

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Alstead Broadband Committee

Approved Minutes for Meeting of July 8th, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.
Municipal Building, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602
Conference call: (978) 990-5000, access code 539083#
Google meet; <https://meet.google.com/gzp-ovpr-fyf>

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Gordon Kemp, Chris Rietmann, Joe Levesque, Joel McCarty, Jim Howard, and Mark Mastrocinque.

TOWN STAFF PRESENT:

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER: Gordon Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

GUESTS: Carol Miller, Director of Broadband Technology. Division of Economic Development Department of Business and Economic Affairs. State of New Hampshire. Ms. Miller is in her position since 2009. Most of her career has been working with Federal stimulus grants. She is a big proponent to “fiber to the premise”. 25/3 is the FCC standard. It is that low because telecommunication providers cannot always meet a higher requirement. CCI has been the most active in New Hampshire. Chesterfield was the first town to agree to a proposal, bond it and get it built. Ms. Miller feels that Comcast would be open to discussions. Comcast serves approx. 10% of Alstead households. Our franchise agreement for video service with Comcast is every two years. Ms. Miller will facilitate a meeting with Comcast. Covid-19 has disrupted the supply chain and will affect any timeline for any broadband build-out. We should contact CCI and Comcast to ensure that this is doable. Ms. Miller’s opinions is that regardless of what happens our efforts are not lost. Brad Roscoe of Chesterfield went through the entire bonding process for Chesterfield. She suggests we speak to the N.H. Bond Bank about the bonding process. The bonding for infrastructure is taxable. Alstead must have a town meeting and/or vote for the bonding. Bonding can only cover unserved and under-served areas. The Southwest Regional Planning Commission can assist with facility mapping of Alstead. They were a partner in the New Hampshire Broadband Mapping. She estimates having “fiber to the premise” increases a home’s value 20%. Ms. Miller’s opinion is that partnering with a company like CCI or Comcast end up costing the community almost nothing. Her opinion is that it is well worth it. The bond is paid by the town? with a franchise fee paid to the town.

CCI offers a television service with their franchise agreement. Would that conflict with Alstead’s franchise agreement with Comcast?

The committee agrees that the goal is fiber to the whole town without cost to the residents.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: Minutes of July 1st, 2020: On a motion from Chris Rietmann, seconded by Joe Levesque the Committee voted to approve the minutes of the July 1st meeting. All in favor, no opposed.

DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS:

OLD BUSINESS:

- Town-wide survey/questions/cost? Cost of the mailing is \$230. 1,190 pieces of paper that must be copied, folded and taped. Joel believes it can be done with a postcard.
 - i. (see Monodnock Broadband Group slide deck for survey questions from State of NH & Mission Broadband Inc. on Survey Monkey. Approx.. 3100 responses)
 - ii. Joe will contact Brad Roscoe
 - iii. Franchise Agreement with Comcast; conflict?
 - iv. Miles of Roads/is this needed? There are 64.87 miles of paved and dirt roads in Alstead. 16.2 miles of dirt roads are not maintained. There are three state roads in Alstead. Joe Levesque will ask David Conescoe.
 - v. Post minutes and meeting schedule on website - done
 - vi. Encourage sign-up at Starlink

NEW BUSINESS:

- i. RFI
- ii. Starlink/Kuiper/oneweb/volunteer to monitor
- iii. Community benefit organization

OTHER ITEMS:

- a. Public comments
- b. Next meeting Wednesday, July 15th at 6:30 P.M.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Mark M. will ask Carol for sample RFI language that she thinks would be effective
- Jim and Mark will put together the survey for Alstead. The survey should serve the dual purpose of informing the public.
- We have the contract & RFP with Consolidated Communications. We still need the RFI.
- We will get a copy of the franchise agreement with Comcast.

On a motion by Chris Rietmann and seconded by Joel McCarty, the Board voted to adjourn at 7:50PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Mastrocinque, Secretary

The next meeting of the Broadband Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, July 15th, 2020 at 6:30PM