

Town of Fairhaven

Broadband Study Committee

March 31, 2020 7:00 p.m EST

ATTENDEES:

Sean Powers, Bob Espindola, Derek Frates, John Methia, Jay Simmons, Jeff Christensen and Devin Cox, EntryPoint Networks

ABSENT:

Suzanne Dwyer

Jeff Christensen advised the committee he sent out a discussion guide to review for the next meeting. Mr. Espindola asked to have the February meeting minutes made available to review. Mr. Frates advised the minutes were now available to the committee to look at.

Sean Powers called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m., welcomed everyone to the Broadband Study committee meeting and reviewed the recording guidelines.

AGENDA:

Review Minutes from February meeting

Mr. Powers asked the committee if they had a chance to review the meeting minutes. Jay Simmons motioned to approve, Sean Powers seconded the motion and it was unanimous.

Review EntryPoint Timeline, Scope of Work, Project Milestones

Mr. Powers gave the meeting over to Jeff Christensen from EntryPoint Networks.

Mr. Christensen advised the committee he went through the scope of work and added a timeline in the last meeting that it is available to them for review. He said there are a dozen models that have been tried across the US and will be shared by Mr. Frates to the meeting members. After they have reviewed the models they can begin to look at and discuss them at the next meeting and he is open to adding to the models.

They will also begin to look at market analysis and he questioned if anyone knew what the market share of Verizon vs Comcast is in residential services in town. Mr. Powers said it is very low and Mr. Espindola said he wasn't sure how to find out. Mr. Christensen said he will try to find it out through the survey that will be sent out so they would be able to capture the data of both residential and business. Mr. Espindola said he believes Comcast is the dominant service provider but can't put numbers to it.

Mr. Christensen said the timeline will be on an aggressive schedule but the bulk of the work will be on EntryPoint. At each meeting they will review and see what the committee can do and may adjust the timeline as needed.

Mr. Christensen went on to explain we will develop a community engagement plan that will be discussed during the May meeting. He requested that Derek take this item and think about putting it on the Town website for creating an independent website.

He asked if everyone had a copy of the timeline and explained there is flexibility, questioning if anyone had any questions on what will happen between now and August. No one had any questions or concerns saying it looked good.

Mr. Christensen discussed EntryPoint will be putting together preliminary pricing on Middle Mile connectivity options. He asked if anyone knows who is currently carrying the connectivity back to Boston as the Town already has some infrastructure. Mr. Frates said it may

be Comtrack; they are the company who put in the Municipal loop. Mr. Espindola said they provide fiber but didn't know if it was actually Comcast and that may be something Nicole(IT) might be able to get the information for them.

Mr. Christensen went on to discuss evaluating the legal structure asking if the Town has a full time attorney? Mr. Espindola replied that we have a labor consultant and special counsel for other things depending on what it is. Mr. Christensen asked if they could set up a call this month to discuss creating a legal structure and see if they are able to set up financing for the Town. Mr. Espindola said we will need to put a little more definition to this before speaking with the attorney. Mr. Christensen explained they would sit with the attorney and review the options available to the Town that would get added to the report. Mr. Espindola responded that the attorney would have to have structured questions to go by and Mr. Christensen said he would ask if the Town has authority to do this and what options were available such as a Betterment.

Mr. Christensen let the committee know that they need to think about what 3 neighborhoods they would like to use as a high level network design model. Mr. Espindola said this may be something the Assessor office can assist with. Mr. Christensen explained the neighborhoods need to be bound by streets. Mr. Espindola volunteered to coordinate with the Assessor to bring back the information.

The committee was advised at this time they need to assess the existing infrastructure to see if Comcast is the dominant provider by meeting with business and residential owners and asking questions. Mr. Espindola said Suzanne Dwyer is currently trying to work with the business association and may be able to work on this as well asking if this is a person to person meeting. Mr. Christensen said yes should be person to person meeting with members of Fairhaven Business association and Rotary Club and he would help if needed.

Mr. Christensen brought up a Strategy Issues document and reviewed Strategy vs Tactical with the committee. He explained Strategy is a “Vision” for the future and Tactical are “short term” goals. He asked the committee to think about what they are trying to accomplish as a committee, stating they don’t need to make decisions but need to give it thought. He said they need to think about what they want aligned with the project in what way they are aligned with the customer base and how they want to apply that to become part of the vision.

Mr. Espindola asked when they look at this should they prioritize. Mr. Christensen advised it is up to the committee to tailor the needs of the Town and next time they will want to create a “Vision Statement”. Mr. Simmons asked if Mr. Christensen or Mr. Cox if they see anything that is missing from the list of examples. Mr. Cox said they may want to get a little specific providing examples:

- Innovation and Economic Development
- Robust emergency response
- Smart grid deployment

Mr. Cox advised the committee they would want to look granually at what the Fairhaven residents would really want. Mr. Espindola said Economic Development is a driver and that someone from the Economic Development Committee will be joining this committee.

Mr. Christensen went on to review S.W.O.T. analysis and explain what means; Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity, and Threats. He provided broad examples and advised the committee to fill in the boxes with 3-4 bullets each.

ACTION ITEMS:

Requests for Committee Members Action Items

- Mr. Christensen asked that the members review the infrastructure and make a comparison of the available media; Fiber/DSL/Coaxial Cable. This is something that will show up in the report that will be in there for review and they should become familiar with these and such terms as Upload/download speeds.
- Comparison of the Municipality and Models doing a Pro/Con by reading over the models and bringing questions to the next meeting. He advised the committee Mr. Frates will provide them with supplementary documents to review
- Think about the Vision and S.W.O.T analysis
- Mr. Frates will look into Middle Mile provider who brings service to Boston and will follow up with Nicky (IT). Derek will email Jeff a copy of the Town Comcast bill break down to review
- Mr. Christensen will work on Legal structure
- Mr. Espindola will get with the Assessor to find 200-300 residents living in neighborhoods bound by streets for the purpose of cost modeling
- Read supplementary documents on infrastructure and business models
- Mr. Espindola will reach out to Suzanne Dwyer regarding the Business Survey. Mr. Christensen said they will give that a little more time to work on that due to the current National COVID-19 issue we are in and will see where we stand in May
- Mr. Frates, Erin, and Mr. Espindola will work on collecting invoices and find a way to get billing information from residents and Town employees by possibly putting it on the website by using an upload feature. Mr. Christensen said they have until July to get this information. They need to see the address and amount residents are paying for services. Mr. Espindola expressed he

would like Mr. Frates to get this information out to the community using social media.

Mr. Christensen thanked everyone for their time and said they will review all of the action items and see where they are at during the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

Mr. Powers said meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday of each month and Mr. Espindola said they can be adjusted due to special circumstances.

Next meeting is scheduled for: Tuesday April 21st

NOTE:

At the end of the meeting Fairhaven resident Gary Lavalette asked to address the committee.

Mr. Lavalette said he feels he has an average household bill with basic cable. Stating the easy part of his billing is the internet provider, the hard part is the channel lineup and the high cost of equipment. He also wanted to understand how the homes would get access to fiber optics.

Mr. Christensen replied by thanking him for his input and explaining that his concerns will all be covered in the analysis report and it will also include options. Mr. Espindola went on to explain that if the Town moves forward with any options they would always be presented to the community with all of the specifics for review and a vote before anything was implemented.

Mr. Lavalette thanked the committee and said he was very interested in helping in any way they may need.

Mr. Powers called the meeting to end at 8:35p.m, it was seconded by Jay Simmons and the vote was unanimous.

