

SELECTBOARD MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2018
MINUTES

Meeting opened at 6:00pm.

Present: David DiNicola; Judith Hoag; Albert Sirard
Duane Pease, Town Administrator (TA)

Brief discussion on the Slocum Lot, a land locked parcel owned by the Town. Chester is considering logging their portion of the lot and taking it out through property owned by Tom Beck as he is also doing some logging. TA will look into foresters who can give assessment of timber value to Middlefield's lot.

Board met with Brian Foucher of WiValley to discuss his proposal for high speed internet (attached to minutes). He gave a brief outline of what his company does, who they serve and how they would tailor their wireless proposal to the town.

All of the infrastructure would be owned by the Town and WiValley would own the equipment mounted on the poles and installed in the homes. MBI funds would cover the entire cost of the system and there would be no costs to the town in excess of the MBI funds. Minimum speed would be 12/3 with at least 80% of the users receiving 25/5. They would need a take rate of 35% of the homes for this to go forward. No other towns would need to be involved. Monthly cost would be \$69.95 with additional charges if users opted for phone service or higher speeds.

There would be 10 towers (poles) located in various places in town to transmit the signal. When questioned if there were variances to building each site, Brian said all their sites are built the same way. There was continued discussion regarding storm damages, response time, rate increases, upgrades, etc. Any damages WiValley would respond and make repairs as rapidly as possible, if the damage affected the electric line, they would have to wait for the electric to be repaired. Rate increases would only occur if the take rate dropped to unsustainable levels and upgrades are figured into their pricing. If upgrades are installed, it will not affect the customer rate.

Brian said that fiber is the best but the costs and maintenance are much higher. He also said his company is taking down a 90" monopole and that could be used for the Middlefield system and would be very cost effective. He does not try to compete with cable and looks for areas that do not have cable or other cost effective alternative. His company is privately owned and has 7 investors, they use the latest technology available and can increase speeds to individuals if requested.

He said he would have to review the By-Laws before going forward and obtain easements of right-of-ways to install the necessary poles.

Maureen Sullivan asked if TV white space would be used, Brian replied he does not use white space but prefers 900 megahertz. There was further discussion on the use of TV white space and Microsoft's push to use 3 channels. Judy questioned the risk of increased cost. He advised there would be no cost above the MBI allotment and additional costs would be borne by the investors. Sherri Venditti how graphics would work, Brian said it can be challenging but 12/12 can be deployed to home that need it.

Brian questioned where the Town was in choosing an internet provider and was told the Town is going through the process of listening to the proposals and working through them. The Board thanked him for his presentation.

Dave said he had contacted DOR and that Jane and Bev need to balance out to each other. There was discussion on the remaining balance of the loan for the Town hall improvements; there is one more payment due in Fiscal Year '19. Dave also wants to know what the State money coming in monthly is and board signed a letter to Bev and Jane requesting monthly and quarterly updates.

Dave suggested the Board form a Broadband Committee to review the proposals and make recommendations to the Selectboard, other members agreed. Dave motioned to appoint Maureen Sullivan and Howard Knickerbocker to the committee, Judy 2nd and both were approved on 3-0 votes. A third member will be appointed at a later date.

Judy motioned to adjourn, Al 2nd; vote 3-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Town Administrator

Minutes accepted with/without changes by:

David DiNicola, Chair

Judith Hoag

Albert Sirard