



Gentlemen,

On behalf of the members of Nobleboro’s Advisory Broadband Research Group, I want to thank you for allowing me to address you regarding the need to change our committee status from working group to that of an official, volunteer based, town committee.

Broadband/cable technology and/or communication committees have been officially recognized by their governing boards in the Towns of Boothbay, Boothbay Harbor, Bremen, Bristol, Dresden, Jefferson, Monhegan Plantation, Newcastle, Somerville, Southport Island, Westport Island, Waldoboro and Whitefield. The Towns of Edgecomb, Jefferson, Whitefield, Dresden, Wiscasset, Westport Island and Somerville have also opted to be part of the LCRPC’s LC Broadband Committee. Furthermore, Alna and Boothbay Select Boards are personally leading their town’s broadband expansion.

As respects funding; Alna, Bremen, Bristol, Boothbay Harbor, Monhegan, Newcastle, Southport and Waldoboro have all received at least one and in some cases multiple grants from ConnectMe, Maine Community Foundation, USDA or the Island Institute. Four of these town’s Select Boards (Damariscotta, Jefferson, Newcastle and Southport) have already authorized startup matches of from \$2,000 to \$5,000. In addition, the towns of Dresden, Edgecomb, Somerville, Westport Island, Whitefield and Wiscasset participated in the 2018 LC 7 – Town ConnectMe Community planning project.

We cannot afford to fall behind our neighboring communities in attracting grants or supplying needed services.

To quote Mary Ellen Barnes of LCRPC *“Almost all funding sources (small to large, state to federal) require a town committee. From a funders’ perspective, a committee listens to the public (about local issues of internet speed, reliability and affordability), regularly keeps in touch with Town officials, develops goals to prioritize un- and under-served homes, and establishes working relationships with the private sector and with state and federal funding sources. Funding sources want to know that Town officials and the Town Broadband Committee have a well-researched and clear plan (which does take time to develop). Broadband is primarily a private sector industry, and communities without a public voice (through a committee) are left to the mercy of national or regional corporate business models. Residents and towns have no control over what improvements will be made & when.”*

If we are to maintain our stated goal of being a family friendly town where people can age in place, then we need to insure the infrastructure that allows:

- Increased area job growth
- Expansion of local business to outside markets
- Educational opportunities for distance learning
- Residents to connect to Tele-Medicine
- Allows residents to stay in touch with family and friends

Following the Select Board’s May 19th meeting a small group of eight formed an Ad Hoc Advisory committee to research and recommend best options for expanding & improving broadband service to the residents of Nobleboro. The group of 8 has elected officers and assigned responsibilities. All of these individuals are full-time residents of Nobleboro representing life time residency as well as in migration; currently employed and retired. The committee’s composition is cross generational and represents all corners of the town’s residential neighborhoods. (See list on Attachment)

Their credentials include:

- A doctor practicing Tele- Medicine
- The Co-founder & stockholder of a publically traded Boston based industrial automation Corp - managing remotely: adjunct lecturer (virtual & in person) & former researcher at Bowdoin College
- A former Bell Labs scientist
- A local engineer serving on our planning board and Comp Plan committees

- A local attorney serving on our planning board with expertise in contracts & environmental law
- A former non-profit director and member of the LCRPC, Planning Board and Comp Plan committee
- A former corporate CEO & Turn Around specialist
- A member of our Select Board

So, why are we asking our Select Board to formally recognize us as a Town Committee?

Recognition as a town committee gives us standing and credibility

- Recognition gives committee members legitimacy and standing when communicating with the citizens of Nobleboro (citizen input broadband survey, community conversations and listening sessions and public hearings).
- Recognition gives committee members standing and credibility when speaking with, collaborating with and potentially partnering with Broadband Committees established in other Lincoln County communities.
- Recognition gives committee members standing and credibility when speaking with or requesting information from satellite, DSL, broadband and cable providers.
- Recognition gives the committee, with the approval of the Select Board, the ability to apply for and receive funding from community & private foundations, government agencies (county, state and federal), private donors, donor advised funds, and other entities as well as access to no or low cost technical support from the LCRPC and Island Institute.

To date, group members have:









- 📄 Contacted the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission (LCRPC), Island Institute, ConnectMe, Maine Broadband Coalition, Tidewater Telecom and Spectrum.
- 📄 Scheduled an initial information meeting with Tidewater Telecom
- 📄 Scheduled an educational presentation with representatives of the LCRPC and Island Institute.
- 📄 Applied for a start-up grant from the Maine Community Foundation's (MCF) Community Broadband Grant program. The application included a letter of support from Select Board Chair Dick Spear
- 📄 Requested and graciously received a commitment from the Town's Select Board to set aside \$1,500 from its ARPA Funds to be used in conjunction with the start-up grant activities should the Town receive a positive response from the MCF Community Broadband grant application (October 15, 2021).
- 📄 Additionally we have raised \$1,500 from within the committee to be applied to the MCF grant budget, pending recognition as a Town Committee.

On behalf of the Nobleboro's Ad Hoc Broadband Research Group I respectfully ask the Select Board for full recognition as a duly appointed town committee.

Cordially,
 Nobleboro Broadband Research Committee
 Peter Gabbe –Chair

8/25/2021

Nobleboro's Advisory Broadband Research Group's members include:

-  Peter Gabbe – Chair and Liaison to other community broadband committees; Liaison to Grantors and the Maine Broadband Coalition.
-  Nate House – Vice Chair and Liaison to broadband support committees at the regional and state level
-  Michele Hallowell, Esq. – Scribe and Legal Guidance
-  Bill Silver – Liaison to Broadband Providers; survey analytics
-  Dean Levy – Mapping Oversight
-  Marty Welt – Website Development Oversight
-  Marianne Pinkham – Liaison to County Committees (LCRPC), press releases, government and organizational resources and Website/Communications management
-  Dick Spear – Select Board contact and advisor