

## Telecommunications Committee Report Select Board Meeting 12/12/16

On Dec. 6, the Telecommunications Committee met with representatives of Comcast. The following was discussed:

- For Comcast to wire the three primary underserved/unserved areas of Cavendish, the costs would be as follows:  
A (Twenty Mile Stream) \$223,143  
B (East Rd and Brook Rd areas) \$308,000  
C (Knapp Pond/Tarbell areas). \$435,000
- The only area that meets the state's criteria for under or un served is the Knapp Pond/Tarbell Hill area. Comcast is deciding at corporate whether they will apply for VT Connectivity Funds. They will let us know within two weeks whether they will do this. If they are going to file for this state grant, applications are due Dec. 29.
- Comcast is aware that the state wants them to do a project in Cavendish.
- The connectivity rate Comcast uses in VT is 15 home per mile, well below their national model of 23 homes per mile. None of the Cavendish catchment areas identified as un or under served meets their rural criteria. These areas are closer to 8-9 homes per mile. Consequently, Comcast will not expand into those areas unless they receive Connectivity Funding from the state or other sources of funds. As it is, Comcast will only front about 25% of the costs for the build out.
- There is approximately \$550,550 for this round of funding and there are 29,836 conditionally eligible locations. The cost of wiring Knapp Pond area is \$435,000, of which Comcast would pay \$108,750 and ask the state for \$326,250. We discussed TDS's activity in the Tarbell Rd area, know and they were clear that without the Tarbell piece, they wouldn't have a viable project.
- In Oct. 2015, the representatives from Comcast told us that within three years the entire town would be receiving services from Comcast. However, after this meeting, it's apparent that's not the case as they want outside funding to share the cost of expanding into rural low density areas.
- FairPoint (provides services to the Northeast corner of Cavendish) is being sold to Consolidated Communications based in Mattoon, IL FairPoint had received Connect America Funds and VT Connectivity Funds to provide Internet in unserved areas. Knapp Pond is a difficult area to wire and when speaking to FairPoint in February, we were told Cavendish wasn't on the immediate list for upgrades. With the sale of the company it's unclear if the funding would go with them or what the overall impact will be.
- As far TDS, while the new system is working well in the Tarbell Rd area, Twenty Mile Stream was not wired by Thanksgiving so it looks like this project will be delayed until

sometime after the new year. We've been unable to reach the TDS representative, which is usually an indication that nothing has changed.