

**Town of Waldoboro
Minutes
Communications Technology Committee
January 9, 2017**

1. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

John Lawrence called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Committee members Bob Butler, Richard Hoffses and John Lawrence were present and constituted a quorum. Also present were Seth Hall and Reuben Mahar.

The Committee voted to table the minutes of the December 19th meeting. Members had not received the minutes prior to the meeting.

2. Live Streaming from the Conference Room

Richard Genthner was not at the meeting, and he had not made available to the Co-Chairman an estimated cost for equipment needed to stream meetings from the town's conference room. John will add streaming to the agenda of the next CTC meeting, scheduled for Monday, January 23rd.

3. Map of Existing Internet Availability and Discussion of Service Providers

John Lawrence said that he and Dick Glidden would complete one more tour of Waldoboro to double-check the accuracy of the on-going mapping effort. John suspects that two areas are not adequately covered and could qualify for a grant. His goal is to have the map ready for the next meeting.

We briefly discussed Internet service providers operating in Waldoboro. Richard Hoffses said he has 10 X 1 Fairpoint service, which is neither reliable nor adequate. Bob reported that Fairpoint is reportedly providing 15 X 5 service to areas of Finntown Road. John Lawrence has LCI fiber service, which held up despite the recent loss of power.

We agreed that it's difficult to assess where Fairpoint is, but the consensus was that Fairpoint does not meet the minimum Maine standard of symmetrical 10 X 10 service.

Time Warner is now called Spectrum. We agreed to re-initiate contact with Spectrum to see if they will cover small pockets that have too few subscribers to be attractive to a new provider. One pocket is in the area of Moose Meadow Lane off Route 220. Also in North Waldoboro is a pocket of 7 or 8 homes on Noyce Road, to which Spectrum has not yet extended service.

Red Zone has taken over from GWI. The tower on Storer Mountain Road is the closest access point for Noyce Road, but that tower is shadowed and has high vegetation with which to contend. The Flanders Corner Road tower has the same problems due to signal loss in vegetation. Red Zone has confirmed they have no interest in allocating more of their capital resources to the former GWI network which is intended to cover North Waldoboro.

3. New Business:

The committee agreed to host another broadband educational evening in the village

(Note: MAP is moving out of #9 Friendship Street. MAP, along with two other participants, will occupy the old location of the Harvest Moon pizza shop. We may want to consider holding the broadband event in that location.)

The purpose of the broadband event would be to stimulate more interest in Fiber in the village. The problem is how to convince existing Spectrum customers to switch to Fiber broadband. The committee is referring to people who say, "Spectrum is good enough for our needs."

Butler suggested it's LCI's job to sell its product. We agreed that LCI could provide speed comparisons between cable and fiber broadband. Perhaps the compared speeds of a video or movie download would help make the case for fiber. The consensus was that by 2020 people would need gigabytes of broadband capacity. With fiber they can increase their bandwidth easily, not so with cable. LCI should have some ideas of what would draw people into the broadband event.

It was suggested that we hold a workshop to counter the "cable is good enough" argument at the next January meeting. John Lawrence will put the workshop on the agenda. John will see if he can get LCI to attend the workshop.

There was a discussion about involving the School District in the fiber broadband initiative. We will try to identify someone in MSAD 40 who is conversant with the district's IT. John reported that Miller School hooked up with Fiber in the last couple of weeks.

Next week will see two events on Thursday the 19th. In the morning will be Hall of Flags event at the Capitol. Internet providers will interact with the new slate of state legislators to discuss new bills concerning broadband Internet. LCI will be there, and John Lawrence has volunteered to man their table with them. Perhaps we will learn more about how new legislation will change ConnectME.

On the same day, at 4:00 p.m., Lincoln County will make a presentation about broadband. John Lawrence, at the request of Mary Ellen Barnes, will make a brief presentation about Waldoboro's experience. There will be a discussion of the county's role in furthering broadband expansion.

It was suggested that County government can be most helpful by providing information and educating the public about the importance of fiber broadband as the best long-term solution.

4. Citizens; Comments

Reuben Mahar said that the FCC's minimum broadband requirement is 25 X 4. Reuben also said that a bigger problem is congestion through the modem. If you have an older modem from Spectrum, you can purchase your own, more capable modem with up to 16 channels. Spectrum's new offerings and rates will build the rental into Spectrum's rates. The modem rental will no longer be a line item on the Spectrum bills. Now is the time to make the purchase of a modem and to return to Spectrum the modem it provided. Spectrum subscribers should check to make sure their modem will handle all the bandwidth necessary for the TV, Internet and IP phone service.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Butler