

CITY OF CONDON
Fiber Committee Notes
Tuesday, December 6, 2016, 8:30 a.m.
City Hall – Council Chambers

Present: Mayor Jim Hassing, Councilors Jan Stinchfield & Donald Jamieson, Chief Dale Scobert, Elizabeth Farrar & CA Kathryn Greiner; Nancy Werner, City's attorney on the telephone. Absent: Rita Rattray. Guests: Tom Wolff, Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative (CBEC) General Manager, Lori Anderson CBEC Director, Rachel Weinstein Gilliam County Community & Economic Development staff, Jordan Maley, OSU Extension Agent

A short discussion was held regarding the recent meeting with Gilliam County to form a potential partnership with Gilliam County to build a middle mile. Councilor Stinchfield summarized that Gilliam County Judge Steve Shaffer was not in favor of a partnership and Commissioner Mike Weimar did not have information to decide. Wolff asked what the partnership was requested and was told that it was on the middle mile from Arlington to Condon and depending on investment is what would be owned within the line. Councilor Jamieson stated that at this time the city does not want to be an ISP and the goal is open, affordable fiber for ISPs in Condon.

Wolff stated that CBEC's position is to provide fiber to every residential customer in CBEC's service area and his company would want to own a portion of the fiber in the line. CBEC would have a wholly owned subsidiary to provide the fiber or broadband services to their customers. Councilor Jamieson stated that the goal was for the city to own fiber and contract with interested companies to lease the dark fiber and provide the maintenance.

Discussion held regarding what is currently available with Windwave (WW) out of Heppner owning aerial fiber across Baseline Road in Gilliam County near CBEC's Shutler Flat then underground to Arlington. Wolff stated that Lightspeed Network has worked with other cooperatives and has interest in this area. It was discussed that WW has submitted an RPQ/P to Frontier Telenet (FTN) for \$2 million to come from Cedar Springs Road to Condon in a buried line and an additional \$2 million to go from Condon to Fossil.

Wolff suggested that if the fiber was hung on Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) transmission line it would be a shorter route than following some of CBEC route. Columbia Power Cooperative out of Monument is also interested in providing fiber and comes near Shelton Park in Wheeler County. There was a discussion of a recent townhall meeting with State Rep. Greg Smith that he noted that Wheeler County has been "earmarked" for \$2 million and needs to have it spent by the time the legislature meets in February, but a plan needed to be submitted by mid-December. If the money is not used then the money may be reassigned at the state level to another project.

Wolff stated that he believed CBEC had planned to do a feasibility study in June and borrow funds to complete some of the backbone, but may move this process up if the partners have money in a shorter timeline. Weinstein stated that if there is fiber laid in rural areas there may be USDA Community Connect grants that may be applied by CBEC.

Wolff stated that CBEC are meeting with Wheeler County representatives to determine if they can partner with them to get fiber to their service area.

Nancy Werner stated that putting together a partnership agreement with CBEC and city would not be difficult as it would be to draft each partners roles. Having a partner that does not have to abide by Oregon Public Contracting rules does not excuse the city in this law and they would have to go out for an RFP for contract services. A short discussion was if the city would enter into an Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) for a 20-40 year period but then it would preclude them from public contracting but they would not have an ownership interest. Though the IRU gives them a right that cannot be taken away from them for that period, it could when the lease was complete. Werner added that if there was an IRU CBEC would be the lead on the project.

The fiber committee will recommend to the City Council at their December 7 meeting to begin the process of entering a partnership with CBEC to bring middle mile fiber line from Arlington to Condon if the CBEC board agrees to the terms.