

City of La Verkin

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La Verkin City Council Work Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 5:00 pm.

Council Chambers, 111 S. Main, La Verkin, Utah

Present: Mayor Kelly Wilson; Council Members: Patricia Wise, Richard Hirschi, and Micah Gubler; Staff: Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, and Kevin Bennett

Excused: Councilmembers Blair Gubler, Chuck Hardy, and Christy Ballard

A. Called to Order-Mayor Wilson called the work meeting to order at 5:16 pm.

1. InfoWest/Go Fiber

The meeting was turned over to Randon Anderson. The work meeting was to answer any questions the Council has about possibly franchising with InfoWest.

InfoWest likes to help communities grow by upgrading existing phone and TV infrastructure.

He explained fiber is a piece of glass that a laser shoots through that runs from individual connections back to the equipment. This is why they need a franchise, so the City knows they are running fiber in the City for the residents. There is no cost to the City. InfoWest will install the fiber, and in turn, they hope to sell the product to our residents. There are multiple ways to install fiber. He briefly reviewed those options, but they are mainly in the ground.

Kyle mentioned talking to Utopia. They are also a communications company, but they have cities maintain the infrastructure. The feels that is not feasible for a small city. InfoWest will handle all the infrastructure.

Kevin said La Verkin City does not have a conduit in the ground for InfoWest or other companies to utilize. Does InfoWest install a conduit so anyone coming after them can use the same location, or would it require excavation each time another company wanted to come into the City?

Randon commented that other companies do not like to share. Hurricane City had this same question, and InfoWest gave them an example list of qualifications to get a franchise. Only so many things can be installed in a road or on a pole. You don't want people taking up that space to service only sections of your community. St. George has capped the franchises at four per pole. If there is space in the ground, they will do other things. They also can require a company who wants to install in a crowded easement to notify other companies to allow them to install in the same trench.

One problem with everyone in the same conduit is determining who is responsible for maintaining that conduit.

Kyle said one of his criteria would be that InfoWest must serve the entire community, not just the "easy" access areas. He would like to include a percentage and a timeframe in the agreement.

Randon replied that putting a number to something you aren't working on would be hard. Hurricane's agreement has a five-year plan where InfoWest is trying to get as much done in that time frame as possible, but Hurricane also owns all the poles and all the ground. Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) owns La Verkin's poles, so it will depend on what they allow InfoWest to do. He could not guarantee a time because of that.

He suggested reevaluating the agreement after so many years. InfoWest would have no problem agreeing to that.

If InfoWest gets a franchise, the first step would be to determine what RMP poles they need to use and then submit that information to RMP. After approval from them, the plan would be engineered. This process would take about three months. This is for areal infrastructure. Anything underground will be engineered as such. La Verkin is mixed. We could get La Verkin planned while working on Hurricane and be ready to start next year. The actual construction is probably about one year. If there is an area they can't physically get to at first, InfoWest/Go Fiber can get to them wirelessly until the fiber can reach them.

Councilwoman Wise asked how accurate the speeds were.

Randon replied that other companies would say you can get up to a gig. InfoWest will tell you precisely what you are getting. They also don't oversubscribe their customers, and the prices don't change after the first year. They have seen prices go down because bandwidth is getting cheaper. He gave a brief history of Go Fiber and InfoWest and that merger. They are currently finishing up installing in St. George, then they will move to Hurricane and hope to come into La Verkin and Toquerville. This is no cost to the City. The franchise agreement lets the City know InfoWest is working in the City and lets InfoWest know what the City wants and doesn't want.

B. Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.

April 19, 2023
Date Approved

ATTEST: Christy Ballard
Christy Ballard
City Recorder

Kelly B. Wilson
Mayor Kelly B. Wilson