**Joint meeting of Select Board & Cable Committee-minutes**

**February 18, 2016, 6:00pm, Rhodes Building**

**Present:** Selectman Santos, Selectman Martell, Selectman Doubleday, Robert (Rusty) Rowell-Cable Committee, Dana MacDonald, Robert Rehm, Marc Perrault, Maryann Pepin, Cynthia Goss, Greta & Damian Biagi, Thomas Terault, MBI representatives Ed Donnelly, Cynthia Gaines, and Sean Cunningham, and Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant Susannah Carey.

**Absent:** Richard Hall, David Rabinovitz

**Open:**

Selectman Santos opened the meeting at 6:02pm.

**Appointment of Kevin Hartzell**

On a motion by Selectman Martell to appoint Kevin Hartzell to the Conservation Commission, seconded by Selectman Doubleday, unanimously approved.

**Warrant for Presidential Primary**

On a motion by Selectman Doubleday to sign the Warrant for the Presidential Primary on March 1, 2016, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved. All three Selectmen signed 5 copies of the Warrant.

**Colonial Power Contract**

This item was tabled until next regular Selectmen’s meeting on February 22, 2016.

**MBI Broadband Extension Program Proposal**

Mr. Ed Donnelly, MBI Policy & Planning, spoke about how Comcast was the only firm for Pelham. There are 9 towns left and Comcast has 7 of those towns, and the Town’s of Montague and Hardwick have both Comcast and Matrix.

Ms. Cynthia Gaines, MBI GIS Manager, wants to be able to bring Pelham’s service to 98.8%. She was unsure of the number households that would be affected by the proposed change. Ms. Gaines brought a map that showed the Cable Broadband Service for Pelham with Estimated Cable Service Availability, Estimated Service Extensions, Mass Broadband 123 Network, and Base map features. She spoke of the State setting aside $5 million for the program and that there were 10 eligible towns that were narrowed down, 1 being Pelham. An RFQ was sent out to find a bidder and Comcast responded. The Fiber-Optic Network runs through the Town on almost all of Amherst Road and all of North Valley Road continuing onto Buffam Road. Not all households are connected, but the library, school, and town offices are.

Mr. Donnelly said that Comcast has verified build outs and wants to make sure Comcast doesn’t fold on its proposal. The properties on the map are marked as served so MBI isn’t giving in. Mr. Donnelly was unsure if there were any households that were not represented on the map as he did not bring the list of addresses and wanted to make sure he had the most accurate households represented. Selectman Martell stated that there were 25 forms signed, with 1 undecided and 24 that were interested in hooking up.

Selectman Martell wanted to know what will happen once our contract is up for renewal with Comcast, September 30, 2016. Would they be able to shut the Town’s service off on October 1, 2016? The answer was no, the contract with Comcast is a separate agreement and it won’t impact the Broadband unless the Town doesn’t choose to renew with Comcast.

Selectman Martell wanted to know if there should be another meeting planned for a month out? Ms. Biagi, resident, said the Cable Committee planned their next meeting for March 30, 2016, and Selectman Martell verified that. Selectman Doubleday said there would be no reason for scheduling a meeting until the negotiations between Comcast and MBI were settled.

Mr. Donnelly finished by saying that the money is there for allocating and Governor Baker’s Administration has continued to expand to more households in Massachusetts.

Mr. Donnelly is the contact person for residents and the Town of Pelham:

Ph: 508-870-0312 email: [Donnelly@masstech.org](mailto:Donnelly@masstech.org)

Robert (Rusty) Rowell, Cable Committee, spoke with the Selectmen after the conclusion of the MBI meeting about the 10 year contract with Comcast. He thought that the Town could renew their contract with Comcast for as little as 3-5 years, if didn’t want to be locked into a 10 year traditional contract term. The Town could set the term at time of renewal on basis of guaranteeing service to the rest of Pelham as a stipulation. Selectman Santos asked Rusty Rowell to look for the list the addresses, of those who were interested in hooking up, and see if he has them with his notes from the Cable Committee.

**Town Officials-**none

**Public Comment-**none

**Old Business-**none

**New Business-**none

**Adjornment**

On a motion by Selectman Martell, seconded by Selectman Doubleday, the meeting was unanimously adjorned at 6:52pm.

**Documents Reviewed**

Warrant for Presidential Primary, MBI supplemental Info Request Letter 12.25.15, Comcast Response Letter 1.15.16, Map of Proposed Service Area, Map Key, and Summary of Coverage Statistics.

**Next Regular Select Board meeting**: February 22, 2016

Respectfully Submitted,

Susannah Carey