

Montague Broadband Advisory Committee Meeting  
Montague Center Fire Station

March 30, 2015

Members in attendance: Kevin Hart, Lisa Enzer, Rob Steinberg, Peter Vichi  
Walter Ramsey- Town Liaison  
Kevin Hart introduced committee to those in attendance, and outlined evening.

Called to order: 6:32 PM

Nominations for officers: RS motion for Kevin Hart to be chairman. Peter 2<sup>nd</sup> motion.  
AIF

Kevin motioned for Lisa to be secretary- Rob 2<sup>nd</sup> motion. AIF

Kevin motion to approved minutes from Jan., 7 2015 meeting. Rob 2<sup>nd</sup>: AIF.

RS: Reported on CIC meeting. Described the 3 steps necessary to get funding for pole survey, and make-ready costs. Est. \$500/pole for this 1 year process. MBI has \$5M for underserved areas- unsure of MBI plan to reimburse. CIC approved request to FinCOM.

LE: FinCom/Bos meeting report. Distributed special article on warrant for May 2, 2015 Town Meeting. \$215,600 passed by FINCOM/ BoS requires 2/3 vote by town meeting to pass. Requested volunteer assistance from residents in contacting Town Meeting members to share information and ask for their support in passing the article. To be followed up mid April.

KH: Report on meeting with Town of Leverett reps on feasibility of working with them. Leverett is interested in having the Chestnut Hill area become part of their 'regional network' at greater cost/house than other option (Matrix), and would still leave rest of town un-served.

Approximately 159 houses within Montague have no service.- 94% of Montague is served through the TV Franchise with Comcast (cable) at this time.  
Continued by describing Matrix offer, which is a 20year contract. See special article for details. (attached)

RS: Motion to accept URL and e-mail address for committee. Will work with town to link to town website. Peter 2<sup>nd</sup>. AIF  
Requested committee distribute FAQ handout to attendees and larger community.  
Kevin 2<sup>nd</sup> . AIF.

Scheduled next meeting on April 20, 2015 6:30-8:00PM at Safety Building in Turners Falls.

Kevin opened the floor for questions and comments. (see attached)  
Meeting adjourned at 7:45PM

**Q & A from 3/30/15 meeting:**

Who is responsible for maintenance of system?

Operations cost is built into the monthly fee. Co-responsibility to repair downed lines.

Is there a track record for Matrix?

Building out in towns of Alford and Princeton now. Nearly completed Leverett.

Why are we not creating an MLP and part of Wired West? Since the committee is uninformed of this option.

Wired West is the organizing body for un-served towns. *MassBroadBand123* is the rubric the partially served towns, which is the category Montague at 94% served currently falls under. Committee members will follow up on this.

Is there additional costs after the \$215K allotted?

Depends on MBI. Meeting to take place 3/31 to initiate request for reimbursement.

The whole town needs to know why they should pay for the make-ready. Town needs a vision of where this is going and whom it will effect.

(Description of fiber vs cable ensued and detailed info on megabites)

Essentially.. fiber is superior technology offer a superior future for Montague which can control it's own destiny.

Can you tell the town more about the future?

To clarify...increased density lowers costs. eg: 1 pole might serve a number of homes in a denser area of town, while the low density of un-served areas costs approx.

\$500/pole for survey and make ready.

What happens if there is a new homeowner?

The new homeowner does not pay again for installation, just the monthly charges. If you don't choose to bring fiber to the house during the initial construction phase, the fee will be \$1500 to bring back a crew. Matrix will do an aerial survey as part of the infrastructure development.

Comments and concerns from the floor about the terminology of broadband and new FCC ruling as of Jan. 2015. Definitions are important to allow town to be considered for grants/funds.

The Airport Commission has been unable to get Comcast to fulfill the plan for build out, and there were oversights by MBI when building points of presence in that FAA paperwork was overlooked. Bringing a word of caution to the proceedings.

Questions of cost increases once we're contracted with Matrix or other bidders.

Would encourage negotiators to cap rates. If we can find other bidders it would improve our negotiating position.

Question on costs for private roads to be built out.  
Deferred to meeting with Matrix on April 20 for more info.

Concern about Leverett's experience with Matrix and the difficulty between the tow. Leverett has an RFP and every 'change order' within the process was very costly. Montague would have a 'turn key' relationship and Matrix (ex) would be responsible for building and making the system workable-otherwise subscribers can op out after 2 year contract leaving Matrix 'holding the bag'. It is in the company's best interest to serve the subscribers well.

Thus far, committee members have been unable to find other potential bidders. Not clear if the town will develop an RFP for this/not.