

**DRAFT** Broadband Study Committee (BSC) Meeting Notes

Date: June 9h, 2022

The meeting was held virtually, on Zoom.

Committee Members Present: Sean Powers, Bob Espindola (joined at 7:00 p.m.), Sean Daly, Cathy Melanson

Committee Members Absent: Tom McAfee

Town Staff Present: Derek Frates.

Consultants Present

Entry Point -Jeff Christensen, Devin Cox

David Robertson – Lewis, Young Robertson & Burningham

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM.

The committee discussed efforts to get lawn signs out.

There was a brief discussion about the video produced last year for Town Meeting that has been edited for this years Town Meeting. It is ready to go.

There was a general discussion about the Town Meeting Articles.

Derek Frates pointed out that Articles 34 and 35 would be taken out of order and reviewed first because Article 34 requires a paper ballot and Town Leadership feels it would be best to take up that vote first. Article 35 logically would follow immediately after.

There was discussion about what materials could be provided at Town members, including the 2 page summary provided by Lewis-Young.

Bob Espindola joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Discussion continued about whether the two-page financial summary provided by Lewis-Young should be provided to Town Meeting members.

The consensus was that providing detailed two-page summary might be confusing to Town Meeting members to be presented prior to the meeting. The page will, instead, be available in electronic form, in the event that people ask questions where bringing it forward would be best.

Summary language about article 34 and 35 was discussed. Jeff Christensen, of Entry Point, will draft some language for each article and Bob Espindola will request that the draft be reviewed by Town Counsel prior to Precinct Meeting.

Bob Espindola notified the committee that he is no longer a voting member of the committee and, therefore, would not count in terms of setting a quorum for voting.

Meeting notes from May 16<sup>th</sup> were reviewed. Sean Powers made a motion to approve, Cathy Melanson seconded. The vote carried unanimously.

The committee discussed next steps following Town Meeting.

Entry Point reiterated that Mass Broadband Institute (MBI) has \$50M in funds, Digital Equity Act. There was a review of the Community Compact Cabinet (CCC) Grant relative to physical location of the Fairhaven Housing Authority (FHA) facilities planned for work in this grant. Bob Espindola called up the FHA web site and shared his screen to show all facilities and there was a discussion about proximity of properties to the existing loop.

Jeff Christensen asked if there were other FHA properties in Town.  
Bob Espindola

Sean Powers asked who will be managing the CCC grant. Bob Espindola explained that he offered to represent the Town with regard to the Grant and would work with Entry Point and the Fairhaven Housing Authority management and Board of Directors.

Bob offered for anyone else on the committee to participate.

Sean Powers asked if anything else regarding the grant would need to come before the BSC again.

Bob explained that Entry Point was concerned about the cost of materials in the grant application and indicated that once the final scope and materials cost are refined, that he would plan to bring the final plan to the BSC, FHA and the Select Board before moving forward expending the funds.

Jeff Christensen explained that Entry Point would support the project and that there may be an opportunity through the Digital Equity Act, to hire a staff person that can do community engagement and, perhaps provide resources to assist with elements of the grant.

Sean Powers asked how long the Town has to be able to expend the grant funds.

Bob Espindola shared his screen with the Grant Acceptance documents that the Town signed showing that the grant funds must be expended and a final report presented by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Jeff suggested a meeting with Josh Eichen from MBI to review the types of things that the Town might be eligible for grants and then, after that, the Committee would regroup to discuss the planning for the CCC grant.

Jeff Christensen suggested the Digital Equity Grant funds should be available in the coming weeks.

Entry point plans to provide a summary for all their clients in the coming weeks of all Grant opportunities.

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Jeff Christensen suggested there is a chance that the monies from MBI may utilize Regional Planning Authorities, such as SRPEDD, to administer the grant.

Jeff Christensen discussed some technical aspects of what the new fiber distribution and suggested that the design may be best to include a higher count fiber for future distribution.

There was a question about ARPA fund availability. Bob Espindola explained that there has been no planning for ARPA fund spending and that will take place after Town Meeting.

The next meeting date was set for

Motion made by Sean Powers and seconded by Cathy Melanson to meet next on June 27<sup>th</sup> at Noontime to accommodate meeting with MBI. The meeting may be informational only but will be posted as a will be posted.

Cathy Melanson made a motion to adjourn at 7:28, Sean Powers seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**DRAFT** Meeting notes submitted by Bob Espindola