

Economic Development Advisory Committee 10/19/2015

**Economic
Development
Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Recorded by Sharon
Rossi
October 19, 2015**

Members present:
PRenaud, AWood,
JMoran

Attending:
MKavanaugh

**7:00 p.m. Meeting
Opened**

PRenaud motioned to accept the September 21, 2015 and July 20, 2015 minutes as presented. JMoran seconded. Vote unanimous.

Broadband:

PRenaud talked to an informed source at FairPoint who stated they are installing service area interface (SAI) boxes and received the following information. New boxes are being installed on the paved section of Old Bennington near Forest Rd, Forest Rd. facing the end of Zephyr Lake Rd, and on New Boston Rd. near Forest Rd.

Higher capacity fiber optic cables are being installed connecting these SAIs with the Central Office in the town center. The boxes essentially will enable the unserved areas of town to get DSL level service. The target operational date is by the end of the year. These areas are Cavender Rd., Riverbend Rd.,

Colonial Dr., the western end of Swamp Rd., Old Bennington Rd. to the Peterborough line and to the Bennington line, Muzzey Hill Rd., the coverage gap on County Rd., and Forest Rd. near the Hancock line. The boxes are like remote central offices.

Customers within 7000 feet of a box will be able to get a higher DSL rate of 15 megabits/sec. (Mbps) for downloads.

FairPoint received \$37 million in funds from the federal government to upgrade their network in rural areas. They are mandated to provide a minimum of 10 Mbps down within 6 years to all of their customers. The FCC will soon be raising the minimum level of broadband internet service to 10 Mbps down and 4 Mbps up. If Greenfield were to be a 'squeaky wheel,' as Rindge is being, we could get this within the next 1-2 years versus within the next 6 years.

What can't be determined about the current upgrade at this time is what the upload speeds will be, what the pricing structure will be, and will service reliability be improved? One committee member has business connections with FairPoint, and is extremely dissatisfied, so, not sure, if the boxes will make service reliability better or not.

PRenaud will contact Peter Nixon, a FairPoint executive, to set up a meeting with the EDAC.

CMRC has excess bandwidth which they can sell to the town. They also have space for additional antennas on their tower. These options could be utilized to have a limited fixed point wireless network in town. PRenaud is prepared to write a zoning ordinance that would allow antennas (transceivers) to be attached to trees, buildings and other existing structures should it become advisable to go this route.

In Peterborough there is an effort to promote a regional broadband group, with Select Board Chair (Peterborough) Barbara Miller as the coordinator of a potential broadband exploratory committee. Her company writes grants and they are using grant money to facilitate speed testing and a regional internet connectivity survey. She asked MSteere to have the School Board promote the survey so students could get their parents to participate. MSteere e-mailed APatt asking if we should promote this. PRenaud was copied on this e-mail and offered to promote their regional survey.

Considering that we have a lot of data on our side, it should be helpful in getting the various telecommunication companies to listen to the regional committee. Also the UNH Co-operative Extension has all our data from the speed tests in Greenfield. Ms. Miller got the

results from our survey of last year detailing the high points from our survey. Greenfield will receive a town report with results from the current regional survey.

PRenaud offered to write a notice via an e-mail blast. The Committee agrees that an e-mail blast from PRenaud be sent promoting the survey.

He will write an announcement and send it out.

JMoran motioned to have PRenaud to be the contact and for the EDAC to support the regional survey.

AWood seconded.

Vote unanimous in favor.

AWood read the e-mail from JMoran about the conversation he had with SBrooks, Manager – Government Affairs (ME, NH, VT, NY), TDS

Telecommunication Corp. January 18, 2016 was tentatively set as a date for a meeting with TDS representatives.

JMoran said SBrooks stated the town should present a viable business case that will help any telecommunication company make it worth their while to expand telecom networks in town.

The committee agreed to get as many voices, such as DRED, SWRPC, to assist Greenfield in committing to a telecommunication service. PRenaud is to contact Carole Miller and have her write a letter to TDS

promoting Greenfield as a business revenue venture.

MKavanaugh said if you could show a significant growth with the FairPoint boxes and then show TDS the increased costs for them to attain, that would make them more interested in Greenfield.

AWood said there is opportunity to see some headway with all the info received this evening.

MKavanaugh asked if all the households were to sign up, how many are there.

PRenaud said about 1800 residents and about 620 houses.

JMoran said TDS's first meeting should be amongst the power people, namely the Select Board. We should keep the business aspects private for now.

PRenaud will set up an exploratory meeting with TDS and the Select Board for January 18, 2016.

PRenaud will talk with the Select Board within the next 2 weeks about the exploratory conversation/meeting.

Next step plan:

PRenaud will contact JHunter, CMRC, to see how WiValley is working out. If it is positive, then get BFoucher in for a meeting.

PRenaud said he feels that WiValley wants to connect with businesses rather than residences. AWood said it has been very hard getting information from

them and my business is what he should be aiming for. It was pointed out that JHunter took 4 months to get a response from them. There are a lot of issues concerning WiValley's business approach, model and infrastructure.

PRenaud will talk to JHunter next week and let the committee know what transpires.

PRenaud will also share the TDS information with him.

Depending upon the info from JHunter, we will try to get BFoucher from WiValley in for next month's meeting.

FairPoint: 12/21/2015 set as possible date for meeting with EDAC.

MKavanaugh said it would be beneficial to find the number of residences on DSL and which company is their service company.

Organization:

Broadband is going to be the main focus for at least several additional months.

JMoran said if the Select Board wants to put together a Master Committee for Community Development, let them. MKavanaugh said until broadband is in town, no real development projects can go forward. For future projects, JMoran would like to address group net metering, but it may not even be a possibility, due to the NH legislature being pounded into abolishing it by lobbyists for the utility companies.

Budget: JMoran
motioned to reduce
the budget to \$1600.
AWood seconded.
Vote unanimous in
favor.

Zoning

Amendments:

PRenaud stated he is
writing an
amendment to have
the village become a
limited mixed use
district. This would at
least allow some
business activity in
the village district.

Another amendment
would allow the
larger homes in the
village district to
become multi-family
homes.

9:30 p.m.

Adjournment
PRenaud motioned to
adjourn. AWood
seconded. Vote
unanimous in favor.