

Board of Selectmen

Dale Harmon- Chairman
Chuck Cunningham - Vice Chairman
Michael Tomacelli
Steven Lewis
Desiree Scorgia

Town Manager

Daniel Bryer Jr.



**Town of Boothbay
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Wednesday, January 12, 2022
7:00 PM
MINUTES**

Present: Dale Harmon, Steven Lewis, Chuck Cunningham, Mike Tomacelli and Town Manager, Dan Bryer Jr.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Hearings: None

Public Comment: None

Approve Minutes: *December 8, 2021*

Steve Lewis made a motion to approve the December 8, 2021, meeting minutes as written. Chuck Cunningham seconded the motion. Vote: 3-0 in favor. Mike Tomacelli refrained from voting as he was not at the December 8, 2021 meeting

Reports:

Dan Bryer

Public works has been working some overtime with recent storms.

Clifford Park – The town has raised the \$250,000 necessary for Paul Coulombe to pay for the remainder of the project. The project is currently projected to cost \$1.75-2 million.

Steve Lewis – would like to have a plaque or some sort of recognition at the park for the large contribution from Paul. The Board agrees with Lewis.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Boothbay Region Clean Drinking Water Initiative represented by Jeannie Hamrin – Ms. Hamrin is speaking as an introduction to the town and an outreach for any questions or ideas the town may have in regard to the purpose of the initiative. The initiative wants to educate the community about the threats our public water supplies face and how to address those threats as well as work with willing watershed landowners to protect undeveloped watershed land.

Spectrum Communications re: Broadband Steve Holmes in person and Ben Topor on video conference - Topor presented a new broadband proposal and answered questions. Spectrum is offering a symmetrical service, 1GB upload and 1 GB download. This new service will require upgraded infrastructure by Spectrum. These upgrades will cost Spectrum around 1 billion dollars. They hope to have the upgrades completed in 24 months. The new symmetrical service will cost the town of Boothbay homes \$39.95 per month with an annual increase of up to 3%. For comparison, the current non symmetrical service costs the regular consumer \$135 per month. Billing can be done by the town or run through a 3rd party. Most 3rd party billing companies charge \$5 per bill generated. The \$5 would be added on to each bill, making the monthly charge to Boothbay residents around \$45.00 per month not including taxes and fees. Besides the faster symmetrical service the other benefit to the town over the old proposed plan is that if someone doesn't pay their monthly premium their service can be turned off, giving the town

leverage in collecting the owed monthly charges. With the old system if someone didn't pay their premium there was no way to shut off their service. The town is billed monthly for the total of Boothbay's premiums. This amount is based on all Boothbay residents. The town is being charged even if someone doesn't use the service. Spectrum currently has 1,632 internet customers in the town of Boothbay, they are anticipating around 141 new customers. The anticipated new customers do not currently have access to Spectrum or any fast broadband service. They will be new to Spectrum because of the new expanded infrastructure to be installed by Spectrum.

Steve Lewis questioned the price increase and how much taxes and fees are.

Topor says that increased speed and symmetrical service cost more. Currently internet service is not taxed and there are no fees. That wording is in the proposal to cover them legally.

Mike Tomacelli asked about the abrupt lack of communication when this was first discussed back in March 2021. It would have been nice to have someone reach out with a simple phone call or email to let us know what was happening. Tomacelli hopes that does not happen again.

Topor explains that a key person in the first proposal left the company unexpectedly and left them scrambling. He apologizes for their lack of communication and says it will not happen again.

Chuck Cunningham asked if this proposal is for residential only.

Topor says this is only for residential customers. He adds that they are looking to cover 100% of residential customers unless someone is 2 miles out down a private road they would not be running cable that far to reach 1 customer its just not cost effective.

Lewis asked about the charge for installation in the proposal. He notes that in the last proposal installation was going to be a 1 time free service for all who needed it. He comes back to the price and feels that it is too much of an increase compared to the last proposal, especially when you add the billing fee on top. He pushes for \$35 from Spectrum with the \$5 billing would be \$40.00. Lewis feels more comfortable with that rate. And pushes for free installation for anyone who needs it, with a cutoff date.

Topor will talk to the higher ups to see what he can do about the decrease in premium and the free install.

The Board is happy with the proposal overall and would like to have a contract from Spectrum soon. The town has some voting deadlines that need to be met. The Town meeting in May would have a February cut off. We have a June primary as well where we could get it on the ballot. If it doesn't get squared away by then it would have to wait until the November Town meeting.

Topor is going to get to work on the pricing and get a contract to the Town as soon as possible. Spectrum and The Board would like to get this on the ballot for the February Town meeting.

Lincoln County Regional Planning: Lincoln County Hazard Mitigation Plan update 2022 – The board decided to table this discussion until the next meeting.

Public Comment: None

Review Warrants and Sign:

Chuck Cunningham made a motion to review and sign warrants. Mike Tomacelli seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0 in favor

Adjourn Meeting:

Steve Lewis made a motion at 7:57 PM to adjourn the meeting and Chuck Cunningham seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0 in favor.