

## #14...Nov 23, 2020

1. At the moment, there is no new news about the fate of the GWI loan application to build out fiber internet in Brooksville. It is beyond frustrating for all of us.
2. ConnectMe is encouraging everyone in the state to take more speed tests and submit them through the ConnectMe platform. If you have any difficulties completing this “assignment” please ask, I might be able to help you figure it out (you can phone me at 207 326 8022). Please do this to add Brooksville tests to the statewide picture. <https://www.mainebroadbandcoalition.org/speed-test-info>. You can scroll to enlarge the map after you do the test to see the dot that represents your location.
3. HOWEVER, Please do not take this test to add your results to the overall Town results IF you are one of those households who has arranged a private deal with CCI to provide fiber to your personal residence! Most of us cannot afford to do that, and I worry that your super speeds are going to mislead authorities into thinking that we are all set. I think my worry is justified given that the FCC has been in the habit of believing that, if one household in a census block was “served”, all households were (or could be).

If you don't know what I am talking about, here is the problem. Some Brooksville residents, either fortuitously located really near a CCI terminal, and/or possessed of wealth to spare, have made private arrangements with CCI to serve their private homes with fiber internet. To see what this would have cost my husband and I personally, we talked to CCI. Here is the essence of their quote:

36 month term

\$732.88 per month

\$25,000 “activation fee”

No sharing the service with neighbors. No bundled phone service.

Total cost over three years works out to \$51,383.63 - and no mention of what the future monthly rate would be after three years.

We have heard rumors of hookup fees as high as \$40,000 - \$75,000 (no info on monthly charges). Despite fees of these magnitudes being astronomically out of reach for most Brooksville residents, some people are apparently paying these amounts. (The lowest we have heard works out to \$3000 per year for a resident near a terminal.) And, some residents in separate households on one particular road are being charged the same outrageous price, being told that they each must have individual fiber cables run down the same road, rather than sharing a cable. Some have inquired whether their cable could serve others to save costs, and were told absolutely not. Corporate decision. Because internet is unregulated, CCI can get away with it, and they are taking full advantage of that fact.

I don't need to tell you that this goes against my principles, or what I believe to be the sentiments of most Mainers who feel that we are all in this together. Given that I feel so strongly about this, I am recusing myself from any future arrangements that anyone in this Town wants to make with CCI. If for example, the GWI loan is not approved and some folks

want the Town to consider putting Town money in CCI's pocket as an act of desperation, like they did in Brooklin, please do not ask me to lift a finger to help. I will be spending effort ONLY in trying to get ALL Brooksville residents a decent level of affordable internet.

Keep submitting your speed tests and advocating for internet as an essential public service!

Abbie

p.s. my latest speed test? 0.48 mBps down, 0.15 mBps up. Red dot on the map.