

**TOWN OF NOBLEBORO BROADBAND COMMITTEE
BROADBAND COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING**

Monday, November 15, 2021 at 7:00 pm (EST)

Via Zoom

- I. Call to order at 7:00 – Quorum present: Chair Peter Gabbe, Dean Levy, Michele Hallowell, Marianne Pinkham, Mark Morrison, Bill Silver, Marty Welt, Nate House
 - a. Members of the public: Selectman Richard Powell
- II. Agenda additional items - None
- III. Updates
 - a. Research & Development (Marty) – Found company advertising cellular and satellite forms of internet (i.e., the cellular signal is coming from space). Researching companies in the satellite space with different propositions.
 - b. Twin Villages meetings update (Marty) – The Twin Villages’ meetings tend to be short as much of the work is done offline. Readying their request for information (RFI). Link circulated to view Maine public, during which Starlink users are giving positive reviews.
 - c. Poll Results (Peter) – 238 people signed the broadband petition and 216 for remote access to Town meetings, out of 620 in-person voters on Election Day. An additional 18 other signatures have been obtained. Monday, November 29th is the deadline for obtaining signatures and submitting them to Peter to be compiled.
 - d. Select Board Presentation (Peter) – December 1st Select Board starts at 4:30 pm. Peter will update the Select Board on the Broadband Committee’s activities to date and poll results. Representatives from Island Institute, Regional Planning Committee, and Bremen will be present to help educate the Select Board on broadband issues. Select Board meetings will be held on December 1, 15, and 29, 2021, which includes public comment periods on use of ARPA funds, such as broadband. Public participation is encouraged.
 - e. Coalition & Regulatory update (Nate) – Midcoast Internet Coalition in Rockport is going back and forth regarding Knox County Commissioners’ decision. Will be following to see how this goes with use of ARPA funds. The Town of Whitefield recently earmarked more than \$100,000 ARPA funds for broadband.
- IV. Old business
 - a. Preliminary Education Outline (Mark) – Ongoing work on the draft. Currently doing a “frequently asked questions” format to this outline.
 - b. Connectivity Options Grid (Marty) – Connectivity matrix and notes circulated to group prior to meeting. Created a matrix from publicly available information listing fiber, satellite, cellular, and cable providers. Matrix shows data allowance, speeds (download and upload), lowest and regular monthly costs, equipment costs, and required contract length. Certain satellite providers offer limits for data allowance per month and, when exceeded, the available speeds fall off precipitously. Axiom will be added to the spreadsheet. Maps reveal that oftentimes providers’ services are clustered across multiple towns, which is evidence of providers’ density-of-service requirements.
- V. New business

- a. Tidewater meeting review (Bill) – Meeting today with Tidewater on their mapping activities. Randall Manning, Alan Hinsey and Jim Corbett (engineer) discussed a preliminary engineering study that Jim had done and the purpose was to determine how many places in Nobleboro are “unserved”¹ and how much would it cost to build it out. Tidewater made certain assumptions and found that ~1,000 potential users in Nobleboro and 100 of them are unserved, about 10%. They then applied metrics of miles of fiber and costs of buildout, applied 20% would be covered by a grant. The cost of serving these underserved 100 is cost prohibitive.
 - 1. Bill moves that we enter executive session to discuss proprietary information provided by Tidewater. Michele seconded. Unanimously passed.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

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- b. Survey review (Bill) – Comments on the draft mostly added comments, so there is a considerable effort now to pare down the survey. Draft will be circulated to Island Institute to obtain their input. Goal to have finalized survey at the end of the month. After the Island Institute reviews it, a copy will go to Selectman Richard Powell for review. Would like to ensure the best possible response rate. A list of methods of delivery. Bill to produce mailing labels, finalize the survey, put it in online form. Will use grant money. The March Town Meeting will be a deadline to tally and present all information. Marianne moves to have the drop date of January 6, 2022. Michele to work on the social media. Marianne to work on news article announcements. Bill to work on Survey Monkey. Peter to work on mass mailings after the town real estate list is culled.
 - c. Evan Goodkowsky Consideration (Peter) – Peter previously spoke with him in July. Marty has seen Evan’s work in action and is quite impressed. Need to plan on scope of work for him. Nate, Marty, and Peter will work on a list of weaknesses and pressure points so we can coordinate speaking with Evan.
 - d. Twin Villages Initiative (Marty) – Attending meetings every two weeks. Marty will continue to monitor. They put out the RFI to 8 different companies.
 - e. Next Steps
- VI. Timing of next meeting
- a. Interim Zoom Meeting Monday, November 29, 2021, at 7:00 pm to discuss issue of direction of the Committee and update on meetings and conversations by Peter, Marty, and Bill.
 - b. Regular Zoom Meeting Monday, December 13, 2021, at 7:00 pm.
- VII. Adjourned at 8:59 pm.

¹ Whether you are “served” is a defined term of art of granting authorities. A place is “served” if a place has or has access to internet service at least at a certain speed at a certain level of affordability.