

Minutes

Date: 2/22/2024

Time: 0800

Location: Zoom

Zoom Meeting ID: 815 8788 2013

Zoom Meeting Password: CABLE

The Zoom chat will not be monitored. Participants who wish to speak must raise the hand icon until the Chair asks them to unmute. If anyone is audio or visual recording, please acknowledge it at this time.

TOWN CLERK
BRIANNE

2024 MAR -7 PM 10:42

RECEIVED

- 1) Call Meeting to Order, and Attendance: **Present:** Mr. Contrino, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Frank, Ms. Howland, Mr. Johnson, Mr. McCarter, Ms. Siroonian, *ex officio*; BCTV; David Isenberg, Falmouth Net Advisory Board. **Absent:** None.
- 2) **No meeting on 2/15** due to lack of timely posting of submitted agenda by Town Hall. This has been fixed. Note that all meetings are recorded and can be accessed in full from BCTV. Minutes of 2/8/2024 meeting deferred until 3/7 meeting.
- 3) Review Public Correspondence: None reported
- 4) Old and Ongoing business and associated Discussion/follow-on actions, including:
 - a. Select Board Presentation Debrief, Mr. Dwyer
 - i. Select Board does not wish to have further written materials submitted re: our quarterly report; advises that the slides Mr. Dwyer submitted are sufficient for their purposes. They had no comments or questions. They will take our report “under advisement” due to limited time and personnel to deal with more comprehensive information
 - ii. Awaiting input/responses from other quarters, i.e.: the finalized MBI DEI plan; FCC comments; whether incumbent ISPs have included our letters of conditional support in their submissions
 - iii. CITAC is willing to help support the Select Board with burdensome routine tasks, such as filling out applications or technical support with online resources, e.g., the report that it took 5 hours for a staff person to fill out an online form; both Mr. Johnson and Mr. Dwyer are very willing to be on call and can be there within minutes as needed.
 - iv. Further CITAC recommendations will depend on Comcast and Verizon grant conditions are disclosed.
 - b. Gigi Sohn Meetings Debrief
 - i. Recapped Ms. Sohn’s most important points: Our educational efforts towards improved broadband in Bourne must prioritize benefits to the Town first, and deemphasize what she characterized as “wires, cables, and poles.” Benefits, as demonstrated by other municipalities, largely related to attracting a younger population with money to spend:
 - a. Increased home values, tax base
 - b. Increased attraction to scientific ventures and businesses of all kinds, especially “clean” services; these are especially loath to invest in an area where adequate fiberoptic broadband is poor or absent
 - c. Tourism, as tourists are more likely to demand adequate broadband for remote work and recreation/entertainment
 - d. Support for tourism industry
 - ii. Smart technology benefits for the Town:
 - a. Enhanced management of vehicle/traffic flow

- b. Infrastructure connectivity
 - c. Power consumption
 - d. Public communications
 - e. Air, water quality monitoring; flood watch and control
 - f. Public safety
 - g. Waste management
- iii. Scare tactics about “high rate of failure” for municipal systems are based on ten- to fifteen-year-old systems. Twenty-five years ago costs were high and demand was low; clearly not applicable to current demands, technology, and business models.
- iv. The public system is a model whose time has come. There are over 650 public networks in the US, 50 up in the last few years alone, including a number of them in small and larger towns, cooperative ventures / public utility districts for regional systems, and cities. They provide higher customer satisfaction at lower costs, and spur competition with commercial providers that benefits users.
- v. The main benefits of these are that the communities own them and control them and their revenue; profits go back into the system in the form of enhanced services and lower rates, not to shareholders out of state.
- vi. Is it unfair for private providers to compete with public-funded ones? No. As a matter of public record, ISPs receive billions of dollars from governmental sources, most lately from the federal Affordable Connectivity Program. Comcast and Verizon asked the Town of Bourne for letters of support for their application for funds from the BEAD program. (It’s not clear whether they used our conditional letters of support in their application for a BEAD grant, pending).
- vii. Broadband bills increase regularly, especially with unknowable fees. According to Sen. Markey, “It’s because they can.” His office notes that 40% of inflation is from record-making corporate profits.
- viii. Mr. Isenberg, Falmouth: Discussed history of the Falmouth progress towards a municipal broadband service.
 - a. Primary actions were public education, partially funded by a private donor, to communicate the idea of it being “our network.” Their plan is for a 100% fiber network, as hybrid networks have too many potential points of failure.
 - b. A fiber network offers “almost flawless performance,” very low operational costs, and low complexity
 - c. Falmouth’s priorities: contract with a provider who is required to put all profits back into the network; provide meaningful competition for commercial for-profit ISPs, get a feasibility study to demonstrate this; 100% coverage, not 80% at half the cost, no digital ‘redlining,” following net neutrality guidelines, low cost to low-income resident; downstream revenue participation in years 5-8 when there’s surplus income
 - d. Generate ROI sufficient to revert control to town, e.g., like “rent to own.” Enough for any needed techs to assist; minimal points of failure in an “all glass” system, paid for by subscriber revenue.
 - e. Projected 60% “take rate,” i.e., subscribers, is sufficient to succeed.
 - f. New businesses springing up to assist residents with switchovers, digital navigators at schools, libraries (provisions for these appear in all DEI plans)
 - g. Potential for spreading to include other towns, a model for regional expansion. OpenCape already investigating a fiber-to-the-home network pending MBI input.

- c. Plan for reviewing information from MBI Public Access office:
 - a. Three subcommittees proposed, moved, seconded and approved for the purpose of reviewing reams of data to help identify gaps for speed testing, among other things.
 - i. Review and analyze data: Mr. Johnson, Mr. Frank
 - ii. Public outreach: Mr. Dwyer, Ms. Howland
 - iii. Investigate and track funding opportunities: Mr. Dwyer, Mr. McCarter
- d. Media Outreach Review and Approval
 - a. Clerk will re-send job description to Bourne Enterprise and Facebook seeking a new member to fill vacancy
 - b. Discussion of whether it was improper to share minutes with the press and others directly vs. requiring them to be requested of Town Hall and sent from there. Mr. McCarter will investigate the state rules on that.
- e. Speed Test update
 - a. Will discuss further in two weeks when MBI / BEAD information is available
- f. Request to Town for CostQuest License
 - a. Town has obtained FCC registration number and license for obtaining FCC data
 - b. Mr. Johnson will assist Town Hall staff to establish a password and obtain data as needed
 - c. The Cape Cod Commission and MBI will be notified that this Level 2 license is active and we can access backup data
- g. Liaison with Legislators and Staff
 - a. OpenCape session with Ms. Sohn attended by 3-4 members of the Cape Cod delegation
- h. POC for new Bridge fiber infrastructure: Sen. Markey's regional legislative affairs aide for fiber issues will approach Army Corps of Engineers district colonel (superior officer) for contact information.

Next Meeting Date 3/7/2024, via Zoom

Future Agenda Items: Followup on above items as indicated

Adjourn Regular Session, moved and seconded, passed unanimously, adjourned @ 0948.
Wendie Howland, Clerk