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Williston adopts a memorandum of understanding with fiber optic high-speed Internet Service Provider



Williston Mayor R. Gerald Hethcoat and City Council President Charles D. Goodman are seen in action on Tuesday night (Dec. 20).

By Jeff M. Hardison © Dec. 22, 2016 at 3:17 p.m.

WILLISTON -- The Williston City Council with a 4-1 vote, where City Councilman Danny Etheridge voted "No," Tuesday night (Dec. 20) agreed to a memorandum of understanding with a utility provider.

Etheridge voted "No" because he did not like the idea of inserting an advertisement in the city utility bills.

Likwid Communications plans to install fiber optic lines in Levy County, including in the cities like Williston, to provide customers with the ability to use that service for high-speed connections.

Likwid Communications President Christopher Smith and Lou Newman, chief executive officer and founder of Newman Strategy Group, were present to answer questions from the City Council and from people in the audience.

In this agreement the the City of Williston recognizes that reliable, high-speed internet service is a desirable service for residents and business intersts to have available.

The city is letting its utilities customers know of the option available for them to sign into a three-year contract for Internet service with Likwid Communications.

A flyer will be inserted into the bills.

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(from left) City Council Vice President Nancy Winger speaks as City Councilman Elihu Ross and City Manager Scott Lippmann listen.



As a result of this action, the city must now allow any like company to insert a similar flyer. That does not mean,

however, that any non-utility company can insert this type of advertisement. Smith said that if some other company is willing to invest what is required to make fiber optic cable service available for Internet and telephone service, then he has no qualms about them seeing the same treatment as he and his company are seeing.

Likwid Communications Inc. has decided to expand its existing fiber optic high-speed internet service network into Levy County, according to a press release previously published in HardisonInk.com (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 Chris Smith of Likwid Communications Inc. said.

The company is not seeking any funding from government entities.

"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 (Citrus 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."