

Wolcott Planning Commission Minutes

Jan 7, 2020

Members present: Jim Robert, Bruce Wheeler, Bill Cotton

Others Present: Lea Kilvadyova (LCPC), Jeff Mciver (Consolidated), Monica Cross, Trevor Putvain

The main purpose of the meeting was to meet with Jeff Mciver of Consolidated Communications to discuss Internet access problems and options to get improved service.

There has been much activity at the county level to explore options for better broadband service in the area. Lea presented the background and the current status of state and county activities. Many towns are voting, at town meetings, on whether to enter into Communication Union Districts (CUD).

The state is promoting improved broadband service by making available the Broadband Innovation Grant Program to conduct feasibility studies. The current round of state grant funding will go to Electric Utility companies to investigate the feasibility of providing broadband services including the business and regulatory ramifications.

Jeff described an installation of fiber optic Internet access in the town of Chesterfield, N.H. Customers pay an extra \$10/month to repay the construction bonds. Chesterfield subscribers now have extremely fast service, albeit at higher prices as speeds increase.

We explored options to both identify existing Consolidated service problems and to enhance service in the future. Many in town need (or desire) better Internet access, however it is imperative to keep basic service costs low to avoid a worsening "digital divide".

Consolidated Communications seems quite willing to work to improve the service, so if subscribers have quality issues or any questions, they should call Consolidated service.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm