

Leyden Broadband Committee

Minutes of the Committee Meeting of 1/5/16 at 7:00 PM

Attendees: Bob Ryan, David Curtis, Tom Luck, Jeff Neipp, Al Woodhull and Bob Anson.

Minutes from December 1, 2015 accepted and approved.

Old Business

None

New Business:

- Report by Bob Ryan of the 12/8/15 meeting between Greenfield's Mayor Martin, Bob Ryan and Lance Fritz.

Bob Ryan, Chair of the Leyden Broadband Committee and Lance Fritz, Leyden Selectman met in Greenfield with Mayor Bill Martin in order to have further discussion concerning the possibility of contracting with Greenfield's MLP to administratively manage and maintain Leyden's broadband network. It was a very warm and positive meeting with Mayor Martin giving positive indications that this collaboration could be possible.

Jeff Neipp reported from information gathered online concerning some discussion in the press about Wired West and Massachusetts Broadband Initiative. Reportedly, Wired West has been very active in the last week with various sub-committees meeting nearly a dozen times. Negotiations will take place with MBI on Wednesday January 6, 2016. There is very active movement within Wired West to regain a footing in order to move forward.

- Report from Al Woodhull, Leyden's Wired West delegate, as to the status of the negotiations between WW and MBI.

Jeff Neipp accompanied Al Woodhull to the WW board meeting in Charlemont during the last week of December. Three negotiating teams were formed. One was to focus on Technology, and Al Woodhull serves within that group. The second would focus on Outreach and public perceptions, while the third would attempt to foresee anything that could go wrong and have solutions in mind to deal with those inevitable problems.

There is, within Wired West, a group of five towns calling themselves the Northern Tier. They are the towns of Ashfield, Colrain, Heath, Leyden and Rowe. Four of those towns are located at the border with Vermont. The representatives from these towns believe that they should cooperate on a regional solution in order to save costs relating to the Broadband Network. Some of these towns are not electrically connected in a contiguous fashion within their own borders, making a

stand-apart solution to broadband connectivity extraordinarily difficult. Some representatives from the Northern Tier also expressed concerns that some on WW's Executive committee did not have good interactions with MBI and that some of these interactions could have soured things concerning relations with MBI.

Negotiating sessions between Wired West and MBI took place the Saturday before Christmas as well as Tuesday and Wednesday of the Christmas week. A Wired West Executive Committee meeting took place yesterday (January 4, 2016) but AI does not have any information about that meeting for us yet.

Bob Ryan repeated his concern over the issue of ownership of the network inside Leyden. He hopes that the issue of ownership is being addressed now as the process continues. Kelley has said that a hub already exists in our Town Hall from the previous middle mile endeavor where the state built broadband connections to every town's library, fire station, etc. Those hubs do have high bandwidth capacity, according to Al Woodhull, but the existing hardware is not adequate for building upon. Bob Ryan feels that MBI has gone through the experience of building out the middle mile, they have a large budget and are currently recognizing that Wired West has a lot of important ideas but little practical experience.

Al Woodhull showed a simplified map of how connections in the Western Massachusetts area could be done. Connections from local hubs could be made to Springfield and to Albany. It would be to the regions advantage to have two independent connections to major hosts for broadband transmission. There could also be cost savings in operations by having a small number of very high volume connections rather than a large number of connections that transmit small amounts of data.

Bob Ryan would like to speak to Kevin Fox of Colrain and see if he's also interested in a cooperative arrangement with Greenfield also. We need to find out what Greenfield is actually offering us. Everything is "up in the air" and there are too many variables in transition now. Tom Luck asked why the RFP is asking for only one bidder. Can't several contractors bid on different parts of the system? Tom Luck and Bob Ryan would like to talk with Kelly Management and the City of Greenfield again, as well as Eric Nakajima of MBI to find out if we can be financed by MBI funds if we contract through Greenfield. We'd also like to get independent people here to judge whether a hookup to Greenfield would be robust enough to meet our needs.

Meeting Adjourned 8:47 PM