

March 24, 2021: Email from Colleen Quint to Broadband Committee

Minot Broadband Committee members - thanks for your support and efforts to get the word out about the broadband referendum earlier this month. As you know, it passed by a whopping 120-3! That's incredible and really shows how well people understand the need. Working with Brian Lippold, our consultant, we're getting ready to apply for the matching ConnectME Authority funds before the April deadline. Having the town share of funds committed is a good thing. We know it will be competitive but hope we are in a good position, and will be sure to loop back with Committee members as we have more information.

We've just posted an update to the Town website with some information about what to expect next. We know our work isn't done, and we're currently talking with Charter (aka Time Warner/Spectrum) whose engineers have been doing some additional surveying to see what the cost is to take the next step and expand to some other parts of town that are currently not served. You'll see in the update that we expect a LOT more dollars available in the state for broadband from the most recent federal stimulus bill, and that bodes well for future projects.

Finally, for anyone interested in what to do in the meantime, Colleen has signed on with Starlink and installed it a couple of weeks ago (with some troubleshooting help from Kerry Bonney). The quick news is: it works great! She's gone from using a Verizon Wireless signal on her phone or via a mifi device with download speeds ranging from 3 to 35 Mbps, to now having 100+ (and typically much, much higher). It's been a game-changer. For anyone interested in also being part of the Beta test, you can learn more at starlink.com. There is an upfront cost of about \$600 for the dish and then monthly cost of \$100 (no data caps, at least none at the moment). Might not work for everyone but we have a big open field next to the house with a clear and unimpeded view of the northern sky. More satellites continue to launch and they say service will only get better - and it's been pretty terrific right out of the starting gate. If you have any questions, feel free to email Colleen directly (cquint25@gmail.com).

Thanks, everyone, and we'll be sure to keep you posted as we finalize and submit the ConnectME application and as we learn more from Charter and other providers about getting service to other parts of town.