

A special meeting of the Kirklin Town Council was held on Thursday, April 3, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at Kirklin Town Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Comcast/Xfinity fiber infrastructure project.

Town Council Members in attendance: Melinda Jobe, Craig Hudzinski, Brent Stetler, and Jerry Faucett. Walt Minnick was absent.

Also present: Shane Kohl, Brianna Kohl, John McIntyre, Steven Strykowski, Nick Till, Amber King, Stacey Cooper, Dan Michael, Mike Altman, Wade Howard, Carl Olsen, AJ Lantrip, Tasha Grider, Courtney Grider, Kylee Brandenburg, Billy Walker, Brendon Bright, Jay Moore, Sandra Price, Nikki Atherton, Linda Jobe, Jim Phipps, Randy Weaver, Lisa Weaver, LuAnn Schoen, Scott Asher, Tonia Asher, Jeff Dennis, Glenn Coffman, Teresa Coffman, Jeremy Burton, and Tara Walker.

The meeting was opened by Melinda Jobe with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

Melinda Jobe asked Billy Walker if he had issues with the Comcast project. He replied that his issues were pedestals that needed to be moved such as in an alley, next to a fire hydrant, and in a sidewalk line but that three had been moved already. Mindi then addressed Comcast and said that residents are disliking the pedestals on US 421 and SR 38 and some locations where they are around their homes. Craig Hudzinski stated that when Comcast was in attendance at a previous council meeting, they left the impression that everything would be underground with the exception of some pedestals along some alleys. Melinda Jobe said that she confirmed with INDOT that Comcast did get correct permits for the highways and conducted a survey that found Comcast was following proper guidelines while in the state right-of-way. Jeremy Burton introduced himself as the Manager of Government Affairs for Indiana for Comcast and apologized for the misunderstanding. He stated that he expects their \$1.7 million investment to be completed by the end of May. He informed attendees of a program called Internet Essentials for low-income residents for \$15.00 per month and a subsidized laptop program. He then invited questions from residents. Sandra Price asked if there will be a pedestal in everyone's yard to which Mike Altman with QC Communications replied that each pedestal will serve two or four homes, depending on its orientation. Melinda asked if they could be buried. Steven Strykowski, a construction manager for Comcast, replied that they can look at it on a case-by-case basis. He said the problem with putting the equipment they are using in underground vaults is that water can enter and cause issues and failures, and when it freezes it starts snapping connections inside, which is the reason for the pedestals. Tonia Asher asked why residents don't have the option of having them put behind their homes instead of in front. Steven replied they stay in the right-of-way versus on private property so that they can access them when repairs are needed. Brent Stetler stated if a resident allowed them on their property, then it wouldn't matter. Steve replied that they would need to gain their permission every time a repair was needed. Jeremy said that staying in the right-of-way was best practice under Indiana law. Jeremy and Steve invited anyone to email or call them with any questions or concerns. A resident asked if they were required to sign up for Comcast and Jeremy replied no. Amber King inquired why they couldn't put them in the alleys. Jeremy replied that when designing projects, they have to design to the best standards to maintain their best-in-country uptime. He said that they want to know resident complaints so that they can consider what can be done on a case-by-case basis. Tara Walker asked if they avoided putting them on Duke Energy poles because they didn't want to pay the rent. Jeremy replied that pole permits were not approved in time and that an underground network is more reliable during storms and that it is actually five to ten

times more expensive for them to install underground. Craig asked what residents can do with their pedestals. Jeremy stated that residents can landscape around them. Steve stated that they work on their own equipment and customers receive a faster response when there is an issue than some providers who may not get service restored for many hours. AJ Lantrip stated that change is good but asked if Comcast could provide blueprints to keep at town hall so residents know what will be installed in their yards. Jeremy stated that he would look into that. AJ also asked if they had an example of a successful project in another town. Steve replied that, while it was coax and not fiber, that Darlington, IN would be an example. Craig would like the red paint from locates on the downtown sidewalks removed. Billy stated that he found out that they changed their original plan for downtown and are now going along the alleys behind the buildings. John McIntyre asked who made the decision to install pedestals instead of flush tops and if homeowners had the option of a vault at this point. Steve reiterated the issue that water can cause in underground vaults. Jeremy stated that they're willing to listen to individual complaints from residents who contact them and determine if anything can be done without risking the reliability of the network. Tasha Grider asked what a vault is. Jeremy replied that they house the splice case, which is the main line that feeds the distribution cables to the pedestals. LuAnn Schoen asked if she has a choice between a flat and a pedestal and Jeremy replied that she can contact him to see if anything can be done. Tara stated that she would post Comcast contact information on the town's Facebook page. AJ asked what their liability is if they damage the pedestal. Jeremy replied he would get back to everyone on that. Shane Kohl asked why pedestals could be put in the alleys downtown and Jeremy replied that they were taking notes. Tara asked if their project was part of the Rural Broadband Initiative and why they chose Kirklin. Jeremy replied no and that Comcast business managers make the decisions on where they go. Sandra asked why they didn't do a survey of the town to see if there was interest. Jeremy responded they had a strong business case to make the investment in Kirklin. AJ asked if he was saying residents wouldn't have had a choice if they came or not. Jeremy replied that in Indiana, ISP's have a right to be in the right-of-way statewide. Mike Altman stated that as pedestals lean when installed they will continue working them so that they will tighten up straight. Tara asked what the income threshold is for their Internet Essentials program since Kirklin has some low-income residents that would likely benefit from it. Jeremy replied that more information can be found on www.internetessentials.com but that generally if a resident has a child receiving free and reduced lunches or receiving food stamps, they probably will qualify. Jeremy closed by stating they want to be responsive and address concerns and they thanked the town for having them here tonight.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Melinda Jobe, Council President