

Town of
Wilbraham

240 Springfield Street
Wilbraham, Massachusetts



01095

Broadband Advisory Committee

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BROADBAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

March 26, 2019 7:00 PM at TOWN OFFICE BUILDING,
SELECTMAN'S RM. MINUTES

Attendance B. Williams, T. Colapeitro, C. Goonan, R. Tourville

Meeting kicked off at 716pm

Rich from Westfield G&E has the floor

- Holyoke G&E – no fiber to home projects at this time, all commercial
- Fiber creates a competitive atmosphere with current ISPs
- Ability to stream music and tv are great selling points for Fiber to Millenials
- Seniors qualify for money savings
- Westfield G&E has a great customer management portal online
- Westfield G&E uses word of mouth, lawn signs and direct mailers to market Fiber in town

- 70% of Westfield is currently lit with Fiber at \$85/month for Business Gig/Gig Symmetrical for 5-25 users
- Westfield is currently overseeing Fiber projects in 19 other local Western MA towns
- Costs vary, but Rich mentioned it's about \$55k-60k per mile for running fiber strands aerial.
- Approximate cost of \$30,000-40,000 million to do the whole town with the fiber network
- How many miles is calculated in road miles, not square miles
- There are roughly 30 utility poles per mile

A project to resurface Boston Road (Rt. 20 corridor) is in the early stages of design. If widening the road is part of this project, replacement of utility poles would be likely. Current utility poles on Rt. 20 are crowded and may not sustain any additional utility such as Fiber.

Rich stated that due to costs, we as a committee should put the focus on running fiber aerial as opposed to underground conduit, especially for the Rt. 20 corridor.

He also mentioned that we should visit the idea of creating a Municipal Light Board and utilizing the benefit of the MLP being segregated from the Selectboard for financial purposes.

Wilbraham does not own the utility poles, so considerable work would need to be done for Make Ready.

Rich suggests using the grant money we have to create a survey and distribute that to commercial tenants on the Rt. 20 corridor, especially Post Office Park which could be a great pilot location for Municipal Owned Fiber.

When asked about 5G, Rich reiterated that no MA towns close to the size of Wilbraham are going to utilize wireless to accomplish what we would like to. A pilot program in Post Office Park would be a great starting point.

Committee discussion further points to the current IT building as being the main HUB for municipal owned fiber. The space and backbone requirements for hardware already exist.

Citizen's Open Forum

There was no one present to take advantage of the open forum.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent. The Committee will reconvene at its next scheduled meeting on 4/02/19

Submitted:

Tom Newton – Committee Member

Date :3/26/19

Approved as to form and content:

Christine Goonan – Committee Member

Date: 3/26/19