

Broadband (Fiber Optics) Study Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 1, 2020

Location: Zoom meeting

Committee Members present: Kim Maxwell, Bill Brown, Libby Borden, Nina Ritson, John DeShazo, Brett Robbins, Jim Jasper, Paul Chaplinsky, Julia Scharnberg

Other attendees: Matt Riiska, Gary Steinkohl, Anna Timell

Meeting called to order: 6:02 PM

Agenda

- Review of Meeting Minutes from September 17, 2020
 - Minutes approved – Motion by John DeShazo
- Review of Norfolk Broadband Project Business Plan
 - Discussed questions presented by Nina Ritson and resolved open items
 - Open items
 - Determine format for overall business plan (i.e., visuals and condensed prose)
 - Kim Maxwell to submit new business plan draft in November; including updated fee data from ISP and Contractors
 - Need to assess each home's distance from the road → input for budget
 - Each committee member could drive / estimate 9 square miles of road
 - Anything that is already connected aerially is <175 feet; underground and/or poles on property should be noted as likely >175 feet
 - GIS mapping tool may be a faster way to tackle this:
<https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=1007&LayerID=20386&PageTypeID=1>
 - Julia volunteered to explore tool and report back
- Sources of funding for project
 - Public sources: Discussed loan sources, interest rates and other available grants
 - Private sources: All private, philanthropic fundraising will be conducted via a third party foundation (Norfolk Foundation has been proposed) to ensure the privacy and anonymity of donors (if they choose)
 - Committee intends to setup private fundraising through established 501-C3 to ensure donations are tax deductible
 - Other ideas: HUT could be designed with a revenue generating data center for Norfolk residents / developers

- Economic development opportunity for the town
 - Will need to be considered in final budget
 - Official Fundraising Committee to be established during next 1-2 meetings
 - Libby Borden to approach Norfolk Foundation about interest in leading private donation arm of project
- Marketing
 - Established Marketing Plan subcommittee with mandate to develop 8 month roadmap for engaging community + BOF
 - Subcommittee volunteers: Jim – Website development, Libby – General plan, Bill, Kim
 - Public facing page on NorfolkCT.org – Jim and Bill to launch this
 - Public facing email FiberOpticBroadband@norfolkCT.org
 - Proposal to assign town resident call list to each committee member; assess interest in fiber / share information and generate excitement
 - Continue general marketing to public through Norfolk Now
 - Program for pre-subscriptions: Likely on hold until after meeting with the Finance Committee in February
 - All town general zoom meeting to be scheduled
 - Engaging with the BOF
 - Send short form business plan, long form business plan, and overview document to BOF in late October / early November
 - Need to get on BOF agenda (2nd Tuesday of every month); proposal to do this in November or December
 - Follow up with one-on-one meetings
 - Unresolved items
 - Internal collaboration (e.g., G-suite)
 - Is this permitted?
- Timeline
 - Need BOF approval in Jan / Feb
 - Public meeting with Town in March
 - Public meeting on budget in April
 - Vote on budget in May
- Likely agenda items for future meetings: Committee Chair (Kim Maxwell) will create a comprehensive list of to-dos to be reviewed at upcoming meetings. Example items of importance are below.
 - Status of fundraising for network and HUT
 - Finalizing long business plan
 - Developing short form business plan
 - Marketing between now and BOF meeting
 - Marketing after BOF meeting
 - Presubscription program (design)
 - Presubscription program (launch)

- Real coverage of Comcast
 - Number of homes >175 feet from road
 - Better estimate of those who cannot afford Fiber, but who are interested
 - Support from Northwest Connect, including web site
 - Nailing down ISP and maintenance fees
 - Support for OTMR legislation
 - HUT location
 - Early engineering work
- Next Meeting: Thursday, October 15, 2020

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:18

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Robbins
Secretary