

Town of Fairhaven

Broadband Study Committee

May 19, 2020 7:00 p.m EST

ATTENDEES:

Sean Powers, Bob Espindola, Derek Frates, Jay Simmons, Jeff Christensen and Devin Cox, EntryPoint Networks, Alyssa Botelho joined as a guest

ABSENT:

John Methia, Suzanne Dwyer,

Mr. Espindola opened the meeting at 7:15pm welcoming everyone to the meeting and advised it is recorded and televised.

Turned over to Jeff Christensen who asked Derek Frates to review action items from last meeting. Mr. Frates read off the action items.

AGENDA:

Mr. Christensen stated he sent out an email to everyone individually one action item to note is looking for the committee to number the list of priorities and feedback on the SWOT analysis.

Mr. Espindola shared he found categorizing the action items made it easier to prioritize them.

Mr. Christensen showed the committee the SWOT and ranking that Mr. Espindola provided as an example of what they are looking for.

Mr. Espindola asked if he could explain a little further what local control means. He went on to explain local control would be an enabler for the items listed as #1

Mr. Espindola asked if we should create alignment with subscribers? Mr. Christensen explained the incumbents their mission as a company is organized around shareholder and profitability return but that's not what the consumer

cares about. They care about low cost, responsive customer service, and how the network is functioning. The alignment is the town cares about the same issues as the consumer.

Mr. Christensen went on to state the infrastructure is old and by getting state of the art network management we can get fiber optics services and provide an example of the benefits ex; gamers. If there were too many people on the network they would not have good performance. Think about how we can use this network for public safety services.

Hard for people to get motivated for the future unless it's something we can see and that's somewhat normal.

Mr Frates asked if Mr. Christensen can resend Mr. Espindola's list to the committee.

Mr. Christensen provided an update on middle mile saying they are looking for 2 more proposals.

Crown Mobile meeting went well, runs around the outskirts of Fairhaven and will compare with the Open Cape proposal then will go to CenturyLink.

Mr. Frates asked as it stands now if it's Comcast all the way and was advised said yes, all the way to Boston.

Mr. Espindola asked if this middle mile is for our existing loop. This would be if we do fiber, this would be the network to get service back to Boston so we would not have to go to Comcast.

Quincy approval was forwarded to Mr. Frates to get out to the committee and Mr. Frates advised it was sent out today for review.

Mr. Espindola said he did see it and is not clear on next steps. Mr. Christensen questioned who we use for legal work and was advised we have town counsel and when it came to Comcast we used outside counsel who specializes in it.

Mr. Christensen said what we are trying to do is give this report back to the Selectboard saying the town is legally able to make this change. Mr. Espindola clarified we would be providing the legal info provided by Quincy and see if our legal would allow. Mr. Espindola will meet with the Town Administrator to see if we can go about getting this done. One thing left out

of the Quincy document was the betterment options. Mr. Espindola asked Mr. Christensen send him a paragraph off to him to provide to legal.

In terms of high level design traditionally we have an engineering firm do the design. Entry Point has a license to use the software to do these designs. The key thing the software does is build a database, add the cost factor and once you do high level design it will do a bill of materials.

Mr. Christensen showed the section of Town we wanted modeled and explained the equipment that would hold the fiber.

Mr. Espindola clarified the splice boxes were on poles. Mr. Christensen reviewed running 4-6 customers off each splice mode. The report will show the cost of each home per slice mode. Bob said this North Fairhaven neighborhood was picked for the population density Entry point was looking for. It Does not have to be all on poles it can also be buried. Mr. Espindola questioned the cost between the pole mounted and buried. He was advised it tends to be \$900 less per home to be buried. High level design and with this the financial team will look at the financial model. It will give you approximately how much it will be under this model and compare it with Comcast as far as cost and speed. Ultimately, feasibility is getting people to sign up.

Mr. Christensen asked Mr. Frates to provide the Market Analysis update.

Mr. Frates said it's going well and showed everyone the Town of Fairhaven website and link to where everyone can upload billing and news information on the study committee. Mr. Christensen said 25 was a good number to start to send over. Mr. Frates said he may take some ads out in the Neighborhood news for the older population who may not look at the internet. Mr. Frates said there is money in the budget. Mr. Espindola made a motion to advertise the bill upload in paper not to exceed \$500 for next few weeks. Mr. Powers seconded the motion. Mr. Christensen suggested they work with Mr. Cox on marketing and reach out to the employees to get them engaged it will drive up the numbers easily if they upload their bills.

Mr. Espindola suggested reaching out to HR to get a mass email out to town employees. All in favor, vote unanimous. Mr. Frates said Alyssa Bothelo does a lot with social media groups she can work with.. Ms. Bothelho said there is a lot of feedback on Facebook pages, the community is very vocal and she will post to the groups. Mr. Frates will send Mr. Cox links where they are posted now and work from there.

Meeting was turned over to Mr. Cox for community engagement and marketing review. He will send a copy of the Community engagement plan to the committee. He reviewed the plan stating the goal is 40% or higher.

He went over the community survey on what is important to them, a survey that doesn't take more than 3 minutes, a survey that reflects the consensus of Fairhaven.

A mock survey will be sent to the committee to review and send back to him any feedback regarding what is in the best interest of town. Mr. Cox went over different questions in the survey. Advised these are the types of questions used in multiple cities over the years and provides them with the information they need.

Mr. Espindola stated concern with questions regarding the town building and owning the network and how it would be paid for. He suggested the question list other options that we are looking into. Mr. Cox said this is why it is being sent to the committee and get everyone's feedback on how the questions should be worded.

Mr. Christensen suggested maybe this survey and the link could be put together prior to advertising in papers to kill 2 birds with one stone.

Mr. Cox said this is something the community has to be educated on because Comcast will do everything to put doubt and fear in them. We need to start with a fiber specific Town website. He shared with the committee an example of what it would look like and the information it would contain. Quincy, Superior, and Mountain home were shown a simple website, start slow and add to it over time. Showed a message from the mayor asking them to take a survey, along with a video on infrastructure, a reminder to take the survey. Also provides contact for any questions they may have and put them on a heat map.

The heat map statement is customized to what the Town and what they are looking for.

The web page is progressive and should start off small. All of that is the community engagement piece. Also the ads in the paper will start educating themselves and engaged in the process. Ultimately the feasibility of this network is based on the amount of people who want to sign up. Gives good solid data on whether it should continue to move on and if there is support.

Mr. Cox explained all of the information shared today is included in the Entry point agreement. They will create it and it will be turned over to have someone manage it long term. Once it's out in the community then we get into the marketing effort driving people to the other social media platforms to get word out and links along with articles regarding the topics in general

If the Town decides yes we want to move forward and deploy we would start to do yard signs and neighborhood signage and a Town wide open house where we will come and report the plan and share with the community getting additional information and input. Another thing we want to start doing is identify Fiber champions in the community. Someone who understands fiber and how it will benefit the community because it is more effective to explain why it's so important and the impacts it can have.

After the Town decides to approach and move forward will send out door to door sales force out into the neighborhoods. This is a year by year approach. Starting the marketing grassroots education can happen relatively early on.

Mr. Espindola asked about the sequence on how to make the best decisions on what steps are taken when.

Mr. Cox replied Mr. Frates has done a fantastic job on the website and if you have a social media person we should get the invoices done to get that behind us. While doing that, fine tune the survey questions and once launched do a big community engagement initiative.

Mr. Christensen recommended if we can collect the invoices without spending money on advertising, do that first then spend the money when needed. Mr. Espindola said he suggests giving it another month and see what we get.

ACTION ITEMS:

Mr. Espindola stated that he would like a bcc on each committee member to respond back individually on action items needed from them. This would keep the committee meetings going and does not allow the members to speak about the questions so they are not carbon copied.

Ms. Bothelo volunteered to work on website management in the long term. Mr. Frates will work with her.

Mr. Cox will send copies of all documents he reviewed and links to the other cities and towns websites to start looking at and give him ideas along with the survey questions.

Once he gets all feedback he will start to put together a draft of what it will look like. He will need a pic of the Town of Fairhaven so people will know its Fairhaven. Mr. Frates said he will provide that to him. Mr. Cox would also would like a good quality of the town logo.

Mr. Espindola said one of the action items he was supposed to reach out to school dept. regarding concerns with issues working from home during the pandemic. He said he did reach out and have not received any formal feedback yet.

Mr. Christensen said we have a number of committee action items and he and Mr. Cox will link up and summarize all of them into one email.

Mr. Christensen advised the committee he wants to hold off on Risk Analysis until after he gets other things squared out.

Mr. Frates questioned Mr. Espindola if Alyssa Botelho would have to send a letter of interest to the Selectmen office and it would be discussed and voted on at there next meeting. Ms. Botelho said she has already sent one, Mr. Frates will follow up.

NEXT MEETING:

Mr. Christensen said he would not be available for the next meeting and asked if it could be rescheduled. Mr. Frates will schedule it for June 30, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Mr. Espindola said it is also important to reach out to the other committee meeting members to see if they can attend and will have to make some votes moving forward. Mr. Frates and Mr. Powers will send out meeting reminders.

Sean Powers motioned to adjourn meeting Bob seconded all voted unanimous

Meeting ended at 8:54

