Minutes of the Meeting of the
East Haddam Broadband Implementation Committee
July 28th, 2023

Members/ Staff Present: Tom Sevigny (chair), Craig Mansfield, Bruce Harris II, Stanton Conover, Stuart R. Palmer, Theresa Govert, Linda Zemienieski
EntryPoint: Nicole Banyai, Jeff Christensen, Eric Banyai
Excused: Laurel White

1. The meeting was called to order by Tom Sevigny at 1:05 pm
2. Approval of the Agenda for 7-28-2023
3. Approval of the Minutes for 7-14-23
    a. Theresa Govert requested a motion to remove "So Eversource can't control how municipalities get services." Craig Mansfield motioned to accept the minutes as amended. Stu Palmer second. Unanimous Aye.
4. Members of the committee and participants from Entrypoint Networks introduced themselves.
5. Nicole Banyai broadly introduced the potential Scope of Work moving forward.
6. Jeff Christensen discussed a new option, not a recommendation, for financing the network which helps cities and towns that are interested in a municipal broadband that helps to address the logistical, financial, and political issues of backstopping the debt that have kept projects from moving forward. In response Entrypoint Networks created a subsidiary 501(c)3 nonprofit called OAT Networks. OAT Networks would take out debt, and there would be a joint powers agreement including assistance from Town of East Haddam with community engagement, right of way, permitting and the JPA would give East Haddam the option to acquire 100% of network from OAT. This allows for local control and helps avoid residents being subject to a monopoly. Would be local branding, and a "doing business as" East Haddam Fiber. They've developed program with a national lender, towns must be eligible which East Haddam is, and they must apply. A successful application will depend on take rate and then OAT Networks will take out the loan and it will be non-recourse for Town of East Haddam. OAT Networks would assist in achieving target take rate, arranging financing, overseeing design/engineering, organize and oversee construction, standup operations and operate network and provide customer service. Residents would sign up for a 3-year contract. There were general questions around municipal gain and whether it applied to entities working with municipalities or just municipalities themselves and the cost implications of either scenario. General discussion about the cost impact of moving forward with this option, in that because the nonprofit would be borrowing debt at a higher interest rate than municipal bond rates. Then an overview of what an open-access network looks like and benefits of broadband fiber network. General discussion about what the process would look like moving forward i.e. getting hard numbers from construction partner, community engagement process, etc.
7. Nicole Banyai lead a discussion about the menu of options for community engagement, and additional options for scope of work including grant research, writing and application support and the pricing.
8. Next meeting Friday, August 11, 2023
9. Adjourned at 2:16 pm