

## **Shutesbury Broadband Committee Annual Town Report**

Fiscal Year 2015

Prepared by Asha Strazzero-Wild and Gayle Huntress, Committee Co-Chairs

Estimated hours donated by Broadband Committee: ~2,000 hours (9 committee members (6 active members), 76 individual volunteers)

- Attending monthly Committee meetings (often includes work in between meetings)
- Attending regional meetings (WiredWest) and neighboring town's broadband meetings
- Planning and executing events (Education about overall initiative to bring high speed internet to Shutesbury, Pole Inventory Events (2 full days + training session), Information Sessions about upcoming votes (town vote and ballot vote), Education events about next steps)

Estimated in-kind donations: \$2500 donated from local supporters (Whole Foods, Jones Realtor Group, Glazed Doughnuts, Target, Marshalls, Friendly's, Staples, Stop & Shop, SAC, local residents)

*Note: Each month the Broadband Committee had a focus area; the bullets for each month summarize the key activities the Committee engaged in and discussed each month. There were 1-4 meetings each month (minus July 2014); please see the Shutesbury Broadband Committee website for detailed notes on each meeting.*

### **July 2014- Determine data to inform Broadband plan analysis**

- Met with Matrix to understand the make-ready process
- Built demo of pole data-entry App on iPad
- Discussed how best to communicate the Committees actions and disseminate useful & timely information to those interested

### **August 2014- Collect and understand sentiments from community members**

- Update from WiredWest delegate(s)
- Heard recap of January Hills neighborhood meeting (~25 ppl) discussing their Broadband options. They were also updated by Paul Dunphy (Stephen Kulik's aide) and Rob Brooks (Leverett BBC.)
- Discussed GPON vs Active Ethernet vs wireless vs hybrid solutions

### **September 2014- Learn how neighboring towns engaged residents**

- Update from WiredWest delegate(s)
- Discussed Leverett meeting about Broadband sign up (packed house!)
- Attended Economic Broadband Committee Conference in Springfield and reported back to committee

- Reviewed existing pole inventory data and plan (roads, teams, inventory day logistics)

#### **October 2014- Prepare for Community Engagement Event (Pole Inventory Blitz)**

- Update from WiredWest delegate(s): WW & MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Institute) & the \$50Mil state bond grant for last mile buildout
- Decided on messaging about Pole Inventory and plan for Volunteers – Training and Day Of Pole Inventory
- Completed extensive review and revision of the draft FAQ document - ready for Town website

#### **November 2014- Execute Community Engagement Event (Pole Inventory Blitz) and engage in information research and collection**

- Discussed results from the completed Pole Inventory Blitz
- Analyzed our Pole Inventory data to estimate build costs
- Confirmed SBBC Meeting to review 3 plans (WiredWest Deadline for Commitment)
  - The Wired West Plan (Regional Cooperative Solution)
  - The Matrix Plan (Public-Private Partnership)
  - The Shutesbury Independent Plan

#### **December 2014- Engage in feasibility analysis of Broadband options for Shutesbury**

- Update from WiredWest delegate(s)
- Met with the Select Board to compare and contrast the three plans to bring Broadband to Shutesbury
  - The Wired West Plan (Regional Cooperative Solution)
  - The Matrix Plan (Public-Private Partnership)
  - The Shutesbury Independent Plan

#### **January 2015- Work with Select Board to message pursuit of WiredWest Plan**

- Set internal sign up goals for subscribers- Goal to get to half of the 40% town resident goal in the first week
- Edited text from WW that the Select Board then forwarded to MBI

#### **February 2015- Launch WiredWest sign up campaign**

- Discussed upcoming WiredWest Board Meeting - our turn to host!
- Reviewed tax calculator tool, table tents, Wired West brochure, first mailing letter.
- Discussed property tax implications and how to communicate them clearly to townspeople

#### **March 2015- Plan for Information Sessions about WiredWest**

- Update from WiredWest delegate(s): Discuss possible scenarios of the roles of Wired West and Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) in the design and build out of the fiber network. Concerns the impact might have on Shutesbury as well as on the other two parties were also considered. All subscribing towns must wait to see how things come together.

- Printed materials and reviewed slides to be distributed/shared at the upcoming Shutesbury town-wide information sessions

**April 2015- Host 2 Information Sessions about WiredWest**

- Folded, stuffed, stamped, addressed, return addressed, and sealed the six hundred plus letters to residents who had not signed up yet
- Reviewed Warrant article wording
- Hosted 2 Information Sessions at the Shutesbury Elementary School (invited Wendell and New Salem)

**May 2015- Present WiredWest Broadband Option at Town Meeting**

- Update from WiredWest delegate(s)
- Heard presentation from Axia
- Note: **Town Meeting bond authorization passed 417 to 13**

**June 2015- Promote ballot vote information to residents**

- Update from WiredWest delegate(s): Reviewed the number of towns now in the network build out and the discussed the new business plan.
- Voted unanimously to turn Shutesbury's funds from MBI, for planning over to WiredWest.
- Note: **Town ballot vote debt exclusion override passed 525 to 43**