mr. McIver stated that Mr. Moran could refer that back to the town because that would be covered in the contract.

Mr. Moran stated that he went and researched the other towns and noted that the pricing he was finding for towns that are currently offering the Broadband service are different than the pricing that Mr. McIver is providing in his slideshow. Mr. McIver stated that by the time that Greenfield is installed the other town's rates would change.

Mr. McIver stated that it was CCI's goal to have everyone connected in 10 months.

Richard Spenser asked a question about the timeline.

Jack Moran asked a question about bundling and whether CCI would have a TV service.

Mr. McIver stated: "Yes. We have a TV and Cloud Services and other streaming services bundle."

Mr. Moran asked about the company's policy on loss of service and service credits. Would a loss of service due to storms or accidents be automatically applied based on the data that the fiber network can provide to CCI, or, would the consumer still need to apply for credit.

Mr. McIver stated that this was a good question. He provided an overview of the copper versus fiber network and stated that the goal of the company is to get back online quicker with the fiber network.

Diane Boilard asked whether DSL would continue to be supported or would it be shut down.

Mr. McIver stated that there is no plan to remove the DSL service even after Broadband is installed throughout the town.

At 3:15pm, Selectwoman Day asked if there were any other questions. Seeing none, she closed the meeting and asked the Selectboard members for a motion to adjourn. Selectman Borden made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Selectwoman Day. On a roll call vote, the Board voted 2-0 in favor of adjourning as follows: Karen Day – Aye, Michael Borden- Aye,

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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**Selectwoman Karen Day**

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**Selectman Michael Borden**