

**Draft Minutes of Beaver Island
Telecommunication Advisory Committee Meeting
Peaine and St James Township, Beaver Island
Beaver Island Community School | March 19, 2019 5:00PM**

Present

Kevin Boyle, Kathleen McNamara, Wil Cwikel, Paul Welke, Theresa McDonough, Neal Green

Absent

Garry Conant

Others Present

Paul Cole, Dick Mulvihill

Meeting began at 5:02 pm.

February 19, 2019 minutes approved by Cwikel, second Green. All in favor.

Review from Boyle on our previous meeting with Kevin Shepard. Many questions to answer and items to be clarified per Shepard's connection with the needs of new county building. We understand that he needs better service for arraignment issues at county building but how much is needed?

Boyle will have further conversation with Kevin Shepard:

1. What are the real prospects for fiber link under the lake? Update on Jason Allen meeting.
2. Prospects for a link to the north built to distribute bandwidth.
3. What is his intent with grant writer? Can we be included in grants? We don't want to duplicate work that is happening with Kevin Shepard. Reconnect program?
4. Can we/should we have a representative involved with Shepard's group?
5. Prospect of "lighting up downtown" area for this summer?

Boyle will keep us informed via email.

Boyle will have conversation with Eric Smith (NMU) who is his contact regarding the additional tower antenna at Font Lake. What is the lead time on equipment? Boyle believes that this could still be done before summer and he will get a new estimate. There would be higher rates than TDS but for 150 mb service. Should we consider commitments from community businesses? This antenna would benefit school and CMU as a back-up source. Merit would provide service but the island would own the link.

Update from McNamara on conversation with Bill Scott, GLE President. They do have tower on the mainland to send signal to the island however they realize that there will be challenges. GLE does not have a specific timeline yet as winter set them back. Bill Scott was going to speak with engineer and speak with McNamara again. Bill Scott goal is to know by September 2019 of WHEN they could provide our service to the island.

McNamara did ask Bill Scott if it would help GLE if the island were able to “bring something to the table”. He did not have an answer. Would GLE be interested in a public/private partnership?

Boyle, McNamara and Mulvihill will meet/converse with GLE.

McNamara reports that she has been trying to speak with someone at TDS and has not had any luck reaching a knowledgeable person.

Update on Next Century Cities. There is one Michigan community participating: Sebewaing. McNamara will call this community to get an opinion. Township supervisor needs to request to join. Committee has given McNamara permission to join if she deems feasible after conversations. No cost to join.

Boyle mentioned Michigan Broadband Cooperative which would be another group to review however the island would need to build on our own.

Update on ReConnect program. The USDA Reconnect program has extended deadline to June 31, 2019 for the current application. Boyle is signed up for webinar on the loan process. Grants are for specific areas. Shepard might not include the island BUT Charlevoix might benefit from defining the island in the Charlevoix service area.

Discussion about presenting a short update to townships at next meetings, April 3 and April 10.

Adjourned at 6:22 pm

Next Meeting Date

The next BITAC Meeting will be on Tuesday, April 16, 2019 at 5:00PM at the Beaver Island Community School conference room.