



Mirán Fernandez
Chief Information Officer
Cable TV Coordinator

John Meyers
MIS Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas A. Golden, Jr., City Manager 

FROM: Mirán Fernandez, Chief Information Officer

DATE: March 18, 2024

Re: **MOTION RESPONSE: 01/23/2024 by C. Gitschier** – Req. City Mgr. Update
The City Council On The Wi-Fi At The Senior Center.

MOTION RESPONSE: 01/23/2024 by C. Scott – Req. City Mgr. Provide A
Report On When The Internet Will Be Restored To The Senior Center.

I write in response to C. Gitschier’s motion requesting additional information regarding Wi-Fi at the Senior Center, and on C. Scott’s motion requesting a report on when the Internet will be restored to the Senior Center (which was clarified to be focused on Wi-Fi).

The City of Lowell has delivered “Free WiFi” (FreeWiFi) services in some form or capacity to visitors at most public buildings since approximately 2004. While presented as “free”, these FreeWiFi services were typically funded through MIS, limited in their access to resources (e.g., speed, protocols, etc.), and subject to restrictions (e.g., times, website access, no privacy guarantees, etc.). Since its rollout, FreeWiFi has not been subject to any service level agreements, nor intended to replace cellular services, as it was provided strictly as a convenience.

The April 2023 cyber-related incident disrupted a variety of services throughout the organization, including the City’s wireless and FreeWiFi services, such as those at the Senior Center. Tasked with recovery and continuity of operations, MIS teams acquired/deployed/funded numerous mobile Wi-Fi devices throughout a variety of municipal buildings, including the Senior Center to assist with Wi-Fi services and access.

MIS selected a vendor to assist us with the rollout of secured wireless services throughout the organization, to include the redeployment of services similar to those previously available through FreeWiFi. Following some logistical/sourcing delays, the “col-visitor” Wi-Fi service was enabled on 02/26/2024 for testing throughout a variety of buildings, including the Senior Center.

The col-visitor Wi-Fi service functions to allow basic internet services, has the generally same terms/conditions/rules as the prior FreeWiFi with a splash page which requires weekly acceptance, is rate limited to 5MB/s up/down, and is only active during standard business hours (to be determined), currently defined as 6:00AM – 11:00PM.

All feedback to date has been positive, and MIS continues to roll out City Wi-Fi services.