

Forest Gate HOA Members Meeting Minutes  
15 July 2019

The HOA president opened the meeting with information on what the meeting was being held for and presented some history of the internet service in the neighborhood. Of note:

- Members of the Forest Gate HOA sought solutions to enhance internet access in our neighborhood due to the limited access speed and poor reliability of current services.
- Contacted three providers; Comcast, Centurylink and Force Broadband
- Comcast wasn't willing to provide a quote and had no interest in providing a solution
- Centurylink showed little interest and indicated an exorbitant cost
- Force Broadband provided a quick response and reasonable offer.
  - Information received after the meeting; the \$72,000 being charged to the Forest Gate community is approximately 40% of the total projected cost for the fiber install. Force Broadband is covering the offset of \$108,000, which they consider an investment to earn our business.
- Introduced Dan from Force Broadband to provide information on their company and answer any questions from those members in attendance.

Dan from Force Broadband provided some history of the company, costs for service and related information for the fiber install.

- Company started approximately 3 years ago when 3 partners merged to provide fast reliable service to communities and businesses in rural areas.
- Initially began by providing wireless services to those in mostly open rural areas.
- Eventually began offering fiber service options to those areas in heavily wooded locations (where wireless service is not effective).
- Since establishment, they've accrued nearly 500 customers, with ZERO lost customers to date.
- If fiber gets installed into Forest Gate, the monthly cost for each homeowner would be as follows: (all taxes and fees are included in the monthly costs)
  - 25 mbps - \$50/month
  - 300 mbps - \$70/month
  - 1000 mbps - \$100/month
- Once you select which rate of speed you'd like, you do not have to sign a lease or contract for a term...service is provided month to month.
- Force Broadband will coordinate a date with each homeowner to perform the fiber line install to their home. A \$10 installation fee is required for the install (Dan indicated that the \$10 fee was imposed to help ensure the homeowner shows up as scheduled. In previous experience, homeowners failed to be home on the scheduled date if there was no fee.)
- Once you sign up for service, that price will be locked in for life as long as you don't cancel or transfer the service.
- They do offer home phone service as well for \$30/month.

- If you need to upgrade or downgrade your service (go up or down in mbps required) there is no fee to change.

Dan from Force Broadband began answering questions.

Q. Could we see the drawings that Force Broadband has developed showing how the lines will be run to each house?

A. There are proprietary concerns with the drawings currently developed.

- Dan indicated that they did provide some drawings to another community that offered them to a competitor.
- The current drawings were only designed to a rough detail to establish an estimate for materials and work to be performed.
- Force Broadband rep will do a pre-site survey with each homeowner to determine an appropriate route and address any landscape lighting or irrigation lines in the area.
- Each homeowner will have input on where the line should be run.
- Plan is to use existing easements along the backside of all properties for the main lines and gain access to each house approaching from the rear. This typically eliminates the requirement to bore under sidewalks and driveways, which drives the costs up exponentially.
- There will need to be approximately 6 junction/vault boxes installed within the development, which will be away from any houses within the back easement. They will be below ground, flush mounted with the ground level...not the above ground pedestal type. The covers are rated for 25,000 lbs, so garden tractors or lawnmowers could be driven over them without concern.

Q. Since some houses are closer to the back of their lots than others, will each homeowner be charged a different amount?

A. The costs for the materials (conduit and fiber cable) are minimal, so costs were determined by an average distance.

- Conduit will be installed underground using a cable plow, which lessens the amount of disruption to each homeowners' yard.
- Conduit will be installed first and then the fiber cable will be pulled through the conduit to each house.

Q. How much will it cost a homeowner if they accidentally cut the fiber line?

A. It's approximately a \$100 fee for repairing a cut fiber line.

- The conduit being installed has a feature to be identified when using the 811 service (underground utility location service).

Q. If a homeowner is currently in a lease with a service provider, can Force Broadband assist them with breaking or ending that lease?

A. No

Q. What type of wiring is required in the house for fiber to work?

A. Cat5E cable is the standard and what's typically installed in most houses built after 2002. Cat5 cable is also acceptable and will work, but Cat3 cable will not work.

- Force Broadband will provide a box they'll install in the house to convert the fiber signals to copper.
- If a homeowner does not have Cat5 or Cat5E cable in their house, Force Broadband will assist the homeowner in developing a solution on a case by case basis.
- The service speed each homeowner signed up for (25, 300 or 1000 mbps) is guaranteed by Force Broadband as it enters the house. They cannot guarantee that speed after it gets sent through a homeowners' router or wireless network.
- Dan indicated that purchasing any wireless router for under \$100 usually doesn't perform as expected.

Q. Where will Force Broadband be getting their fiber service from?

A. Centurylink owns the main trunk of fiber in Colorado Springs and Force Broadband would purchase an amount of fiber support that fulfills the Forest Gate requirement.

Q. Is there any wireless system or router that you'd recommend?

A. Google wifi and associated "pucks" are a great solution to get consistent wifi service and speed throughout the house.

Scott Braeger provided the HOA members some considerations and research information on fiber networks;

- Research shows fiber networks are more secure.
- Must consider where we'll be at in five years and the home amenities that will consume bandwidth:
  - Smart TV's and appliances
  - Home surveillance/camera's
  - Cloud storage
  - Online healthcare video service and imaging
  - Increase in video quality (4K to 8K), Netflix, Hulu, Gaming, etc...
  - Cell phone service support
- Costs to install fiber service in the future will only increase

Q. If Force Broadband goes out of business, would another company be able to take over the installed fiber cabling and service?

A. Yes.

Q. If Force Broadband cuts my irrigation or landscape lighting power lines, who is responsible for repairing the damage?

A. Force Broadband will work to repair any damage if the homeowner had identified those lines during the pre-site survey.

Dan provided one last piece of advice. If a homeowner is currently in a lease, he recommended getting the fiber line installed to their house now (for the \$10 fee) while the neighborhood cabling is being done to avoid the costs of having Force Broadband come back out later and pay for the costs of getting the equipment back out to perform the install. Force Broadband will honor the same rates as initially offered to the community at the end of their lease.

Dan can be contacted at [dan@forcebb.com](mailto:dan@forcebb.com) with any additional questions. Some information about their company can also be found on their website [www.forcebb.com](http://www.forcebb.com). Dan indicated that their website is fairly rudimentary at this time, since all the owners have been busy out performing installs.

The HOA Board Treasurer read aloud the covenant verbiage related to special assessments to begin discussions on funding the fiber install if the HOA members voted to move forward.

- Indicated that if the members voted to approve the fiber install, each of the 50 lots within Forest Gate would be responsible for \$1440 to accrue the \$72,000 installation cost.
- HOA members assessed that the HOA should request legal assistance to ensure any decisions aligned with the intent of the HOA covenants and considered Colorado State Law. Fees for an attorney not to exceed \$1000. Each of the 50 lots would provide an additional \$20 to fund the attorney fees.
- Discussed that some HOA members had requested that the meeting be informational only and requested to delay the vote on whether to impose a special assessment to a later date.
- Proposed that the HOA members vote on whether to have the meeting as informational only or to move forward with a vote on whether to impose a special assessment on all lot owners to install a fiber-optic internet infrastructure to the neighborhood.

HOA member motioned to move forward with the vote and was seconded.

Voting Ballots were handed out to each HOA member in attendance to include additional ballots to those members with proxies. 37 of the 50 lot owners were represented at the meeting. Vote was whether to delay the vote on a special assessment to a later date or to proceed with a vote.

Ballots were collected and counted by the HOA board members and verified by a non-board member (Robert Harasimowicz). The vote to proceed passed 29-8.

A motion was made from the floor and seconded which called the question "Shall Forest Gate HOA assess a one-time special assessment of up to but not exceeding \$1,460 on all lot owners to provide fiber-optic internet infrastructure access points to all 50 lots?" (\$1440 for fiber-optic and \$20 for legal fees). Once again, voting ballots were handed out, collected and counted. That vote passed by a vote of 31-6.

HOA president concluded the members meeting with a recap of the evenings decisional points and indicated that the HOA treasurer would begin communication with an attorney to gain legal advice. Additional information will be provided to the HOA members as we move forward.