



City of Lucas
Technology Committee

Regular Meeting

March 12, 2019

7:00 PM

City Hall – 665 Country Club Road – Lucas, Texas

MINUTES

Call to Order

Chairman Paul Rathgeb called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. It was determined that a quorum was present.

Committee Members Present:

Chairman Paul Rathgeb

Member Mark Skaggs

Member George Brody

Member Dennis Scully

City Staff Present:

City Manager Joni Clarke

Special Projects Coordinator Kent Souriyasak

Bill Baxter, City IT Consultant

Committee Members Absent:

Vice Chairman Trey Sleeper

City Council Liaison Present:

Councilmember Debbie Fisher

Regular Agenda

1. Citizen Input.

Bill Esposito, 13 North Star, lives in Lakeview Estates located at Lakeview Drive and Christian Lane. Mr. Esposito is concerned about unreliability and slow internet and would like increased bandwidth, preferably a fiber or cable solution. Mr. Esposito works from home and having reliable internet is important. Mr. Esposito currently has Rise Broadband and uses line of site to radio tower. AT&T is a provider in this area, but Mr. Esposito could not make it work because it is too far from the hub. Mr. Esposito indicated HughesNet could not provide VPN, which is essential when you work from home, and offered to help the Committee.

Russell Guzman, 12 Rollingwood Drive, discussed which entities are responsible for the internet infrastructure. Mr. Guzman would like the City to play a role and explained he currently receives telephone service from AT&T and internet from HughesNet. Mr. Guzman shared that daughter needs internet to access school data for homework from Willow Springs. Mr. Guzman indicated that when it rains, the water interferes with telephone service from AT&T. Mr. Guzman also indicated that there is fiber on Rollingwood, and AT&T was not willing to provide him with service.

Chuck Vavra, 15 North Star, indicated that he is a Geologist and runs a consulting business from home. Mr. Vavra has very large reports and subscribes to Rise Broadband, but Rise Broadband's customer service is not adequate. Mr. Vavra lives adjacent to USACE land and had to remove a tree to connect to the Winningkoff Tower because there are trees on USACE land interfering with line

of sight. The speed is inadequate, and Mr. Vavra has difficulty uploading reports for clients. Mr. Vavra indicated that AT&T telephone is terrible and the VOIP option is not adequate. Mr. Vavra believes that our community has many people that are working at home.

Russ Edwards, 655 Stallion Drive, surveyed his neighborhood and found results all over, and that there was a lot of diversity with AT&T and Rise. Mr. Edwards has Rise Broadband and pays \$50 a month for 20 MB. Mr. Edwards is willing to represent his neighborhood.

Nick Knize, 1001 Stansted Manor Drive, relocated from Rockwall and is new to Lucas. Mr. Knize works at home as a software developer and uses Rise Broadband which has stable network. Mr. Knize indicated that Suddenlink is doing a site survey and will provide a bid to extend a node costing approximately \$10,000, but the closest one is about a mile. Mr. Knize also indicated that if a request for a site survey is made to Spectrum and AT&T, they will have to pitch a business case to see if it is profitable. Suddenlink has taken an interest and we need enough voices to help make our case. Some counties have agreements that may help extend nodes to areas with coverage issues.

2. Consider approving the minutes of the January 24, 2019 Technology Committee meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Committee Member Mark Skaggs, seconded by Committee Member George Brody to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2109 Technology Committee. The motion passed unanimously by a 4 to 0 vote.

3. Provide update on communication efforts.

Committee Member Mark Skaggs indicated that the meeting notice was posted on Nextdoor and has been trying to share information with homeowner associations. Committee Member Skaggs explained we are on the committee because we have experienced the same issues. Committee Member Skaggs shared that he lives in Claremont Springs and is working on mapping and will be posting this information to the website.

4. Provide further insight into the results of the 2018 Technology and Communication Survey.

Committee Member Mark Skaggs re-evaluated the data from the survey that the City administered last fall and categorized the comments. Committee Member Skaggs looked at satisfaction by zone and evaluated patterns, indicating that Zone 4 has the best ratio of satisfaction to dissatisfaction. The survey data shows a shift from dissatisfaction to satisfaction between 20 MB and 100 MB. Delivery mechanism concluded that fiber was linked to satisfaction. Committee Member Skaggs highlighted the providers with AT&T, Rise and Frontier serving 84.9% of the service in the City.

Bill Esposito, 13 North Star, asked do we have any leverage, and will they give us a map?

Committee Member Skaggs responded no.

Councilmember Fisher explained that property owners are giving individual easements.

Mr. Esposito indicated we need a heat map.

5. Consider exploring opportunities to steer interest from Verizon for 5G Home service.

Committee Member Dennis Scully explained that he works with Verizon which rolled out 5G Home but unfortunately, they have not provided any information and it is in six different cities now. Committee Member Scully indicated that we are not alone in our internet challenges and that 5G Home is expensive. Committee Member Scully is hopeful that he will have additional information at the next meeting. It may not be a solution today, but it is a possibility.

Russ Edwards, 655 Stallion Drive, shared one of the key things about the 5G Home is that we will see mobile devices this first half that support higher speeds. 5G Home probably will not be here until the second half. Mr. Edwards indicated we need a network.

Councilmember Fisher confirmed that this type of technology is regulated by state law.

The Committee discussed how we can be friendly to internet service providers.

Russell Guzman, 12 Rollingwood Drive, asked what the City has for its telephone service?

Councilmember Fisher responded that the City uses Grande.

NOTE: Committee Chairmain Paul Rathgeb MOVED item 7 before item 6.

- 7. Consider adding Speedtest Custom by Ookla to the Technology Committee webpage on the City website in order to objectively gather information on actual internet speeds that residents are experiencing from providers.**

The Committee discussed a website that was developed by a citizen and would process location and speed information.

MOTION: A motion was made by Committee Member Mark Skaggs, seconded by Committee Chairman Paul Rathgeb to add a speed test to the Technology Committee webpage on the City's website to collect data on actual internet speeds from residents with proper security, privacy and location information. The motion passed unanimously by a 4 to 0 vote.

NOTE: Committee Chairmain Paul Rathgeb MOVED item 8 before item 6.

- 8. Consider a strategic plan to pursue internet solutions and improve resident satisfaction.**

Committee Chairman Paul Rathgeb explained that the Committee needs more specific information to internet service providers to determine if they can provide service. The Technology Committee's role is to provide recommendations to the Lucas City Council. There is a need to define the problem and get the detailed information. The Technology Committee needs to evaluate the opportunities for internet service providers to invest in our community. We need to be able to demonstrate that our community is a worthwhile investment. We must build our case and we also need to figure out what our solutions are, and it will probably not be a one size fits all. We should explore universal solutions and figure out if there are gaps, how we can fill them and present that information to potential internet service providers. We may need to consider a future bond proposal and hold an election. Once we have all this information, we will present it to the City Council.

6. Consider assigning responsibilities to committee members in order to collect and manage information.

Committee Chairman Paul Rathgeb discussed the following areas of responsibility:

- Collecting and managing information/communication effort
- Leadership of identifying the problem
- Probable solutions and lead this effort

Committee Member Mark Skaggs volunteered to collect and manage information/communication efforts.

The Technology Committee will place this item on the April agenda to discuss specific assignments.

Committee Chairman Rathgeb asked those citizens in attendance to send the Technology Committee an e-mail if you want to help with any of these efforts. We need help, so the more people that are interested, please let the Committee know.

The Technology Committee discussed having a booth at Founders Day and City staff will assist with this endeavor.

Russell Guzman, 12 Rollingwood Drive, asked about T-1 lines and Committee Member Skaggs responded that he had some information.

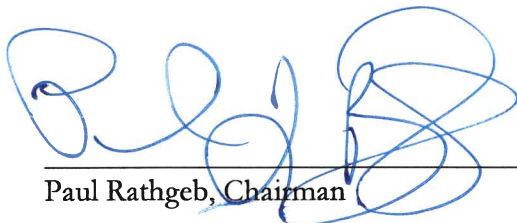
The Committee discussed mailers and using the newsletter to get out information. Committee Member Skaggs and Special Projects Coordinator Kent Souriyasak agreed to work on a mailer.

Michael King, 1200 Bloom Street, indicated that whether a citizen is satisfied or dissatisfied doesn't mean that they are indifferent about improvements. Satisfied doesn't mean you are not interested. Mr. King also indicated that it was not an option to use TV via internet because of internet deficiencies.

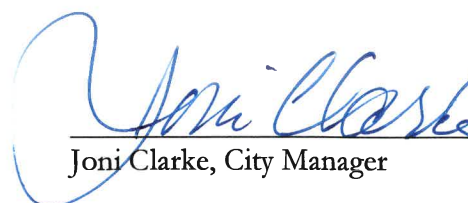
MOTION: A motion was made by Committee Chairman Paul Rathgeb, seconded by Committee Member George Brody to have Committee Member Mark Skaggs and Special Projects Coordinator Kent Souriyasak work on preparing mailing inserts and assist in preparing a booth at Founders Day. The motion passed unanimously by a 4 to 0 vote.

9. Adjournment.

MOTION: A motion was made by Committee Member George Brody, seconded by Committee Member Mark Skaggs to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 pm. The motion passed unanimously by a 4 to 0 vote.



Paul Rathgeb, Chairman



Joni Clarke, City Manager

