

Communications Technology Committee

Meeting Minutes

September 26, 2016

1. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

John Lawrence called the meeting to order. Present at the meeting were Bob Butler, Dick Glidden, Richard Hoffses, and John Lawrence.

Ted Wooster and Seth Hall were also present.

2. Old Business

August 22nd Minutes: On the motion of Richard Hoffses with Dick Glidden's second, the committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Aug 22, 2016 meeting.

September 12th Minutes: On the motion of Butler with Dick Glidden's second, the committee voted to table until its next meeting its discussion of the September 12, 2016 minutes. John Lawrence noted that the minutes discussed a vote concerning the establishment of a sub-committee. It turns out the vote was not valid because a non-member voted in favor of it and should not have voted. Butler then moved that the September 12th vote to establish the sub-committee be rescinded. Dick Glidden seconded the motion. The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

LCI in Waldoboro Village: The committee discussed how to increase the take rate in the village. It was suggested that Ted Wooster could be available to knock on doors with Chris of LCI, who wants to coordinate the take-rate effort with the committee. A similar effort was successful on Old Augusta Road, where 25 to 30 homes will have signed with LCI by the end of September. John will call LCI to establish contact between Ted and Chris.

Butler suggested that LCI should attend CTC meetings at least once a month to update the committee on progress and to obtain assistance in resolving issues.

3. New Business

Community Education. The committee held a general discussion about promoting within the village and elsewhere a better understanding of computer app enhancement with fiber speeds. Educational process to gain greater understanding of computer and handheld device app enhancement with fiber optic cable speeds

Fiber offers advantages over other forms of connectivity because down (receive)

and up (send) speeds are symmetrical.

This fiber advantage is difficult to explain to people who are using other forms of broadband. The point is that all apps and software are being designed with symmetry in mind, making fiber the broadband of choice. Chris may have a handle on that. With fiber you're using light waves to transmit packets of data, and, unlike copper cable, you're not having to re-amplify signals. Re-amplifying causes latency.

Richard Hoffses suggested that LCI might have a power point presentation, which Waldoboro could post on its website to illustrate why more bandwidth is important.

Also to be kept in mind are the many entry-level users in Waldoboro Village, who do not have computers or handheld devices with digital technology. Can the committee conduct workshops and/or tutorials? Would there be sufficient computers available for people to use during such events?

The Committee could invite the Waldoboro Library Director to one of its meetings to discuss a possible role for the library in the education effort. There are some important applications, for example on-line medical care. And, the library has a number of computers, which could allow multiple participants in the tutorials. Tidewater has apparently expressed a willingness to help people learn how to use computers.

Richard Hoffses wondered if SAD40 would have an outreach program for students who could help elders learn computers. Schools are going back to laptops so students will have to know how to type.

Select Board Meetings Streamed Live: The committee needs to find a way to effect live broadcasts of Select Board meetings. The committee thought contacting Mary Ellen Crowley of LCTV would be a good place to start. She is apparently interested in getting the wheels turning with live streaming of events. LCI should also be available to provide advice and assistance.

Defining remaining un-served and under-served pockets in Waldoboro: Communications with un- or underserved people have been on-going. These people want reliable Internet. The CTC will make efforts to encourage people in such areas to pool their resources and to organize to act as a single group. A ConnectMe grant may be a possibility, given the numbers, and LCI has already shown an interest.

Update on Charter and Redzone Contacts: John Lawrence is trying to get Redzone to come and speak with the CTC. At a minimum he'd like himself and Richard Hoffses to meet with them. He believes Redzone is re-thinking how they wish to launch their wireless service in the Waldoboro area for which it has not set a priority, even though they recently purchased GWI.

John Lawrence is concerned that Redzone talks about 30 to 50 mbps service, a level

they cannot meet. Fiber optic cable would be far better than Redzone wireless. However, if wireless is supported by fiber, wireless service levels are enhanced.

John will also try to get Charter (formerly Time Warner) to meet with the committee.

Wi-Fi Hot Spots at strategic locations in Waldoboro: The committee needs to determine, with LCI, how this will happen. In Camden, hotspot access is permitted for only a limited number of hours a day, after which pop-ups warn the user that free-access-time is running out. Another limiter is throttling back on speed performance. A third technique is to provide one of hour free hotspot usage, after which the user pays.

We also need to figure out where to put the hot spots. It would probably takes two hotspots to cover the village, perhaps three if the town landing is included.

LCI does not do hotspots, yet. They are discussing it, and they have shown a strong interest in it. Waldoboro needs to show a demand for it. Present options appear to be that either LCI purchases the technology or they they cooperate with someone who has the technology.

WBA members might want to post ads on hotspots to help defray the cost. Or they might find a single sponsor for one or more hotspots.

Seth Hall asked if the town should consider whether transient people might make good use of a hotspot if it advertised free Wi-Fi. Free Wi-Fi might encourage people to stay longer in given locations.

John Lawrence said businesses in Vermont advertise free Wi-Fi (e.g. Dunkin' Donuts) to attract customers. Apparently Redzone maintains hotspots at harbors (Rockland, for example), where sailors can get information about the harbor. Hotspots are an economic development issue.

4. Citizens' Comments

Seth Hall said the town should consider all connectivity options. There will be under- and un-served people for a while, and the Committee should be driving the process and pushing LCI to get service to people.

Seth Hall also said that he's distressed that the Chairman of the Committee has taken a leave of absence. He felt the committee's emphasis must be on moving forward fast. Time is going by. Seth encouraged the committee to recruit someone to replace the missing member or to act as an alternate.

John Lawrence said it would be useful to have the Town Manager available to help get the attention of Internet providers with whom the CTC wishes to meet. Town

Manager intervention to meet with Red Zone may be necessary.

Seth Hall noted that Waldoboro currently has no franchise agreement with any Internet Service Provider. The agreement with Time Warner lapsed some time ago. The Committee agreed that the subject should be on the agenda of the next meeting.

5. Next Meeting and Adjournment

The CTC will next convene on Monday, October 24th at 6:00 p.m.

The motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Butler
Secretary