



FBCTF Minutes 2022-02-10

The meeting opened at 6:35

Present were Mark Howell (chair), Gordon Brockway (Light Board liaison), Scott Hopkinson, David Hesel. Ms. Hire joined at 6:40

Chair report

Mr. Howell announced that the Peg Access committee discussed FBCTF videos being available. The backlog of meeting videos to be posted should be cleared soon.

Minutes

2022_01_06 Minutes:

Public comment: Concord Greene board did not approve expenditure.

Mr. Hopkinson moved, Mr. Hesel 2nd, to accept minutes. Unanimous.

2022_01_27 Minutes:

Stacey Circle spelling.

2022-02-03 Minutes: Mr. Hopkinson moved, and Mr. Hesel seconded to approve as modified.

Chair Report:

Mr. Howell sent response to Mr. Wood and public works engineer and asked for a meeting to discuss opportunities to extend the fiber network. Planning for fiber into road program work. Suggested staff suggest what should be done. At Light Board meeting, Wood said depreciation fund can be used for fiber construction (as opposed using revolving fund). Hesel and Howell ask if depreciation is commonly used that way.

Mr. Howell: Any structured program for capital expenses would serve the purpose. If meeting does not happen, we will ask for a meeting with Mr. Wood.

PEG access meeting discussed Minuteman Media budget for FY23. \$21,923 PILOF (Payment in Lieu of Franchise) to MM. Asked where this PILOF came from. It was introduced in 2021. About 20% of telecom free cash flow, and 5% of MMN budget. Increased year to year. The policy is for PILOF to 3% of Broadband Revenue. ~~A fee with Comcast has been negotiated, so Telecom is being asked to provide an according amount.~~ Transfer from one enterprise to another one.

Mr. Howell asked Mary Hartman, the finance committee observer, if she had any knowledge of Finance committee discussions policy for the PILOF. She responded that the Finance Committee had not considered this item and that A budget hearing would be the time to discuss.

Mr. Hopkinson reported that Deputy Town Manager Hodges related to the PEG Access Committee at their meeting that the Town Manager Steven Crane working with staff had decided to make this payment that they considered it "The right thing to do." Gordon commented that he does not remember the Light Board discussing or making this decision. Mr. Howell: We do not usually enable staff to transfer funds from one budgeting entities or enterprises to another without Town Meeting or other

authorization. Mr. Howell recalled asking about this at the 2021 Enterprise Budget hearing. Broadband rate payers are burdened with paying for Minuteman Media Network.

Mr. Hopkinson: PEG access committee has discussed concern that Comcast fee could decline over time, because of using 5G as a broadband alternative and avoid the franchise fee. Verizon could do the same. Part of capital budget depends on if the franchise fee declines. Auditors told telecom to repay loans from CMLP – should have gone to TM.

Mr. Howell: As the Fiber Completion Task Force our responsibility to understand the impacts on the Telecomm which is a growing drag on telecom finances.

Mary: What was the original thinking behind the PILOF. Mr. Hopkinson: like PILOT. Mary: Finance committee does not talk about these transfers. She suggested that the best place to raise the issue is at the enterprise budget hearings. Mr. Howell: Unless someone follows up on issues raised at the hearings such as the transfer, there may not be a result.

David: Comcast has increased download speeds from 200 to 300.

Mr. Hopkinson: High-definition television requires 16 mbps for each stream, so three hundred is more than most people need.

Mr. Howell: 3% of aggregate total of revenue transferred to MMN.

Mr. Howell: Do we want to raise this in the report? Should we seek to understand if the Light Board support this? It is optional and is not a “Tax” as labeled in the CMLP Budget Forecast.

Gordon: The Light Board has been informed that we will get information is promised from Light Plant staff.

Update on efforts to design coordination fiber construction with the roads program.

Meetings are planned.

V. ARPA (American Recovery Plan Act)/Infrastructure Proposal Development

No specific ARPA deadlines are upcoming. No further discussion of this topic in this meeting.

VI. Continue Discussion of the Preliminary Report Outline

- o Ms. Hire’s input on fiber construction section (reference document from the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition, dated 2018, for cost of deploying fiber)

- o Next section to review

Gordon: Warner Woods has fiber in street. Mr. Howell: There was an opportunity to add Fiber, but the Builder signed an exclusive installation agreement with Comcast. Gordon: it would be great if we could understand why an address is lacking fiber.

Gail: A main is used with apartment complexes. There are multiple dwelling unit (MDU) buildings that are listed in GIS as having a main address, while units have a submain address. The term is "Apartment Main/SubMain"

Gail asked what "Fiber in Street but "Not Available" at 1175 addresses means. Concord Greene may be an example.

Gail asked if the draft report is a complete list of all affordable housing.

Mr. Hopkinson: Some affordable units are included in what are otherwise market rate developments.

Mr. Howell: if we provide fiber to affordable units, this could allow access for all units.

Mr. Hesel: is the housing past the police station affordable? These are duplexes.

Gail intends to find a complete list of affordable housing.

Multi-dwelling Units from master address table.

About 83% of these addresses do not have broadband. But 1394 addresses do have access to fiber. Some single-family homes are condominiums.

Mr. Hesel: Concord Greene has thirty-two units. Fiber is "not available."

Gordon: Does the GIS data shows what the structures are?

Mr. Howell: There may be programmatic solutions for these properties.

Gail: What is the typical value of a property that has fiber vs. not: eighty-three of unserved parcels are MDUs.

Mr. Howell found fifty-two streets. How many miles of fiber have been installed? Mr. Howell: Talbot report in 2015. There are about 115 miles of street. About one hundred miles got fiber.

Higher density areas are more expensive to construct. ARPA funding for broadband could address equity issues. Define this as an underserved population, as part of framing our grant.

Gail: what does "Fiber in Street but Address Noted as Not Available" What does this mean. Mr. Howell: we could ask for explanation.

Mr. Howell: Once these things are categorized, different situations. New rental units seem to end up without fiber. Gordon: Right of first refusal. Mr. Howell: Somerville bylaw tenant has right to contract for broadband, which cannot be restricted by a property owner. Mr. Howell analogized this to the "Right to Dry" bylaw that passed at Concord Town Meeting years ago, which gave residents the right to dry their laundry outside.

Mr. Hesel: The Comcast contract does not prohibit competitors. We believe the Warner Woods development or the other West Concord apartment [development? Beharrel street?] does prohibit other broadband.

Last Thoughts

Gordon: 80,000 per mile. That is 1.2 million. Mr. Howell: an annual budget of 100,000 would be possible?

Mr. Hesel: 600 feet for EV was \$49800

Public Comments:

Karlen Reed. Monday Select Board meeting to discuss ARPA funding.

Mr. Hesel moved to adjourn; Mr. Hopkinson seconded. Unanimous roll