

Plainfield Broadband Committee

Meeting Minutes June 13, 2016

Committee Members Present: Brian Hawthorne, Howard Bronstein, Leslie Rule, Lew Robbins, Kimberly Longey. Others Present: Michael Lumsden (prospective committee member), Allan Douglas and Scott Keith (representing Cummington broadband committee)

Brian Hawthorne called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM at Town Hall. The committee meeting recessed between 7:30 PM and 8:10PM so members could attend Town Caucus. The meeting reconvened at 8:10 PM and adjourned at 9:15PM

Brian reviewed the proposed agenda. Allan Douglas and Scott Keith of Cummington were welcomed to the meeting. The committee agreed to add discussion of potential collaboration and information sharing with Cummington to the meeting agenda.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2016 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Leslie Rule provided an update on the status of WiredWest. She reported that members of WiredWest executive committee met with Bill Ennen and Peter Larkin on June 9 and will be discussing their impressions and recommendations at upcoming WiredWest executive committee and board meetings. A general sense is that the Baker Polito plan does not recognize WiredWest as a viable way forward, though recognizes the 5 years of knowledge, organizing and structure created by the group. Kimberly Longey said that WiredWest still has tremendous value for its member towns and if it can restructure its business plan could play a coordinating, technical assistance or other service provision role for its member towns. Leslie and Kimberly are committed to remaining active representatives of Plainfield to WiredWest.

In preparation for meeting with Bill Ennen on June 14, committee members discussed a range of information and updates pertaining to Massachusetts Broadband Institute and the last mile program. Leslie will draft a list of questions to guide the discussion with Bill. Leslie shared information on the first MBI funding award made under the new program guidelines to the town of Middlefield for a wireless pilot study serving 32 households. It was noted that Hawley is also seriously looking into wireless instead of fiber to the home. The Middlefield study is targeted for completion later this year, so that data collected can inform that town's next step in crafting a town-wide solution. It was noted that while the capital costs of wireless systems might be slightly less expensive than fiber, the operating costs are virtually the same. While Plainfield is firmly committed to fiber for our primary technology, a hybrid fiber/wireless for some areas of town may be something to consider.

The committee reviewed the draft "readiness to proceed" form compiled by Kimberly. A motion was made and seconded to send the form to Christine Hatch of MBI as presented, with a copy

to Bill Ennen and also to Paula King. The motion passed unanimously. Kimberly will send the form Tuesday morning June 14 so that Bill has it in advance of our meeting with him.

Brian reported that the Plainfield Planning board had not yet met to discuss the Baker/Polito administration Community Compact initiative. Brian, in his capacity as member of Plainfield Planning Board, will continue to research and recommendation for that board's participation in any Community Compact. Plainfield's broadband needs will be incorporated into any future proposed community compact where appropriate.

The committee entertained several questions from Allan Douglas and Scott Keith. It is in our respective town interests to keep information flowing. Cummington is eager to learn as much as possible about what Plainfield is doing and may be interested in formally collaborating.⁴

Brian noted several recent newspaper and public radio articles on broadband. The documents and emails will be stored in our shared google drive.

Lew Robbins noted that the new MBI last mile broadband program guidelines are spurring discussion within this committee that could result in substantial changes to Plainfield's approach to bringing broadband to town. Committee members generally agreed to the importance of regular communication to townspeople about our committee's work, and the questions, challenges and opportunities we are facing. Lew and Michal Lumsden will work together to craft a communications strategy and outline a series of articles for upcoming publication in the Plainfield Post. Public information meetings will also be part of the strategy.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Upcoming meeting schedule for the month of July:

Monday July 11 7PM Town Hall

Monday July 25 7PM Town Hall

Minutes above as approved at the 2016-06-26 meeting.