

Scandia Internet Focus Group Meeting Notes – April 18, 2018

Attendees: Travis Waite, Rajean Moore, Jessie Pereboom, Kristin Novak, Chris Frymire, Aron Larson, Eric Mohr, Steve Kronmiller, Jason Sachs (MidCo)

There are approximately 223 Cable TV subscribers and 385 Internet subscribers in Scandia today. Maximum subscription rates seen across the country are 60%. So, even when a community says “everyone wants it”, they typically find less than half actually sign up.

MidCo uses a fiber backbone to nodes and runs coax from the node.

The main line runs from Minneapolis to the “head-end” in Forest Lake. From there it runs into downtown Scandia and then south to Marine, where it loops back to Minneapolis,

Currently all coax lines are at capacity so no new coax connections can be built off existing lines. New runs could be made off the fiber though.

The franchise agreement requires MidCo to expand their system in Scandia if there are 25 homes in a mile for free. There is some question where this mile begins (node, tap, or amplifier). Neil has the agreement and we can find the language there.

The cost to expand the system is approx. \$11 per foot, or about \$58k per mile. Most of the cost is for labor to plow or bury lines. Material cost runs \$2-\$4 per foot.

MidCo installs their lines in the same way electric is run to a home. If the electric lines to a home are buried, MidCo buries their lines too. If the electrical are overhead, MidCo runs their lines overhead too. Buried lines are placed in conduit to make maintenance and upgrades easier.

Overhead lines are cheaper to run, but due to pole heights, overhead runs are not always an option due to line clearance requirements. There must be separation between lines and all lines need to meet minimum road clearance requirements.

Buried lines need to be in the right of way to facility maintenance. This was brought up when we mentioned Scandia’s 2018 road improvement project and asked if this would be a good time to get lines buried.

MidCo is only expanding in “required” areas at this time due to cost factors. Generally speaking, the cost to run service to a home needs to be under \$3k for MidCo to consider the project, if it is not required by the franchise agreement.

All customers who have MidCo have 1Gig service available to them.

MidCo is exploring fix wireless as a potential future strategy, but this is only be done in one test area right now.

The “head-end” is in Forest Lake near the old city water building north of downtown.

Bottom line... MidCo will expand their service in Scandia, if required, but they don’t really want to because they lose money.

Next Meeting: April 25, 2018 at 6:30pm – Bill Coleman will be our guest speaker