

**Minutes**  
**New Marlborough Cable Advisory Committee**  
**Tuesday February 16, 2021 11:00 am**

**Board Members Present Via Teleconference:**

Steven Klein-Chairman  
John Valente  
Michael Shocket  
Broc Kerr

**Others Present:**

John Decker, Charter/Spectrum  
Joe Volpe, Charter/Spectrum  
Members of the Public

**Call to Order:**

The meeting of the New Marlborough Cable Advisory Committee was convened at 11:02 am via teleconference due to the Covid-19 virus outbreak.

**Update of System Installation Progress:**

- **John Decker, Project Manager Charter/Spectrum** was present to update the Committee on the progress of the installation.
  - Approximately 70% of the town is completely wired. (a map is posted on the Town website)
  - Some areas of the map, which show no progress, are not part of the installation.
  - An area around Adsit Crosby Rd. is awaiting completion of National Grid work related to a solar project on Knight Rd
  - They are preparing to release first set of addresses for sales and connection by mid-March
  - 200-250 addresses will be released approximately every 3 weeks.
  - There is a slight delay at the start as those initial addresses are verified and entered into the system.
  - Once that is completed sales and connections begin and the process is continuous as new addresses are released
  - There will be 5 zones and all should be available for signup by mid June. The pace of installation will depend on the number of homes that sign up for service.
  - A map of the 5 zones will be released soon and will be shared with the public as soon as available. John will also provide a list of addresses within each zone that can also be distributed.
  - Wiring is fiber directly to the modem in the home.
- **Joe Volpe, Manager Direct Sales Charter/Spectrum** was in attendance to brief the Committee on the sales process.
  - Once addresses are released direct sales reps will be deployed to the area to contact residents in person.
  - If residents are not at home the rep will leave a business card with contact information. Contact information will also be available on the Town website.
  - The Cable Advisory Committee will also be distributing information through all available services.
  - All COVID protocols are followed and sales reps are equipped with Personal Protective Equipment. Signups is touchless.
  - Marketing materials are not distributed in advance. Sales reps have the most up to date information on rates and services that will be available just in New Marlborough in order to provide a customized package for each customer.
  - Reps will have channel lineups that can be left with the homeowner (without pricing). Sales reps are not high pressure. They are consultants whose job is to provide the appropriate options for the needs of each customer.
  - Ann Sweeney asked Joe to please consider an alternative approach to in-person direct sales and more transparency in the pricing, a process more aligned with the pandemic times. Joe assured her that the sales reps are flexible and will honor the concerns of the individual homeowners.

**Follow-Up Discussion**

- Following Joe's presentation Steve Klein stated the Committee would organize a town-wide Zoom call on a Saturday with Spectrum reps so that more people would have a chance to participate in an information session.
- Steve asked John Decker about flexibility for part-time homeowners. John replied that this was not his area but he did know there was flexibility since there are no contracts with Spectrum. Joe Volpe would be better able to answer this question.
- Steve suggested the website <https://www.inmyarea.com/internet/massachusetts/hancock> which provides information about services available there from Spectrum and others. While this is not an official Spectrum site, it does provide a significant amount of information. Pricing and details may be different in New Marlborough. He added that it has been made clear to us, whether we like or not, that Spectrum's policy is not going to involve a price sheet that is distributed to people in advance. However, as soon as a few people in town get the information, we will all know and the Committee will make a point of sharing it.
- Jerry Weinstock asked about seasonal residents who may not be around during the period when reps are in their zone. In those cases, the Sales Supervisor's contact information will be readily available and residents can sign up over the phone. Lead-time from sign-up to hook-up will vary but in this phase John Decker hopes for 2 to 3 weeks. Steve added that the 3 week cycle from zone to zone was designed to maintain that timeline.
- Further discussion noted that "take-rates" for the service have run 80-85% in most places. There are no contracts so services can be added or subtracted without penalty. Many people opt for internet only initially and then add TV or phone at a later date. Adding services may require an additional visit for installation of added equipment.
- Steve asked for a volunteer to compile a list of the realtors for the purpose of informing them of the status of high-speed broadband in New Marlborough prior to the spring sales season. Michael Shocket agreed to do so.

### **Wi-Fi Hotspot Update**

- There are now two hotspots instead of three in town, the firehouse and the library. The library is transmitted to town hall by antenna to maintain the three locations. There are some technical issues at the Firehouse relating to slow speeds. Marc Trachtenberg is working on it with the service providers.
- Tim Newman asked if there has been any discussion about shutting down the hotspots. Steve knows that it was a consideration but he does not believe that a decision has been made.

### **Review of Minutes:**

The Minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously and without discussion by a roll call vote of members present.

Michael Shocket -Aye

John Valente-Aye

Steven Klein-Aye

Broc Kerr-Aye

**Next Meeting was set for Saturday March 13 at 11:00 am for a town-wide Zoom meeting with Spectrum .**

With no further business at this time, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded and so voted by all members present to adjourn the meeting at

Michael Shocket -Aye

John Valente-Aye

Steven Klein-Aye

Broc Kerr-Aye

Approve Minutes 4/2/2021 Steve Klein, Chairman