

Town of Mt. Desert
Broadband Committee Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2022 @ 4:00 pm via Zoom

Members Present: Frank Baltzell, John Fehlauer, Scott McFarland, Kathy Miller, Durlin Lunt (ex officio)

Also Present: Brian Lippold, Casco Bay Advisors

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the July 14, 2022 meeting were moved for approval, seconded, and unanimously VOTED for approval.

2. Discussion with Casco Bay Advisors re: communication with providers

Brian Lippold of Casco Bay Advisors sent the report on the existing Town broadband services to ten providers in the state, inquiring about their interest in working with the Town to expand to FTTH. He has heard back from four of them and has met already with two of those three.

- Otelco is not interested, they generally work in other parts of Maine as a local telephone
- Matrix Connected Fiber is not interested
- Spectrum/Charter has agreed to look at the unserved properties to confirm they meet density requirements, which would require them to build out for services at their expense. They also agreed to look at the other unserved areas in Town, but those buildouts would require Town funding. Brian expects a report back in a few weeks.
- Consolidated reports that Mount Desert is not on their current list for FTTH, but they will look at the funding needed to build it out. Brian noted that over the last year as costs have increased, they have cut back on some of their building plans. They would need to go through a high-level engineering plan to provide us a proposal, and that could be a month or more to hear back from them.

There was a discussion on a range of areas:

- The new brand for Consolidated's fiber roll out – called Fidium Fiber.
- Brian noted that if Spectrum completed the build out at their own expense, the Town could enter into a new franchise agreement with them, which Durlin would support.
- If we want something other than what the companies plan to do on their own, we will need to subsidize them or build our own network.
- Having Spectrum provide full coverage doesn't eliminate the need/desire for fiber optic
- Spectrum has no plans for a FTTH buildout. 940/35 is their current max speed with a hybrid fiber/coax system.
- Committee members experience a range of speeds at a single location. A hybrid system should be able to provide consistent service, but they often have issues with design, maintenance, or downstream capacity that makes speed vary, even in one location. Brian noted that speed tests are best done with new computers and a direct plus into the services, not via WIFI/routers.
- Brian will make his study on existing services available on the Town VETRO instance.
- For the project to connect the BH and Town police departments, we are waiting for Consolidated to negotiate with Bar Harbor some cost increase issues.

3. Discussion with Tremont Town Manager re: collaboration

Kathy noted that the Tremont Town Manager, Jesse Dunbar, was unable to attend again, but their Town is creating of their own Broadband Committee. We will keep this item on the agenda for a future meeting.

4. Other such business as may properly come before this meeting

None

5. Next Meeting – 2nd Thursday of each month

The next committee meeting will be Thursday, September 8, 2022 @ 4 pm via Zoom.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen W. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kathleen W. Miller