

Economic Committee
August 31, 2020
7 pm via Zoom

Present: Chelley Tighe, Suzanne Gray, & Steve Reinhart

Absent: Skip Hagstrom, Adrianna Stefanko, Danielle Jacques & Mary Belle Isle

Guests: Beth Lorenz & Barbara Young, Dana Pinney, Kimberly Heald & Paul Owens

Minutes: 8-17-20 approved

Suzanne opened the meeting at 7:08 pm. She welcomed the guests and introduced Dana, Kim & Paul from the Broadband Volunteer Task Force.

Broadband: The Broadband Volunteer Task force was invited to the Economic Committee meeting to provide information about the broadband project, and to come up with some ways the committee could assist. Dana gave a detailed summary on the history of internet in Fitzwilliam beginning with the results from the Master Plan and how residents felt high speed internet was of great importance to the town. He discussed how the task force was formed and where they were in the project, going through some of the requirements that need to be met. He stated that it all needs to be voted on at our town meeting with a 2/3 majority. If that passes, the town will file for a bond and ideally, hookups could begin in late Fall 2021. Also explained was how the bond would be paid for and that was through user fees, so the more users the less per household. Paul added that the goal of the task force is to bring broadband to every resident in town. Kim commented that they want to bring fiber to every house with no tax impact. Dana informed the members that a website, called "Connect Fitzwilliam", was created to have information readily available should anyone have questions or want to understand what the project is all about.

Suzanne thanked Dana, Kim & Paul for all the work they have done. The members agreed that they have done a fantastic job and were amazed at the mention of the website Connect Fitzwilliam.

Members: Suzanne stated she was happy to see Beth and Barbara again. She asked Barbara how she felt about becoming a member and Barbara commented that she would like to but cannot see a clear direction for the committee. Suzanne responded that we need members in order to have a direction. Without a 3 person quorum, decisions could not be made. Barbara has some ideas to share, some outside the box and Beth suggested a brainstorming meeting. The next meeting will be dedicated to coming up with ideas for the committee and how best to serve the community and businesses.

Next Meeting: September 28, 2020 at 7 pm via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Minutes taken by Marion Wheeler