

Minutes
New Marlborough Cable Advisory Committee
Thursday, June 18, 2019
6:15 pm

Board Members Present:

Steven Klein
John Valente
Michael Shocket

The meeting of the New Marlborough Cable Advisory Committee was convened at 6:15 pm.

Chairman Klein noted that Selectman Richard Long and resident Brian Richer were also present.

Steve started the meeting by stating that we would be speaking to John Maher, our Charter liaison. Steve stated that he had spoken with him and indicated that we would be expecting a status update on pole licensing, the additional poles that will be required, and to seek clarification on behalf of some residents who have concerns about the feasibility of their locations.

Phone Call with Charter

- John Maher stated that National Grid has said they have about 10,000+ man hours of work to be done and that they would be very busy in town over the summer but that would be likely completed by November. In response to Steve's question about the status of the design of the system, Maher indicated he was not clear if the design process had to wait until make ready is complete. Steve asked to be updated by email on that matter, as some residents who have concerns about their location are anxious to speak with Charter about their options. Mr. Maher agreed to follow up with Steve. Maher mentioned that prior to work commencing that there would likely be a pre-construction meeting with town officials, police and fire department representatives and that as they got closer to the build-out that there might be some kind of a "sign-up booth" in town for people to meet Charter reps in person to sign up.
- Michael Shocket asked for clarification as to an end date for completion and it was reiterated that Charter, by contract, has 1 year from the completion of the make-ready work on the poles and, while there is no deadline for that work by National Grid, the Lieutenant Governor was exerting a lot of pressure on all parties for a timely completion of their work.

After the phone call the discussion centered around the fact that there was significant activity around town by Nat Grid and that the expectation was that the make ready work would be completed by November or December of 2019. That would mean tat the system would be fully complete by November or December of 2020. Steve reiterated that residents would have access to Spectrum incrementally as each residence is wired,

and would not have to wait for completion of the entire system. Steve further noted that the “make ready” work is the uncertainty that all towns are living with. While it is frustrating, the State does convene a monthly meeting where they are leaning heavily on all involved to complete work in a timely fashion.

The minutes of the Feb 28, 2019 meeting were approved with the notation, for these minutes, that the April meeting did not take place as scheduled.

Steve introduced a discussion about the new town website. All of the previous documents from the Broadband Committee from the old website would be ported over to the new site under a “Cable/Broadband “ direct link on the homepage.

The Mission Statement for the new website was approved as: “The Cable Advisory Board will act as a liaison and point of contact between Charter/Spectrum and the Town during the construction and enrollment period. The Board will keep the community informed of progress and answer broad-based questions about ongoing service.”

Steve will ask for a generic town email address for contacting the Cable Advisory Board. The process for adding content to our page is still undetermined. Steve will draft a basic statement as the first update for the website. Michael will draft a brief article for the 5 Village News based on Steve’s draft for the website statement.

Resident Brian Richer asked about Maggie’s List as a method for distributing information. Steve articulated the concern about Maggie’s List as an official communication arm as it often leads to debates in which we should not participate. As we progress, we will carefully choose how to redirect a misinformed discussion on Maggie’s List. We all need to encourage residents to sign up for town “News and Notices” updates via e-mail.

In November, as we anticipate the start of the wiring, we will plan a press release.

Richard Long reported that the Selectboard reappointed all members of the Cable Advisory Board for another 1-year term.

It was decided that since there was no urgency to meet at this time, that Steve would call the next meeting when necessary, likely August or September.

With no further business to conduct, a motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 pm.

Approved by: Cable Advisory Committee

Date: September 12, 2019