MINUTES
BROADBAND FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 2022
REMOTELY VIA ZOOM

YOUTUBE LIVE
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNf5-Ve8bgA

1 PM

Minutes of the first meeting of the East Haddam Broadband Feasibility Committee

1. Call to Order: First Selectman Irene Haines at 1:08 pm

2. Introduction of Committee Members
    a. Patty Stricker - Resident East Haddam
    b. Wayne Schulz - Resident Moodus/East Haddam
    c. Tom Sevigny - Resident East Haddam
    d. Tom Hays - Resident East Haddam
    e. Craig Mansfield - East Haddam - Director Emergency Management

3. Election of the committee chair and secretary
    a. Craig Mansfield nominated Tom Sevigny as committee chair with unanimous vote
    b. Patty Stricker nominated Wayne Schulz as secretary with unanimous vote

4. Explanation of Process: As detailed in a resolution adopted at the September 7, 2022 Board of Selectmen meeting:

    a. The Broadband Feasibility Committee will work with EntryPoint Networks, Inc Consultants as the representatives from the Town of East Haddam as they develop a detailed Digital Access Broadband Master Plan. This will include, but is not limited to,
        i. community engagement to survey residents and businesses about their needs and interests in regards to community broadband,
        ii. a market analysis to identify the current landscape of service providers, prices and speeds from carriers operating in East Haddam today,
        iii. a risk analysis for all project phases,

iv. a High-Level Network Design for a Fiber to the Business and Fiber to the Premise Network in consultation with Biarri Networks,
v. various financial and cost breakdowns for various components of the project,
vi. recommendations for the funding path for infrastructure, operations and maintenance of the network and service providers and identifying potential federal and state grant opportunities,

5. Chair Tom Sevigny presented additional information about the process as well as answered initial questions from committee members..

   Tom Sevigney explained the ideal outcome for this broadband project could be
   i. When you go online you see a screen which allows you to select (subscribe) to the broadband provider you want based on price and service quality.
   ii. Question: Wayne Schulz asked “Who maintains this or does it piggyback on some other lines?
   iii. Tom Sevigny: The town of East Haddam (or their contractor) would be responsible for laying and maintaining lines which we anticipate would be paid for by bonding and/or federal and state funding or grants.
      1. There are expected to be three components of monthly cost to users:
         a. Bond Payback
         b. Regular Maintenance
         c. ISP broadband provider fee
            i. Cost to each resident subscriber is anticipated to be $50-$60/mo (combined)
            ii. Provide each subscriber more choice and potentially a lot cheaper than what people are paying now for their Internet Access (Competition should keep pricing down)

   b. Question: Craig Mansfield - Has Entry Point done any type of feasibility study to look at high level of what this cost would be
      i. Tom Sevigny:
         1. They’ve done preliminary study but this report will go deeper
         2. There is no expected partnership with existing provider(s)
         3. We are creating a broadband “road” for other ISPs to use

   c. 10.7% of households in the town have no Internet Access
      i. Seen as either too expensive or,

ii. Providers want a lot of money to lay lines to some homes

d. Survey of townspeople is expected
e. Goal: To determine how many people are interested in broadband as outlined in the proposal?

f. Committee member Tom Hays - 90 students and 40 staff members at Franklin Academy would look forward to expanded affordable broadband access (https://fa-ct.org/)

g. Entry Point suggests a take rate of 50-60% would be required in order for this to be feasible (it would not be mandatory for everyone in town to subscribe).

h. The town has a two month consulting agreement ($5,000/mo) with Entry Point to create a feasibility study. Their original plan was $20,000 to do both the feasibility study and also design the plan for implementation but it was decided to split this into at least two phases with this being the first phase at a cost of $10,000.

6. Next Steps
    a. Coordinate a meeting with Entry Point contact(s) for kickoff of project and assistance by this committee

7. Audience of Citizens: No audience questions

8. Adjournment at 2pm

9. A video recording of this meeting is available online https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNf5-Ve8bgA