

GRAFTON COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE MEETING

Bristol Town Office
5 School Street
Bristol, NH 03222
January 26, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nik Coates, Carina Park, Ed Morris, Brigitte Codling – via Zoom

OTHERS PRESENT: Nancy Whitman, Tom Adams, Kevin Glynn, Samantha Norcross- via Zoom, Julie Libby- via Zoom

N. Coates called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM

MOTION: C. Park moved to approve the minutes from October 27th. N. Coates seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Grant Updates & Next Steps

Grant Project Update – K. Robinson stated that they are supposed to hear from the NTIA grant mid-February.

K. Glynn gave an update on the middle mile route to the committee.

USDA Grant – K. Robinson reported that the Reconnect Grant is for rural areas such as theirs are able to apply for \$25 million for the last mile portion of the project. She explained that they were hoping to use ARPA funds for this grant match but they were not able to use ARPA funds for federal grant match. The main challenge is identifying a service area that is not being served by the incumbent providers. If Grafton County were to apply, USDA is going to look on who is the protected borrowers list and they will then open it up to all providers. She stated that they would look at the data to find where they know there are no services and apply for those small geographical areas.

Middle Mile Engineering Progress Update

K. Glynn reported that they have 110 of the 335 miles complete in the 1st phase. He reviewed a map of the route and discussed data collection information with the committee. He stated that he is looking to get the rest of the data within the next couple of weeks to complete the design package and hopes be ready to start once they hear from the NTIA grant. He answered questions from the committee and public.

N. Coates stated that the total cost of engineering was estimated at \$550,000. He asked the Committee their thoughts on going to the Delegation for the remaining roughly \$350,000 in ARPA funds to finish the engineering work. The Committee agreed. K. Glynn noted that noted some of their electronics have a long lead-time.

MOTION: C. Park moved to request \$350,000 in ARPA funds to complete the middle mile engineering. B. Codling seconded the motion and all were in favor.

N. Coates asked County Administrator Libby what the process would be for that ARPA application. CA Libby stated that they had just finished the 2nd round of ARPA requests on Monday and there is no schedule for a 3rd round at this time but it looks like it would be at their May meeting.

Town HLDs & Final Engineering Update

K. Glynn gave an update on the final engineering and reviewed a map of the project with the Committee.

K. Robinson stated that the towns should not be paying for these designs. There is no cost to the towns. She explained that if there is a group asking towns for ARPA funds to complete this, to let them know the county is funding this portion.

N. Coates noted that it is important to be shovel ready for when these grant opportunities come about.

February Regional Meetings

N. Coates reported that the tentative February meetings are as follows:

February 15th –5-7pm in Haverhill at the Robert E Clifford Memorial Building

February 16th - 5-7pm Plymouth State University Bradford Room 5-7pm

February 17th Zoom 2-4pm

The Committee discussed details of those meetings and what information they feel is important to present as well as advertising for those meetings.

Business Planning & Work Group

N. Coates stated that they would need to come up with an RFP Process for selecting internet service providers. He suggested creating a group to talk about how they are going to get providers on the network. The Committee agreed to have Kevin Glynn, Brigitte Codling, Ed Morris and John Adams be the group to start those discussions.

3:10 PM with no further business the meeting adjourned