



WILDWOOD

# Rural Internet Access Committee

Minutes from the Meeting of  
Thursday, June 6, 2019

I. Welcome and Roll Call by Chair Kallaus

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kallaus, at 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room, at Wildwood City Hall. A roll call of members was conducted, with the following individuals being in attendance:

Committee Members:

Rick Kallaus  
Deb Trunko  
Scott Jackson

Council Member Liaisons:

Cheryl Jordan

City Staff and Officials:

Mayor Jim Bowlin (left at 7:20)  
Council Member John Gragnani (arrived at 7:15)  
Director of Planning and Parks Joe Vujnich  
Assistant Director of Planning and Parks Kathy Arnett

Wireless Providers:

Chris Bay – Bays ET  
Rob Quest – Wisper ISP

Committee Member Hitzeman and Council Liaison McGowen were absent.

II. Approval of Minutes from the Meeting of May 22, 2019

The minutes were not yet finished, so this item was postponed to the next meeting.

III. Discussion Regarding the Preliminary Findings Presented at the May 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting by CTC Technology and Energy, the City's Consultant Engaged to Develop Workable Solutions to Solve the City's Rural Internet Access Issues.

Chair Kallaus noted tonight's meeting is intended to discuss the eight (8) approaches

outlined at the previous meeting by the City's consultant. Director of Planning Vujnich noted questions were raised at the last meeting, following Mr. Asp's presentation. CTC is seeking to respond to those questions and seek any other feedback from the Committee this evening and then they will finalize their report and provide it to the City. A summary of options and advantages/disadvantages of each approach has been provided by the consultant to aid in the discussion this evening.

Discussion was held regarding the best way for the Committee to narrow down the approaches to determine the most practical for the City. The discussion focused on the following: the lack of consensus within the community to becoming an internet utility; the need to determine how to fund any approach; the combination of funding mechanisms; the summary presented this evening from the consultant, which noted only three (3) approaches are likely practical for Wildwood; the desire of the Committee to focus discussion on the three (3) practical approaches; the consensus of the Committee to not pursue Option G, which is expand wireless assets and essentially continues on the path the City has employed since later 2013; the desire of some homeowners to pay for their service connections from their houses to the main line; the amount of time each approach will require; the desire to explore the capital expense for Approach E, where the City leases the dark middle mile; the potential for a hybrid of solutions, including starting with dark fiber to rural areas and adding other solutions; how to fund Approach E, City Attorney, John Young, had outlined options at a previous meeting, including options such as a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID), a Community Improvement District (CID), general revenue bonds, etc.; the Committee would like to know the quantity of homes served by each approach to better understand a per capita rate; the desire for specific feedback from Spectrum during discussions with the consultant; the need to verify how CTC defined underserved/unserved; is there a way to offset drop costs to homes; a request to see costs broken down per Ward; the lack of available grants; the potential for the consultant drafting an RFP, instead of grant applications, since none are available; the proposal by Bays-ET to build out a portion of Ward 6. Chris Bay will provide more detail regarding the map that was referenced tonight and Department will provide a Ward Map to him for coverage; comparison of CTC's numbers versus price provided by Bays for installation of fiber; the concern the pricing provided by CTC is much higher than pricing from Bays; the inability of the City to build the entire network; the lack of future-proofing with the City's current wireless approach; the need to require providers to provide full coverage in areas they wish to serve; the concern with lack of interest in Wildwood by Wisper ISP; Wisper ISP looking to add non-line-of-sight equipment to Babler State Park Tower, but would require another tower analysis; Wisper ISP looking at options to provide higher bandwidth; what would RFP, if drafted by CTC, entail; and a request for RFP to focus on dark middle mile and state the City may be able to provide cash incentives toward the development of middle mile and utilizing existing resources in place.

Consensus among the Committee Members was to determine if CTC will provide a proposal to draft an RFP instead of grant applications, as part of their current contract.

A motion was made by Council Member Jordan, seconded by Committee Member Jackson, to request a proposal from CTC to draft an RFP, by Ward, to solicit proposals for private consultants, with projected costs, on Approaches E through H, and offer potential cash incentives, in lieu of writing grant applications, as outlined in the current contract. A voice vote was taken, with no opposition, and the motion was declared passed.

IV. Next Steps for Committee

The Committee will reconvene after CTC has responded to the request for proposal.

V. Other Items for Consideration

None.

VII. Public Comments

John Gragnani questioned on how many households can get FTTP from a wireless receiver. Chris Bay noted there is a large variation to this answer and it is based on equipment. Mr. Gragnani then asked how many receiving stations are needed to provide service to five hundred (500) homes? Mr. Bay noted again the answer would vary, as it could be one (1) or ten (10).

A resident noted his frustration with the length of time it is taking to solve this problem. He wants to see actionable work and the City to provide this basic utility.

VIII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Liaison Jordan, seconded by Committee Member Trunko, to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Kallaus at 8:40 p.m.