



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Jim Bowlin and City Council Members
City Attorney John Young
City Administrator Steve Cross

From: Larry Brost, Ward One City Council Member

Subject: Internet Access

Date: January 3, 2023

As the internet project (the “Project”) gains cadence as represented by the Spectrum team in a meeting with the City and the build out continues toward reaching our residents, I feel the City of Wildwood needs to further define its proactive and reactive approach, especially in 2023 and 2024.

While the members of the Council and City staff may have varying thoughts as to best practices toward the successful conclusion of the Project, I feel the following is important to harness the knowledge and talent of the City staff, Council, and our residents for the overall benefit of our residents.

While common practice for the City may be to have such a request go through and get formulated at a committee level, one is not functioning at this time for the Project. I feel Council presence on a committee is important as resident questions and issues will likely accelerate.

Accordingly, I request the following be presented to the City Council for action:

1. Form a steering committee or ad hoc committee. The committee would consist of City staff engaged in the project and three City Council members, which would report to the City Council. Tasks would include collectively reviewing and monitoring progress, reporting on progress, and meeting regularly with Spectrum. I recommend such a committee meet two times a month, with one meeting including the representatives of Spectrum. We need to prepare for what will likely be an increase in resident questions, issues, etc. Like other committees, all Council members are welcome and should participate in providing their thoughts and concerns.
2. This Committee should recruit a resource to lead the Project which would be approved by City Council. One can argue this is a very critical project in the history of our city, and the use of committees and a project lead are common practices. Further, since our City Administrator Steve Cross who has carried the weight of this Project, has announced his plans to retire, such a resource will be critical for a smooth succession.

3. Most important is high speed internet reaches our residents and the City's involvement in bringing service to our residents concludes. The City's future involvement should be like interactions we have now with Ameren, Spire, etc. An example of the City being proactive and reactive is the "Spectrum List" of residents included in the contract to receive service. From Spectrum's viewpoint this seems to have evolved to the contract number of a minimum 2,025 unserved and under-served residences which likely will result in more than 2,025 residences receiving fiber. Spectrum also acknowledges their "walk out", which developed the Spectrum List, has issues. For months the City has been collecting resident information as to level of internet service. At this time, I would like City Council to approve immediate action toward the development of a comprehensive electronic list of ALL residences in Wildwood in a form to review, track, and ensure all residents have been consciously included to receive high speed internet or consciously excluded. The City's approach of being reactive to issues with the Spectrum list has been positive for our residents, but I strongly feel we need to also be more proactive.