
STC Meeting Minutes – March 8, 2019 (Revised 4/5/19)

Call to order

A meeting of the Sherman Telecommunications Committee was called to order at 3:01 PM at Mallory Town Hall on March 8, 2019.

Attendees included Committee members Gail Maletz [GM], Steve Maletz [SM], Zoe Sochor [ZS] and Terri Hahn [TH]. Absent were Don Lowe [DL] and Al Zeisler [AZ]. Also in attendance was Sherman Charter/Spectrum representative Frank Copsidas [FC].

Approval of minutes and 2019 meeting dates

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2019 STC meeting was made by SM and seconded by ZS; approved unanimously. (Note: The February 2019 meeting was canceled.)

Correspondence/Public Comment

FC shared background experience with cell towers and knowledge of fiber optics available in Sherman. Background – During his career, FC owned 14 radio stations and built several towers around the U.S. He is currently on the PURA board for Spectrum; on a committee mandated by public utilities to oversee Spectrum in 17 towns to ensure public access.

FC reported that there are 3 fiber strands intersecting at the center of Sherman. Fiber-optic internet from Connecticut Education Network (CEN) is available to businesses in 190 zip codes in CT. FC says the fiber runs along routes 37/39 and intersect near the corner in town. It is not available to individual residents, only government and businesses. In Sherman, the Sherman School and library are the only entities using it.

FC commented that cell carriers are increasingly using microcells - smaller, less use of space and cost, to extend the coverage of a cell tower. He also discussed how cell service providers are using spectrum to provide high-speed wireless data. The ATSC 3.0 next-generation broadcast system is meant to address consumers' growing appetite for content delivered via the internet. FC explains that ATSC 3.0 is like 5G for TV and reported that T-Mobile just rolled out a nationwide program to use that spectrum to provide 5G wireless data.

GM posed the question, what do we do with this information, how can we leverage it to bring reliable cell service throughout Sherman? The answer readily apparent to the group was the importance of having the STC continue to establish and maintain relationships with community groups, for example, Northwest ConneCT and the Council of Governments (COGs). This underscores the mission of the STC.

Old Business

□ **Status of emergency equipment installation (CF/TH)**

Chris Fuchs was not in attendance. TH reported on her conversation with Aldo Pascarella about signing the easement for the work to begin on the emergency equipment project. Aldo assured her that the license will be granted. TH reported that the delay has been because of the lawsuit Timber Trails has been involved in, and when it is resolved, Aldo will be able to sign the easement for work to begin. If this doesn't happen in a timely manner, an alternate location is being considered.

□ **Possible cell tower site per Ray Vergati (GM)** - GM reported that in his email of March 5th, RV said that Homeland Towers has an interested landlord and are actively working on negotiating a ground lease, hopefully by early April, with an interested carrier with funding. Next steps would be filing the site in zoning around July 1 with a zoning process of 9-12 months.

□ **T-Mobile installation at Happy Acres per Dan Reid (GM)** – GM reported that, in his March 5th email, Dan Reid said installation is on pace with construction to be complete by the end of March. Expectations are that it will be on air by the end of April.

□ **NWConneCT / NWCOG (TH)** – TH reported that in April NWConneCT is coming under the umbrella of Roberta Willis. TH will be attending its April 25 meeting at 4 pm in Goshen, representing Sherman, and FC will join her if possible.

□ **Emergency call boxes (AZ via email)** – AZ emailed Brian Mirizzi, the System Administrator for the Litchfield County Dispatch to find out how emergency call boxes could be installed on

our local state roads as an interim solution to the lack of cell service. Mirizzi said that was not something they would know. FC reported that any installation of WiFi along 37 would require permission to go on the poles. The town is entitled to space on every pole because it sits on their right of way, he said. FC said he would bring it up in his March 12 meeting, and that it would only require VoIP. FC would also investigate retrofit of LED lights.

o ACTION: TH to follow up to FC's meeting and find out about ownership of utility poles in town and the town's right to use them.

New Business

Discussion/action on new chairperson and member(s) in the April meeting and whether to meet monthly or every other month. The April meeting will be Gail and Steve's last meeting as they are moving out of Sherman. Gail is resigning as chairperson and will pass along paperwork and history and help where she can.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 PM. Next meeting: Friday April 5 at 11 am, Mallory Town Hall.