



Minutes

Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force

Meeting Date: March 9, 2021
Meeting Time: 2:00 p.m.*
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting
Prepared by Sarah Merrifield, Executive Assistant Committees of Council

A. Call to Order

***Meeting to start immediately following the adjournment of the Committee of the Whole meeting**

Deputy Mayor Potter called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. with Councillor Sampson and Mayor Soever present.

Town staff present were Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt and Director of Operations Shawn Carey.

- **Task Force Member Attendance**
- **Additions to the Agenda**

E.1.1 Bill 257, Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, 2021

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof

NOTE: In accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the Town Procedural By-law 2019-56, Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force members must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Clerk for inclusion on the Registry.

None

B. Staff Reports and Deputations

B.1 Deputations, if any

None

C. Matters for Discussion

C.1 Discussion regarding Method of Installation of Fiberoptic Conduit in The Blue Mountains Road Allowance

- Reviewed a draft “Variation Agreement” that the Town could consider using in situations where rural internet utilities need to be installed in an area other than the designated utility corridor
- In this situation, the Town would own the conduit, and internet providers would lease conduit space
- Any “Variation Agreement” requires equal and fair access to providers, subject to agreement conditions and requires legal services review
- Discussed that a local internet provider is considering conduit installation at Swiss Meadows and may require a similar “Variation Agreement” – a proposal from the internet service provider should be provided to the Task Force

C.2 Action Item Tracking

- Follow-up to Internet Service Providers who attended February 16, 2021 PIC
 - Draft “Thank You” messaging to participating Internet Service Providers to advise the Town is open to receiving proposals for internet service installation in the rural areas
 - Deputy Mayor Potter to draft letter to SWIFT regarding potential funding
- Request for Information, if deemed the right path forward
 - On hold indefinitely
- Meeting with CENG representative
 - Meeting set up with CENG at the end of March
- One-on-one meetings with Internet Service Providers
 - On hold indefinitely
- Internet Speed Test Challenge
 - Report going to Committee of the Whole March 23, 2021
 - Outlines request for funding
- Installation guidelines for conduit in The Blue Mountains Road Allowance
 - Shawn Carey to follow-up
- Public RABIT Task Force meeting
 - Should coincide with Internet Speed Test Challenge, likely the first week of May, 2021

D. Correspondence

None

E. New and Unfinished Business

E.1 Additions to the Agenda

E.1.1 Bill 257, Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, 2021

- Bill proposed at the Ontario Legislature will seek increased cooperation between municipalities and utility owners to facilitate installation of broadband internet

E.2 Items Identified for Discussion at Next Meeting

- Proposal by Bruce Street Technologies
- Update on Eh!Tel and GBTEL Inc. Universal Broadband Fund proposals
- March 23, 2021 Internet Speed Test Report

F. Upcoming Meeting Dates

March 17, 2021

G. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.