

## **CHARLEMONT BROADBAND COMMITTEE**

**ATTENDING: Bob Handsaker, Mary Ellen Banks, Lora Fulton, Cheryl Handsaker**

### **1. Application of the Drop and Installation Policy**

#### **a. Should 9 8A North be treated as an error in the design or a change of use?**

- i. MOTION Exempt this location from our standard policy on allocation of new fibers and network extensions, since it was being taxed as an MDU by the assessor's office at the time we finalized the network design, if the new owner will pay the actual cost of the needed network extension. Moved by Mary Ellen, seconded by Lora.**

**1. APPROVED: Lora - yes, Mary Ellen- yes, Cheryl - yes, Bob- yes.**

### **2. Digital Equity Grant Next Steps**

#### **a. Thanks to Lora for all the work bringing us to this point in the Digital Equity Grant!**

#### **b. We have been allocated \$54,000? grant for Digital Equity**

- i. Application must include all the items we will want to use the funding.**
- ii. Grant must be submitted by June 2025 and the money needs to be spent by 9/30/26**
- iii. Reimbursement grant - must pay out of pocket and will be reimbursed twice / year.**
  - 1. Can be paid from the MLP budget but the town might be reimbursed so that that money would need to be transferred.**
- iv. Cyber Seniors can be included separately as part of our whole budget rather than a part of the regional plan immediately.**

#### **c. What kind of items could be added to the budget for this grant?**

- i. Cyber Seniors**
  - 1. Applications for medical discharge - consider a workshop for training about using these types of applications.**
  - 2. Commit money to Cyber Seniors for 1 year as a part of this grant.**
- ii. Extending library hours 2 hours/ week**
  - 1. This seems like a good area to help the community.**
  - 2. Work with the Friends of the Library group to leverage the 501C3 status**
  - 3. Use Cyber Seniors mentors to staff the hours**
- iii. Develop a plan for subsidies for low income residents**
  - 1. Paying subsidies directly is not allowed from the grant.**
  - 2. Would they fund a study on options for implementing means-qualified subsidies?**
  - 3. Take this idea back to the regional planning group and see if we can leverage the power of the crowd.**
- iv. Hardware for workshops**
  - 1. Large Monitor for town hall/ library**
  - 2. Hardware support for online meetings?**
  - 3. Exhibit Hall hardware?**

**3. Broadband Budget Season!**

- a. Volunteers welcome!
- b. Lease fees will not be included in the budget this year
- c. Budget due late February / early March,

**4. National Grid Project**

- a. Can the cost of moving municipal fiber be rolled into the project budget?
- b. Pole hearing for Legate Hill Rd has been moved to January 27

**5. Broadband Committee Changes**

- a. Should we reconstitute the broadband committee to reduce the number of members to make a quorum possible?
  - i. Consider reducing the number of members?
  - ii. Consider alternate members?
  - iii. Change language of the meeting group to say quorum of filled positions?
  - iv. Disband the Committee as an Advisory Committee to the Selectboard. Reconstitute as an Advisory body to the MLP Manager?
- b. Gratitude for Lora's service on the committee.

Meeting adjourned, 7:51 PM. Moved by Cheryl, seconded by Lora. Voted unanimously to adjourn.