

**APPROVED Minutes of  
Beaver Island Telecommunication Advisory Committee Meeting  
Peaine and St James Township, Beaver Island  
Beaver Island Community School | January 15, 2019 5:00PM**

**Present**

Kathleen McNamara, Neal Green, Garry Conant, Wil Cwikiel and Theresa McDonough

**Absent**

Kevin Boyle, Paul Welke,

**Others**

Paul Cole, Dick Mulvihill

Vice Chairperson McNamara chaired the meeting while Chairperson Boyle was absent. Draft Minutes from Dec. 11, 2018 were approved with no changes. Vice Chairperson McNamara reviewed the Agenda for the evening.

Mulvihill created a BIA Communications Infrastructure 2019 Roadmap. Discussion and review followed. Points made on: How Do We Get There? Does the township become the owner building our own network? Or does the township build a partnership with ISP? Discussion concerning USDA Reconnect program. Much info outlined on Roadmap.

Boyle, McNamara and Mulvihill would like to have future discussion with GLE about their plans. If we bring something to the table, how would this change GLE timeline? They are the logical candidate being that they are located in Boyne City and are interested in providing internet service to Beaver Island.

Boyle and McNamara will also find out about removing unused or outdated equipment from Donegal Rd. tower. Discussion about creating a draft plan to present to the public with benefits and costs outlined. Committee wonders what are the visions and goals of other businesses.

**We need to define requirements of business community.**

- McDonough and Cole will speak with local businesses.
- McNamara will speak with EMS,
- Green will speak with Fire Dept. and
- Cwikiel will speak with Rural Health Center.

Conant reports that American Tower owns the Kings Highway tower. Unclear about Donegal Rd. tower but township owns this. AT&T shares tower on Kings Highway with TDS and has not been happy with them. AT& T has plans to upgrade this year (2019) to 25 mgs both ways. AT &T will place their own microwave tower on Kings Highway and it will tie into the Donegal tower location. Verizon does not have any changes or plans to upgrade.

Cwikel updated that he has been advised to wait and see what will happen with island technology before making decision with school tech plan. He had received a \$70,000 quote from Merit that among many items includes mobilization cost of equipment to island and running fiber from school to Donegal tower.

Discussion about meeting Northern Lakes Economic Alliance to get a consultant to help with grants and advising. Cwikel has spoken with them in the past and knows they helped coordinating with Harbor Springs, CMU and NMU fiber.

Speaking of NMU, Boyle found that NMU would require another tower at Donegal location if NMU offered an “extension to extended learning” program. They could provide services to Beaver Island. Again, would it help to fund another tower to get process moving faster and connect partnership? However, why would we build tower if GLE is already going to do this?

McNamara will call NLEA to set up meeting.

**Bullet points to discuss with Northern Lakes Economic Alliance:**

- NLEA to survey current needs on island
- NLEA to help understand where other regional communities are with their level of service. Compare to Charlevoix, Petoskey, Harbor Springs and hear about successful collaborations
- How is information conveyed to community? Community needs to understand the consequences as well if nothing happens.
- Understand NLEA’s initiative. Does Beaver Island fit into it as a Northern Michigan community?
- Feedback from NLEA on the next steps for Beaver Island. What path do they recommend? What is their process/procedure? We need their input and advice.
- If we join consortium, what further assistance can we expect? Is there a fee? What will they provide?
- What can we provide to NLEA before a meeting? Share Mulvihill’s Roadmap.
- Can NLEA assist with relationship with Great Lakes Energy?

**Questions to TDS**

- Are they willing to sell fiber to “us”, Great Lakes Energy?
- How many fibers in TDS cable? Maybe it would not even work for what we desire?

**Next Meeting Date**

The next BITAC Meeting will be on Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at 5:00PM at the Beaver Island Community School conference room. BITAC determined that meetings will be held the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Tuesday of each month at the Beaver Island Community School conference room at 5:00 pm. A schedule will be posted with the dates for the next 6 months.

**On next agenda:** Cellular improvement