

**Broadband Subcommittee of
Temple Community Planning Committee (TCPC)
FINAL Minutes
Thursday, February 13, 2020, 7:00 PM
Temple Town Hall**

Attendees: Dana Nowell, Christine Robidoux, Keith Charlton, Jessica Hipp

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

Report on the Monadnock Broadband Meeting

D. Nowell and C. Robidoux reported on the Monadnock Broadband Meeting, which was held on February 3, 2020. Temple was one of nine towns represented at the meeting. Sen. Jeanne Dietsch, Carol Munroe (ValleyNet), Reps from Sen. Hassan, Sen. Shaheen, and Rep. Kuster, and Henry Underwood (SWRPC) also attended. Information was presented on the three bills proposed:

1. SB 457 concerns Communication Districts and was modeled after the sewer districts bill. It has bipartisan support, and it is expected to pass.
2. SB 459 is intended to encourage providers to respond to RFI's. If they don't respond to an RFI within 60 days, the area will be considered unserved. This bill also allows e-911 services to share data with municipalities as another means of getting the information.
3. SB 559 allows municipalities to consider areas unserved if the transmission rates do not meet the minimum capability requirements based on speed test results.

The Chesterfield Rep stressed his recommendation to follow to the letter the 13-Step outline of the process to be eligible for a Municipal Bond through the NH Bond Bank. A Bond Attorney can guide towns through the process.

At the federal level, representative for Shaheen, Kuster, and Hassan shared information about HR 4227 which is aimed at improving FCC data. There was discussion of raising the rates to 25/3 but nothing officially proposed at this time. HR 4500 will include data caps.

Carol Monroe gave a presentation on ValleyNet and EC Fiber (VT). They are working with the town of Lyme, NH. Lyme Fiber was created as a for profit business entity, and they contracted with ValleyNet. Both Carol and the rep from Lyme Fiber indicated it was a very successful partnership. They brought on local investors to get things started, created a website, asked residents to sign up for service, then did site surveys. They found local "business champions". They promoted the value to the town of this project, include an increase in their real estate values, they shared the benefits and published statistics to support their case. They now have surrounding towns asking to be a part of their network.
<http://www.swrpc.org/files/Monadnock%20Regional%20Broadband%20Group%2001032020.pdf>
<http://www.swrpc.org/files/SRPC-Jan2020.pdf>

Chesterfield Rep recommended viewing the presentation he gave at the April 22 Monadnock Broadband Group meeting for more information on the process and formula for success.
<http://www.swrpc.org/files/Chesterfield%20-%20Lessons%20Learned%20v0.pdf>

D. Nowell created a spreadsheet comparing the financing models discussed at the meeting and how they could be applied to our town. The chart currently uses only hypothetical numbers and it is something we can revisit as we are further along in the process.

NH Broadband Investment Initiative Meeting Update

The NH Broadband Investment Initiative was a meeting of bankers and others who are involved in funding broadband now or in the future. A partnership is forming between CRA for Digital Equity, UNH, and the Bureau of Economic affairs to do mapping. They also intend to offer planning grants. The Community Development Loan Fund is working to be able to take CRA money from banks to fund broadband projects in NH. This would potentially open up additional funding avenues.

USDA Reconnect reps also attended. The Reconnect program is available only in areas that only have 10/1, so most areas in New Hampshire would not qualify. The program does have some planning grants available. It was noted that providers are not interested in working with USDA funders because of the pole ownership requirements.

Inviting ISPs to a Select Board Meeting

A representative from Consolidated Communications will attend the Select Board meeting on Tuesday, Feb 25. Representatives from TDS and Comcast have been invited but have not yet responded. We should speak with ValleyNet as well.

Broadband Survey

The subcommittee reviewed and edited a survey to assess the current broadband need and availability in Temple. The goal is to fit on one page for a mailer and also to have available at Town Meeting. An electronic version of the survey will be available and will be distributed through the town email blast and on Facebook. The library has agreed that paper surveys can be returned to the dropbox.

J. Hipp will draft the paper version. The Broadband Subcommittee will meet on Friday, February 21 to review and approve.

The meeting adjourned at 8:36pm

Upcoming Events

Broadband Subcommittee – Friday, February 21 at 7pm

TCPC Meeting – Monday, Feb 24, 7pm

Select Board Meeting – Tuesday, Feb 25, 6:30 pm, Consolidated Communications presenting

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Hipp.