**13 November 2020**

**Location: Zoom Conference Call**

**Attendees:** Butler Smythe,Robert Publicover, Jim Fisher, Joel Katz, Doug Cowan, Hannah Barrows

**Overview/Comments:**

One small announcement… Hannah Barrows has departed the country! Yep. Hannah has moved to Scotland (again) and a replacement will be announced shortly – a new hire at Island Institute. She’ll support our meetings through the end of the year – hopefully with an onboarding for the next meeting in December.

**Agenda**

1. Town Updates
	1. Blue Hill: Still no CCI identified update plan for Pleasant St. RT (“full”) and no plan for the Morgan Bay RT (also “full”). Have heard from more people that have had issues getting service, so this is not an isolated problem – in Blue Hill or other peninsula towns.
	2. Deer Isle – Spectrum is receiving some property owner provided funding to extend service to an area on the island.
	3. Sedgwick – Bob Publicover reported that the town is getting calls from new home buyers (especially out of state folks) that can’t get broadband. Butler noted that he’s heard the same not just in Blue Hill. Some have bought through realtors that are not from the area and have over sold Internet access. Buyers are at risk.
2. Broadband Survey – Island Institute Update (NEW Start DATE - Nov 24)
	1. Hannah advised that the ConnectMaine Authority Speed Test Initiative will start on 24 November (UPDATE) - so this is some more time to get the word out on this. In addition, it is noted that the program will be active for about 1 year though trying to get folks to participate earlier is highly desired. An online map will show participant service levels and apparently the system will screen out between ISP providers (i.e. land based vs. cellular, satellite, etc. All will be able to see. A link will be provided (a sample of the page was sent previously) and though access to the link is available today, the data capture will start from the 24th of November. Current Link is in 8.b.ii. below.
	2. Butler will add more information to the PUB web site (and the link) which will be a good reference for participants – including recommended specifics on how to make sure the data is accurate when taken at a home or a business. (i.e. app updates off, etc.). Some of that information is already available on the PUB site.
	3. We need to challenge the FCC Maps!
3. How can the Bond Issue vote help the Peninsula – The Grant Program
	1. It does not appear that access to funds and the finalized process/criteria will occur before February.
	2. Butler noted he is starting to work with GWI to try and capture cost information for the worst served area of Blue Hill, to try and develop a plan for accessing some of those Grant funds. How much is the big question. $200,000 – the current Grant level – does not do much to help rural areas.
4. Recent Vetro Cares presentation & 9 Nov. virtual Public Meeting
	1. The Vetro Cares program call, attended by Butler and Jim Fisher, is a program that provided towns/groups with **Free** access to Vetro to help develop or coordinate with ISPs in their planning for areas. Butler noted that GWI uses Vetro as do other ISPs in Maine. In using hard to access or unusual routed can be identified by local efforts before an ISP actually has feet on the ground in the area. You must qualify to get one of the few Free spots available (6 left currently but more to come).
	2. GWI has been active assessing poles in at least Blue Hill, but Vetro does not ID long driveways and unmapped pole locations…
	3. The Public meeting was attended by four from the PUB group and a follow-on meeting is planned for the 14th of December. A separate email with meeting link has been provided.
5. Redistricting conversation
	1. The political divisions of the state over time are available online and one of the concerns raised is that the current “Peninsula” divisions break the area up at all levels –
		1. Federal: Senate and House (for both Isle au Haut is in 1 & the rest are in 2)
		2. State: Senate and House (3 house reps represent the Peninsula and beyond)
		3. Is this helpful to the group – yes, if all support the efforts of the group but unfortunately that may not be consistent.
	2. Federal Census effort and accuracy/completeness are factors in any upcoming redistricting as are political considerations. Redistricting conversation on the subject will occur and Broadband concerns should be raised with your representatives - at all levels.
6. Last Month’s Actions – Updates: No Actions
7. Is there a better day/time/schedule given COVID related schedule conflicts? Discussed briefly and sticking with the current plan.
8. Relative to probable mapping visibility of Speed Test Data: Jim Fisher provided the link (i.) below. If you zoom in, you should see Colored Data Points – there are very FEW in our area.
	1. I (Butler) tested the tool the other day and can confirm that one mark, SE of the village of Blue Hill (there are only two marked in Blue Hill) is one I provided and is adjacent to my house. The other – I do not know…. Try it.
	2. The links are provided below and (ii. Is the one that will take you to the ConnectMaine test tool.
		1. <https://expressoptimizer.net/projects/Maine/speedtestmap.php>
		2. <https://www.mainebroadbandcoalition.org/speedtesting-link>

Next Meeting – 0800 11 December via **Zoom**