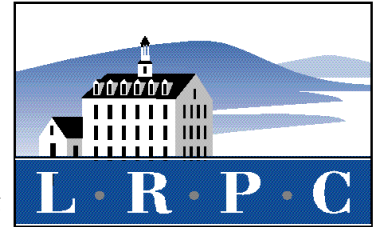


LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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MINUTES
LRPC COMMISSION MEETING
Wolfeboro Public Library, Wolfeboro, NH
November 17, 2014

PRESIDING: Pat Farley
QUORUM: Declared

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.
COMMUNITIES PRESENT: 4

MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Kerr (Barnstead)
Douglas Read (Northfield)
Patricia Farley (Tamworth)
Roger Murray, III (Wolfeboro)
Charles Storm (Wolfeboro)
LRPC STAFF:
Jeffrey Hayes
Marie Gelinis
OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:
Bill Gassman (Moultonborough)
Carol Miller (DRED - DED)
Jason Hills (SAU 80)
Peter Pijoan (Wolfeboro Public Access TV)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

John Cotton (Andover)
Charlotte McIver (Danbury)
Jean Marshall (Freedom)
John Ayer (Gilford)
John Morgenstern (Gilford)
Mitch Manseau (Hebron)
Dean Anson (Laconia)
Warren Hutchins (Laconia)
Barbara Perry (Moultonborough)
Wayne Crowley (Northfield);
Patricia Jones (Ossipee)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Acting Chair P. Farley called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. A motion to declare a quorum for conducting business was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Kerr/Murray, III.* Introductions were made by those in attendance.

2. Motion for Approval of the September 29, 2014 Commission Meeting Minutes.

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 29, 2014 LRPC Commission meeting with the following amendments was unanimously approved: (1) David Kerr, Town of Barnstead, was in attendance; and (2) Bill Bayard, Planning Board Chair, Town of Meredith, said that once the Plan is adopted, a letter could be sent to all member communities asking them to review the Plan and raise any questions they may have. *M/S/P Murray/Kerr.*

3. Draft Lakes Region Broadband Plan - Panel Discussion.

J. Hayes introduced speakers Carol Miller, Director of Broadband Technologies, NH Department of Resources and Economic Development; and Bill Gassman, member of a citizens group in Moultonborough working to make broadband available to 100% of the residents of that Town.

C. Miller reviewed her leadership role in developing the Broadband Plan:

- Increase broadband availability and review affordability, adoption and capacity in the Lakes Region and throughout New Hampshire;
- Coordinate Broadband initiatives statewide;
- Collaborate and promote public/private partnerships;

- Serve as policy and legislative advisor;
- Manage the governor's Committee on Planning and the Development Advisory Committee;
- Build Capacity (involved in infrastructure analysis and funding resources for communities throughout the state);
- Advocacy for Business and Residential Broadband.

A 2013 study showed that New Hampshire was statistically higher than most other states in computer ownership and high-speed internet use. While New Hampshire is in a very good position as far as availability, competition is what will bring new and innovative services, affordable services, and new technology to the state. She said that close to 95% of the census blocks in the state are served; however a two-mile wide census block only needs one connection in order to be considered served. She reviewed providers and new product lines that are available in the state; and public/private collaborations such as NH Fastroads, which is a collaboration between civic, municipal and institutional entities that is building fiber to residences and leasing the fibers to service providers.

State challenges include:

- Lack of competition;
- The cost to deploy broadband in unserved and underserved communities;
- Physical infrastructure and deregulation;
- Lack of cell coverage in pockets throughout the state (the number one issue for public safety);
- Broadband adoption, affordability and capacity will continue to be challenges for years to come;
- State broadband mapping and planning funding ends at the end of 2014.

C. Miller reviewed state legislation pertinent to broadband and community readiness broadband pilot projects that are guiding communities through the process of evaluating what they want and need to do with regard to broadband and coming up with a plan.

Bill Gassman plays a leadership role in a Moultonborough citizen committee working to make broadband available to 100% of the community. The work of the committee is funded with a portion of the town's cable franchise fees. He reviewed broadband issues facing Moultonborough including a review of economic, social, and political/regulatory issues in the town that are affecting broadband. The findings of a speed test conducted in the summer of 2014 showed that:

- Moultonborough is well served, including business grade;
- About 10% of the Town participated;
- Time Warner Cable is used 3X more frequently than Fairpoint service;
- Time Warner Cable's mean-average speed is two times that of Fairpoint DSL;
- There were some complaints about provider service consistency or reliability.

The broadband working group's draft recommendations to the Select Board are:

Short term:

- Set goal of 100% availability
- Solicit proposals to extend service to unserved areas
- Ensure zoning regulations address internet service
- Fund a dedicated 20+Mbps public WiFi in town hall

Long Term:

- Publish guide on town's providers and how to choose
- Add "served" data to property assessment records
- Map and market residential and business class capacity
- Revisit goals and investments every three years

Following the panel discussion, public and Commissioner comments on the Lakes Region Broadband Plan were heard. Dialogue ensued regarding collecting and capturing data regarding availability and capacity and solutions for

hooking up different service areas. B. Gassman said that once it is known where cable lies and who does not have it, engineering work is done to determine how the problem can be fixed in a financially practical way.

J. Hayes reviewed the Executive Summary of the Plan. He said the five year effort to map public availability showed there is very good coverage and service overall. He noted that the Plan is a technology plan and will be completely out of date in two to three years. He said that all sectors of society, including education and health professionals now depend on broadband availability, and how to extend coverage is included in the Plan as goals. C. Miller thinks that 100% coverage is a good thing but said it would take a lot of collaboration to get that availability, and measuring coverage is a town by town effort. She said that complacency is a big issue, but leadership is also a big issue. While 100% availability is definitely needed, how to get from here to there in rural pockets will take a lot of collaboration. B. Gassman said that while it is important for LRPC to have that goal and work with various regional governments, it may take ten years to reach that goal. He said that rural free enterprise has gotten the Town of Moultonborough to 95% connectivity and it is the role of government to make sure that no one is left behind. Dialogue ensued regarding how the internet is being used by public and private entities to provide services to residents in low cost ways. C. Miller said that changing attitudes and culture at municipal level will be difficult as well as setting realistic goals and achieving them town by town. She said that the speeds of today barely meet the demands of today and that the need for capacity will double or triple every three years. J. Hayes said that declining and aging population projections and difficulties with retaining youth in the Region affect a company's willingness to invest in broadband infrastructure. Cru Con was used as an example of attracting low impact businesses to the Region that rely on internet capacity. Dialogue ensued regarding future applications for the internet in the fields of education, healthcare, and public safety.

J. Hayes reviewed the Findings and Recommendations section of the Plan:

- Build out
- Zoning maps
- Creating a document library
- Contact lists for coordination for information and projects
- Create links to Broadband provider contacts on the LRPC website
- Research leverage that federal and state funding can provide
- Request that the Department of Revenue Administration include broadband as a component of property assessment records.

C. Miller thinks the recommendations are achievable goals within the framework of the Plan. She said that LRPC reached across its Region and got some very important work done, but a statewide effort is what got the PC involved. She noted the importance of the leveraged federal and state funding that provides local and regional services, and said that it may be difficult to keep the program going once the federal funding grant expires, which is the end of this year. A motion to adopt the Lakes Region Broadband Plan was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Kerr/Storm.*

4. **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Storm/Kerr.*