

**DRAFT Minutes of Beaver Island Telecommunication Advisory Committee Meeting
Peaine and St James Township, Beaver Island
Meeting in person and by videoconference – September 17, 2020, 4:30 pm, BIC Center**

Present

Kevin Boyle, Kathleen McNamara, Theresa McDonough

Absent

Paul Welke

By videoconference or others

Wil Cwikel, Neal Green, Gary Conant, Dick Mulvihill, Cynthia Johnson, Nathan Altman, Kate Lesea and Adam Kendall

Meeting begins with motion by Kevin to approve minutes, Kitty seconds, all in favor.
Approval of draft agenda with motion by Wil, Kitty seconds, all in favor.

Discussion on Font Lake loading issues. Kitty has made contact with the manager of the towers for 911's and others. He will meet Kitty on the island to review the current situation. Kitty still believes that we may need to strengthen the foundation or supports on current tower or look into building another, depending on analysis. Tower loading standards have been upgraded and will eventually overload the tower. The tower capacity needs to be shared with the township boards.

U.P. Tower update: NMU will not extend the tower. The engineers are concerned with the connection. NMU will explore the possibility of using their own spare equipment to test the connection (rather than buy new). NMU can evaluate the performance and monitor a linked performance for testing purposes.

The BITAC will be presenting to both township boards in order to update them on the progress as well as stress the importance that our island service should match the service that the mainland receives. A wireless system is not practical and is too costly. In a few years, it will again be an obsolete system therefore we need to continue pursuing a fiber connection.

We all agree as a committee that our long term solution is to pursue fiber (with a possible partnership with GLE)

It makes sense to have fiber on the island in order to provide the customer with the service they want rather than trying to connect fiber across the lake. The backhaul needed can be built cheaper than the fiber across the lake. Reliability is key!

Kevin will use last year's presentation as a base and update it. Goal is to recommend a path to the townships and receive guidance. Would the township consider funding any necessary studies (if not, how do we raise more money if we need further studies) and would they support a partnership with GLE? Kevin will include a possible timeline in presentation.

Brief discussion on collecting data for surveys. Something included with November tax bills? Follow up on BIA postcards? More info from community would be helpful in recommendations to township.

Meeting concludes at 5:30 pm.

Next Meeting Date The next BITAC Meeting will be Thursday, October 15 at 4:30 pm at the BIC Center.
Tentative meeting for township presentation: October 22.