

**TOWN OF CONCORD
 SELECT BOARD AGENDA
 JANUARY 20, 2022 AT 6:30 PM
 Concord Carlisle Regional High School
 MAIN GYM
 500 Walden Street, Concord, MA 01742**

#	Time	Agenda Item
1.	6:30pm	Call to Order
2.		Consent Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulatory Letter to Concord, Ohio
3.	6:35pm	Discuss special town meeting warrant article
4.		Extend Charge of Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force to June 30, 2022
5.		Vote to Approve the Appointment of Interim Treasurer-Collector
6.		Vote to Appoint Interim Town Manager Kerry A. Lafleur to Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust
7.		Meet new Concord Free Public Library Director, Emily Smith
8.	6:55pm	Other Business
9.	7:00pm	Adjourn to Special Town Meeting

Note: All times are approximate and subject to change.

Current Board and Committee Vacancies
Concord 2025 Executive Committee
Conservation Restriction Stewardship Committee
Council on Aging
Natural Resources Commission
Personnel Board
Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee
Tax Fairness Committee
West Concord Advisory Committee



OLD NORTH BRIDGE

TOWN OF CONCORD

TOWN HOUSE - P.O. BOX 535
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742

Concord Township
Lake County, Ohio
Members of the Board of Trustees
7229 Ravenna Road
Concord Township, OH 44077

January 20, 2022

Dear Distinguished Board Members and Our Fellow *Concordians*:

We write today to wish you all a sincere Congratulations regarding your community's bicentennial! Concord, Massachusetts was founded on the principals of agreement and harmony, we consider ourselves honored to share our Town name and values with your Township. Our ancestors, many of whom still have descendants living in Concord, MA today, were willing to risk their lives to fight for freedom and liberty in what would become the Great American Revolutionary War. We are honored that Concord, Ohio's founders chose to remember the great Battles of Lexington and Concord and the '*Shot heard round the world*' when determining a name for your township.

Concord, Ohio's bicentennial is as exceptional as it is momentous. Your community's perseverance in the face of difficult situations, coupled with your desire to work together to create a true sense of belonging, is inspiring. We hope that your Township will continue to embody the true American spirit as your history grows and your population prospers.

We welcome you to visit Concord, MA and celebrate with us in the year 2025 as we commemorate the Semiquincentennial Anniversary of the start of the Revolutionary War where it all began, in Concord!

With pride and deepest respect, we congratulate you all on this community-wide milestone and wish you good health and spirit in the years to come.

Respectfully Yours,

Ms. Terri Ackerman, Chair
Concord Select Board

Ms. Kerry Lafleur, Interim Town Manager
Town of Concord, Massachusetts

Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force
Charge

A. Purpose and Background

The purpose of the Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force (FBCTF), as voted by Article 41 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting, is to study and recommend appropriate solutions for the completion of Concord's fiber optic network, known as Concord Light Broadband, so that this network can offer broadband service throughout the Town.

A recent GIS data analysis found that 5 - 7% of residential parcels are without Fiber Broadband access, either by under-ground or overhead cable, representing 20 - 25% of individual addresses. Residents in affordable housing, condominiums, or apartments may face difficulties connecting to the Town's fiber network.

The FBCC will study alternative approaches to network completion and provide a written report of recommended actions and strategies for the Town Manager and Select Board to consider. The report will present solutions, including possible funding, for three distinct aspects of network completion, or subject areas:

- (a) recommending ways to expedite the installation of fiber-optic telecommunications utility service on the remaining 5 - 7% of Town streets that lacks such service
- (b) exploring barriers to Concord Light Broadband subscription growth
- (c) investigating opportunities for expanding fiber-to-the-home and fiber-to-the-business.

This Task Force will explore the barriers to broadband adoption in a targeted, focused effort. It will revisit the fiber completion strategy on behalf of the community. The report will provide the Light Board, the Select Board, and the Town Manager with information needed to form rational policy decisions on laying fiber to homes and businesses in Concord.

B. Membership

The Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force shall be comprised of seven members appointed by the Select Board. The term of office shall be until February 1, 2022, which is the target date for completion of the Report, unless extended by the Select Board.

Membership shall be as follows:

- One member of the Concord Municipal Light Board, chosen by the Light Board
- One member qualified to represent the business consumers of fiber-based utility services
- One member qualified to represent the real estate community
- One member from a multi-unit dwelling (not currently served by fiber) or Home Owners Association (HOA) board member.
- One member of the PEG Access Advisory Committee Two additional citizens-at-large, with preference given to those with expertise in Broadband or networking

The Task Force shall elect a chair and clerk.

C. Duties and Responsibilities

The Task Force shall seek creative, forward-thinking solutions that acknowledge the existing roles and responsibilities of the Town Manager and staff of the Concord Municipal Light Plant in providing broadband services and completing the broadband deployment of the Town's fiber optic network. This work, for completion of the rollout, will focus exclusively on our fiber. (In particular, the FBCC will not study or explore cellular telephone service solutions or internet access that is based on wireless technologies, such as small cells, 5G, or over-the-air-reception devices.)

The Task Force shall hold at least one public hearing and may conduct surveys, focus groups, or other data collection methods. It is also recommended that Task Force members meet with groups such as the Concord Business Partnership, Economic Vitality Committee, League of Women Voters, the Concord-Carlisle School Superintendent, Council on Aging, and (representatives of the arts and digital media communities)

- The Task Force should research barriers to customer growth prior to developing a plan for expansion. It is recommended that the Task Force shall conduct a citizen survey to ascertain an approximate percentage of citizens who do not want or anticipate using fiber and why.^[1]_{SEP.}
- The Fiber Broadband Task Force shall report their findings and recommendations in writing to the Town Manager and Select Board no later than February 1, 2022. The report shall be publicly available, and the Light Board and interested members of the public should have an opportunity to review and comment on it prior to final submission.

This Report shall be divided into the three aspects of completion set forth in Article 41 and repeated in section A above.

The Task Force may choose to explore additional issues that help to articulate the mission and the business and financial policies for expanding the fiber network and sustaining operations.

(a), "the last 5 – 7 % of streets"

(b), "barriers to subscription growth"

(c): "fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) and fiber-to-the-business (FTTB)" aka the 'last mile'

D. Other Considerations

To foster a free and open discussion of ideas, the Task Force shall comply with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law (including keeping minutes of its deliberations), the Public Records Law, the Conflict-of-Interest Law and all other applicable laws and regulations of the Commonwealth, as well as all relevant Bylaws and Administrative Policies of the Town.

Christopher Carmody

From: Mark Howell <mark_howell@mac.com>
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Christopher Carmody; Terri Ackerman
Subject: FBCTF Progress Report and Request for extension

January 14, 2022

To: The Town of Concord Select Board

From: Concord Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force

The Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force has been meeting just about weekly since our appointments were formalized in September 2021. The appointments to this task force all expire on February 1, 2022. Despite our focused effort it has not yet been possible to complete our work under the charge you created and the 2021 Annual Town Meeting Article 41 vote yet.

We are taking this opportunity to report our progress, lay out our plans and request that you extend the current appointments to the task force so that we can complete the work in a responsible way. It is our intention to produce a report and recommendations before the 2022 Annual Town Meeting takes place on May 1, 2022. We have no intention to propose any articles for Town Meeting action this year. Our consensus is that this topic requires much more study and dialogue within the community before any such action would be needed. We are requesting that you consider extending our appointment through June 30 2022 to allow us to complete the effort and communicate the results.

Below is a brief summary of our study as of mid-January 2022.

Our primary task is to create recommendations and a report focused on the goal of completing the construction of the fiber optic network to the residential and business premises that are not currently served. The report will shed light on the important decisions and process regarding future investments in fiber. We expect to make some recommendations regarding metrics and responsibilities. We intend to provide alternative approaches for consideration which will allow for different outcomes depending on the level of investment and the priority the community assigns to this goal.

To do this we first started by attempting to quantifying the current fiber network's coverage within Concord. We have data on the streets, the property parcels and addresses (both residential and businesses). This data has allowed us to quantify the extent of the network and begin to analyze the gaps at a high level. The data indicates that there are approximately 8000 addresses and only 76% of them currently have access to Concord's Fiber System.

Stated another way, about one in four premises that is served by CMLP's electric service, is not currently able to also use the fiber network. This statistic alone confirms the value to the community to study further construction. With that established the next steps are to gain a better understanding of the reasons for these gaps and develop an approach to estimating the costs to complete construction of the fiber network.

We are also examining the capacity of the Broadband enterprise to generate cash to support investing in fiber construction. It is necessary to make some assumptions about addressable market and market share to forecast this capacity. We find that this capacity is closely related to subscriber growth, as that impacts gross margins and free cash flows.

Article 41 requires that the task force examine barriers to subscription growth. It appears that Concord Light Broadband currently serves about 25% of the premises which already have fiber available. At this time there are approximately 1500 subscribers out of about 6000 served addresses. Establishing what constrains subscriber growth is a complex endeavor. Consumer behavior is notoriously difficult to discern. As a practical matter, neither the time, nor financial resources available to the task force will allow for extensive data collection. In lieu of that, we are looking at how we might perform some outreach to collect input from the community's experience with Concord Light Broadband. We do expect to recommend that some processes be put in place to provide data in the future. We also expect the report will suggest follow on work in this area.

The third focus area from Article 41 is to investigate opportunities to expand “Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) and Fiber-to-the-business (FTTB),” also known as the ‘last mile.’ What we have identified is that there are some parcels which are served by fiber from the right-of-way, but the potential customers on these premises have additional obstacles to installation. Rental units, condominiums and many small businesses fall into this category. The report will identify some of these inhibitors and, when possible, make recommendations of policies, processes or services that could be developed to address them.

It continues to be apparent that there are complex business strategy issues that do need focused, thorough attention. Our effort can only be considered a start, not a conclusion. The time constraints of Article 41 require that we take the approach of surveying the issues, highlighting the opportunities and handing off the findings to the Town’s existing governing process, so that the Town may choose a way forward. We are interested in any suggestions you as the Select Board or any citizen may have. Our task force web page has a feedback form that can be used to contact the task force with suggestions.

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force,

Mark Howell
Chairperson
mark_howell@mac.com