



**Town of Whitingham  
Broadband Committee**

**MINUTES OF MARCH 30, 2020**

*These Minutes shall be accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted) at a future meeting of the Whitingham Broadband Committee (WBC).*

The Whitingham Broadband Committee (WBC) held a regular meeting on Monday, March 30, 2020 at 9:00am via Zoom conference.

Committee members on the Zoom conference: Wayne Corse, Phil Edelstein, Michael Edwards, Doug Fruge, Olivia Kennett, Michael Patton, Mike Mandracchia, Doug Amidon,

Others on the Zoom conference: Seth Boyd, Gig Zboray, Chris Lynch from Matrix Design Group

**Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda.**

Phil Edelstein called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

**Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)**

None

**Reviewed Windham Regional Broadband survey results**

A total of 345 Whitingham households responded, including 237 households responding Definitely Yes and 92 households responding Probably Yes to signing up for competitively priced fiber internet for a total of 329 positive replies. Total countywide responses to the survey were 4300 with 1600 coming from homes that already have cable. Over 90% of the cable responses were mainly looking for a lower price. Whitingham responses included 156 that pay for satellite TV service.

**Review CUD progress**

The results of the WRC survey suggest that Whitingham may be better off building its own fiber network rather than wait for the CUD process which is evolving slowly. There are ~900 homes and buildings in town including 2nd homeowners so 548 households did not respond to the WRC survey. We need a minimum of 430 households (45%) to sign a non-binding request for the Matrix proposal to be viable. Chris Lynch outlined the Matrix proposal and talked about financing options for the town share of the cost. Chris also spoke about the make ready process for the poles. It appears that Jacksonville Electric has 1200 poles and GMP 1900 poles. Jacksonville Electric and Riggs Distler are unique advantages for Whitingham that other towns do not have, further suggesting the town develop an independent fiber plan outside of the CUD, which can be joined in the future if it is advantageous. The Committee agreed to draft new letter to residents and property owners to build more support for a fiber project, with the hope of exceeding 430 positive responses.

**Discussed key points of the new letter**

Phil will draft a new letter for review by the WBC and the SB that will outline the Matrix (or similar) proposal, explaining how people who pay for landline phone, satellite TV and internet can save money by streaming content and connecting their cell phones to the fiber, eliminating the need for a landline phone.

**Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Michael Edwards, seconded by Phil Edelstein, all in favor.

Mr. Edelstein adjourned the meeting at 10:00am.

Respectfully submitted,