

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

AUGUST 12, 2020

MEMORIAL BUILDING

2:30 P.M.

The following are to be considered draft minutes until approved by the Board.

This was a special meeting for the Board of Selectmen and representatives of the Internet Advisory Committee to meet with representatives from Consolidated Communications regarding the timeline for installation of fiberoptic lines throughout town as a result of CARES ACT grant funding that was approved by Governor Sununu to bring broadband internet to Springfield. Consolidated was awarded the bid through the State of NH.

Selectboard present in the meeting room: Tamara Butcher, Chairwoman, Dick Hendl and George McCusker.

Others present in the meeting room Don Hill, and Internet Advisory Committee members; Whit Smith, Dan Saulnier, Kevin Lee, and Dick Petrin. Terry Smith and Andy D'Amico were present via zoom.

Jeff McIver and Michael Cannon, representatives from Consolidated introduced themselves. They are the point of contact for this project. Jeff described there four different phases of work required. 1. Fiber installation, 2. Splicing, 3. Testing, and 4. Installation. A fiber box will be mounted to the house to bring fiber to the home from the pole. A fiber jump will be brought into the customer's house. The fiber box is a point at the exterior of the home where Consolidated can test the connection.

When Consolidated decided to move forward with this project and before the State notified them about the grant, Mike had already started doing the prep work and purchasing to be ready. Engineering has been out and getting prints out and that is expected to be completed by the first week of September. The biggest piece with the CARES ACT is the timeline, from now to December 15. Mike has reached out to a couple of national companies to get bids for the placing and splicing to assist with that due to the short timeframe. Consolidated will be managing the contractors.

Jeff stated consolidated will be mapping and color coding all areas of fiber installation. For communication purposes that will show where the installation process is as the project is taking place.

Mike reported fiber will come from a "central office" (i.e. one the metal phone cabinets seen along the roadsides as specific intersections.) Feeder cables will come out from the central office to splitter cabinets that are mounted on the poles. Building the fiber to the poles will happen first. Then they will come back and string fiber to the home when subscriptions are placed to run the drop to the house. Customers will be able to sign up for fiber beginning in October. The mapping will be available for residents to see what the status of the project.

The plan is to have the system ready for service on December 15. Jeff stated along with the fiber map, and the table will show the status of how things are progressing and will likely update every other week. There will be a pre-registration site set up specific for Springfield and will be available for at least two months prior to finishing the project, residents can log on and subscribe for fiber installation and activation. The preregistration form also has pricing and suggested recommendations for use based on proposed fiber use. Consolidated will line up installation schedules based on subscriptions received. Customers who currently have Consolidated for internet and phone can keep their current service and still be a Consolidated customer without signing up for the new fiber installation.

The construction deadline is robust. Hanging fiber will begin soon. The website for customers to pre-register for installation is expected to be available in October. As fiber is strung and spliced and service is provided out to some of the homes, the service will be tested before it goes "live." The goal is to have fiber to each home by the December 15th date, though as service requests start coming in, installation could push out for two or three months.

The current infrastructure for Consolidated is copper cable from FairPoint. There are lots of problems with copper. During storms and when it gets wet problems increase. Copper has been used for a long time and is aging out. Consolidated will be stringing new fiberoptic lines that will alleviate problems that people are having and will be an optimal product for a long time.

Whit reported The Internet Advisory Committee has scheduled an information session for residents on **Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Firehouse**. The session will include information as to the process that has been taking place over the course of the last couple of years. Jeff and Mike will also speak to the installation process. Attendees will also be able to address concerns and have questions answered.

The information session ended. Tamara thanked Michael and Jeff and those in attendance for their time.

At 3:50 p.m. a motion was made by Tamara to enter non-public session per RSA 91:A-3 personnel. The motion was seconded by Dick and approved by Tamara, Dick, and George.

At 4:00 p.m. the Board entered back into public session. No decisions were made on the non-public session. Tamara moved to seal the non-public minutes, seconded by George, and approved by Tamara, Dick, and George.

The meeting adjourned.

Submitted by,

Janet Roberts,
Administrative Assistant