

			
Florida, MA	Hawley, MA	Monroe, MA	Savoy, MA

Four Towns Broadband Committee Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the FHMS Four Towns Broadband Committee took place at the Hawley Town Office on Thursday, April 6, 2023.

In Attendance:

Hawley: *Hussain Hamdan & Rick Kean
 Florida: *Kevin Poirot (not present), Cindy Bosley & Joan Lewis
 Monroe: *Greg Vitarelli & Richard Olney-Jones
 Savoy: *Melanie Glynn, Sarah Satterthwaite
 DesignNine: Jack Maytum?
 WiValley: Brian Foucher
 Hub66: Andrea Vient (not present)
 Interisle: Steve Harris, Fred Goldstein

*Voting Members

Note: there may have been other callers who did not identify themselves.

Quorum, Call to Order

A quorum was established, and the Meeting called to order at 4:44 pm.

Review and approve minutes from the December meeting

Minutes of the December 15 meeting were approved unanimously as written by the voting members present.

Roles & responsibilities

Melanie happy to serve as Savoy representative, just not as chair for the 4 towns. Hussain on route to meeting. Hussain later agreed to serve as chair with promised support from Melanie and Brian

➤ Brian's report

Borden Mountain status:

- Site is operational with electricity.
- Most of the point-to-point is up and running.
- Work on site currently on hold due to snow.

- Hope to get up with lift to tweak point-to-point alignment and get CBRS turned on.
- Will put up fencing, required planting & have propane tanks & generator for backup power.

Where we still lack coverage:

- Coverage is considerably improved to various locations.
- With CBRS service from Borden Mountain, approximately 260 homes that we haven't been able to reach should get better service, particularly in Florida and Savoy, not so much in Monroe and Hawley.
- Hope to win back customers who have moved on to Starlink.
- CAF II performance tests significantly improved, where you don't have multiple hops down.
- Fiber in particular areas will enhance coverage.
- Without Charlemont connection, Hawley coverage is more difficult.
- Will be able to pick up additional customers in Adams and North Adams.

Homes connected:

- 95 Florida.
- 31 Monroe.
- 120 Hawley.
- 121 Savoy.
- 367 total, 286 customers after many lost to Starlink.

Phases and payments to date, future payments:

- All phases have been completed.
- Towns will need to sign off on Borden Mountain once it's reported to MBI how many customers are connected via CBRS.
- MBI will still hold back 15% of the \$2.1M since actual performance is less than that in theoretical design.
- Enhancements to resolve performance issues must be approved by the state.

What the future expansions might look like (infrastructure bill monies):

- There is lots of fiber funding available at the state and federal levels. It will take far more than \$2.1M to get it done.
- We want to go from where we are now to hybrid solutions.
- Unlike Charlemont, want a multi-hub solution to avoid single point of failure.
- See the possibility of having the most resilient network in the state.

- Minimum 100/100 requirement going forward – only fiber, since wireless can rarely achieve those speeds.
- Otelco is no longer providing service to WiValley customers following GoNetSpeed acquisition.
- Future is fiber with wireless redundancy, though some may still want lower-cost wireless.
- Must support wireless for another seven years.
- FHMS agreement is for wireless, not fiber, but should not be difficult to amend.

Changes at WiValley, Hub66 & fiber.

- Transferring customer base in New Hampshire to Hub66.
- Agreement to transfer MA customers must be approved by MBI and Otelco.

Open for questions.

- Lark has data on professional services.

➤ **Professional services fund balance and payments**

Nothing further.

➤ **Reorganization of the FHMS Committee based on the legal documents that created us, including,**

- FHMS has a 10 yr. (6 more) agreement with WiValley (or Hub66) and the four towns.
- Can do addendum to cover wired.
- Fiber might require agreement re use of poles and other procedural matters.

➤ **Other questions or topics not elsewhere anticipated**

- Sarah asked when she would get service. Brian said he would be up before the end of April to check service.
- Cindy asked when we could expect fiber buildout. Hard to say – MBI has been vague – several factors to consider.
- Cindy reported Florida signed franchise agreement with Charter but were unaware it did not cover the entire town.
- Melanie reported Savoy has not signed and it was recommended to the select board that they look at all options and impacts prior.

➤ **Next meeting date, back to regularly scheduled meetings?**

July 13 at 4:30 pm at the Hawley Town Hall.

➤ **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

 