

**TOWN OF BEDFORD**  
**April 16, 2021**  
**BEDFORD TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

A meeting of the Bedford Telecommunications Committee was held on Friday, April 16, 2021 virtually over the Zoom platform. Present were: Bill Duschatko (Chairman/Town Council Rep), Kathleen Bemiss (excused at 12:53), Mike Koustas, Peter Michaleas, and David Tuttle. Also present: Rick Sawyer, Town Manager.

Chairman Duschatko called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. and provided notice that the meeting was being conducted virtually due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04.

A roll call attendance was taken.

**New Business**

- Bedford School District Fiber Network – Chairman Duschatko indicated that Randy Protho from the District had been very helpful and noted that the schools are all interconnected with the SAU building with a side connection to BCTV. Currently they utilize 6 of their 12 fibers. Their system is leased with FirstLight through an education grant program that significantly reduces their cost.
- NH Fiber Networks – Chairman Duschatko indicated that the Town of Rindge had entered a partnership with Consolidated Communications for fiber connections to 2,700 locations with a \$3 million bond that is guaranteed by Consolidated. The town has free service and connections except for their fixed IP addresses. 75% of the town was wired in less than a year. Mr. Koustas noted that Fast Roads served as the backbone.

It was noted that Durham, Hampton, and Rye were receiving fiber investments by Consolidated through their Accelerated Fiber Expansion Program without municipalities needing to invest as Consolidated had decided there was a logical business reason to complete the work.

Chairman Duschatko noted that NH Electric Co-op has entered the broadband industry with service to some of their existing electric customers including Colebrook and Lempster and they were looking to make further investments in the Lakes Region. The Co-op is receiving FCC funds of \$35-40 million over the next 3-4 years to assist with the network expansion.

- Consolidated Communications Presentation – Jeff McIver and Michael Cannon from Consolidated presented a summary of initiatives they have and the status of their network in Bedford. In Chesterfield following a 2019 vote within 10 months fiber was available to anyone in town who wanted it and they are seeing 60% penetration or about 2,200 connections.

A five town public/private partnership initiative in Harrisville, Walpole, Westmorland, Dublin, and Ridge has moved forward with 441 miles of fiber with a residential monthly cost of \$65. Cares Act funding in 2020 provided for expansion in Mason, Danbury, Springfield, and Errol.

In Bedford Consolidated already has fiber available to approximately 1/3 of the community. They noted that they know they need to improve their marketing of their coverage here. It was noted that the residential and business fiber networks are separate networks in town. 6,664 out of 10,435 passings for Consolidated in Bedford do not meet the 25/3 broadband speeds or 62%. It was noted that issuing an RFP would be a good way to have Consolidated and others provide costs for construction and identify issues. The following slides were presented:

### 2020 Public Private Partnerships

- 5 Towns Voted in Favor of a Public Private Partnership
  - Harrisville, Walpole, Westmoreland, Dublin, and Rindge
- 8001 Total Passings
- Key Milestone Dates
  - August 24<sup>th</sup>-Beginning of Fiber Construction
  - November 2<sup>nd</sup>-Beginning of Splicing Work
  - November 30<sup>th</sup>-Fiber Testing will Begin
  - December 14<sup>th</sup>-Install 1<sup>st</sup> Fiber Customer



### NH Cares Fund Towns

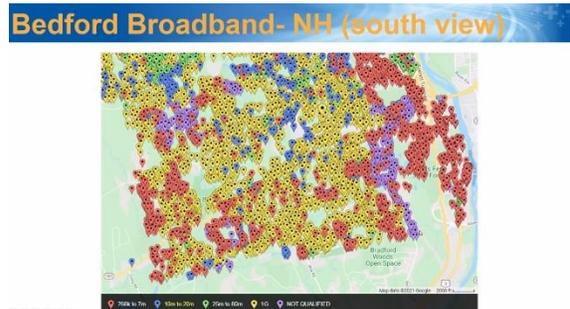
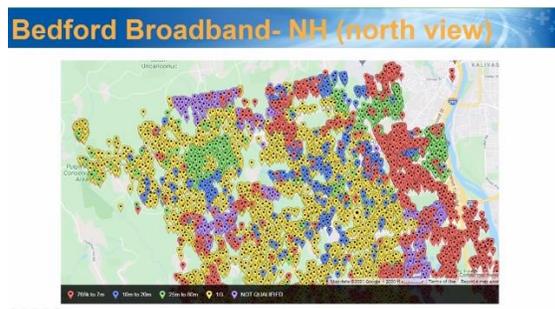
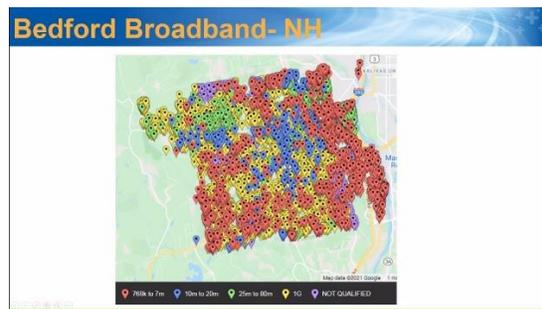
- Towns awarded by the State
  - Mason
  - Danbury
  - Springfield
  - Errol (Partial Award)
- Timeline
  - Construction started Mid-September
  - Entire Network built and ready for service by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December
  - All residents in the towns listed above are able to order fiber service today

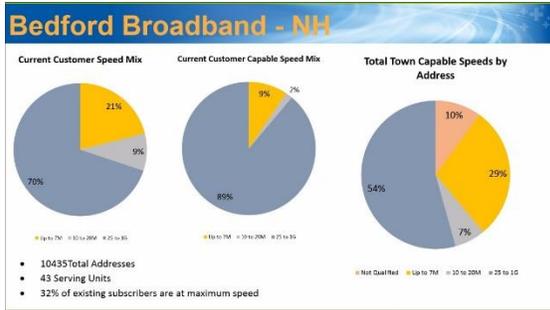


### Discussion/Opportunities

**Consolidated's accelerated fiber expansion program:**

- Building over 1.6M fiber passings and over 11,000 miles of fiber
- Over 400,000 fiber passings in NH with over 4,000 miles of fiber
- 5 year build program, in progress as of 1/4/21 including Keene, Rye Beach and Durham
- Multi-gigabit symmetrical consumer and small/medium business internet services with aggressive pricing
- Expanded fiber network to support large business, government and carrier services
- Consolidated's accelerated fiber to the premises expansion project between 2021-2025
- Collaboration with town officials on the build; timing, scope, Fiber Distribution Hub placement, traffic control



- General Discussion – The Committee discussed the potential for completing an RFP and for doing an updated survey of the community.

Chairman Duschatko adjourned the meeting at 1:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rick Sawyer, Town Manager