



WILDWOOD

**Meeting Minutes for the
Wednesday, May 22, 2019
Rural Internet Access Committee Meeting
6:30 p.m.
Wildwood City Hall – Council Chambers
16860 Main Street, Wildwood, Missouri 63040**

1. Welcome And Roll Call

Chair Kallaus called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and requested a roll call of the members be taken by the Department. The following members were in attendance: Committee Members Kallaus, Trunko, and Jackson, along with Council Liaisons Jordan and McGowen. Committee Member Hitzeman was absent. Also in attendance was Tom Asp of CTC Technology & Energy, Chris Bay of Bays-ET, Rob Quest of Wisper ISP, and Department of Planning staff Director Vujnich and Planner Newberry.

2. Approval Of Minutes From The Meeting Of February 5, 2019

The Chair requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the Committee's February 5, 2019 meeting, which was made by Committee Member Jackson, seconded by Committee Member Trunko, and hearing no objections or changes to them requested a voice vote. A voice vote was taken to approve the minutes and passed unanimously.

3. Presentation By, And Discussion With, CTC Technology And Energy, The City's Consultant Engaged To Develop Workable Solutions To Solve The City's Rural Internet Issues. This Discussion May Identify Potential Fiber Approaches And Preliminary Costs.

a. Consultants' Presentation, With Comments And Questions

Director of Planning Vujnich reviewed the City's challenges relative to the lack of high-speed internet in its rural areas and then introduced Mr. Tom Asp of CTC Technology & Energy. Mr. Asp provided a preliminary report on his company's findings relative to the challenges outlined by the Director and the potential solutions to the problem. He described the cost estimates for fiber to the premise, which is the state-of-the-art technology and the future-proof solution for this need and then outlined these deployment costs. The report segmented the community into three (3) areas by density and then provided a range of eight (8) approaches from fiber to the premise, to middle mile solutions, to City provided incentives, to continuing with the current solution. He then reviewed key factors in each approach, including the cost of ownership and operation.

Mr. Asp reviewed his discussions with Ameren Missouri, who is quite supportive of the City's efforts and its potential role in a solution. Ameren Missouri is an investor-owned utility that does not have a need for the fiber to the premise and will not be pursuing that type of install. Ameren Missouri is regulated by the Missouri

Public Service Commission. Mr. Asp noted that in his conversations with Ameren, Missouri, its existing fiber network does not serve the City's problems relative to last mile locations and connections to homes, since it is installed between major transmission substations, but it may be helpful in transport services for long-haul and backhaul transport of data and they may allow this use. However, if poles would need to be upgraded, those costs would be passed on and pole attachment fees would be assessed as well. It was Mr. Asp's determination that Ameren Missouri should not significantly modify the City's approach

Discussion was held among the Committee Members and Consultant about the following items: the Ameren partnership may be helpful in the future, but would not impact the City's selected direction, nor the current fiber pilot project underway in the Hawks Rest Subdivision, since Ameren Missouri is not in a position to assist in the last mile and connections to the home; the registration process with Missouri Public Service Commission for providers; the density of the areas lacking service; the number of passings sets the cost of fiber installation; the goal to build fiber along the streets; the drop costs, which are high in low density; the lack of a telephone or electric cooperative to spread the cost, as was done in other areas of the country; the lack of grant funding available; the cost of installing raw fiber and passing every home or business in the community, which is approximately fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000.00); the estimated cost of fiber installation per home, which is approximately twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000.00); the surprise of the consultant with the magnitude of the costs; and the potential for pursuing a lobbying effort to assist the City with funding.

Mr. Asp then reviewed the options outlined in the draft report, including the four (4) fiber to the premise options. The options include, Option A – City installs the infrastructure and is the ISP; Option B - Open access, where the City builds the network, but others operate it; Option C – Break down further two (2) private operators, including both retail and electronics; Option D – leasing dark fiber to premises, similar to the Westminster model, where the City owns the drop to the premise; Option E - dark middle mile – Internet Service Providers would leverage middle mile fibers. Estimated cost of \$4.3 million, but lacks incentive to ISPs; Option F. – leveraging cash incentives for Spectrum or other provider to complete install. It was noted, Spectrum is interested in \$2 to \$3 million dollars, but there are concerns with legal and other hurdles; and Options G and H – fill the short-term gap, as a long-term solution is identified.

Discussion continued regarding requiring new development in low density areas, which focused on installation of fiber at the time of construction. It was noted the best solution may be a hybrid approach utilizing several components. An approach that would combine Options E and F, coupled with household participation, may see the best success, especially since the middle mile is more aerial and, therefore, less expensive.

Consensus was reached by the Committee Members to have the consultant provide an Executive Summary for Option E, F, and G.

b. Updates from Bays ET and Wisper ISP

Both current wireless internet service providers were in attendance and provided the following updates:

Rob Quest, Wisper ISP, noted the current efforts of Wisper ISP, include a fiber project, but not in Wildwood. The company plans to continue to do what they are doing.

Chris Bay, Bays-ET, noted he is currently installing fiber in Wildwood and would like to pursue a partnership with the City to continue to expand this effort.

c. **Other**

4. **Next Steps for Committee**

None noted.

5. **Other Items for Consideration**

None.

6. **Public Comments**

John Gragnani, Council Member Ward One, noted the internet services in rural areas is poor and some residents are willing to contribute to solutions. He believes fiber optic is the best solution and best return on investment.

Bill Young, Wild Horse Valley Subdivision, questioned if the consultant had completed a survey of existing assets.

7. **Next Meeting Date – To Be Determined (Based Upon Availability Of Draft Report From CTC Technology And Energy)**

8. **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

Committee Member Jackson offered his condolences to the family of Ray Manton.

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn, which was made by Committee Member Trunko, seconded by Council Member Jordan, and hearing no objections the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:22 p.m.