



Town of Middlefield Communications Committee

Open meeting: May 20, 2014

Committee members present:

Howard Knickerbocker
Joe Kearns
Steve Harris

Others present:

Tom Austin
Bob Hoynoski

Minutes:

Meeting called to order at 3:05 pm.

Approved minutes for 05/09/14 as read.

Discussed possible redeployment of replaced office computers to the auditorium for public use.

Discussed planning a trip to Huntington for a demo of their overhead projector.

Howard gave a report of WiredWest board meeting of 5/17:

- Reportedly there is a lot of shove back from MBI including demand for 60% take rate, and concern with use of "appropriate technology" – MBI no longer granting WW "a place at the table."
- Leverett installing last mile fiber on their own.
- Tyringham to join WiredWest.
- No response from FCC re WW Expression of Interest in funding from the Connect America Fund.

Discussed upgrading electrical service from the road to the town hall. Joe reported he had talked to Skip re digging the trench to bury the electrical, phone & fiber cables. Howard had talked to building commissioner, who said it was OK to bury the cables. Howard to find out steps required to bury the electrical cable; Steve to do the same for fiber.

In regard to emergency communications:

- Discussed placement of 40' communications tower at the Middlefield Fairgrounds, as the location would be approximately 56' higher than the town hall, and the location would be easily accessible, even in winter.
- Discussed installing solar panels on tower, with backup batteries.
- Discussed need for long-term lease from Highland Agricultural Society.
- Discussed fastening tower to ledge behind building, and need for adequate grounding.
- Discussed arranging June visit to Cummington to discuss emergency communications funding, a portable command center, and related matters.
- Howard said that we need an inventory of town emergency communications equipment and allotted frequencies. Tom to provide same.
- Howard said it would not be difficult to conduct a study of field strength at various locations in town, using professional measuring equipment. He said transmission from field to tower is the weakest link, as the return signal from portable devices was many times less powerful than signal from tower.
- Discussed need to draw up agenda for meeting of all parties concerned with emergency communications.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.