

MINUTES
Town of New Marlborough Broadband Committee
Wednesday, May 24, 2016, 9:00 a.m.

1. The following Committee members were present:

Steve Klein, by telephone

Richard Long

Michele Shalaby

Tom Stalker

Owen Wright

constituting all the members of the Committee. Whereupon, Mr. Long called the meeting to order.

2. As the members were meeting for the first time, Mr. Long called for nominations of a Chairperson and a Secretary.

-Upon motion made by Mr. Wright and seconded by Mr. Stalker, Mr. Long was duly elected as Chairperson by unanimous vote.

-Upon further motion made by Mr. Wright and seconded by Ms. Shalaby, Mr. Stalker was duly elected as Secretary by unanimous vote.

-A brief discussion ensued concerning potential meeting schedule. It was agreed the next meeting would be scheduled subsequent to June 9 at a morning time.

-The members then considered a draft statement of purpose and objective for the Committee. Ensuing discussion suggested changes with the agreement that a new draft statement would be circulated for comment, and that after agreement the statement would be presented to the Board of Selectmen for approval. The new statement is as follows:

Draft Articulation of Purpose and Objective: “To achieve true high bandwidth internet access options for residences and businesses in the Town of New Marlborough at an optimal cost for taxpayers and subscribers, and consistent with sustainable operations.”

3. Mr. Long distributed a packet of relevant background materials for use by members accompanied by brief comments on some of the materials. Particular focus was given to MBI’s Last Mile Program Update of May 10, 2016, noting the increased flexibility and urgency expressed therein. Much additional information is available on various websites including in particular that of the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI).

Mr. Long noted that Bill Ennen, who has been appointed liaison between MBI and western Massachusetts Towns, has been in contact to set a briefing meeting.

4. Mr. Long provided a summary of the activities of a group of Towns contiguous to and inclusive of New Marlborough exploring broadband options and how the Towns might work together to achieve their goals. Ms. Shalaby was instrumental in bringing the group together initially. It was noted that to date the Towns have heard conceptual proposals, or indications of what services could be provided, from Westfield Gas & Electric, Crocker Communications, and Matrix Engineering. Frontier Communications may make a future proposal, but has presented conceptual ideas to New Marlborough. Separately, the Towns heard from consultant Fred Goldstein who discussed the wireless option some other western Towns are considering.

5. A discussion of a potential Town survey particularly focused on seeking to determine pricing sensitivity to various service options followed. A number of members doubted whether new information of value would be generated by such an effort. The item was tabled without decision.

6. The members then considered and accepted individual assignments for completion in advance of the next meeting.

7. Having completed the meeting Agenda, on motion duly made and with unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas R. Stalker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Thomas R. Stalker, Secretary