

# TOWN OF MT. DESERT BROADBAND COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 5, 2016 / 4pm @ Town Office

Members Present: Jeff Burnham, Lili Pew, Wendell Oppewall, Philip Koch; Ed Ganz & John Fehlauer (via phone); Matt Hart, Dennis Shubert, Durlin Lunt (ex officio)

Public Present: Joanne ?, Jeff Nevins (Fairpoint), French Scott (Fairpoint, via phone).

## Fairpoint Presentation

- A major focus of the presentation was their subscriber map, which is proprietary and cannot be shared via hard copy. Jeff indicated that he will forward along some of the non-proprietary slides, and French stated that they are always willing to meet with us to give us another look at the map itself.
- Fairpoint primarily deploys an “ADSL2+” infrastructure, offering downloads of 15mbps inside of 7,000 ft. The central office (CO) in NE Harbor currently uses an older technology only capable of 3-7mbps download speed.
- Fairpoint has also employed “ADSL2+ Bonded” lines in some regions, with corresponding download speeds up to 25mbps.
- There are other DSL technologies capable of faster downloads (VDSL, G.fast, etc.), but the range is very limited and they are geared towards apartment and office buildings, etc.
- Currently, somewhere between 74-82% of the Town is eligible to receive Fairpoint DSL service. Of those, the breakdown is as follows (download speeds):

51% qualify for 3mbps or more

21% qualify for 7-15mbps (only 1% actually gets 15mbps)

25% of businesses qualify for BBE

52% of businesses qualify for CES

*\*NOTE: ONLY 11% of subscribers are eligible for faster speeds but opt not to enroll. Phil pointed out that this low % is an indicator that for the vast majority of Fairpoint DSL customers in TMD, they have likely already maxed out their bandwidth.*

- Fairpoint is in the process of completing two projects that will impact service in TMD, and work should be completed in 2016.
  1. Upgrade of Somesville Remote Terminal (RT) to Next Gen. DSLAM.
  2. Addition of Next Gen. DSLAM in Bar Harbor

*\*NOTE: Fairpoint expects these two projects will mean 11% will now be eligible for 15mbps download speeds (up from 1%), and 34% will be eligible for 7mbps (up from 20%). These two projects WILL NOT extend the footprint of current service (or lack thereof) in Pretty Marsh, etc, and only increase speeds for current customers. Also of note, although much of Mt Desert could potentially qualify for \$ from the "Connect America Fund," Pretty Marsh does not.*

➤ Four potential FUTURE projects were also addressed:

1. Upgrading the RT near Bartlett's Landing, which is currently fed by fiber but not set up for DSL. Some new fiber might be required for this as well.  
Rough Cost Estimate: \$125,000-\$150,000
2. RT near Seal Harbor Beach could be given fiber optic feed (from NEH) so DSL could be offered in Seal Harbor (Time Warner currently serves Seal Harbor with broadband).  
Rough Cost Estimate: \$125,000-\$175,000
3. Upgrading the NE Harbor CO with Next Gen. DSLAM. This would only serve those who currently qualify for service, but bump download speeds up to 15mbps w/in 7,000 ft. of the NEH CO.  
Cost Estimate: \$50,000
4. A new RT along Rt. 198 near Abels to reach those not currently eligible for DSL along the upper Sound area. This option might require two new terminals.  
Rough Cost Estimate: \$150,000-\$300,000

*NOTE: With the exception of option #3, each project has an engineering cost ranging from \$3,000-\$5,500, which would result in a more firm cost estimate and be deducted from the overall price tag should TMD move forward with the project.*

- Dennis asked about the potential for revenue sharing, etc., should Fairpoint benefit from the TMD funding one of these projects. Fairpoint reps could not provide a solid answer, but indicated it was highly unlikely. They suggested the possibility of providing some educational tools, etc. to the community instead.
- Fairpoint representatives indicated that due to their commitment fulfilling their "Connect America Fund" projects, most of their resources are already spoken for. Should the TMD move forward with further engineering on one or more of the four

potential projects listed, they would also provide a time estimate. None of these projects are currently on their radar, although some (in particular, #3) might eventually be addressed even without TMD action.

- The group appeared to be of the opinion that focusing on project #1 (extending Fairpoint's DSL footprint into Pretty Marsh) has the most potential "bang for the buck" amongst the options presented. It was also expressed that priority should be given to getting those with no DSL (or other broadband option) connected, rather than increasing speeds for current customers. Lili pointed out that internet connectivity (or lack thereof) can play a significant role within the real estate market.

**Next Steps:**

- The Broadband Committee will hold its next meeting on Tuesday, January 12 @ 4pm in the Town Office Conference Room. Agenda items from the Jan. 5 meeting still need to be addressed, along with further consideration and conversation regarding the Fairpoint presentation.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Hart". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Matthew Hart