

Connectivity Committee Meeting Minutes - DRAFT
Tuesday, March 19, 2024
6:30 to 7:15PM at Readfield Library

1. Roll call and determination of quorum. Members attending: Rocko Graziano, Dan Wells, Kathryn Mills Woodsum. Others present: Eric Dyer, Jaaron Shaw.
2. Review of minutes from January 29, 2024. Motion by Rocko, second by Dan, approved 3-0.
3. Oral and written communications.
 - a. Readfield Town Manager: Eric
 - i. Doesn't think we need to rush into preparing an ordinance now.
 - b. Other, if any.
4. Members of the public may address the committee. Jaaron agrees with Eric.
5. Unfinished business. None.
6. New business.
 - a. Actions needed due to MCA Presentation
 - i. Nothing for us to do. We are waiting on them to announce their schedules.
 - b. Review the old and new ordinances and make a recommendation for the Select Board to include on this year's town meeting warrant.
 - i. There has been a new set of State rules adopted (February 18, 2024) for Video Provider Franchise Agreements, H.P. 1264 - L.D. 1967. We need to align our new ordinance with this document. The new rules require a provider to provide a PEG station.
 - ii. The ordinance draft we have been reviewing seems antiquated as video broadcast is no longer a market driven service (cable TV) but this is all we can regulate, not internet service.
 - iii. We need an ordinance for having an agreement with Spectrum to continue service for cable and a PEG station, and they can choose to provide internet service over those same lines.
 - iv. About 320 addresses are served in Readfield for cable, and those customers each pay a monthly franchise fee to Spectrum who then pays it to the town. Approximately \$28,000 last year. Used to purchase equipment and supplies for broadcasting and running the PEG station, with the balance going to the undesignated fund.
 - v. We could try to negotiate with Spectrum to finish building out the last mile services to the approximately 84 addresses that do not have access, and discuss the franchise fees and the PEG station needs.
 - vi. We could live stream our meetings on YouTube rather than on PEG. This would allow streaming for everyone not just Spectrum subscribers. We already rebroadcast recorded meetings on the PEG station that are available to everyone. Live participation is available through Zoom.
 - vii. We agreed to not submit anything for this year's town meeting. We will work on aligning the ordinance draft from legal counsel with the new state franchise rules, beginning with our next meeting in May. Dan and Rocko will begin work on this prior to the May meeting, with a goal of a completed ordinance by October 1, 2024 to give to the Select Board for review.

- viii. Suggest to the Select Board to consider having live broadcast meetings be switched to streaming (YouTube or Facebook live) rather than the PEG station. Zoom is still available for participation. PEG would just be used for rebroadcasting.
 - ix. Eric will reach out again to Spectrum and have something to report back in May.
 - c. Review the budget request for FY2025 for renewing the cable television franchise agreement with Spectrum.
 - i. Don't need funds this year specifically but will need some funds for legal review and for discussions with Spectrum. Once we do more work in the summer months, we will have an idea of what would be needed in FY 2026 which can be taken from the franchise fee income.
 - d. Discuss public outreach: Mission of this committee, Digital Equity and BEAD Promotion
 - i. Eric will include in his April Messenger article.
7. Set next agenda.
- a. Next meeting is May 15, 2024 at 6:30PM at the Readfield Town Office. Work on the ordinance.
8. Adjournment at 7:15PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathryn Mills Woodsum.