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Likwid Communications Inc. announces plan for potential fast Internet service in Chiefland



Chris Smith, president of Likwid Communications Inc., tells the City Commission that this improvement to the area's infrastructure will help business interests have a greater opportunity to see more growth, as well as provide members of the public with faster Internet service.

**Story and Photos By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 29, 2016 at 2:07 p.m.
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CHIEFLAND -- Making the rounds to the various cities' government leaders and having made a appearances before to other municipalities and to the Levy County Board of County Commissioners, Chris Smith, president of Likwid Communications Inc., gave his presentation to the Chiefland City Commission on Monday night (Nov. 29).

As noted in the other stories about this group, it has decided to expand its existing fiber optic high-speed Internet service network into Levy County, according to a press release from the company sent on Thursday night (Nov. 17).

"After successfully servicing our customers for almost a decade, we decided to expand our service area within the Inverness-area, to the south, and to the north," President Smith has said.

The company president is reaching out to all of the municipalities in Levy County. He



intends to offer open lines of communication to elected officials, managers, business owners and individuals. Smith has said what he means and has done what he says he will do so far.

Lou Newman, chief executive officer and founder of Newman Strategy Group

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"We plan to finance such a network on our own," Smith said, "without placing any financial burden on local governments or taxpayers. We have partnered with Newman Strategy Group, a comprehensive consulting firm, capable of providing strategic plans, feasibility studies, grant writing services, marketing plans, and public relations services, all under one roof, which increases efficiency while decreasing cost.

"We have our own trenching equipment, our own field staff, and our own fiber," Smith continued, "which makes us the most competitive provider of middle-mile and last-mile project work. We have already done it successfully for years in a neighboring county and survived the Great Recession. We can finally bring reliable high-speed Internet services, without usage caps, to Levy County at competitive prices -- if enough residents and businesses sign pre-commitment contracts."

During the presentation Monday night, it was mentioned that the price range for monthly service starts at \$39.95 for data transfer speeds that are faster than over traditional telephone lines. That speed of connection allows for watching videos with ease. Smith also said Monday night that there is no limit on usage.

For instance, Verizon charges customers per gigabyte after they reach a certain amount each month. In one Verizon package, it is 20 GBs for about \$150 a month and then it is \$15 for every GB over that.

Currently, the Verizon MiFi system provides high-speed Internet service to several rural places in Levy County. There is a Verizon store near the Drummond Bank on U.S. Highway 19 in Chiefland where people can buy a JetPack and have that portable modem for Internet service immediately.

The number of people needed to sign up before installation of fiber optic lines by Likwid Communications begins is 200 individuals. So far, there are about 20 people who have signed up for the three-year agreement.

The starting point for activity with Likwid Communications Inc. is <http://www.golikwid.com/>.

Smith and Newman next plan to be at the Fanning Springs City Council meeting which starts at 5 p.m. on Dec. 13.