

CITY OF LAMBERTVILLE
BROADBAND, CABLE, TELEPHONE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REORGANIZATION MEETING
January 30, 2023, 7:00 P.M.
Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center
25 South Union Street, Lambertville
MINUTES

Chairman Brand opened the meeting by stating that notice of the meeting had been provided pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act and that the meeting was being recorded and streamed live on the Zoom Meeting Platform.

Roll Call was Taken.

Present:

Stefanie Brand

David Burd

Steven Chernoski

Present on Zoom:

John Weber

Not Present:

Shaun Ellis

Stefanie Brand noted that this meeting was the Reorganization Meeting for the Committee. Ward Sanders' term ended and he was no longer on the Committee. John Weber had been appointed and was joining the Committee in his place. Stefanie Brand was reappointed for a new term. Ms. Brand thanked all members of the Committee past and present for their willingness to serve and indicated that she had spoken to Mayor Nowick and that he had asked her to pass on his thanks as well.

The Committee reviewed the minutes of its last meeting on May 22, 2022 that were prepared and circulated by Shaun Ellis. David Burd moved to approve the minutes, Steven Chernoski seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Old Business

Ms. Brand reported that since the last meeting the Mayor and Council had approved the Ordinance expanding the Committee's jurisdiction to provide advice to the Governing Body on issues relating not only to Cable but also to Broadband and Telephone.

Ms. Brand noted that since the last meeting the FCC Broadband maps had become available and had been circulated to Committee members. They showed generally substantial coverage

within Lambertville, but to determine whether there is full coverage you would have to type in individual addresses. She also indicated that the BPU Survey on broadband coverage was circulated to Lambertville citizens through the Lambertville Matters newsletter and that she had a call in to BPU to find out if there was a way to get the results of the survey from Lambertville residents.

Ms. Brand and Mr. Burd reported on their January 18, 2023 meeting with Fred DeAndrea from Comcast. The meeting was held at City Hall and the Mayor and City Clerk were also in attendance. Comcast confirmed that the City was mostly wired with fiber for broadband except for a small area by the Municipal Utilities Authority facility on the south end of town near the tow path. He indicated he would provide more information on what would be required to wire that area. Also discussed at that meeting was how residents could return old equipment or obtain assistance that would be provided at an Xfinity store since there is no store in town. He indicated that an Xfinity store had opened in Flemington and was now the closest store. He also stated that residents could print out a label and mail back equipment at any UPS Store. He was going to check on the location of UPS Stores in Lambertville or close by. Mr. DeAndrea also agreed to provide us with additional information regarding assistance programs available to Lambertville customers. The City will be providing Comcast with information regarding municipal needs and necessary upgrades. Mr. DeAndrea indicated that Comcast expects to be rolling out network upgrades in Lambertville over the next few years that would allow for better service up to 10 gigs.

Mr. Chernoski reported on his attempts to follow up with local state assembly representatives regarding federal assistance for broadband access. He indicated that still had not heard anything back from them. Ms. Brand stated that she had listened in on a call in the fall with the federal government regarding the federal money that stated there would be a single state agency in charge of distributing the money. She said she would add it to the questions she would ask the BPU.

New Business

The Committee discuss flyers and educational materials that it would prepare to provide information to Lambertville citizens regarding their broadband, cable and telephone options. We discussed what level of detail to provide since the information changes frequently. We also discussed reports that Verizon is now offering 5G wireless service in Lambertville. It does not appear that Verizon intends to offer FIOS service in Lambertville. No final resolution was reached on these issues but it was agreed there would be more discussion.

Ms. Brand reported that the City had received a packet from BPU that Comcast's franchise renewal was up and that we needed to begin the renewal process. The franchise expires in October 2025 and Comcast is entitled to a 10 year extension as long as it is in compliance with its franchise. As part of the process we will need to ascertain compliance with the franchise and the municipal report is due by October 2024. We will need to do an investigation and provide a report to the Governing Body so they can provide that municipal report to BPU by

October 2024. Ms. Brand stated that she had spoken to BPU and they would be providing a workshop for the City some time in March.

Motion to adjourn. David Burd moved, Steven Chernoski Second. Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.