

**Lincolnvile Broadband Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**April 21, 2022**  
**Lincolnvile Town Office**

Members present in the town office: Jordan Barnett-Parker, Steve Hand, Dave Perkins (left at 8:02), Jay Philoon, Michael Kosowsky

Members present remotely: Josh Gerritsen, Arlene Jurewicz Leighton, Steven Koltai (arrived 6:03)

Members absent: Cheryl Nevius

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Jordan.

There was no public comment.

Motion to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2022 meeting was made by Jay and seconded by Steve H. Michael noted that the indentation of lines in some sections of the minutes didn't appear in the final version. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation by Mark Ouellette of Axiom:

The draft report he sent the committee is an early draft; in particular the action items have to be done and he has yet to check the whole report over

The model is simple, taking number of subscribers and amount borrowed to determine if revenue is enough to go forward without losses. It's the model used by several communities they work with. Some communities have adopted other models, eg. private investment.

He will add a section on grants. Federally, Axiom had success with an NTIA grant. At the state level, Connect Maine will announce recipients of the first round \$15MM the week of April 11. He expects the process for the September round to be similar. The state uses Vetro data, and Lincolnvile will probably be considered served. The process includes asking incumbents if they will be building out in the next year.

Dave asked that the next draft elaborate on the projections of the take rate. Mark said take rate improves when an incumbent is unwilling to change price and the project is considered to be "community owned." Still unsure how much of Lincolnvile has been built out by LCI. Steve H. suggested that LCI would be able to lower its price in response to a price we advertise. Mark pointed out that so far in his work, legacy providers haven't lowered their prices, but they have

not been privately owned like LCI. Also, would LCI decouple their phone line requirement? Mark said Axiom typically sets 100/100 at \$64 per month.

Steve H. asked that since there is fiber on the polls, does Mark think Lincolnville will not get grant funding? Mark responded yes. Mark also said that there will be so much money flowing to these projects that labor will be difficult to find, particularly when the pay rate in NY and FL can be \$40/hour and here in Maine it's \$25. Mark is confident supply of materials will rise to meet the demand, but you will have to order a year in advance.

Jay asked how other communities are dealing with their incumbents, eg. what's the argument for "yes, there's LCI here, but here's why it doesn't matter." Mark responded that towns are often hesitant to go with someone new. The committee must set goals, and explain if you find plan A cannot meet them, you move to plan B. Goals such as equal access and future-proof. Once you know the cost of your alternative you should talk to LCI.

Josh asked if we can get a meeting with LCI. Mark said he can ask, but unlikely the decision-makers will attend. It will also be difficult to give LCI public money for infrastructure that LCI would own. Dave pointed out that LCI enjoys a lot of goodwill in the town and suggests we come up with a plan and ask them to beat it.

Steve K. asked about the data in the draft report: how many fibers is "high count?" Where does the data come from? Mark responded high count is 144 or more strands, green on the chart is 12 or more, and they built the map in Vetro. Michael asked that Axiom send him a KML of that chart so he can overlay it on the data Steve H. obtained from LCI.

Josh asked for comments from each committee member on working with LCI and on building our own system.

Josh: need to see a 20 year commitment, a maximum price, and every house covered.

Steve H.: for the town to buy in, we have to talk to LCI

Mark suggested that we should try to "lead the pack." Go for 1gig up and down for \$70, and have 10 gig available.

Arlene: our committee charge is for 100/100 service, so if LCI can't do it we need to find another way. We're doing this for the future of our town

Steve K: if we have no leverage, not in favor of talking to LCI

Jay: we should be bold. \$3.5MM seems like a good deal

Michael: I have no bad experience with LCI that would keep me from talking with them

Dave: we're all like-minded on this committee, but moving forward there are Selectmen, town meeting, and the community

Jordan: we're in year 2 ½ or 3 now. LCI is part of this effort but shouldn't be our focus. 40% of the town has fiber, 30% DSL and 30% nothing. If we can attract the 30 + 30 and some of the 40, we'll be fine. Steve H.: said that in VT, Tilson not hitting 30% after a year. Mark said some communities are approaching 70% and feels there is always 30% you'll never get.

Josh suggested knocking on every door in Lincolnville to explain what we're trying to build. Mark suggests un-slick material and neighbor-to-neighbor campaigns work well. Steve H. suggested driving around town to verify current infrastructure.

Mark said we should get ready for the September state funding round because not clear what will come after. Look at the current application process on the Maine Connect Authority website, for example we have to pick an ISP. One strategy to accomplish overbuild is to point out that to get from the CO to new area X you have to pass through area Y that has existing coverage, but might as well build out Y too.

Michael showed the web page mockup at [heywhatsthat.com/lbbc](http://heywhatsthat.com/lbbc) and said he had permission from the Maine Broadband Coalition to embed their speed test on our site. He will speak to Dave Kinney about replicating the page in the town website, including adding our agendas and minutes on our committee's page.

Josh reported on the MIDC meeting. GWI made a proposal. Lincolnville could perhaps eventually be part of the MIDC effort, but they will first focus on unserved and underserved. Steve K. said that fewer than 20 addresses in Lincolnville may qualify as unserved, and if twenty towns are involved, a town with only 20 addresses may not get much attention.

Discussion of action items:

Grant applications: Steve K. pointed out that because other towns often fail to get their applications in, our chances for winning grants may be better than we'd think. Jay will investigate the MCA grants and Josh and Jordan will bring to the select board whatever the board must do in the application process

Infrastructure survey: Steve H. will follow up with Axiom and with colleagues at Tilson on how to drive around and determine presence of fiber

Web page: Michael will follow up with Dave Kinney

Next meeting 5/12 at 6pm

Motion to adjourn was made by Josh and seconded by Jay. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Kosowsky