

Meeting Minutes
Broadband Community Interest Meeting #1

December 17, 2019
Mountain View Lakes Community Building
12798 Parker Ave Pine, CO

Meeting called by:

Bev Long, Elk Falls Ranch

Committee Members in Attendance:

Bev Long, Elk Falls Ranch
John Carr, Park County Broadband Advisory Board
Diana Link, Mountain View Lakes
Austin Schaefer Mountain View Lakes

Committee Members not in Attendance:

Rena Braun, Elk Falls Ranch
Laura Nesbitt, Elk falls Ranch
Zach Taylor, Staunton State Park

Guests in Attendance:

Mountain View Lakes:
Michael LeFever (VP of MVL HOA)
Lee Willis
Dewey Webber
Casey Hughes
JoAnn Harris
Darren Stambaugh

Woodside:

Mary Schoen (2,3,4)
Lara Reinoehl (5,6)
David Barona
Pamela Hyer
Bruce Bohne
Ken Vantuyl
Bob Voth (1)

Elk Falls Ranch:

Ralph Kolva
Laura Pyle
Peter Zeeb
Steve Sparer

Call to Order

A Broadband Community Interest Meeting for Elk Falls Ranch, Mountain View Lakes, Staunton State Park, and Woodside was held on December 17, 2019 at the Mountain View Lakes community building. The meeting began at 7:05 pm and was presided over by Bev Long with Diana Link recording meeting minutes.

Introductions:

The meeting started with a brief introduction by Bev Long and an explanation of the grant cycle and process, general overview of fiber, and the neighborhoods that will potentially be involved in the project.

John Carr, from the Park County Broadband Advisory Board, introduced himself and summarized his involvement in the broadband fiber network initiative in Park county, CO. John provided details of the ways fiber can be distributed (e.g., buried, above ground on poles specifically for the fiber, cannot be run on utility easement poles) and details on how the fiber may be run to dwellings (e.g., poles, may bury to each house if residents each pay extra, can be a microwave plus fiber combo which is less ideal).

Austin Schaefer, MVL introduced himself.

Diana Link, MVL, introduced herself.

Woodside 2,3,4 representatives introduced themselves. Mary Schoen is president. She indicated that Woodside is a volunteer HOA. Woodside has DSL with “pretty good” internet speeds, but the speeds preclude residents from effectively working remotely. Woodside has over 200 lots and plans to poll members to gauge interest via e-mail.

Woodside 5,6 representative Lara Reinoehl (President) introduced herself. Lara sent one e-mail to her unit to gauge interest in broadband; there are many retirees in her unit who have not expressed much interest. Lara wants to learn more to send another informational email to Woodside 5,6.

Resident Survey:

Bev Long provided a summary of the preliminary survey results:

66 total responses:

54 Elk Falls

11 Mountain View Lakes

1 Staunton

37 speed tests: (using state website)

31 did not meet speeds of 25 down 3 up

6 met speeds of at least 25 down 3 up - these residents cannot be included in the grant

Willing to pay for service:

Ranged from \$40-200/month

Misc survey comments:

13 comments total - 9 positive, 4 indicated non-interest

General Discussion:

We need more people to take the survey and we need 50% commitment. There was a brief discussion on the engineering study, which is estimated to cost ~\$20,000 (later corrected to ~\$10,000 by Bev) if Woodside and Staunton are included; this cost would be split among the groups (Staunton, EFR, MVL, WS). If the grant is not awarded, we are not reimbursed for the cost of the engineering study but we can reapply. Contrary to prior mis-information, we need ~100 houses committing to \$100/each to start the engineering study. Getting fiber to each dwelling will cost about an additional \$500, paid separately by individual residents. This \$500 is returned if we are not awarded the grant. There are incentives for putting \$500 down, where the internet service provider (ISP) will provide a monthly discounted service for approximately 2-3 years for those who sign up early vs. later. The amount of the discounts will likely allow residents to quickly recoup their \$500 payment.

John Carr noted that empty lots can opt in for the same incentive mentioned above, putting \$500 down for future dwellings on these lots.

An attendee asked where the \$500 figure came from. Bev answered that this figure came from the Silverheels project which was recently awarded a grant and good model for us to refer to.

Attendee questioned if Burland received a grant; unsure at this time.

Attendee question on who will be responsible for managing the fiber/internet service issues answered by John Carr: South Park Telephone, should they be our partner, would be responsible, and has a customer service function. South Park Telephone is a subsidiary of US Cellular based in Atlanta, GA.

Project Facebook Page:

Bev announced the Broadband Initiative Facebook group she created, and referred to paper handout on the group. The goal of the Facebook group is to have a forum for residents to ask questions, offer suggestions and conduct general discussion about the project.

Question/Answer:

Attendee questioned how much resident participation is required - answered by John Carr that 50% of lots, not dwellings. Bev has information in e-mail from South Park Telephone that the figure is 50% of dwellings.

Attendee questioned on dwellings technically on multiple lots, and how much buy-in would be required if this is the case. Some MVL lots cannot be developed. Answer unclear at this point.

Attendee questioned how much funding will be available for these projects going forward. The grant process is competitive; one of the biggest reasons Silverheels was successful was because 3/4 of the lots committed, and Silverheels developed a robust program for homeowners to write to the grant board to show genuine interest.

Bev announced that David Shipley of South Park Telephone, who wrote the Silverheels grant, and is also on the Broadband Deployment Board, offered to attend our January community broadband meeting. If we get buy-in from businesses along the intended fiber route, this could strengthen our grant application.

Attendee questioned what Staunton's involvement in this project will be. If the State decides Staunton needs broadband, the state will fund it 100% for Staunton. This will bring fiber closer to our neighborhoods. Otherwise, Staunton may partner with us for the grant. Zach (Staunton Park Manager) plans to have this answer worked out by the end of December 2019.

Attendee questioned regarding fiber branch line locations answered by John Carr: Elk Falls Ranch and Staunton get power from lines through MVL. Unsure where Woodside line would run; the engineering study will tell us this information in detail, including whether lines can be buried or run on lines.

There was a question whether we plan to add additional neighborhoods. The answer is no; if the project gets too big it can complicate the project. We may ask a few businesses (e.g., state road facility on Parker Ave) to join in once we have more information on costs. If a neighborhood does not obtain enough resident interest, they may be unable to participate in grant application. Other options include looking into federal grants (e.g. USDA), low-cost federal loans and Elon Musk SpaceX Starlink.

Project Plan:

Bev reviewed the timeline of what needs to happen to move this project forward on time.

Woodside Unit 1 representative, Bob Voth, commented on lack of knowledge by his fellow residents. Bev will send information to Bob who has all emails for these residents.

Bev plans to send a letter to others along the fiber route to gauge interest. We should know the engineering study cost by February, and the negotiation process with the ISP will begin in March to determine rates that will be offered to residents.

John Carr reviewed pricing structure for retail vs. what Silverheels agreed to pay. With a 3-year contract with 65 lots buy-in 10% disc, 80 lots 15% discount, 95 or greater 20% disc off retail.

Resident Expectations:

Bev reviewed the resident expectations sheet, and mentioned the appeals process from providers (e.g., Rise), which holds up the grant award process. There is a 60-day review and comment period allowed for appeal. John discussed the Silverheels grant timeline: grant deadline met, two months allowed for ISP review and comment, grant awarded in October, and will start laying fiber Spring 2020.

Woodside and Bev briefly discussed how to survey the Woodside residents; Bev recommended using her survey link from Constant Contact.

Incumbent ISPs:

Discussion on Century link involvement - CL is not interested in updating DSL lines, which is old technology and will continue to deteriorate; not financially lucrative for CL to do this.

8:16

Meeting adjourned; January meeting date and location TBT pending David Shipley's availability.

Handouts:

Agenda

Project Plan

Neighborhood Map

Property Counts

Facebook Group Information Sheet

Resident Expectations