

Stowe Universal Broadband and Cell Access Committee Authorization

Policy Statement: The Selectboard finds that:

- Universal high-speed Internet access and mobile cellular telephone coverage are vital for economic development, opportunities for lifelong learning, public safety, and quality of life of Stowe residents.
- The public good of the community will be promoted by assuring that reliable and affordable high-speed Internet access and mobile telecommunications services are available at all locations within the Town of Stowe on or before 12/31/10.
- While existing providers of these services are gradually extending service within the Town, no requirement exists for any individual company to make these services universally available within Stowe, and there is no assurance that these services will be accessible in all areas of Stowe in the near or foreseeable future.
- Universal access within Stowe to high-speed Internet access and mobile telecommunications services may be accomplished sooner, and may only be economically feasible, if the Town exercises leadership to support and facilitate extension of those services.
- The efforts of a Town-sponsored Universal Access Committee will complement the state-wide efforts of the Vermont Telecommunications Authority, and enable service-extending projects that qualify for assistance from the VTA.

Therefore the Selectboard has decided to appoint a citizen committee to help advance this objective in Stowe.

Members:

- Up to seven members from the community at-large will be appointed by the Selectboard.
- The Board may also appoint one or more of its own members.
- Owners, employees or representatives of companies that provide high-speed Internet or mobile telecommunications services in the Town are eligible for, and are encouraged to seek, appointment to the committee, but shall not vote on any matters taken up by the committee.

Term:

Unless otherwise decided at a future date by the Selectboard, the term of the committee members shall be from the date of their appointment through February 29, 2009.

Charge:

1. Identify what is an acceptable level of high speed internet and cell phone coverage.
2. Identify and map areas in Stowe without access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet access services and cell phone coverage;
3. Identify options, and determine the most economic and timely means of extending service to these areas;
4. Assess the level of demand for high-speed services within areas of Stowe now without access;
5. Assist and encourage companies now providing high-speed Internet access and cell phone service within the Town to extend service;
6. Develop and implement a plan to evaluate the interest of homeowners, businesses and citizens in receiving high-speed Internet access in those areas now without access;
7. Communicate to landowners, regulatory bodies and other entities the importance universal access to the general well-being of the Town;
8. Work with the Vermont Telecommunications Authority, service providers and citizens to achieve the objective of universal access in Stowe as soon as practicable, with the understanding that any initiative that involves municipal financial participation or grants shall be approved in advance by the Selectboard.
9. Recommend to the Selectboard further actions, policies or projects that will advance the objectives of this policy statement.

Selectboard Updates:

The Committee may request time on the Selectboard agenda at anytime for policy guidance and are encouraged to keep the Selectboard up to date. However, at a minimum, the Committee within 60 days of their formation shall develop a proposed work plan to present and discuss with the Selectboard.

Budget:

The Committee shall have a budget of \$3,000 for mapping, mailing, copying, etc. Any additional appropriate shall be approved by the Selectboard.