

TOWN OF MARLBORO
SPECIAL SELECT BOARD MEETING
Thursday, February 13, 2020, 4:30-5:00PM
Marlboro Town Office

Minutes

Present: Tyler Gibbons, Select Board Chair; Jesse Kreitzer, Select Board Vice Chair; Julia von Ranson, Select Board Member; Chris Lynch, Matrix Design Group; Steven John, MCUB Chair; Bill Esses, MCUB; Annie Bartlett, MCUB; Edie Mas, Planning Commission; Malcolm Moore, Andy Reischman, Resident; Aaron Betts, Resident

Tyler Gibbons, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:34pm

Steven John reported that he attended a meeting last night, 2/12/20 regarding the possible formation of a Deerfield Valley Communications Union District (CUD). Representatives from Wilmington, Readsboro, Whitingham, Halifax, and Marlboro were present, as well as Chris Lynch of Matrix Design Group of New Jersey (Matrix has a New England headquarters in South Royalton, VT). Whitingham, Halifax, Wilmington, Readsboro, and Marlboro have a CUD article on their Town Meeting agenda. After Town Meeting, we will know whether or not a CUD will form.

This evening, MCUB members will attend a meeting at Newbrook regarding other regional efforts to acquire universal broadband, sponsored by the Windham Regional Commission (fulfilling the responsibilities of the BIG grant).

In response to the RFP sent out by MCUB, two bids were received from Matrix Design Group of New Jersey and MasTec of Woodbury, MN. MCUB had anticipated a bid from Consolidated Communications but did not receive one.

Matrix Design's bid included an executive summary, group bidder qualifications, technology review, a specific proposal for Marlboro, anticipated project schedule, insurance coverage and a sample agreement. It predicted a cost/customer of \$95/month (for a broadband speed of 100 up and down), or \$155/month (for an enhanced speed of 200 up and down).

Chris Lynch clarified that Matrix is happy to work with either a town individually or a CUD. Lynch said that 500 homes is about the number that can support a technician. Marlboro is a little less dense than their usual clients, but they won't need to build out on every road because of forested areas, etc.

Tyler asked if there's a financial advantage to working within a CUD. Chris stated that redundancy in infrastructure can be an advantage, as well as lower surety bonds due to a higher pole count. Working with a CUD does require a longer process and projects must be based on a revenue bond. Chris stated that an individual town can start out as an individual and then move forward as a CUD later.

The Select Board asked MCUB to spend time researching the bids (and to find out if MasTech has a more specific proposal that meets the specific inquiries of Marlboro's RFP). Chris Lynch offered to come back and give a presentation to MCUB.

The special meeting was adjourned at 5:11pm.