



## Town of Pinetops

P.O. Drawer C  
Pinetops, NC 27864  
P: 252.827.4435  
F: 252.827.2806

[www.pinetopsnc.com](http://www.pinetopsnc.com)

March 14, 2017

The Honorable Susan Martin  
North Carolina House of Representatives  
300 N. Salisbury St., Room 526  
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Rep. Martin,

We wanted to update you on the latest developments concerning our efforts to keep our internet service with Greenlight and to assure you that our town board remains staunchly in support of an exemption for Greenlight in Pinetops.

On Tuesday, March 7, 2016, Mr. Bill Paramore with Suddenlink accepted an invitation to come to the regular monthly meeting of the Pinetops Board of Commissioners. All of the board members, the mayor, the town manager and staff, and about 20 citizens were in attendance. Mr. Paramore brought the regional construction manager from Suddenlink with him to the meeting. Mr. Paramore explained that Suddenlink plans to bring fiber-to-the-home service to Pinetops and is in the process now of the "walk out" construction phase of that operation. He indicated they could have their service operational in town within about 6 months. He said they had similar services in a few other low density areas, such as Blounts Creek, Cove City and Carolina Colours (New Bern), and they felt that Pinetops was a logical location to extend their current fiber service in Rocky Mount. They could serve homes along Hwy. 43 from Rocky Mount to Pinetops and build that network out to smaller communities from here.

In response to several questions from board members, Mr. Paramore indicated they would provide speeds up to a gigabit (download) and prices would range from \$20 to \$100 per month. When asked about upload speed, he said that the upload speed would not be symmetrical and that gigabit speed download would have maximum 50 mg upload, 50 mg download would have 5 mg upload. (Greenlight currently provides symmetrical speeds.) He said 50 mg up was a "gracious plenty" and only corporations sending large files internationally would need more. (Pinetops has 2 companies that send large files internationally.) He said that they were not involved in the Greenlight exemption issue – that was between the City of Wilson and the State. He said it was their hope that they would be able to serve Pinetops without any interruption from the point Greenlight would be disconnected. He said Suddenlink willingly competes with CenturyLink, but refuses to compete with a "tax-subsidized network" like Greenlight. He clearly said that if Greenlight is allowed to continue to serve Pinetops, Suddenlink will not bring their service here. When asked why Suddenlink had refused to provide any services to Pinetops in the past (even though their service area is only 2 miles outside the town limits), but were now willing to bring us their premium services, Mr. Paramore cited their advancement in fiber technology. He also noted that he is a member of the NC Cable Telecommunications Association Board of Directors.



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Mr. Paramore and his guest did not stay for the remainder of the board meeting. The board members, however, did discuss the Greenlight exemption legislation and the Suddenlink presentation. Board members voiced concern about Suddenlink's "sudden interest" in serving Pinetops and all agreed that the only reason for their interest was because Greenlight is serving Pinetops. We are concerned that Suddenlink's commitment to Pinetops is based solely on the pending legislative exemption for Greenlight. Our citizens have no guarantee that this service will be provided as promised, and we question whether we will be left again with a large corporation providing sub-par service, terrible customer service, and no real competition to drive them to do better. Suddenlink has served Tarboro and other areas of Edgecombe County for many years and has never before shown interest in Pinetops until Greenlight was here. Likewise, CenturyLink has had the opportunity to upgrade its service to Pinetops for years, but has never shown interest in doing so until Greenlight became available. We are concerned that their interest in serving or upgrading service to Pinetops will also fade without Greenlight service being available here.

Our citizens still strongly support keeping Greenlight in Pinetops. Our board members still strongly support keeping Greenlight in Pinetops. The City of Wilson has been a great partner to Pinetops and has gone above and beyond in service to our citizens. The service and customer service from Greenlight has been excellent and gives our town a needed economic boost as well as an improved quality of life. The Town of Pinetops stands with Greenlight.

If you would like to hear a recording of our March 7 town meeting, the official recording is available from our town clerk. If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact any of us listed below. We appreciate your support in introducing the necessary legislation to grant an exemption for Greenlight to serve Pinetops.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Coker Craig  
Pinetops Town Commissioner  
(919) 606-3265 (mobile)

Hugh Brent Wooten  
Pinetops Town Commissioner  
(252) 413-7837 (mobile)

cc: Lorenzo Carmon, Pinetops Town Manager