



Town of Middlefield Communications Committee

Open meeting: May 13, 2015

Committee members present:

Howard Knickerbocker
Joe Kearns
Steve Harris

Attending from Axia:

Marc Bouvier, Sales Director
Fredric Feit, Business Development Manager
Steve King, Dir. Customer Experience, Govt. Services

Minutes:

Meeting called to order at 3:00 pm.

Steve gave Joe & Howard the Axia specs for burying fiber to town hall.

Discussed Axia's Fiber to the Premises model for Western MA:

- Point-to-point fiber channel topology.
- Design distribution grid with 100% coverage.
- Invest \$600 per premise.
- Invest in & install required electronics.
- Invest in & install fiber drops to premises & equipment as customers sign up.
- Customers to finance remainder of drops in excess of 300'.
- Invest in required MassBroadband 123 backhaul services.
- Provide network management, maintenance & customer support.
- Axia to make detailed estimate following receipt of letter of intent.
- Steve to provide Axia with pole and house locations.
- Town to raise *all additional capital* beyond last mile funding from state.
- Exclusive provider of internet services for 20 years with 20-year renew option.
- Free access to other ISPs wishing to provide phone or TV.

Residential customers sign up for two years of service:

- One time setup fee of \$100
- 100 Mbps \$49 per mo
- 1 Gbps \$69 per mo
- WiFi included.

Issues & concerns:

- Make ready costs a huge unknown that we would have to work with MBI to minimize.
- Would Axia system be eligible for town's share of the \$18m MBI has designated for professional services?
- All taxpayers on hook whether they take service or not.
- All bond financing concerns remain.
- Can a customer surcharge be applied to help pay off bonds? (Would require demand curve analysis and Axia agreement.)
- Other than liability, town ownership would have little meaning since Axia would be exclusive internet provider for up to 40 years.
- Can costs be reduced via alternate delivery models to outlying premises?
- Will Axia be able to raise fees after two years?

Discussed applying for MBI planning grant as soon as they become available.

Discussed arranging meeting with Crocker re their proposal to provide last mile service, and with Leverett re their municipal network.

Discussed emergency communications upgrade:

- Sharing Chester repeater on the fire tower would obviate the need for town hall antenna & repeater.
- We would add our PL tones.
- Need to discuss with Richie Small re permission, cost sharing, and any other issues.
- Joe & Steve to visit Richie to get the ball rolling.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.