

**Communications Technology Committee  
Meeting Agenda  
Waldoboro Town Office  
6:00 PM June 12, 2017**

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum**

John Lawrence called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Bob Butler, Richard Genthner, Dick Glidden, Richard Hoffses, and John Lawrence were the committee members present. They constituted a quorum. Also present was Julie Keizer, Waldoboro Town Manager, and Maria Smolin, resident.

**Approve Minutes from last meeting**

Lawrence said he had not received the minutes of the May 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Butler mistakenly said he had sent them out. Subsequent inquiry revealed that Butler had been out of town on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and had not attended the meeting.

A motion to table consideration of the minutes of the May 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting until the next meeting was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously

**Old Business:**

• **State Legislature**

Lawrence announced that LD406, the Utility Pole Attachment bill, had passed. LD406 streamlines the process of applications to get on the poles and should reduce make-ready costs by about 30%. Lawrence clarified that the bill does not call for sharing the cost of changing a pole. The PUC has been charged with clarifying that issue, but it appears that the last party on the pole will bear the cost.

LD1399 also passed unanimously in the House. It restructures ConnectME, which would fall under the Department of Community and Economic Development. Lawrence was pleased to say that the bill now

requires the appointment of a director with technical knowledge and experience. If the senate passes the bill and the governor signs it, it is expected that more State and Federal funding will be available to bring broadband to those areas that are not covered by the Three Ring Binder.

- **Conference Room Video Upgrade Project**

Keizer confirmed that the town would put the project out to bid. She asked if the new microphones would pick up conversations among the audience and added that the Town should develop a use policy for the new system. Genthner explained that the system has a wireless mic at the podium and three at the table. It's conceivable that conversations could be picked up. With live streaming, an 8-second delay could be implemented to intercept inappropriate comments.

There was a question about LCTV and the new system. Would the town still support LCTV? If conference room events are streaming directly to U-Tube, LCTV could be cut out of the loop because LCTV does not support live streaming. What if something goes wrong with the new system? Would the town retain LCTV to help oversee and maintain it? Does LCTV have re-broadcast rights?

Butler moved that CTC collaborate with the town manager to develop a use policy that could then be forwarded to the Select Board. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

- **LCI Take Rate Update**

LCI has been struggling with the take rate in Waldoboro. They are not getting as many subscribers as they would like in those areas of town where other, less attractive, Internet options are available at lower prices.

Lawrence and his wife, Marcia Smolin, spoke to Old Augusta Road residents last weekend and learned that a major objection is the three-year commitment LCI has imposed. It turns people off.

Lawrence said that Nash Road, Flanders Corner Road, Old Augusta Road, Jackson Road, and Clarry Hill all have fiber with a total potential customer base of 87 residences. LCI has so far gotten 33 out of those potential 87 possibilities. LCI has no customers on Jackson Road, for example. Lawrence pointed out that Jackson Road is a different market. Lots of

elderly people live on that road, many of whom probably do not have computers. LCI has a high percentage of subscribers along the west section of Old Augusta Road but only 4 subscribers on east section, which comprises most of the road's distance. He said that life styles of non-subscribers are not geared to LCI's higher level of connectivity.

Clarry Hill Road has only two subscribers.

Lawrence asked how we should advise LCI to deal with this. One option would be to suggest that LCI look at less expensive technology. LCI currently uses a \$1000 box to connect subscribers. There is a \$150 box for IT, only, and the box offers the potential to install IP phone. It was suggested that we wait for one month before approaching LCI.

- **Function Document:** - The committee tabled its discussion of the document until after Julie Keizer, Town Manager, has had an opportunity to look it over.

### **New Business:**

- **ConnectME Round 11 Grant Awards**

ConnectMe awarded Waldoboro a grant to bring fiber broadband to Manktown Road. Lawrence stressed that LCI and the town must act quickly to get the news of the award out to Manktown Road residents. Perhaps LCI and the committee could work together to create a mailer for spreading the news about the grant.

- **Spectrum coverage update**

Linda Poore, Spectrum's ranking exec in the State of Maine, has agreed to an introductory meeting with Lawrence and Keizer to talk about *unserved* areas in Waldoboro.

The town also needs to review the franchise agreement it has with Spectrum. By that agreement, made in 1980, Spectrum must provide service to areas containing 9 or more homes per mile. One of the unserved areas is Noyce Road. Spectrum goes along Noyce Road for ½ mile and then stops. Lawrence believes that where Noyce Road is concerned, Spectrum is in violation of the franchise agreement.

- **Fiber Standard**

The Committee continued its discussion of minimum Internet speed standards. Spectrum is now offering 30 X 5 service, compared to LCI's minimum of 10 X 10. We continue in our efforts to locate a venue for making a physical comparison of the two service levels and to point to the issue of latency where service is not symmetrical.

There was a discussion of efforts to educate the community and of encouraging LCI to make good on its offer to install a kiosk at the town office. That kiosk could show the difference in service levels, using a dynamic display video.

### **Citizen Comments**

Smolin emphasized that people do not want a contract for Internet. They are not familiar with the technology. Spectrum provides Internet service without a contract. The only way to move such people away from Spectrum to LCI is for LCI to relax its demand for a contract. She added that in certain areas residents have more than one choice for Internet Service Providers. On Manktown and Feyler's Corner Roads, for example, Fairpoint and Spectrum are undercutting LCI.

Julie Keizer said that the younger generation does everything on-line. They don't need cable, and they don't want television. They get their news from live streaming on their phones and other devices. Their focus is on Internet, only. TV and phones play minimal or no roles in their lives.

Genthner pointed to SlingTV, which permits viewers to pay a low monthly subscription fee to access television programming without using cable. It's a highly affordable service.

**Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Bob Butler, Secretary