

From: Peter Bluhm <peterbluhm@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 3:18 PM
To: Faith Brown <FBrown@leg.state.vt.us>; Ann Cummings <ACUMMINGS@leg.state.vt.us>
Cc: Whitaker Stephen <whitaker.stephen@gmail.com>; Goldstein Fred <fred@interisle.net>; Randy Brock <RBrock@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: [External] Fwd: Mass Broadband

[External]

Faith, Ann,

I wrote to Sharon Gillett, an old friend, asking on your behalf about MBI. Her reply came too late for your hearings this week, but her comments about bonding may be of interest. I have her permission to forward her email. It's below.

Cheers,
Peter Bluhm

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sharon Gillett <Sharon.Gillett@microsoft.com>
Date: September 9, 2020 at 10:14:42 AM EDT
To: Peter Bluhm <peterbluhm@icloud.com>
Subject: RE: Mass Broadband

No problem Peter.

Sharon

-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Bluhm <peterbluhm@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 7:26 AM
To: Sharon Gillett <Sharon.Gillett@microsoft.com>
Subject: Re: Mass Broadband

Sharon, thanks so much for your reply. Would you mind if I forwarded you email to the Finance Committee Clerk?

The committee is hearing later today from Michael Baldino. They moved quickly on this.

Thanks again.

Cheers,
Peter Bluhm

On Sep 8, 2020, at 11:02 PM, Sharon Gillett <Sharon.Gillett@microsoft.com> wrote:

Peter,

So nice to hear from you and glad to know you're still mixing it up in Vermont!

Here are a few ideas for you:

1. By this email I'm introducing you to the current Mass DTC Commissioner, Karen Charles Peterson. Karen can likely point you to a good contact for MBI these days.
2. I found this <https://nam06.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbroadband.masstech.org%2Fwifi&data=02%7C01%7Csharon.gillett%40microsoft.com%7C3c0b2cca04ba4cff0c5308d854b318ab%7C72f988bf86f141af91ab2d7cd011db47%7C1%7C0%7C637352475477536217&sdata=C5XWxv%2BnoZ8t8p%2BMiZ9Jc4APk7fHm8UXn4fdTLddzAE%3D&reserved=0> on the MBI web site - an example what MBI can do for the public with a state-owned backbone network. The page also lists all the ISPs who are working with MBI on this setup - perhaps helpful for VT to contact some of these companies for perspective?
3. You probably already know Chris Campbell who used to be with VT govt. He's been a consultant with Tilson since 2015 (ccampbell@tilsonotech.com) and could be another good person to ask about what other states are doing.
4. My recollection (from a long time ago) was that the VTA used revenue bonds. Mass used general bonds which I always thought was a more practical approach. If rural communities could sustain the cost of broadband networks on their own, they wouldn't need to be asking for govt help - the companies would already be there if the economics worked. So revenue bonds never really made sense to me.

Hope this helps!

Sharon

-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Bluhm <peterbluhm@icloud.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 11:57 AM
To: Sharon Gillett <Sharon.Gillett@microsoft.com>
Subject: Mass Broadband

Sharon, name from the past here. I hope you are well and avoiding the virus.

I testified online to the Vermont Senate Committee on Finance this week regarding the progress of broadband in Vermont's rural areas. They asked where in the country there are states that are doing a better job. Based on my now limited current experience I said that Massachusetts could be a model.

I know you moved on long ago, but I wonder if you could let me know of any useful documents or contacts at MBI. I want to help the Vermonters develop a useful plan to improve rural broadband, and the committee apparently wants to schedule a Zoom witness or two. Any suggestions?

Thanks in advance for whatever you can tell me.

Cheers,
Peter Bluhm