

Minutes of the Broadband Committee Meeting
Saturday November 19, 2016
10:00 A.M. – Sandisfield Library

In attendance: Jeff Bye, Doug Rocco, George Wheeler, Jean Atwater-Williams

To open the meeting the members in attendance voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes prepared by Alice for the 10/29 committee meeting.

The Chair then reviewed the status of the Town's Last Mile Project readiness application. A copy of the Town's project approval letter (dated 11/17/2016) from the Division of Local Services (DLS) to the MBI Technical Director was distributed and reviewed. The Chair also distributed for information a copy of the bonding green light letter Sandisfield received from Locke Lord on 11/2/2016.

Next the Chair had planned to review the results of the discussion Alice had with MBI on 11/3/2016 regarding a Public Works approach for acquiring broadband Internet service for the Town. Little was accomplished during this discussion to review. In place of this agenda item the Chair distributed copies of the RFP issued by MTC on 11/18/2016 for Last Mile grants to provide broadband service to unserved towns in western MA.

Next the Chair reviewed the status of the progress being made by the 5-town broadband working group. Representatives from the 5 towns (Monterey, New Marlborough, Sandisfield, Tolland, Tyringham) have been meeting on a regular basis since May to work collaboratively on a solution for acquiring broadband Internet service for all the towns. The Town of New Marlborough had issued an RFP for broadband network service on 9/15/2016 to test the waters. Following the release of this RFP the towns have been drafting a multi-town version of an RFP. As of the date of this committee meeting the 5 towns are targeting the end of December for issuing the multi-town RFP. The Chair also distributed copies of the email Alice received from Rick Holland regarding a legal position on the procurement of Internet services for the towns via the town MLPs. In Rick's email to Alice he provided the towns with the unofficial word from the MA AAG in charge of the public bid protest unit. According to the AAG as long as an MLP or town pays no funds for installation work, public bid laws do not apply, and the 5 towns can proceed with an RFP for broadband Internet service via MLP procurement.

The final topic on the meeting agenda was selection of a secretary for the committee. Following the nomination of Jean Atwater-Williams to serve as the committee secretary, the members in attendance voted unanimously to select Jean Atwater-Williams to serve as the committee secretary.

The meeting adjourned around 12:00 noon

Prepared by:
Jeff Bye, Committee Chair

Minutes voted and approved:
Date: _____