

Plainfield Finance Committee
9/28/2016

Present: Dudley Williams, Tim Walter, David Kramer, Robert Persing, Lewis Robbins (Chair), Winton Pitcoff, Roberta Wooldridge

Called to order: 7:07 p.m.

Minutes from August 9 meeting accepted, with Kramer and Williams abstaining, as they were not on the Committee at that time.

Chair distributed cost analysis for the Plainfield municipal light plant, with a range of possible scenarios for paying for the infrastructure and operating costs. Each scenario offers a different option for the amount to be paid for by subscribers to the new broadband service and the amount to be paid by taxpayers.

At the All Boards meeting the previous evening a resident expressed the opinion that taxpayers should bear no cost burden for the proposed broadband infrastructure.

Discussion concerning the fact that high speed Internet has become a necessity for many and has been designated a utility by legislators. Having broadband available will be an asset to everyone in town, regardless of whether or not they take advantage of it. Need to find a compromise between how much taxpayers are required to pay vs. subscribers.

The broadband committee is proposing that taxpayers to cover the cost of the infrastructure/plant, and subscribers cover the operating costs.

Motion: The finance committee supports a scenario in which taxpayers bear the capital costs of plant and infrastructure including borrowing costs, and subscribers bear the cost of operating. Moved (Pitcoff), Seconded (Walter), Passed (Unanimous)

Chair requested suggestions for topics for discussion for future meetings.

- Kramer suggested discussion about education funding.
- Kramer suggested discussion about a more progressive property tax system.
- Walter suggested discussion about school transportation costs.
- Pitcoff suggested discussion about systems by which departments submit budgets.
- Pitcoff suggested discussion about town staff salaries and raises.
- Walter suggested discussion about vehicle excise tax.

Next meeting: Thursday, October 20
Meeting adjourned: 8:11

(Minutes approved, with correction, at 10/21/16 meeting.)