

Economic Development Advisory Committee Minutes 07/21/2014

Economic Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes/Broadband Info Meeting

Recorded by Sharon Rossi

July 21, 2014

Members present: JFletcher, NNickerson, AWood, PRenaud

Also Attending: Sue Corcoran, Project Manager, NH Broadband Mapping & Planning Program
Steve Waleryszak, Southwest Region Planning Commission
Jerry Hunter, CMRC, Vice President of Information Technology

7:03 pm: PRenaud called the meeting to order.

1: Broadband

PRenaud said he wants to finalize the survey and to discuss distribution and promotion.

He has a concern about question #7- To get better internet service or more options, how much more would you be willing to pay? \$10, \$20, \$50, other, or \$0. He knows there are people who would like to get better service, but are actually paying too much for what they presently have. So should we change this question, or how can we incorporate this issue into the survey?

A discussion ensued and the phrasing of question #8 will say: Are you satisfied with the value of your current internet service? This will be the new question #8. The previous question #8 will become #7.

SWaleryszak said getting the speed test done by the residents will gather the data needed and the location which ties in with the service.

Put between questions #8 & #9: How much are you currently paying monthly for internet access. This is a very important question as it will give a monetary value for current internet service. The previous question #7 will be moved to #10.

Final question in this section will be: Are you satisfied with your current level of internet access?

JFletcher said we could add after the above question in the following order:

- A: Are you satisfied with the current value.
- B: Ask how much are you spending.
- C: Are you willing to pay more for better access.

PRenaud said the main reason in bringing this up is because I want make valid inferences from the survey results.

JFletcher suggested using for these questions the terms: satisfied, very satisfied, unsatisfied would be the best means of getting info for tabulation. Give a choice of degrees of satisfaction instead of yes/no.

SWaleryszak asked are you able to currently bundle your services. AWood responded only with Fairpoint, but they don't offer cable. AWood said Fairpoint is OK with businesses, but on residential side is horrible.

After discussion it was concluded that these are the four questions that needed to be on the survey: value, level, cost, and willingness to pay more.

For questions #7 (Access Level) and #8 (Value) the following will be offered for responses: Very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat not satisfied, not satisfied.

For question #9 (Cost) how much are you currently paying for your internet: JFletcher said you can find a field program that will help with tabulation.

Question #10 keep as is.

PRenaud said I think we will get some good information from this survey as we have corrected it now.

PRenaud asked if on question #11 (If you buy, sell or rent a home, how important is it to have access to the internet?) He felt the responses should be: strong factor, somewhat a factor or not a factor.

SWaleryszak said we (SWRPC) are finding it's a massive factor – internet access.

The committee agreed to move questions #2 and #3 (about residents' current and future vision of the town) to the end of the survey (after the home selling question). This would necessitate re-numbering most of the above questions.

PRenaud said on question #6, JMoran brought up after the UNH people left at the last meeting about doing an op-ed piece on education on the internet. Should we do op-ed pieces on the internet or newspaper before we do this survey? Do we need to further educate the public about considering future uses of broadband and the internet? JFletcher, NNickerson, and AWood all agreed no, as most people know about the internet. AWood said also on how this survey is answered, it will tell us what people are thinking about for uses of the internet in the future.

SCorcoran said let the survey inform the EDAC what the community wants. All we want is the gut reaction of the townsfolk. No op-ed piece is needed at this time.

PRenaud said the survey is set. NNickerson said it would be good to add a comment line after each question. The committee agreed to do this.

2. Promotion and Logistics in getting the survey out

PRenaud said typically, as was done for the Master Plan survey in 2012, a paper survey is placed at public places in town, and the survey is also put on the town website. Placement of the survey will be at: the recycling center, Harvester Market, post office, town office, library and the town website. The Monadnock Ledger and posters and the town bulletin board on the common are options as well.

NNickerson said this is a snapshot and we will be taking an average from the survey, so the locations talked about are OK.

AWood said let's set the survey out in the five places we agreed on. If we aren't getting the returns, then we can adjust to different locations. NNickerson said the responses should be picked up weekly. Also it would good to tabulate the responses weekly to stay on top of them and not to create a crunch in September.

PRenaud said he will do the editing on the survey and get it to JFletcher so he can do a PDF for a print shop to print. JFletcher will check on which survey program he used previously to help in the tabulation.

JFletcher said he will make the posters, check on survey program, and pricing. It was agreed that the survey will be printed on 11 x 17 yellow papers. NNickerson will make up the boxes for the 5 locations.

It was agreed that the survey will be out around August 1 and returned to the EDAC by around September 8. PRenaud would like to have results all tabulated by the September 15 EDAC meeting.

SCorcoran will follow up with AGarron to find out how long his presentation is. PRenaud said AGarron could do the economic development presentation at the August or September meeting. SCochran will be in contact with PRenaud about this.

PRenaud thanked SCorcoran, SWaleryszak and JHunter for coming this evening.

3. Approval of the Last month's meeting minutes

PRenaud felt that the Charrette Discussion section of the June meeting minutes as written could be misunderstood. JFletcher suggested deletions of parts of sentences and a few other word changes. After reading the editorial changes in this section of the minutes, JFletcher motioned to accept the minutes as amended. NNickerson seconded. Vote unanimous in favor.

4. Charrette update

PRenaud stated, “It’s a good opportunity for residents to propose ideas for the town center.” He asked as individuals or EDAC members to submit ideas or items that we would like to have presented at the charrette for discussion. “The charrette could be a forum to push the Select Board or other officials to approach the owners to rehab or tear down the in-town buildings (2 buildings next to the Greenfield Industries). We, as a committee, don’t necessarily have to propose anything at the charrette, but Norah’s Depot could be a viable business location in town.

All of these buildings would be eligible for tax relief under RSA 79-E.” AWood said “Where the charrette has bearing on the business in town, we would like to be updated by the steering committee.”

PRenaud had a proposed a rezoning ordinance for the Haithcock land last year, but the Planning Board decided to not put it on the ballot. As of right now, Haithcock is building a house on that lot so that eliminates any future zoning changes for that land.

PRenaud commented about the webinar that JMoran did on July 2. It was on grants from the USDA Rural Broadband Development Program. He feels that Greenfield would not meet the requirements for grant consideration. There can be no service greater than 3 Mb/s available anywhere within the USDA defined geographical area. Also, JMoran thinks that the town would not be positioned well in the poverty assessments done by the USDA. In other words, the town and region are not poor enough.

9:15 pm Adjournment

JFletcher motioned to adjourn. NNickerson seconded. Vote unanimous in favor.