City of Caribou, Maine

AGENDA
Caribou City Council
Regular City Council Meeting
5:00 P.M. Monday, November 28, 2016
Caribou City Council Chambers

1. Discussion with Caribou Broadband Coalition   2-5

Upcoming Meeting Dates:
Regular City Council Meeting Monday, December 12, 2016 at 6pm
Organizational City Council Meeting Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at 6pm
Regular City Council Meeting Monday, January 9, 2017 at 6pm

To: Mayor and Council Members
From: Broadband Coalition
Date: November 28, 2016
Re: Broadband Study

The purpose of the workshop this evening is for the Broadband Coalition and the City Council to sit down and discuss doing the broadband study with Tilson. The study would help us gain more knowledge surrounding broadband, and the options that exist to make it available to all Caribou citizens.

The study will look at four different governance and ownership strategies:

- Open-Access versus closed-access networks
- Municipality agreeing to "anchor" a privately owned and operated network
- Municipally owning but operated by a third party
- Municipally owned and operated

Tilson would look at these options and suggest a strategy that best fits Caribou's situation and desired outcomes.

First and foremost no one wants to put the taxpayers on the hook for millions of dollars for no good reason. This study commits the city to gaining knowledge on the topic. We are not spending millions of dollars to build a network, we are trying to learn if building a network is even feasible. We have an opportunity with this study to gain more knowledge about whether or not it makes sense for the City to take control of our destiny and get involved with building out a fiber network.

There are several great examples of what a fiber network can do. The city of Ammon, Idaho realized what is possible and is building the Internet network of the future. Households and businesses can instantly change Internet service providers using a specially-designed innovative portal. With this network they are saving money, creating competition for broadband services, and creating powerful new public safety applications. This video explains it more:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSQVvFY4lPI

Sandy Oregon has implemented a fiber network, because the private sector was unable to provide better internet services. A fiber network that connects the municipal buildings saves money in telecom costs, enabling better communication across municipal buildings, and livability for their citizens. You can view more here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBztjr2uCzg

Some concerns that the Coalition has heard over the past several months include:

If Broadband is already here (or will be here in a few years), why would the city get involved.

The term "broadband" is used quite loosely. The FCC defines broadband as 25 mbps download speeds, and 3 mbps upload. The state defines broadband as 10mbps for download and upload speeds. Some

companies in our area offer these speeds, and some do not. The speeds the Coalition is seeking is 100 mbps download and upload. Upload speeds are what is most important for small and home-based businesses.

While some areas of the community can get speeds at up to 50 mbps, there are many citizens in our community that are without any internet connectivity at all.

There's no guarantee that a private company will bring reliable high speed internet of 100 mbps or higher to our area. We could be at the will of private companies for when, or even if, we would see these types of speeds available to all citizens. Let's be on the front end of this change and chart our own destiny, rather than waiting to see if the private sector will ever decide to bring this to us.

The taxpayers would be liable to cover the costs.

No one in this room today can say with 100% confidence that this would cost the taxpayers money. The coalition does not want to push a project forward that would cost the tax payers money.

I don't need faster internet speeds.

While the individual user may not need anything faster than what is delivered today, that's not the case for every person in town. There are many areas of town that cannot get the internet at all. Getting these people connected would be a huge step forward.

Faster internet speeds benefit business, and not just businesses that may locate in downtown Caribou, but the small businesses in other parts of the community or the home-based business, or telecommuters. Just like roads and bridges were the driver for economic development in the 1950's the Internet is the driver today.

Back in 2000 dial-up internet was good enough for most people, and many people said "I'll never need anything better than that." But as the world continues to change and more things become connected to the internet the need for more bandwidth that is necessary to operate all of these things will grow.

Faster internet speeds can help expand current businesses, bring in new business, bring in telecommuters, provide real time data processing, and bring better access for cloud based systems, or even the ability to locate cloud based systems here. It allows for better communications around the city for police and fire. It opens many doors for education with a 21st century curriculum.

Today the schools of RSU 39 have internet speeds of 100 mbps download and upload. In talking with the Superintendent with these speeds they are able to provide additional on-line based curriculums, computer programs, and 21st century opportunities for the students because of this. Wouldn't it be great to offer this type of access and connectivity to students and families at home as well?

This is from a January 2015 Portland Press article:

> Maine has ranked close to the bottom on lists of broadband speeds by state, including a report based on Ookla NetMetrics data that said Maine ranks 49th out of the 50 states and a recent

report from Akamai Technologies that puts Maine at 48th among U.S. states and far behind countries such as Estonia and Macao.

Many citizens believe that we could see more small businesses, more telecommuting jobs, more distance learning opportunities and giving young people another reason to stay if we had better access to faster internet. The full survey results are included with this packet.

There is no guarantee when it comes to economic development that anything will work. We spend countless hours trying to come up with new ideas and new ways to attract businesses, families, and tourists to our area. This study is another piece of an overall economic strategy. One that the City Council and the Caribou Economic Growth Council discussed at length earlier this year.

While this economic development strategy would certainly provide better, faster internet to the citizens of Caribou, and in some cases provide internet for the first time to citizens of Caribou, this is not all about getting faster internet speeds for us individually. Yes, this is part of it but the larger vision (95% of the mission) of the broadband coalition is to provide state of the art infrastructure for potential businesses, increased resources for existing businesses, retaining the younger generation, recruiting telecommunication jobs, the list goes on.

The Coalition respectfully requests the Council invest in our community to gain the knowledge on the topic that is necessary, before writing the idea off completely.

1. Do you have internet service at your home or business?   305 - Yes   31 - No

2. Is this location your (Circle all that apply):   305-Home   49-Business   4-Organization

3. What is the monthly cost of your internet plan? <u>Average Cost was $66 per month</u>

4. Who provides your internet connection? <u>Time Warner Cable, Fairpoint and Pioneer Broadband were the most common answer</u>

5. Are you happy with your service?   136-Yes   171-No

6. Download Speed: <u>Average 16.67 mbps</u>   Upload Speed: <u>Average 2.32 mbps</u>

7. What are your needs for the internet?

311 - Personal	60 - Medical
139 - Education	28 - Marketing
158 - Research	33 - Movement of Large Files
163 - Streaming (Netflix, Hulu, etc.)	91 - Gaming
125 - Business	23 - Other:

8. Do you or any member of your household telecommute?   85 - Yes   235 - No

9. Which potential effects of improved broadband access do you believe would benefit our city?

213 - More Small Businesses	208 - More Telecommuting Jobs
128 - Fewer young adults leaving the area	186 - More distance learning access
90 - Increase year round residents	57 - Increase vacationers
30 - Other:	

10. Would you like training on using the internet?

35 - How to use an iPad or tablet	18 - How to use Facebook or Social Media
24 - How to use Skype	10 - How to use the internet to promote my business
25 - How to use QuickBooks	20 - How to use Office Applications
23 - Learn to use the internet to connect to family	
21 Other:	