

Broadband Study Committee (BSC) Meeting Notes

Date: August 23rd, 2022

The meeting was held virtually, on Zoom.

Committee Members Present: Sean Powers, Bob Espindola, Cathy Melanson, Tom McAfee, Alyssa Botelho

Committee Members Absent: Sean Daly

Town Staff Present: Derek Frates.

Consultants Present

Entry Point -Jeff Christensen

The meeting was called to order at 7:27 PM.

The meeting minutes from the June 27th, 2022 were reviewed.

Cathy Melanson motioned to approve, Sean Powers seconded. Roll call vote was taken, all members present were in favor.

Bob Espindola provided an update on the discussion about possibly disbanding the Broadband Study Committee following Town Meeting vote on Articles 34 and 35.

Bob explained that the TA had suggested that the mission outlined on the Town website had mostly been completed and that is why she recommended dissolution.

Bob explained that a meeting is set for September 6th to review next steps on Articles 34 and 35. Based on the time that might pass before an MLP Board is in place, Bob Recommended to the TA that the BSC stay together in the interim period.

Bob shared a bullet list of items that could be considered as a revised mission for the BSC in the interim period before the MLP Board is in place.

The committee reviewed the list, amended the list and settled on a recommendation to send the following mission statement to the Select Board for approval.

Fairhaven Broadband Study Committee Mission

The mission of the Fairhaven Broadband Study Committee Mission is to provide continuity between past committee work and the Municipal Light Plant Board which will be formed at a future date. This will include initiatives to advance the planning and evaluation for a potential deployment of an open access fiber network which is owned by the residents of Fairhaven.

BSC Working List - Things to consider completing prior to Transition of BSC to MLP

1. What needs to be done before Town Meeting in the Fall?
2. Coordination with Mass Broadband Institute regarding grant opportunities
3. Execution of the Community Compact Cabinet Grant project
4. Updates of the Broadband Master Plan
5. What to do about the website and future management thereof
6. Community Engagement
7. Write an RFP for Open Access Partner
8. RFP for full build out. (TBD)

Cathy Melancson asked who would be on the MLP Board when it is formed.

Bob Espindola explained that that is yet to be determined and that the positions could be either Elected or Appointed. She asked who would make that decision. Bob indicated that he believes the Select Board would make appointments but he indicated that Town Counsel would be consulted to identify the pros and cons for each option.

Cathy asked if we would be looking for comparable communities who have MLP's for example. Bob explained that, although that is ideal, there are relatively few MLP's in Massachusetts to compare to so we may not be able to really have a large enough sample size for that type of comparison.

She asked how many communities are using MLP for just Broadband. Bob said he did not have an answer but expects that Town Counsel should be able to find that information, along with the Mission statements, charters, etc. for those MLP's.

Broadband Study Committee (BSC) Meeting Notes

Sean Powers made a motion to present the mission statement to the Select Board at next meeting with authority to amend to correct any typos as necessary. Cathy Melanson seconded. A roll call vote was taken and all members present voted in favor.

Derek Frates mentioned that Entry Point sent an invoice for hosting the website which needs to be renewed.

He indicated the cost was \$218 annually and that the invoice could be paid from the funds still remaining in the original Broadband article.

Sean Powers asked for an update on the \$250K CCC Grant for the Housing Authority.

Bob Explained that the project was on hold waiting to see if the scope might be able to be expanded using the MBI grant program funds or to see if the MBI might be able to help with grant management. MBI indicated Regional Planning Authorities, like SRPEDD, might be managing distribution of the \$50M MBI grant funds.

Bob used the Green Communities program as something that the Town was able to use the services of SRPEDD to get the program rolling and now the Town has been benefiting in grants. He also mentioned that SRPEDD does work like that on programs like the Complete Streets program, etc.

Bob mentioned that the Fairhaven Housing Authority is anxious to see the project started. Bob indicated that, hopefully, in the September time frame we can start to provide clarity.

Sean Powers asked if the CCC Grant information can be placed on the Towns' website and, if not, if it could be posted there.

Bob Espindola asked Derek Frates if he could coordinate getting that information from Town Staff and being

Bob indicated the next Select Board meeting would be Tuesday, September 6th.

The Committee discussed a date for the next meeting and decided to set the next meeting for September 15th, starting at 7:30.

Cathy Melanson made a motion to Adjourn at 8:16 P.M. Sean Powers seconded. There was no further discussion.

The vote by roll call vote was unanimous.

Minutes Submitted by Bob Espindola