

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
JULY 10, 2017

Meeting opened at 6:03pm.

Present: David DiNicola, Chair; Judith Hoag
Duane Pease, Town Administrator; Jin Drawe (WiredWest); David Dvore (WiredWest);
Joe Kearns; Howard Knickerbocker; Jay Swift; Maureen Sullivan and Ann Marie
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Board signed warrants for the Special Election to fill the vacant Selectboard position as well as the open position on the School Committee.

Meeting was moved to the auditorium as Drawe and Dvore were to make a presentation on the benefits of having WiredWest be in charge of a high speed fiber internet service for the Town. A history of WiredWest from its inception to its current status was given. Dvore gave a PowerPoint presentation to the group showing the benefits of a regional approach, what it would cost the Towns, how it would be set up, the Town would own the network but WiredWest would manage, bill and maintain. The Town would be responsible for building out the network, cover the debt service and fund a depreciation reserve. The buildout would be done by Westfield Gas & Electric or their subcontractors. The Town would use the money earmarked by MBI for a partial payment of the buildout but would have to borrow the remaining fund to complete this, in Middlefield's case it would be in the area of one million dollars. WiredWest would do all of the permitting, pole authorizations, fees, etc, involved is the startup and the normal yearly operations. If the Town were to go it alone they would be responsible for the pole fees, electric, management, billing, maintenance, etc.

The cost would be borne by the users; the economy package would cost \$59/month, provide 25mbps and used by those just wanting basic service for email, browsing, etc. The standard package would cost \$75/month, provide 1GB and could be used for more complex uses. Phone could be added to either package for \$19/month. The \$59 monthly fee would meet WiredWest's costs for delivering the service. The Town could add a surcharge if they wished and that money would be reimbursed directly to the town.

The fiber network should have a life expectancy of 50+years while the electronics would last between 7-10 years and would be replaced using the depreciation fund. Installation would be free for the first 500' from the street to the home and any distance over that, the cost would be the responsibility of the homeowner, if the service were buried that would also be the responsibility of the homeowner.

WiredWest would require the Town to sign the Memorandum of Understanding by November 1st, if not signed the Town would be out of WiredWest.

There was continued discussion regarding all aspects of building a fiber network including the costs of borrowing such a large sum on money, types of borrowing that may be available, if any additional funding would be forthcoming from the state, if any of the private cable companies would be interested in extending their lines into Middlefield. Verizon was also discussed as they currently provide DSL service to many homes in town, however, they are not interested in providing this service and new requests are being denied.

There was also discussion on maintenance of the lines, would a wireless-hybrid system work better in town, it was brought up that Vermont is using a great deal of wireless service for there residents.

Drawe said it would take about 18 months from start to finish getting high speed fiber internet service to the residents. This is a 50 year network and the Town only has one chance and would be using the MBI money designated to the Town.

It was agreed that another meeting should be held and advertised so more residents can voice their opinions.

Dave motioned to adjourn, July 2nd; vote 2-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Town Administrator

Minutes accepted with/without changes by:

David DiNicola, Chair

Judith Hoag