

The following public announcement was made at the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners meeting on Wednesday, August 17, 2016:

Pasty.NET: First steps to becoming Member-Owned Co-operative

(Calumet, MI) – This week Pasty.NET of Calumet completed a major “air fiber” upgrade for the residents and businesses of Copper Harbor. At the same time it announced the formation of a steering committee to explore the logistics for becoming a member-owned cooperative Internet service.

The new link ties a gigabit of fiber in Calumet to the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge Tower, which distributes bandwidth for users from the west-end marina to the end of US-41, east of town. It comes at a price tag of around \$50,000, paid by marginal revenues from Pasty.NET users.

Earlier this summer Pasty.NET successfully established a similar broadband link to the Rock Harbor Lodge on Isle Royale. The turn-up of service there is awaiting a special use permit.

According to Pasty.NET General Manager, Charlie Hopper: “This project has always been a model of cooperation between government, business, and residential users. They provide access to the towers and other high structures, to relay ever increasing bandwidth, and marginal revenue from user fees are constantly being turned back into this expansion. From its beginning in 1999 Pasty.NET has been operated much like a cooperative. The time has come to formalize this into a member owned co-op structure, similar to rural electric cooperatives.”

Pasty.NET currently serves over 1,000 members, according to FCC coverage data. The move to Co-op ownership is expected to boost the chances for grant funding of the service, with the goal of bringing fiber connections to remote areas. Details of the new Steering Committee for making the co-op transition will be emailed to Pasty.NET members by the end of August.

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