

## **Meeting Minutes for Broadband Community Interest Meeting #2**

February 10, 2020

Staunton State Park Visitor Center  
12102 S Elk Creek Rd, Pine, CO 80470

Note: Severe inclement weather limited many people's ability to make it to the meeting.

### **Meeting called by:**

Bev Long, Elk Falls Ranch

### **Committee Members in Attendance:**

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

### **Committee Members not in Attendance:**

Renae Braun, Elk Falls Ranch  
Laura Nesbitt, Elk Falls Ranch  
Mary Ruth Schoen, Woodside 2,3,4  
Matt Fontaine, Woodside 1  
Bob Voth, Woodside 1  
Lara Reinoehl, Woodside 5,6

### **Guests in Attendance:**

David Shipley, South Park Telephone  
Mike Brazell, Park County Commissioner - District 1

### *Mountain View Lakes:*

None in attendance

### *Woodside:*

Brian Muller  
Elissa Muller  
William Boyle

### *Elk Falls Ranch and Elk Creek Road:*

Heath McNally  
Mike Long  
Jose Solano  
Warren Hall  
Bob Phelps  
Dan Mueller

Paul Vastola  
Suzy Nelson  
Orion Madsen  
Mike Pesta  
Mark Pesta  
Bob Fletcher  
Rachel Cohen  
Peter Paul  
Nancy Carr  
Lee Acree  
Vanessa Acree

### *Burland*

Garrison Genschorck

### **Call to Order**

A broadband community interest meeting for Elk Falls Ranch, Mountain View Lakes, Staunton State Park, and Woodside was held on February 10, 2019 at the Staunton State Park Visitor Center located at 12102 S Elk Creek Rd, Pine, CO 80470. The meeting began at 7:08 pm and was presided over by Bev Long with Diana Link recording meeting minutes.

### **Introductions and Overview**

Bev Long provided a brief summary to newcomers on the Broadband Initiative and introductions of Broadband Committee members in attendance began.

Bev reported that EFR received 55 completed surveys, 33% of total properties.

- 50 of those want high speed internet
- Rise is the predominant current provider with 39 residences
- 44 people want to be able to work at home
- 26 people would like speeds as high as 100 MBPS
- Only 1 resident had speeds greater than 25 MBPS on speed tests

Diana Link introduced herself and gave results of the Broadband Survey for Mountain View Lakes (MVL). Diana reported that MVL received 22 surveys, 14% of total dwellings

- 20 would like high speed internet
- Century Link is the predominant current provider with 12 residencies
- 19 people would like to be able to work at home
- 10 people would like speeds as high as 100 MBPS
- Only 1 resident had speeds greater than 25 MBPS on speed tests

John Carr introduced himself as the Chair of the Park County Broadband Advisory Board and property owner in Elk Falls Ranch. John provided a brief summary on broadband projects in Park County and made an announcement that the Advisory Board is Looking for members.

Zach Taylor introduced himself and discussed Staunton's internet status. Staunton internet speeds are approximately 1 MBPS down, 0.6 MBPS up. Staunton has some support from Colorado Parks and Wildlife for bringing broadband to the Staunton visitor center, and the Statewide operating budget can help to bring fiber to the Park.

### **South Park Telephone Presentation and General Discussion**

David Shipley, Vice President at South Park Telephone (SPT) introduced himself. David was previously the CEO of US Connect. David gave background on his company and its stable history in our area. SPT was established in 1998; they currently have five sites in Park County and lease two additional sites.

- He feels his company is nimble enough to respond to grants such as this.
- He reviewed the grant process:
  - 60-day comment period after July 15 grant submission
  - 2-year timeline to complete the project required by the grant
  - Noted this is not easy
  - The application must be detailed and complete
  - We have to set ourselves apart from others we are competing with.
    - Interest from residents and nearby businesses
    - letters of support from chamber of commerce, State Park, HOAs and residents
    - Can we service any community entities such as libraries, churches, community centers? Other businesses?
    - Commitment up-front from residents is important
  - Challenges
    - Don't know how much grant money is available for the July 2020 grant cycle.
    - The recent Jan 15 grant cycle – There were 25 applicants with 25 million in grant requests. Only 4-6 million available.

SPT has the capacity to take on initiatives like our broadband project. SPT has a budget for these types of projects and the capability to make these projects a reality in a timely manner. SPT is currently working on a project in Bailey at Burland Ranchettes. Silverheels Ranch was the first grant-based project that SPT worked on, which resulted in a \$600,000 State award. SPT needs neighborhood residents to commit to move forward with broadband projects. For example, Silverheels had over 65% resident commitment when the subdivision applied for the State grant that they received.

SPT needs to know that residents of our three neighborhoods are committed. The project will be funded by a combination of State grant + individual residents + SPT. There is a financial risk for SPT to commit to laying fiber for this project without knowing they have residents that will subscribe to their broadband service.

There are two Colorado State broadband grant cycles; one ends January 15 and the other ends on July 15. Applications must be in *before* those end dates. Once the grants are submitted there is a 60-day public comment period; the Broadband Advisory Board does not see comments until the public comment period ends. The internet service provider has to be an eligible provider in good standing with the Secretary of State and must complete the project within two years of being awarded the grant. This can, admittedly, be challenging in this part of Colorado, due to the weather. Timing is very important; we need to stick to a strict timeline or our initiative may have to wait 6 months for the next grant cycle.

We won't know how much grant money is available until one month before the comment cycle ends. Grant applications must meet all criteria, be detailed, and stand out from the other applications. The more commitment from residents, the more monetary contributions (i.e., the more legitimate interest each neighborhood has) the stronger the grant application will be. Federal Communications Commission definition for high-speed internet are minimum of 25 MBPS download speed, 1 MBPS upload speed with less than 100 milliseconds of latency. Broadband is a value proof technology.

Attendee question on Elon Musk's satellite and whether broadband is a technology that can compete with this. SPT discussed latency issue; even with multiple customers fiber has less latency than the other service types.

Attendee question on service to house, and will buried lines to the house add a large cost to the customer. SPT replied that if an aerial route is available, (e.g., IREA poles) SPT will follow the poles. If the electric is buried to your home, then at that point where the electric enters the ground the fiber will be buried. SPT will follow the infrastructure that currently is set to the best of their abilities.

SPT indicated that service will cost about \$79/month for 25 MBPS download, 25 MBPS upload. Max speed provided can be 1 GBPS. The more the residents are committed prior to the project starting, the greater the discount will be. Tiered commitments are 50%, 65%, 80%; each increase in tier will result in a greater discount. Committing to a 5-year contract will reduce monthly rates even more. SPT indicated that Burland Ranchettes in Bailey fell just shy of the 50% commitment and SPT put money in to complete the project.

SPT will also provide telephone service.

Attendee question on whether we plan on adding in the Kings Valley subdivision to this project. John Carr answered that it would become too large of a project to manage and it would move too slowly to make progress.

Woodside 2,3,4 Committee member was not present but Bev shared that so far, they have a 10% response rate to the survey.

Discussion of \$100 per household to contribute to the engineering study and additional \$500 commitment to sign up for service if the grant is approved and we move forward with the project. SPT indicated that the \$500 is important to show SPT that we are committed. It's less about the money than making sure people want this. The \$500 is refundable if we don't get the grant. Depending on your current internet cost, you could make thr \$500 back in 6 months time.

Bev announced that there are approximately 600 homes that can be part of this project in our three neighborhoods, so at \$100 per resident we can easily get the engineering study funded. (We must come up with \$10,000; SPT will fund the other \$10,000 for a \$20,000 study.) Some Elk Falls residents indicated they are willing to contribute \$500-\$1,000 to get the project off the ground.

Attendee question on spanning Park and Jefferson Counties - does this affect the grant? No, since it's a State grant. The more counties served, the better.

SPT indicated that previously uncommitted residents can join during the construction period. There are proprietary rates for early investors in this project. After the construction is complete there will be no discounted rates for latecomers to commitment. It could cost up to \$3,000 to hook up later as the construction costs are expensive when they are one-off. Thus, committing early with \$500.00 is a significant benefit. SPT indicated that it has been shown that access to broadband can result in a 3-6% increase on home values. The second most asked question by home buyers is internet speed; school ratings is the number one asked question.

Attendee question on what internet service is available at Elk Creek Elementary. They have been contacted and have indicated they have excellent internet service. We need to investigate further and determine how they are serviced.

There was a brief resident and Broadband Committee Discussion on the difficulties in getting in contact with residents to take the broadband survey so that we can gauge commitment. Without getting this commitment we will not be able to apply for the grant. Bev encouraged everyone to please complete their surveys

SPT indicated that we really need to know project scope (e.g. are all 3 neighborhoods going to participate?) by the end of February.

SPT will provide the full cost and project design; SPT is committed to full transparency. The design work needs to be completed by SPT by March 31. On April 15 SPT will provide a community presentation on the project. SPT knows we are still working on getting resident commitment; we need 50% commitment from residents. If we are just shy of 50%, SPT may be able to still work with us.

Attendee question on commitment. If don't have enough commitment from all three neighborhoods will we still go forward with laying fiber with just the one or two neighborhoods

that do have the 50% commitment? It's all one big area to SPT. As long as we get our 300 commitments, SPT doesn't care which neighborhoods they come from.

Attendee question on what is the lowest number of households that SPT is willing to get to still move forward on this project. SPT answered that we need at least 275 dwellings that have committed or they will not invest in the project. Ideally SPT wants 350 homes total before construction is complete.

Attendee question on details of the project design. SPT answered that with enough resident commitment, by March 31, SPT will design what the project will look like, what the fiber route will be, and will have a completed pole study with IREA that will indicate if the poles can support the extra weight of the fiber. SPT will follow current infrastructure as much as they can; SPT has done some pre-design on this project already.

John Carr mentioned the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) website and encouraged attendees to look at the previous broadband grants to see a description of engineering studies and levels of resident commitments for those grants.

SPT indicated that if this project is completed the internet service provider (in this case SPT) is required to be the service provider for 5 years. After this, the service could be sold to another provider. However, SPT indicated that SPT is in the business of building up their service areas, not selling their areas.

Brief discussion between board and attendees on what we want to name our grant application. "The Lyons Head" was proposed since this is a prominent land feature familiar to residents in the area.

Attendee question on whether the fiber is run to the inside of the house? SPT replied that the fiber equipment will be grounded to the existing power meter. SPT will put the power supply in your house that fiber optic network is plugged into.

Attendee question on what kind of router we will need. SPT replied that we can use an off-the-shelf router or we can lease a SPT router. SPT is capable of providing up to 1 GBPS speed service; there are no caps on data usage. SPTs oversubscribes to ensure customer speeds.

Attendee question on whether there will be latency issues. SPT replied that most times you will not see any latency. However, this cannot be guaranteed due to certain streaming applications (e.g., Netflix) that have latency issues not associated with internet speed.

Attendee question on whether broadband will eventually not be enough to support our technology. SPT replied that fiber will allow endless capacity. A change of the electronics at either end are the only changes required; the fiber does not need to change. Technology is what requires higher and higher MBPS; fiber can adjust whereas other technology cannot.

SPT commented that the current copper network (DSL) is close to the ground surface and is a lightning attractant. Fiber optic does not have this. A surge protector installed with the fiber will prevent any surges from traveling to your house if lightning hits the copper network.

### **Park County Commissioner**

Park County Commissioner - District 1, Mike Brazell introduced himself. Mike spearheaded the effort to bring broadband to Park County.

Commissioner Brazell commented that education to residents on broadband technology is important. He discussed the analogy of broadband to laptops; a laptop typically lasts for 2-3 years. The bandwidth requirement will increase each year by about 20% with new technologies (computers, televisions etc.) and the current internet service providers in our area cannot provide for that increase. Most folks believe when the current internet infrastructure declines it will be fixed, but no one is coming in rural America to fix old technology.

There are 60 satellites currently with Space X (Elon Musk project); a 1,000-fold increase would be needed for our area to be serviced by this. If you eliminate satellite TV service (e.g., get Youtube TV or other streaming service) and eliminate DSL you end up saving money with broadband. It's important to not be afraid of change; we need to change if the services we have are not working well. There are tens of thousands of channels on YouTube tv versus a few hundred channels on satellite TV. Larger/new televisions are 4K; you need 25 MBPS of dedicated bandwidth. If you have a 4K television you are seeing potentially less than 1/4 of the potential of the resolution of your TV. 8K televisions consume 50 MBPS per television.

### **Project Plan and Forms**

Bev referenced the project plan handout with key dates. She explained the two Commitment Forms and noted \$100 can be sent to SPT now; we are not yet ready to collect the \$500 proof of commitment; the Form provided is a mock-up so people know what to expect.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm