

Islesboro Municipal Broadband Committee
Special Meeting
Wednesday, June 23, 2026
In-Person Meeting at 10:00 AM, Town Office

 **APPROVED**
9/10/26

MINUTES

1. Call to Order & Establishment of a Quorum

Chair Barry Wherren called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM, and a quorum was established with over 3 members present.

Members Present in Person: Chair Barry Wherren, Patrick Nettles

Members Present via Zoom: Bruce Walker

Members Absent: John Rex-Waller, Trevor Blackford, Steve Pendleton, Ex Officio

GWl Representatives in Person: Chris Whelan, Will Duquette, Joshua Bohar

GWl Representatives via Zoom: Tom Cecere

Mac Mountain Representatives via Zoom: Adam Gaston, Tevis Piper, Drew Deaton, Catherine Vaughan, Neil Katz

Others Present: Town Manager Janet Anderson, Page Clason, Frank Start

Others Present via Zoom: Holly Fields (10:27)

2. Review policies and procedures with IMB's Network Operator, Mac Mountain

i. Change Management Style

- Barry Wherren stated that, functionally, the network is performing well. However, from the IMB Committee's perspective, there are some operational areas that need to be improved, and the network needs care and feeding. We'd like to be ahead of the curve.
- Barry added that the committee had discussions with GWl last June about taking a proactive stance in terms of operating the network. We didn't see that move forward much. We feel like we are requesting things of them rather than them leading us. We'd like that to change, because it's their role to provide us with information and insights.
- Chris Whelan stated that he agreed. We want you to feel the love we show to customers and see the work we're doing on the back end. It sounds like we're not conveying that properly. GWl continues to react to problems in a timely fashion. It seems we're not communicating that to IMB. We've had a cadence with the previous IMB representatives. We're trying to work out what the new footing should look like. We're here to listen to issues and provide concrete answers. He asked the committee where they feel the network is being neglected.

ii. OSP Audit and Maintenance

- Chris stated that, per the contract, the audit is an inspection that's supposed to happen yearly. It's a visual inspection at key locations throughout the network to make sure there's nothing major going on. That doesn't absolve us from proactive maintenance. Chris added that we started the conversation last year, and he kicked off an Internal audit, which was more than a visual inspection. This was intended to give the committee a ceiling of potential expense. We found things like cables pulling out of splice cases. If there's no slack, we need to replace sections of cable, which gets costly. It's not urgent, but should be addressed at some point. This was a rough 10% sampling, and we extrapolated what the expenses could be, so the committee could budget.

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- Chris stated that there's still maintenance that needs to happen. We'd stretch the Town's dollar as far as possible per year, based on the estimates and priorities.
- Chris added that a full-on audit is costly. We can give an estimate for that, but it would involve a contractor documenting every splice case and fiber. This is outside the scope of the operating agreement. This is why we recommended working within a budget and fixing the most egregious stuff first. We can evaluate again after that work is completed. However, we can change that, and be flexible on the order of things.
- Barry stated that He thinks there are misunderstandings. Our perceptions of inspections and audits are different. We don't want to get our bond paid off and then have to redo the whole fiber. It's important to keep it maintained. The committee doesn't feel that it's being maintained as we expected. For the audit, Hawkeye came out, and then the person at GWI who was in charge of the audit left and is no longer with the company. We have no idea what was done and what wasn't done.
- Chris agreed that progress reports should have been provided along the way. Joshua Bohar is in charge of the team that would generate those progress reports and keep the committee plugged into that project. We want to do everything that's reasonable to maintain the network. He doesn't believe the network is at risk of major failure because of neglect. Fiber is robust. If there's any degradation, we will see ONTs that will be on alarm, and ONTs offline. We can see the performance of the network and there's no degradation. Our biggest repair problems are limbs falling, pole hits, etc. When these are addressed, it's a longer-term repair.
- Neil Katz added that this is the same level of inspection and care that we provide to our own fiber networks and other networks in which we operate. A physical inspection and driving out will help get some level of optical due diligence performed. Doing it more frequently becomes cost prohibitive, and doesn't necessarily improve performance of the network.
- Joshua Bohar stated that this is a young network. OSP inspections, looking at things from the ground, are like an annual physical. The sampling that our internal team did is like a full-body scan. Is it worth it to spend money on things that are fully functioning? A full audit is not typical for a young network. We could schedule deeper dives section by section so it's not a big upfront analysis.
- Barry stated that we do get microbursts, which can cause disruption. Would that be normal wear and tear? Joshua replied that we can talk further. He's been doing some proactive wind-dampening work on the islands of Lake Champlain.
- Tevis Piper stated that we dropped the ball with progress updates and communication after Andy left the company. We can improve that going forward. He'd like to establish a monthly meeting amongst our two groups, where there's an opportunity to discuss concerns.
- Cathy Vaughan added that we want to address all the items on the list. We are committed as a new team to support in however it's needed. We own the fact that it wasn't as you anticipated. We have new people, and new ways of going about things. We are committed to a high level of service.
- Patrick stated that he is a new member of the committee and is not well versed in the transition to new management, but he sees that every time there's a meeting, we expect someone from the company. However, there hasn't been much attendance at the three quarterly meetings he's been to. Also, people who have been doing the work in the field are not with company

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anymore, and we don't know who's doing the work or what they are doing. Communications are scoring low right now.

- Chris replied that the people in the room have been with the company a long time and are available. Call with concerns. We will provide a great escalation list.
- Barry stated he hears and appreciates what the team is saying. However, there is also a credibility issue. In the past and currently, we request stuff and it's like a void. That needs to be restored.
- Chris replied that with every request, there have been internal conversations. We're just not closing the loop. We're taking this as a call to arms. We're aware that we have to re-earn trust.
- Barry stated that regarding the audit/inspections, if we had a good baseline, the committee would be favorable to not having them every year, as long as we had a good change control system so we know what happened, and that it's been dealt with. If we don't know what the baselines are anymore, it's more important to us to have a more rigorous review of the system. We need to have a comfort level that network is in good shape.
- Patrick shared an example. There was a spares issue for radios, and there was a plan to address it. We're stopped halfway through that plan, and we don't know what happens next. In terms of equipment, we need to have a clear view of when it's going to be likely that we'll need to have funds for replacement. If we're talking about 40 years of fiber, in 20 years, are we considering going underground, or another kind of fiber? Can we have a staged process planned over that period of time?
- Chris replied that if the committee wants the fiber to go underground, we can do some exploration for cost, etc. We will then the Town will do a cost-benefit analysis. We would provide recommendations based on our experience. If we're meeting at a regular cadence that we're proposing, then this should be a transparent discussion. The GPON ONT system that IMB is running has plenty of life in it. The way it's built, we can transition one at a time, or do a rip and replace. Both options have very different cost structures and impacts to customers. We can do an attrition-based upgrade plan path. It depends on IMB's plans for speed and services. Share those with us and we'll find the best solution. Calix is still best from a price standpoint. Will is going to put together a plan to upgrade the wireless components, including Wi-Fi routers.
- Neil added that the company is happy to check out any level of the network, and align that with a longer-term annual plan. We're happy to work with IMB on funds planning.
- Barry stated he was trying to think of a way to systematize the audit/inspection. September 1st would be a reasonable time to have all the information, because we have a budget cycle to conform to. January might be better, because we have to do the budgets in February.
- Chris asked about a target or a hard cap for a budget. He recommends getting the stuff that is at risk of causing outages or performance degradation. Barry replied that we want to keep the customers happy, so whatever is needed to maintain that level of service.
- Will responded to Patrick's concern about the radio spares. He stated that Frank has Cambium radios and is testing them. He's having some issues getting them to stay locked on. These require GPS lock-on in order to work. We don't want to deploy a product that's not reliable.
- Chris added that we have spares for everything except one link on 700 Acre Island. Because it's licensed to Spectrum, they're specific to each link. Sourcing that extra radio is possible, but it's an aftermarket product now.

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- Barry replied that we would have liked to see the testing done in April, so then we'd have all the spares here. We received the new equipment in April.
- The equipment was shipped to Frank, returned, and then shipped again. He didn't receive it until June 5th.
- Barry reiterated that the stuff was here at the end of April, and it's been since then to get the process moving. It's getting into a problem time of year for us. It feels like it wasn't handled properly.
- Patrick added that while we need to worry about things that are 10 or 20 years out, we've got one link that's unprotected at the moment.
- Chris asked if the committee prefers to continue down the path of wireless, or to seek a spare immediately.
- Patrick stated he's not close enough to the details to suggest one or the other. Maybe it's back to communications. At our last meeting a few weeks ago, we didn't have a plan for that.
- Barry added that the company is supposed to provide the lead. It would have been good to have been told last year that we don't have a spare for 700 Acre, and asked what we wanted to do about it.
- Chris asked if the committee was provided any documentation when Roger Heinen handed over the helm. The company is operating under a certain methodology and assumption. The assumption was that that was an acceptable risk by Roger previously. We were planning to deal with that during the upgrade. We will do a better job of communicating, and reset expectations and assumptions.

iii. Spares Inventory/Rapid Response

- Barry stated we've identified some areas that we need to address, and we're glad to work collaboratively to do that. We're going to be getting a container, where we can store equipment in a common location. Currently, equipment is scattered, which makes it difficult.
- Page explained that everything he's aware of should be in the PoP building.
- Barry stated that we need the spares inventory, where it is and how old it is, etc.
- Chris stated that electronic spares are in the PoP, and those are in the system so we can see at least one line card. You have a full chassis there ready to go. There is also redundancy on the transport gear, including the line cards. Even if all that fails, we have spares. As part of a disaster plan that Will is putting together is that we will use that to restore services. As Plan Z, we could actually bypass the gear that's there and do direct interconnections.
- Chris added that we have lots of plans for disaster. We will formalize those and provide them. There are lots of scenarios we can run through and help provide a comfort level. Chris would like to focus on the next transition and investing in that instead of buying more spares.
- Barry replied that we need to know what's there, and have a good plan, so we know what any response is going to be, and make sure everything stays up to the maximum time it can stay up.
- Chris stated that the inventory is tracked on an internal spreadsheet that can't be shared, but Will can export it as a report, or move it to a shared folder that can be accessed in real time.

iv. Vetro Data Integrity

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- Barry stated that Page has had some occasions where the fiber numbering has not been correct. We need to validate the integrity of the data.
- Chris stated that the data that went into the Vetro fiber map was loaded from the original construction as-built information. We update Vetro as changes are made. We have to be made aware of those changes, or we can't update it. It is our authoritative location for storing this data. Maybe someone transposed fiber, perhaps during testing, but these things happen. Chris would not classify the data as lacking integrity or being problematic. If there is a substantial problem, Chris will work directly with the contractors and figure it out. Maybe we messed up on splices. It's our job as an operator to make sure that stays up-to-date.
- Barry asked how the process is set up. Chris replied that they will refine the process for knowing what's being done. Right now, the expectation is that contractors will get a scope of work from us, and from the Vetro Fiber map, we would generate whatever splice diagram needed. If a contractor runs into a problem or discrepancy, they would communicate back, and that information would be transposed into the map. It may not be 100% accurate, but it's usable and workable.
- Barry stated that there was a previous conversation about giving Page access to the map.
- Chris replied that the company does not give access to contractors. We give them splice info. In limited cases, we give access to contractors who do construction, so they can put as-builts directly in there.
- IMB can have a view account for the data. We gave a quote for that last year. If IMB shares data with a contractor, that is within IMB's rights. We just need to know in order to update Vetro.

v. Equipment Upgrades

- Barry stated that we have a sense, based on what Will provided a while ago, that we have low traffic levels, about 1.2 or 1.5 gigs, through our two 10-gig links. Going up to higher speeds is nice, but it's not practical or useful for us.
- Chris stated that either 10-gig link could fail and we'd still be using only 20%. We have plenty of capability there. Discussion about details and options.
- Chris added that with XGS-PON and future technology, you're moving from a 2 x 1.25 gig to a 10 x 10. If you start to see capacity issues at the old level, and we've done the splitting we can, that would be the next trigger point to do an XGS-PON upgrade. We're not there yet, and won't be for the next year or two, at least. To prepare, it makes sense to budget to buy a line card, some XGS ONTs, and a gateway, based on Will's review. The Wi-Fi 7 gateways are comparably priced to what you were buying.
- Barry stated that we need a formal roll-out plan (recommendation). We can provide what we anticipate the needs will be, and monitor as we go.
- Bruce asked how peak bandwidth is measured.
- Chris replied that they have an SNMP monitoring engine that's polling every OLT, set to a 5-minute average. We can see the bandwidth and peaks throughout the day. In general, as soon as 60% of capacity is reached, we kick off a project upgrade. By the time that's rolled out, it's closer to 80%. People start to notice a difference above that. 60% is the industry norm for upgrades.

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- Bruce stated he would like to see occasional reporting on this, for long-term trends, especially seasonal, the last three years, etc.
- Chris replied that the company does reporting by creating a PDF output that's saved in a folder, accessible to IMB. Now that we're on the GAIIA platform, Will and the team will do this manually. It's done quarterly. The last three months is the best view.
- Cathy asked if something is needed from Barry and IMB before making a proposal. She will put that in a timeline of what we need to get and when so that we can meet our deadlines.
- Chris stated that the gig is fine, so we don't need to do an immediate XGS-PON upgrade. He asked if there's interest in new Wi-Fi gateways. Barry said it depends on the lifecycle of the current equipment. Chris stated that Wi-Fi is yearly.
- Patrick stated that many people might not want or need the latest upgrades.
- Discussion of types of ONTs: standalone vs. Wi-Fi integrated. The combo units would have to be put into bridge mode, connecting a new gateway.
- Chris recommended the committee provide an estimate of how many wireless units will be needed. He will then provide estimates. Discussion about support for the Calix system.
- Barry stated the committee would like to have a discussion with Will about the technology first so we know the playing field we are on and how we can best navigate that field.

vi. Wireless Radio Links

- Discussion on this took place earlier in the meeting.
- Barry stated that he's looking for a date for when we can implement the equipment and test it.
- Will replied that Frank is hoping to have the testing done by July 2nd, and then plans to install week of July 13th.
- Page stated that the homeowner will not let it happen on July 13th.
- Barry replied that we'll have to work around the dates. Maybe installation can happen on Seal Island that week.

vii. Access to Subscriber and Report Information

- Barry stated that he presumes a lot of this will be covered in GAIIA once it's fully operational. We need to be able to monitor. We'd like to get reports or have access directly.
- Chris stated that the company's goal is to replicate the functionality that existed under Sales Force. We had the ability to see in real time any open tickets in the IMB network, and stats. Adam would be working on deploying that functionality soon. We're completely in GAIIA right now, and working out the kinks on some of the automation backend stuff. We're currently flushing out the outage module, and trying to replicate it in GAIIA.
- Adam confirmed that this is in progress. Some reports exist, and for any additional reports that we need to build out, we'll be able to do that without issue. One of the biggest issues is access. He's happy to sit through with the IMB to make sure that the login actions take place, and we go through the training again. He didn't receive a response back about training earlier, but can set up a training schedule for GAIIA again.
- Barry replied that he was on vacation when the first links went out, and they timed out. We need refreshed links so we can complete the setup process. Barry is using Chrome software.
- Adam stated that Barry will need to download the Island IO browser.

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- Barry stated that Page and Tina at the Town Office will need to be set up with the browser.
- Page added that before, we had processes with GWI. Now that we have GAIIA, those processes haven't been changed over. We need to get this stuff aligned, so we can use GAIIA effectively.
- Chris stated that they will iron that out. They will optimize the processes.
- Cathy asked if it would be helpful to have a checklist for access and training for Town staff.
- Tom suggested focusing the checklist on things that people are going to do on a repeated basis.
- Chris suggested three training sessions, one for contractors, one for IMB management, one for administration at the Town Office.
- Page suggested an original meeting with all parties, so we all hear what's going on for upfront processes, procedures, and workflow.
- Page also suggested an escalation list and a contact, in case we need to talk to someone for something we don't know how to handle in GAIIA.
- Chris agreed with the need for an escalation contact list.
- Barry stated that we need one master subscriber list.
- Adam replied that the source of truth will be GAIIA. However, they are happy to work with IMB in a spreadsheet if that's preferred for tracking things, making sure both systems align.
- Chris added that the opportunity is, instead of a spreadsheet, we add in GAIIA whatever attributes that were tracked separately.
- Adam added that as the Town maintains whether or not subscribers have paid for fiber, it's 100% on the Town to identify and track that.

viii. Proactive Preparations for Major Storm Events

- Barry stated that because we're removed from the mainland, all the contractors will be busy elsewhere in the event of a storm.
- Joshua stated that he had a conversation with some CMP folks on the ferry ride over today. They station a truck here, and send crews if they have to.
- Barry suggested that GWI/Mac Mountain crews can classify their ferry trip as an emergency.
- Joshua stated that a plan is in the works.

3. Other

- Patrick asked about how Islesboro fits into Mac Mountain business model. Are we unique, or do you have other networks that you're maintaining in the same way? How does this fit within your target for what you want to do?
- Tom replied that we manage several networks across New England. Islesboro fits beautifully into our business model. One of Tom's tasks is to manage the relationships amongst those managed networks. Many of them are municipally owned. That's the most common model. We're very comfortable, and it's an important part of our business model.
- Chris elaborated that Islesboro is one of six networks we operate. They range from 100 units to thousands of units. This fits perfectly. He saw the Islesboro created initially, so it holds a special place in his heart. From an operation side, the way this network is run is ideal.
- Barry stated we have not received invoicing from Hawkeye, and the budget closes June 30th. Neil will check on that and report back later today.

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- Josh stated that they did about 80% of the transfers that we found when we did the OSP ride-out. He will send a list of what's been done. There were about 380 things we saw that could use correction. We plan on getting all the transfers done by the first week of July, and finish the technical work by the end of July. 50% of the work was drops that needed to be modified or fixed. That is planned for August.
- Barry stated that we were anticipating that this would all be done by the end of this budget year. This leaves us in the waffle area. He requested that list of what's been done, what's expected to be done, and timetables.
- Chris requested that emails from CMP get automatically forwarded so Mac Mountain can get notified. They are trying to see if there's a work-around to see if Mac Mtn can be proxy for IMB in there. This is done for other networks, so the town doesn't see that email normally.
- Frank Start stated that some work is falling through the cracks. He stated he keeps asking about how that's being tracked. If a repair or a maintenance item can't be completed, how is that notated and tracked? Frank asked what they consider high priority vs. low priority.
- Chris replied that, internally, they use Monday.com for tracking the status of things. If we know about it, it would be tracked to completion. If anyone runs into anything that's a problem, send an email with photos, and we'll dig into it.
- Page added that, in his opinion, there are three or four high-priority items. They are on the list.
- Chris stated that anything that's being tracked in Monday.com, the Town will have visibility to that. Anything that's affecting multiple customers is the highest priority. A timeframe is not included, as it is not in the agreement. We can't be held to something that the Town could potentially refuse. We manage the process.
- Cathy added that we don't want to assume our list is complete. For the reset we need to make sure we're all working off the same list. This will take input from both sides to make sure we start out on level playing ground to meet expectations of what the priorities are.
- Chris added that we're trying to catch up and reset. He encouraged Frank to talk to representatives on IMB and make sure they feel the same sense of priority.
- Page asked to clarify that the list is already in Monday.com. He asked if IMB will have access to that, and what's the timeline.
- Chris replied that IMB will have access. At the conclusion of this meeting, we will put together some timelines. He would like to roll everything out at the same time (shared Google Drive, inventory, etc.).
- Frank asked about inventory specifics.
- Page added that his view is that we should manage the inventory locally, but Mac Mtn. should advise and oversee. We need more parts, but Mac Mtn might want to look at inventory oversight.
- Chris replied that they will figure out exactly what the inventory stock is, and will leverage that storage container when it shows up and put all the OSP stuff in there. It's fine if the count is managed locally. The concern is that everything needs to stay synched.
- Frank asked technical questions about specific locations.
- Cathy asked about the process when contractors do work, and how we know the work is done and the system is updated.
- Chris stated that someone in the engineering team would generate a scope of work. We work with someone on-site. They'd roll out and give us feedback, and ideally, we'd update the system right then. Outages are handled differently because we want to roll quickly. With maintenance, we expect a

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contractor to give us results and pictures of the work completed. The job is closed out when the feedback loop reaches back to the engineering team.

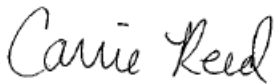
- Frank asked about Vetro and what was the roadblock for just maintaining the spreadsheets.
- Chris replied that the Town pays Mac Mtn to be the operator and maintain the data. Spreadsheets are inadequate for troubleshooting a network. The company works out of Vetro. We can export the info.
- Frank asked about WiFi, and who is billing for services.
- Chris replied that the Town is the ISP, and dictates prices and service levels. If the Town wants to offer mesh services, that could substantially change the cost per unit. Mac Mtn supporting the services is what the agreement is.
- Page stated that he is missing role that Donna Durkin used to fill, where there was a single point of contact, an account manager assigned to Islesboro. We'd love to see that come back. He would also like to see support streamlined for the island. In generic support, the reps don't understand the island network. Users get told the wrong information. Consider a dedicated phone number or phone menu option for Islesboro support, and the reps are trained in Islesboro issues.
- Chris replied that Tevis has done extensive research on custom models. We can dig into that. We're also working on a single point of contact. We will get back with a more clear-cut path.
- Adam stated that the company implemented a dedicated toll-free line for Islesboro a couple months ago. That's separate from GWI.

4. Adjourn

Motion by P. Nettles, seconded by B. Walker, to adjourn meeting at 11:57 AM. No discussion. Roll Call.

Motion passed, 3 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary