



## Internet Action Committee

**Location: Online Streaming (Boxcast and GoToMeeting)**

**Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 6:00pm**

Attendance: Cathy Mackiewicz, Chair Robert Wilmers, and John Carney

Absent: K. C. Douglas, and Vice Chair Marschall Smith.

Also in Attendance: City Council Liaison Patti Ray, City Council Liaison Steve Kronmiller, City Administrator Ken Cammilleri, Justin Forde, Midco Senior Director of Government Relations, and Melissa Wolf, Midco Government Relations Manager.

**Call to Order** – Chair Wilmers called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

**Approval of Agenda** – Motion by Carney, seconded by Mackiewicz, to approve the agenda but to move up the discussion of this year's Midco Broadband expansion project and discussion of the Broadband Expansion Plan to follow the approval of minutes. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes from June 11, 2020** – Motion by Carney, seconded by Mackiewicz to approve the minutes of the June 11th meeting. Motion carried.

**Update on the 2020 Minnesota DEED Broadband Expansion Grant Project with MIDCO** – Forde reported to the committee that construction has already started for the project, and noted that in the near future, the City will be notified who the project coordinator will be. Service connections will be rolling and will not be completed all at once. Not all of the 270 service passings will be on lots with homes.

**Prospects for the 2021 Minnesota DEED Broadband Expansion Grant and the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)** – Forde reported that Midco is still in the process of identifying potential future expansion areas for inclusion in the DEED grant application. Forde also noted that he could not confirm whether Midco's participation on RDOF will include Scandia. There are congressional discussions about expanding RDOF funding, but this has not made any formal progress.

**Midco Ribbon Cutting Ceremony** - Midco is coordinating with the City on a noon time ribbon cutting ceremony on Wednesday, September 16th to celebrate Scandia's new Internet expansion. A boxed lunch will be served to all attendees. A invitees list has been sent to Midco which includes Mayor, City Council, City Administrator, Deputy Clerk, Internet

Action Committee members, EDA Commissioners , Bill Strusinski, Bob Dettmer, Karin Housley, and Tom Emmer. Location has yet to be determined. Midco will have a table at the Famers Market that day. An evening event will include a possible contest at Lilleskogen Park with children writing stories about the Internet. Ray will meet with Principal Julie Hull to discuss. A boxed dinner from a local vendor will be served to approximately 250 people.

**Update on Community Center Wireless Internet Improvements** – Cammilleri reported that the public wireless network is now up and running. Staff will be working to make additional improvements, but the network has strong reception inside the Community Center and in the parking lot. He also noted that the Washington County Library System will be making hotspots available for checkout to help those with limited access to the internet.

**Discussion and review of 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the Scandia Broadband Expansion Plan** – The Committee discussed the challenges of adopting a map as part of its expansion plan. Wilmers noted that it would be impossible to develop an expansion map that would reliably convey what would be a likely expansion area, short of a committed and funded project. The Committee agreed that it would be best to inform the community of current progress and anticipated activities through a page on the City’s website and providing PowerPoint updates as significant developments occur.

Discussion of Mitigating Installation Costs for Properties with Large Home Setbacks – Wilmers noted that one way to mitigate the costs of running long service lines to homes might be by creating a wireless “hop” solution. The option only requires that there is electricity available to power a modem and a wireless device to get the internet connection to a home.

**Discussion of Signal Boosting LTE Devices** – Kronmiller shared Sprint’s Magic Box which helps boost data signals and helps increase wireless speeds.

**Definitions** - The committee looked at the definitions provided in the packet and identified some areas for further follow up with Midco.

**Next Meeting Date** – The Committee agreed to hold its next meeting on Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 6:00pm. The meeting will be conducted electronically and telephonically if the Governor’s Executive Order continues the existing requirements.

**Adjournment** – The Committee adjourned at 7:30pm upon successful motion by Carney, seconded by Mackiewicz.

Minutes Prepared by:

Ken Cammilleri, City Administrator