

**Select Board Meeting Agenda  
Nobleboro Town Office Meeting Room  
March 13, 2024 @ 6:00pm**

**Attendance:** Tina Streker-Broadband  
Nate House-Broadband Chair  
Piper Pavelich-LCN  
Richard Powell-Selectboard  
Emerald Friend-Town Clerk

Bill Soares-Broadband  
Robert O'Brien-Broadband  
Richard Spear-Selectboard Chair  
Jon Chadick-Selectboard  
Robyn Clark-Treasurer

**OPEN MEETING:** R Spear opened the meeting @ 6:00pm

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**MINUTES:** Approve 02/28/2024 Minutes

- R Powell motioned to approve 02/28/24
- J Chadwick 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion
- The vote was unanimous.

**SCHOOL & TOWN WARRANTS:**

1. Town Payroll Warrant	#018/#21	\$ 23,477.13
2. School Payroll Warrant	#019	\$ 64,656.42
3. School AP Warrant	#020	\$ 126,200.44
4. Town AP Warrant	#022	<u>\$ 63,809.41</u>
		<b>\$ 273,954.47</b>

- J Chadwick made motion to except warrants 18-22 as written above
- R Powell 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion
- The vote was unanimous.

**SIGN WARRANTS:** 14-17

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Nobleboro Broadband Committee
  - Broadband letter attached.
  - R Spear said that they will give Broadband until Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to be able to use the allocated, \$50,000 ARPA funds. But if it is not used then Broadband will only have the \$7,500 that the committee has leftover.
- Property & Casualty Insurance
  - Richard Powell suggested to the selectboard that Property & Casualty Ins for some of the town's buildings should be increased due to them not being increased in some time.

- Selectboard all agreed that Historical Society Building should be increased to \$200,000 & Fish Ladder Building increased to \$125,000.
- J Chadwick made motion to make Property & Casualty Ins increases as stated above.
- R Powell 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion
- The vote was unanimous.

## **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT:** R Spear adjourned @ 6:37pm

**Minutes Transcribed by Emerald Friend-Town Clerk**

**PRESENTED by NATE HOUSE  
BROADBAND COMMITTEE CHAIR**

As you are aware the Nobleboro Broadband Committee (NBBC) has been diligently working over the past 2 years to bring both fiber optic internet and digital equity to the entirety of Nobleboro.

While we are here to provide the board with an update on the committee, the biggest item is the allocated ARPA funds. Currently there are \$57,500 worth of ARPA funds allocated for Broadband use. Originally \$50,000 was to be used as leverage for matching grants to build infrastructure, and the remaining \$7,500 for digital equity & helping the less fortunate. We are here tonight with our members and guests to demonstrate the potential use, with leverage, of these ARPA funds for broadband projects, which may qualify for use before the ARPA deadline.

- 1) North Nobleboro - Fiber expansion: There is a potential program where towns such as Waldoboro, North Nobleboro, Dresden, and others would be developed by Fidium Fiber. This would provide similar fiber broadband that LCI provides to their customers. The program would be eligible for matching funds, similar to the MCA grants the NBBC worked on with LCI. Again, we are working closely with the County on this potential effort, which may be eligible for MCA Partnerships for Enabling Middle Mile program (PEMM). The return on using the town funds would be similar to the previous grants, providing fiber internet to 25-50 unserved and 200-250 underserved locations.
- 2) Connectivity, Digital Equity, and Inclusion: Establish a fund to help the less fortunate with broadband costs. These funds would be used to connect (poles/wires), provide internet service, and ensure folks have access to and knowledge of how to use technology (devices, digital training, etc.) The NBBC plans to develop and implement a similar digital equity program to Bremen's utilizing these ARPA funds and other planning grants the committee has previously received.

We understand the timelines/use by dates associated with the ARPA funds. We have been assured by the County, which establishing a digital equity fund, as briefly described above, is an appropriate use of ARPA funds. For reference, the town of Bremen has also used ARPA funds for this exact program.

We urge the Selectboard to hold off on re-allocating broadband ARPA funds until the last reasonable moment, allowing the NBBC the most time to leverage the funds to the maximum extent. Similar grant opportunities to the ones we previously applied for may be available this year, as mentioned above.

As both members of this committee and taxpayers, we want the most value out of these ARPA funds. If no infrastructure projects meet the requirements (leveraging and timeline) for utilizing our ARPA funds, we would like the selectboard to consider keeping at minimum the \$7,500 for digital equity, and potentially increase this amount if possible. Bremen allocated \$25,000 of their ARPA funds, and their program has been a proven success, and recognized as one of the first of its kind in Maine.

In summary all we are asking for is a little more time. The town, county, and State all have ARPA funds allocated for broadband, up against restrictions, and are trying to utilize them. We do not want to miss out on an opportunity to turn \$50,000 into \$500k or \$1 mil, because we did not wait.

Our members will be at the Town Meeting, ready to support the NBBC use of ARPA funds if the issue should arise.