

Bristol Economic Development Committee

June 22, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Present: Bill Dowe: Chair, Rick Alpers: Vice Chair, Vincent Paul Migliore, Jeff Goodrum, Nik Coates and Jeff Hayes (Lakes Region Planning Commission).

The meeting was called to order at 6 pm.

Mr. Dowe updated the committee on:

Metrocast may be interested in leasing their tower in Alexandria and he's continuing conversations with them about that. There are at four property owners who may have land available for building a tower. Microcell/small cell technology may be a viable option.

Mr. Alpers said that because of our geography our solution is likely going to be a combination of traditional tower and microcell.

Mr. Hayes said that as part of the broadband technology initiative that Regional Planning Commissions did a couple years ago there were maps created showing coverage. Carriers now are not interested in rural areas, so the solution will need to be created locally.

Mr. Hayes said that the Town's best strategy moving forward could be to apply for a planning grant with CDBG. He said the best way to position the application is by making the public safety argument – our police and fire need good coverage to do their jobs and older adults need a connection. The application also needs to show there will be a benefit to low and moderate income individuals. The planning grant can include mapping, needs analysis, gaps analysis and cost analysis. There is also another grant opportunity that can be pursued after the planning grant and that is from the Northern Border regional development organization. This one needs to emphasize economic impact (benefits to our employers, tourism, dropped calls in the business district). The town can also set aside its franchise fees from Metrocast. The CDBG planning grants are in the fall and spring and the Northern Border grants are in June/July.

The committee then discussed what its timetable would look like. The consensus was 6 months for deployment of microcell solution and 18 months for a tower. But the town still needs to get a spectrum license if it does microcell, so it is likely longer than 6 months.

The committee talked about other projects it wanted to get going.

School Closing: There was a discussion led by Mr. Migliore about reducing taxes and increasing the population. He felt the best way to do that was close a school and reduce the savings could be put to reducing taxes. He also said that the closed building for the Town's space needs. Mr. Alpers said that he

thought the school closing was an interesting approach, but the savings could be used to invest in the schools to improve educational service. Mr. Dowey asked Mr. Migliore to present to the committee his plan on how a school closing would work at the July 20th meeting.

Business Roundtables: Mr. Coates said another project could be the start of business roundtables to understand the challenges the business community faces and to solicit their ideas on how to move forward.

Trails and Sidewalks: Mr. Coates said that he recently submitted three grant applications for the first phases of the Water Street Recreation Trail and for sidewalks around the town square. The Selectmen had a visioning session a couple months ago and “creating a vibrant walkable community” was one of the priorities agreed upon. The trail and sidewalks would help realize that vision.

At the next meeting, the committee will continue discussing these projects.

Mr. Alpers made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Goodrum seconded. At 8:10PM, the meeting was adjourned by a 4-0 vote of the committee.

Next meeting: July 6, 6:00PM at the Water/Sewer Department

Respectfully Submitted,

Nik Coates