

Broadband (Fiber Optics) Study Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 15, 2020

Location: Zoom meeting

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

Other attendees: n/a

Meeting called to order: 6:03 PM

Major topics

- Minutes reviewed and approved - Unanimous
- GIS mapping project
 - Begin mining data and developing data framework to assess town connectivity challenges
 - Nina to contact town Assessor and populate Property Numbers and other data necessary to search GIS map
 - John and Libby to amend list with “longer driveway” information and build excel database with other key home information
 - Julia to perform data analysis once excel database is complete
- Marketing
 - Working on initial marketing plan (i.e., key events / milestones, mailings)
 - Key outreach to be planned around specific dates
 - Norfolk Now
 - Brochure
 - Email mailings
 - Direct mail prior to town meeting
 - Need to update marketing database – originally developed two years ago
 - Libby to send around to the Committee to review/edit
 - Letter in October issue of Norfolk Now indicates marketing is reaching the town and residents are starting to ask questions
 - November issues of Norfolk Now to include insert directing readers to fill out survey and inviting interested parties to join our meetings
 - Sample questions could include
 - Which of these benefits is most important to you (e.g., 8K TV, WFH connectivity)?
 - Survey to be hosted on Town website
 - Next steps

- Bill to create town email
 - Kim to send around questions for the committee to review
 - Jim to setup survey
- Fees and Business Structure
 - Kim to put together final fee estimate by mid November
 - Initial estimates: ~\$75 per home for internet + \$20/phone line
 - Proportion of business subscribers will potentially subsidize overall costs; bring down total per home fee for all residents
- BOF engagement
 - Committee finalize the fee structure prior to presenting business plan to the BOF
 - Goal to have buttoned up plan by December
- Fund Raising
 - To be discussed at next meeting
- Business Plan
 - Open items: Kim to call Fiber Broadband Association to collect data for the business plan
 - Durability statistics (e.g., towns / other groups who installed fiber 10+ years ago)
 - Other data related to why fiber infrastructure is futureproof
 - General discussion
 - Concerns about the 40 year payback period for “infrastructure” portion of plan (wire)
 - Questions about durability of technology (is it futureproof?); Will costs decrease significantly in the future?
 - Importance of educating the town about what fiber wire is → public utility / community benefit
 - Majority vote at town budget meeting is required to approve coverage of wiring costs via mill rate; getting individual homes to subscribe is an even bigger hurdle to overall success (volume brings down per home expenses)
- To Do List
 - Will be sent out this week
- Next Meeting: Thursday, October 29, 2020

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:31

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Robbins
Secretary