

Connectivity Committee Meeting Minutes - Approved
Monday, January 29, 2024
6:30 to 8PM at Readfield Town Office

1. Roll call and determination of quorum. Members present: Eric Dyer, Rocko Graziano, Dan Wells, Kathryn Mills Woodsum (late). Public: Jaaron Shaw, Hildie Lipson, Kendra-Jo
2. Review of minutes from previous meeting. No action taken.
3. Oral and written communications.
 - a. Readfield Town Manager: Eric
 - i. Eric welcomed Kendra-Jo from the Maine Connectivity Authority (MCA) and Hildie from the Kennebec Broadband Partnership of GrowSmart Maine.
4. Members of the public may address the committee on issues pertinent to the agenda. No comments.
5. Unfinished business. None
6. New business.
 - a. Presentation and discussion with MCA.
 - i. Connect ME is part of MCA. It is a quasigovernmental organization with a high degree of flexibility.
 - ii. They have \$270 million in federal funding and is all in a program called BEAD. Expect all connections to be complete by end of 2027.
 - iii. The funds are limited and the focus is on last mile connections, Reach ME, providing line extension services for unserved town locations. Will comprise about 80 grants and projects statewide.
 - iv. There is a Digital Equity Plan.
 - v. Maps are on the MCA website.
 - vi. Federal standards are Unserved are locations less than 25/3. Underserved are location less than 100/20. These are not the Maine standards which are 100/100 but as this is federally funded, they will use the lower standards.
 - vii. BEAD process is two part: Plan for deployment, and Deployment. The idea is to challenge companies for availability of service. Will use a multi-bid process to cover all unserved homes in Maine. There is a 'Plan B' if there are no bids for an area; could award a single-bid if it meets the criteria.
 - viii. Ways Readfield can support BEAD:
 1. Participate in the challenge process.
 2. Continue to have an active Connectivity Committee.
 3. Provide information to and engage with sub-grantees.
 4. Rally around options.
 5. Support readiness efforts and help residents adapt to new technology.
 6. Focus on Digital Equity efforts.
 7. Promote Affordability efforts.
 - b. Discuss public outreach. Tabled.

- c. Review the budget request for FY2025 for renewing the cable television franchise agreement with Spectrum. Tabled.
 - d. Review the old and new ordinances and make a recommendation for the Select Board to include on this year's town meeting warrant. Tabled.
7. Set next agenda. (2 min.)
- a. Set next meeting date and time.
 - i. Tuesday March 19, 2024 at 6:30PM.
 - 1. Review the old and new ordinances and make a recommendation for the Select Board to include on this year's town meeting warrant.
 - 2. Review the budget request for FY2025 for renewing the cable television franchise agreement with Spectrum.
 - 3. Discuss public outreach: Mission of this committee, Digital Equity and BEAD promotion.
8. Adjournment.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Kathryn Mills Woodsum.
Approved 3-19-24