



## Town of Middlefield Communications Committee

Open meeting: July 19, 2013

### Committee members present:

Howard Knickerbocker  
Joe Kearns  
Steve Harris

### Minutes:

Meeting called to order at 5:35 pm.

Discussed date for MBI/Axia anchor institution briefing at town hall. Steve believed it would be at 6 pm on Aug. 8, but would confirm.

Discussed bringing in VOIP specialist at future date to rationalize town's phone service. Joe also knows of a Northampton consultant who charges half of one year's savings.

Steve reported that Kurt Zinnak is researching backup solutions for town computers and will be reporting back. Howard expressed need to include ability to have a means of recovery in the event of disaster (theft, fire, etc.) and it was agreed that it should be part of the plan.

Howard discussed need to fill out Homeland Security Continuation of Operations Plan (COOP), including vital systems, records and databases and their means of recovery.

Howard reported that he had gotten bids from several vendors for town hall security and had passed them on to the full Selectboard.

The lack of emergency communications was discussed. Joe pointed out the high cost of dispatch service from Berkshire County, and how there's a Hampshire repeater near his house on Skyline Trail. Howard has extensive experience with repeaters and will investigate. It was agreed that emergency communications technology is evolving rapidly, and we need to have mobile broadband communications between paramedics and hospitals, etc.

Howard nominated Steve as Committee Chair, Joe seconded, and it was unanimously agreed.

Steve reported on the current status of last mile broadband efforts. He expressed doubts about WiredWest's insistence that fiber-to-the-home is the only future-proof solution, saying that we need mobile smartphone and data communications as well as fixed broadband, and that a costly fiber network may never pay for itself. He pointed out that the RFP for last mile broadband consulting just issued by MBI called for expertise in

both wireless and fiber.

Howard led discussion on the need to preserve the town's historic records as searchable online documents. He said it was vital to preserve decaying records, and that much needed to be done just to catalogue and prioritize records, and he was going to seek help from those at town museum, historical committees, etc. Additional equipment, such as a large bed scanner may be needed for the job.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.