

LYNDEBOROUGH BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MEETING MINUTES

August 28 2019

Final

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Chamberlain called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Introduction of Members Present:

Chairman Mark Chamberlain, Selectman Fred Douglas and Selectman Richard McQuade
Town Administrator Russ Boland and Recorder Kathleen Humphreys

Public Present: Trish Schultz, Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Scott Brooks, TDS Manager; and
Troy Morse, TDS Senior Tech

Media Present: Jessie Salisbury

III. Appointments:

6:05pm: Non Public per NH RSA 91-A:3 II (c)

**VOTE: Selectman McQuade made a motion, Selectman Douglas seconded to enter
a non-public session at 6:04 p.m. Motion passed 3-0.**

**VOTE: Selectman McQuade made a motion, Selectman Douglas seconded to exit
the non-public session at 6:08 p.m. and resume the public hearing. Motion
passed 3-0.**

6:20 p.m. Appointment: TDS discussion

TDS Manager Scott Brooks and TDS Senior Technician Troy Morse were present to
discuss the high speed broad band services that will be available in the near future in
Lyndeborough. They presented a map titled, "Lyndeborough, Fiber to the Home
Accessibility". (See attached)

Mr. Brooks said TDS is aware this is an important topic for the community and in some
customer's eyes they are a little late to the party. They have known about network
issues for some time but it's a matter of making the dollar and cents work. Engineers
have been working in this community for some time. TDS has the financing from their
corporate headquarters to provide fiber optics to most of the town. The end goal would
be to provide fiber to the entire community.

TDS is in about 25 communities with roughly 38,000 households, in which 83% of
households have the availability of fiber options in the home.

Mr. Brooks felt the upside is they worked out bugs with earlier communities. They have
about 12,000 customers that are on fiber. The majority of the customers, roughly 95%,
purchase the Triple Play option which is TV, broadband and phone service and its fairly
robust. TDS offers three tiers of TV packages and three tiers of high speed broad band;
100 MG, 300 MG and 1 GB. Mr. Scott said he would bring pricing and options to the
public hearing for resident's information.

Mr. Scott mentioned that in Lyndeborough, “65-70% of customers will be able to get fiber out of the gate as an option. The goal with TDS and how quickly we can achieve that is a business model plan. The goal is, since we are already at 83% throughout the state with fiber optics to the home access for our customers, the goal is to have 100% fiber network and retire the copper networks. We have no interest in maintaining two networks. Fiber is much more robust. It’s not as susceptible to lightening strikes and water issues as the copper wire is. Unless you have a cut, fiber is pretty robust.”

The Town Office has the Cable Franchise Agreement to review, which is a contract that the FCC mandates. The contract that Lyndeborough has is TDS’s basic template which is for 10 years. Lyndeborough can determine the termination duration of the contract. It can be renewed at 10 or 15 year intervals for example. The language can be modified if the Town Officials and Town Counsel request it.

Mr. Brooks asked if they could hold a Public Hearing at the end of September or early October because they would like to roll out fiber optics in October 2019.

All Town buildings would be offered free installation from TDS and free basic TV package which is their lowest tier package. Chairman Chamberlain asked about upgrades and was informed that upgrades would be an additional fee for broadband and phones service.

Chairman Chamberlain referenced the map handout and said it looked like someone drew a line on the map and one is being upgraded while the other is not. His concern is there are numerous businesses along Center Road, in the part that is not being upgraded, and he asked the timeline of getting this area done. Mr. Brooks said he does not know the timeline. Most of the communities have pockets that don’t have fiber to the home at this point. Their goal is to have 100% fiber optics coverage in the New Hampshire. Mr. Brooks could not say if that would be 5 or 10-years out. He cannot guesstimate that timeframe.

In looking at the map, Mr. Brooks pointed out the “pain points” so they wanted to address those areas with fiber. The Center Road section can get business service options plus it is also served by the Wilton CO.

Mr. Brooks discussed “back haul” or transport congestion that resulted in speed restrictions. For example, if you gave them 15 MB they still only used 1.5 or 1 MB at night.

Mr. Morse mentioned that Steve’s School Bus Services does not use much internet and Eastern Forest Products has managed IT at this time.

Mr. Brooks also clarified that this discussion is for fiber in the homes and is strictly residential. If a business needs more speed or bandwidth there are business options for those customers and in some cases they are already utilizing those services. Mr. Brooks said they can get in touch with these customers to inform them of the services to suit their needs.

Chairman Chamberlain addressed home businesses and that many people are working from their homes now because we are further away from business hubs.

101 Mr. Brooks said he understands the concerns and cited an example that he lives over
102 the Vermont boarder in a pocket that does not have good internet and he would like
103 more speed but it does not hamper him working from home and his family's needs.
104

105 Mr. Brooks said that TDS will work hard to close those gaps. He said that customers are
106 more skeptical at first but it will be night and day from copper to the fiber network. He
107 also noted that many homes use Direct TV or Dishnet satellite services.
108

109 Chairman Chamberlain asked if TDS will be going totally fiber, what will that do to the
110 cost for customers who just want phone. Mr. Brooks said his understanding is that the
111 cost for phone will be the same price for copper as for fiber. He said that there are some
112 elderly residents who just want phone and it's a cost item for them.
113

114 Mr. Brooks said that regulations have subsided a bit but here in New Hampshire they
115 use alternative regulations and they are still regulated by the Public Utility in Concord so
116 the rates, whether copper or fiber, will be the same. TV is de-regulated so there is no
117 cap but there is no cable service currently in Lyndeborough.
118

119 Mr. Brooks provided an example; when DSL was rolled out, people with 10-15 MB were
120 very happy and they could do anything they wanted such as send pictures, but when
121 streaming video services came along it clogged up the TDS network and slowed sending
122 information along because the "pipes were just too small". TDS could not keep up the
123 demand and the dollars it costs to make those changes. "They went from being the
124 heroes for a couple of years, to the duds for a number of years."
125

126 Chairman Chamberlain inquired about storm damages and the length of time to fix
127 damage; such as poles washout or poles snapping such as what occurred in the Ice
128 storms of 2008. Mr. Brooks said there are "slack points" where they roll-up extra fiber
129 about every 3-4 poles they wrap-up about 300 feet of cable Depending on how much
130 damage is done, they will take that extra slack down and fill in the gap and re-splice it
131 together. Individual homes will depend on how much span there is, and varies. Splicing
132 the fiber is easier now.
133

134 Mr. Morse added that TDS is at the mercy of the power companies and they have to wait
135 for them to do their work first. It is a safety issue and they want to get the town up as
136 quickly as possible, but they need to follow the electric company from road to road.
137

138 Selectman Douglas asked if the TDS cables are down will the electric company not
139 touch their cables until they get there. Mr. Brooks said that at times they will cut the
140 other companies cables if they need to. Selectman Douglas said he has not seen that in
141 his profession, and they won't touch another company's lines such as Comcast. He said
142 he has seen that if the Comcast lines are down and have a lot of tension that wraps
143 around the electrical lines, that Public Service or Eversource will show up, but won't
144 touch the other lines until Comcast comes out and takes care of their lines. Mr. Morse
145 said he has not seen that.
146

147 Mr. Morse said that the lines are set up; power (hot), neutral, cable then us (TDS). He
148 said that since there is no cable in town, they will be closest to the neutral but they still
149 maintain 52 inches, but once in a while the neutral is slacking and he will call the power
150 company to ask them to pull up their neutral to give more separation so there are no
151 problems. There are times that cable is wrapped up in the neutral and he will ask to get

152 that off the cable so there are not issues. If they have to move their cables up they have
153 employees that can take care of that.

154
155 Selectman Douglas asked what the big secret was when TDS started to run fiber optics
156 because there was no communication. Citizens were talking to the workers who said
157 they were putting up fiber optics and there were a lot of calls to the Town Office and
158 Selectman Douglas said he even had people stop at his residence to ask question. This
159 went on for weeks and there were more trucks in town in different locations. Mr. Brooks
160 said that was lack of communication and poor judgement on their part.

161
162 Mr. Brooks said that they were supposed to upgrade Lyndeborough after Wilton and that
163 didn't happen so they didn't want to up the expectations. Chairman Chamberlain said he
164 can understand that but it's different when they are actually putting the cable on the
165 poles. He said yes, but there is still a lot of work that still has to be done and when is the
166 question. They have gotten burnt in the past.

167
168 T/A Boland said he understands that but our point is the Town came very close to
169 signing on for paying \$500 a month to have Citizens' Hall have high-speed internet.

170
171 T/A Boland said that his former assistant lost the sale of her home due to internet
172 limitations. The Town wrote a letter about the problem that was addressed to many
173 people. That is the frustration the Town had. The Town explored a lot of options.

174
175 Mr. Brooks said they are not using federal dollars to upgrade copper wire but the upside
176 is they are using their funds to upgrade today's technology.

177
178 Selectman Douglas cited examples of resident who sold their houses in Lyndeborough
179 because they could not work from home due to poor internet service. He asked that
180 anything they can do to help the people who are remotely in here would be good
181 (*pointed to the area on the map that is not getting fiber optics*). He is concerned that
182 there will be negative comments from those areas.

183
184 Selectman McQuade asked if the remaining copper wires will help the residents in those
185 areas. Mr. Brooks said it will be a different network. If everyone will be taking fiber then
186 you will actually get an increase in the network as people get off the copper but it won't
187 be as fast as the fiber. It might be 10-15 MB instead of 100 GB or 300 GB, but it will
188 improve, but not on that side of town.

189
190 Mr. Morse said that he found that in areas that have copper they put in more remotes to
191 shorten the loops and customers can have an increase in megabytes. It will help
192 upgrade the back haul because they now will have a true 10 MG and for many people
193 that is enough and they don't want to pay for the extra service. The biggest problem has
194 been the back haul.

195
196 The public notice and time frame for a Public Hearing were discussed. They are
197 considering a Public Hearing at the September 25, 2019 meeting.

198
199 The agreement of 100 or 150 feet to residents' homes was discussed. They need to
200 research if there is a charge for a drop. Mr. Brooks does not think they are charging for
201 the initial drop. They might be able to do a temporary drop over a driveway during the

winter. A new construction might be a different scenario to buy new poles as compared to an existing home.

The process to change the language was discussed. The preference of payment options needs to be formalized. The length of the contract will need to be determined. If the contract is approved at the Public Hearing they can start to roll out as soon as the contract is voted on. Mr. Morse suggested an Open House after the contract is approved to review options with the residents.

Selectman Douglas asked if, down the road, the entire town is on fiber options, what will happen to the copper wire and what if customers want to stay on copper. Mr. Morse said that the copper wire will go away but all customers will have the options to switch and there are procedures in place that require many options to contact the individual via letters and phone calls to let them know about the switch. After a point of time, they will have to make a drop to switch to fiber optics. People will not just be cut-off of copper. Selectman Douglas said there are elderly people in town that might be weary of any communication in case it's fraud.

TDS officials will inform the Lyndeborough Police Department when their employees are in town going door to door as well as the vehicles they are driving so residents and the Police are aware of their presence. Upgrade information can go on the Town's website.

IV. **Community Forum and Public Comment:**

No public comments

Old/Tabled Business:

2008 Ford F-550 Sale Update

The 2008 Ford F-550 was placed on Municibid.com. As of today, there is \$7,500.00 bid. The bidding is opened until the September 9, 2019. The Town put a reserve of \$12,000.00 which is the least the seller will accept. That is a blind number so the buyers cannot see it. It was discussed to leave the reserve as is and to review it the day before the bidding end and adjust if necessary. The documentation indicated the Board will need to vote to approve the sale of the vehicle after the bid closes.

Old Town Barn Roof Update

The Old Town Barn roof was completed yesterday and the results look good.

Employee Appreciation Gathering

Thursday, September 12, 2019 from 4:00-5:30 p.m. at Center Hall.

b. **New Business:**

PRIMEX Report on the Highway Garage

T/A Boland informed the Board that the report on the Highway Garage came out well.

The report was favorable and highlighted good practices such as how the department parks their trucks, which is not next to each other. The report recommended installing a fire and intrusion alarm and a sprinkler system. A RFP was developed for the alarm system and possible surveillance cameras.

c. **Items not on Agenda:**

The Town received a letter from the Town of New Ipswich regarding RSA 676:4 I (d) Site Plan review on Map 6, Lot 13-3 for cell tower on Peterborough Road. The New Ipswich Planning Board will meet on August 21, 2019 at 8:10 p.m. to hear this case.

V. Town Administrator Report:

The Town of Mont Vernon would like to purchase the pull-behind sweeper for \$1,400.00. It was proposed for Mont Vernon to take the street sweeper but pay in January 2020 and they will include supplying their traffic line painter with an operator to paint the stop sign lines in Lyndeborough as part of the purchase agreement.

VI. Selectmen's Report

a. MACC Base Action & Agenda

No items to discuss.

b. Transportation Committee

No items to discuss.

c. Planning Board

Chairman Chamberlain discussed at the last Planning Board meeting where a discussion regarding Bob Bell and Granite State Concrete Company was in progress and he, the secretary and another member were researching the files but the meeting was adjourned during their absence and without their vote.

d. Heritage Commission

Nothing to report

e. Safety Complex

No items to discuss.

Consent Agenda:

VOTE: Selectman Douglas moved, Selectman McQuade seconded to accept the Consent Agenda of August 28, 2019. Motion passed 3-0.

August 28, 2019 Consent Agenda			
Item #	Item Title	Item Date	Approved
1	AP Warrants – August 20 & 27, 2019	8/28/2019	Yes
2	Payroll Warrant – August 12 through August 29, 2019	8/28/2019	Yes
3	Execution of 2019 Department of Revenue MS-1 Form (Summary of Inventory Valuation)	8/28/2019	Yes
4	Request for Approval of Intent to Cut Application (19-279-10T) (232-013) – Accessed Via Center Road	8/28/2019	Yes
5	Request for Approval of Intent to Cut Application (19-279-11T) (226-016) – Accessed Via Center Road	8/28/2019	Yes
6	Board of Selectmen's Public Meeting Minutes – August 14, 2019	8/28/2019	Yes
7	Board of Selectmen's Non Public Meeting Minutes – August 14, 2019	8/28/2019	Yes

8	Request for Approval of Purchase Order # 20938 – John Hyde Roofing – Old Town Barn Roof Replacement	8/28/19	Yes
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The Putnam Pond Conservation Area item in the Pending Section of the Consent Agenda shall be modified to read, "Putnam Pond Conservation Area Dedication in 2020".

VII. Information Items Requiring No Discussion

The resident on Center Road has not signed the Fence Agreement to date. The Selectmen would like to impose a deadline for the document to be signed and returned and for the resident to be notified the Town will not be responsible for any damage that could occur during snowplowing without the agreement. The fence is in the right-of-way.

VIII. Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II (a)

VOTE: Selectman Douglas moved, Selectman McQuade seconded to enter a non-public session RSA 91-A:3 II (a) at 7:40 p.m. Motion passed 3-0.

VOTE: Selectman Douglas moved, Selectman McQuade seconded to exit the non-public session and adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Motion passed 3-0.

Adjournment:

All scheduled items having been addressed, the public meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Next regular meeting: September 11, 2019 at Citizens' Hall at 6:00 p.m.

Kathleen Humphreys, Transcriber

Chairman Mark Chamberlain

Selectman Fred Douglas

Selectman Richard McQuade

See attached.