

Bow Telecommunications Committee

April 12, 2024

Draft Minutes

On April 12, 2024 at 9am, the Bow Telecommunications Committee met in Room C at the Bow Municipal Building, 10 Grandview Drive, Bow NH 03304

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dee Treybig called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. Chair Dee Treybig, Co-Chair Deb McCann, Board of Selectmen Representative Kip McDaniel, Board of Selectmen Alternate Ian Flanagan, Bow Community Development Director Karri Makinen, Committee Members Mike Wheeler, Marilee Nihan, and Voluntary RF Engineering Consultant Mark Nolin from Dunbarton were present. New members were welcomed and introductions made for the record.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

As only two current Committee members present today were at the 1/30/2024 meeting, it was discussed as to whether those present today could vote to accept. Karri Makinen noted that it is not optimal, however it has been done in the past. Dee Treybig noted that minutes have been forwarded to former Board of Selectmen representative, Mike Wayne, for ad hoc approval. Mike Wayne motioned to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Deb McCann. Motion passed 7-0.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Summary of Activity regarding BTC since last meeting.

a. Committee members Dee Treybig, Deb McCann, and Mike Wheeler executed and presented a Petitioned Warrant Article to the Board of Selectmen that was an article at this year's town meeting for \$9000 in funding for a town RF propagation plan.

b. The \$6000 needed for the selected Isotrope LLC bid was approved for funding by the Board of Selectmen prior to the Town Meeting, therefore chair Dee Treybig withdrew the warrant article and it was tabled indefinitely.

c. The contract with ISOTROPE LLC for the Town RF Propagation Plan was signed on 3/29/24 and is currently in effect.

d. Karri Makinen presented news that the town of Hooksett will be building a 180" cell tower directly next to the current and approximately 1950's 165' emergency communications tower that is a leased arrangement with Bow residents Frank and Mary Woodbury at their 98 South Bow Rd Bow property. The town of Hooksett owns this existing tower and has leased the land for it from the Woodbury's as it is a high point on the Hooksett/Bow line that works well for its emergency service communications. As this tower's primary function will be for emergency services, which will also be placed at the highest point of the tower, no planning board or further town approval is needed beyond building permits from the Town of Bow per government regulations. The fact that the Town of Hooksett has committed to Verizon to put their telecommunications equipment below the emergency radio equipment at a height of 165 ft is a bonus for cellular service to this section of south Bow and Hooksett for residents who use Verizon. It is not known at this time if other carriers will be added to this tower.

B. The committee discussed the now active ISOTROPE contract, noting scope, sequence and timing. Volunteer RF consultant Mark Nolin spoke at length as to what he would be interested in insofar as how Isotope will approach the project.

C. At 9:30am the committee shared a ZOOM call with Mike Lawton, the Isotrope LLC RF engineer assigned to the Bow project. Mr. Lawton noted that he would approach the project by reviewing existing capabilities available in Bow and surrounding towns and to determine where the gaps are to plot on a propagation map. He will look for coverage for mid-band and low-band frequencies currently or soon to be available and leverage what will be needed to augment and provide the most coverage for Bow. Kip McDaniel asked about the timeframe for his report's delivery. Mr. Lawton replied that this would take a few weeks. It was requested and agreed upon to make the delivery deadline for the report and propagation mapping on or before 4/30/24. At this time, the report will be distributed to the committee members for review prior to an agreed upon next meeting date of 5/3/2024 at 9am. Mr. Lawton from Isotrope LLC will drive up from MA to attend the meeting with the committee in person. Mark Nolin asked that the report be inclusive of coverage from surrounding towns, and Dee Treybig concurred, as we do not want to limit solutions to our town limits, just solve the coverage problems. Mr. Lawton said he would be sure to do so.

Mr. Nolin inquired as to how ISOTROPE would approach spacing of towers. Mr. Lawton responded that it depended upon low-band and mid-band needs. Most carriers use low-band frequency for calls and mid-band for streaming and gaming. Dee Treybig noted that the charge of the committee has always been for emergency and voice cellular coverage (Voice coverage vs Data coverage) and that streaming and gaming have never been part of discussions or consideration and members agreed.

Mr. Nolin noted how the technology is constantly being updated and asked about 5G capability. Mr. Lawton replied that most carriers prefer to put 5G on higher frequencies.

Mr. Nolin asked how the report would be presented. Will it be an “as built” map, with overlay? Will it show degradation? Mr. Lawton said he would do everything to accommodate this request.

Mr. Lawton also discussed the possibility of expansion for carriers, noting the lack of capacity vs. Lack of coverage. The goal would be to identify where opportunities are for towers and then work with the needs of the carriers via carrier development businesses.

D. Next Steps: Marilee Nihan opened discussion as to public access to the new information and suggested that maybe scheduling a Public Forum answering citizen questions would prevent false or diluted information being spread by social media and other outlets. This suggestion was welcomed by all committee members and a meeting date TBD when the information is available.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

RTT Tower: Deb McCann and Karri Makinen discussed updates on the Rising Tide Tower being built on Branch Londonderry Turnpike East. The excavation phase is in full swing and there was concern noted by Ms. McCann said that the access road stemming from the “hammerhead” school bus turnaround looked more like a highway on-ramp than an access road. Karri Makinen noted that the heavy construction vehicles needed the space and stability of the temporary road during this phase. She was unaware of any oversight on the construction site and noted that Tim Sweeney, head of the Public Works Department has promised to visit the site and note what could be done to return this area to more of a woodland after the use for the road has passed. Selectmen Kip McDaniel and Ian Flanagan proposed looking into a plan to return the area to a more aesthetically “neighborhood” feel, once the tower is built through tree planting and other landscaping, and possible discussion with RTT about this element.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

VI. FINAL WORDS

There were no final words at this meeting beyond all committee members being grateful that considerable progress going forward with our charge is being made.

VII. SCHEDULE MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for 5/3/2024 at 9am in Meeting Room C with Mike Lawson of Isotrope LLC being present in person to discuss his report to be delivered to the committee on or before 4/30/2024.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mike Wheeler motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 AM, seconded by Kip McDaniel.
Motion passed 7-0

Respectfully submitted,

Deb McCann

DRAFT