



Date Approved: February 25, 2021

## Addison County Communications Union District dba Maple Broadband

### Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2021

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

VIA ZOOM

Steve Huffaker, the Chair of the Addison County Communications Union District (“ACCUD”) dba Maple Broadband, welcomed the representatives of the Executive Committee to the meeting, called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

#### 1. Welcome/Call to Order

The following members of the Executive Committee were present:

Steve Huffaker, Chair, Ferrisburgh;  
Nancy Cornell, Vice Chair, Starksboro;  
Billy Sneed, at large representative from Ripton;  
Dan Sonneborn, at large representative from Bristol  
Magna Dodge, at large representative from Cornwall  
Arabella Holzapfel, Treasurer, ex-officio, Ferrisburgh  
Adam Lougee, Clerk, (ACRPC)

#### 2. Approve the Agenda

Magna Dodge made a motion and Billy Sneed seconded to accept the meeting agenda; all members present consented to the agenda.

#### 3. Membership

Steve Huffaker noted that things were looking optimistic for Whiting and there should have been a vote. Adam Lougee confirmed that Bridport had informed him that they had officially joined via vote but that he had not received the paperwork.

Nancy Cornell asked about the status of Addison, and Adam Lougee noted he was uncertain. Steve Huffaker noted he had reached out to all the non-members asking if they would be interested in joining and Whiting and Bridport were those who expressed interest.

#### 4. VEDA update

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#### Maple Broadband Member Towns

Bristol	Cornwall	Ferrisburgh	Leicester
Lincoln	Middlebury	Monkton	New Haven
Orwell	Panton	Ripton	Salisbury
Shoreham	Starksboro	Waltham	Weybridge
Whiting			



Steve Huffaker asked Magna Dodge to share what she had learned from watching the VEDA presentation and Magna Dodge noted that she thought options with VEDA were limited at this time. VEDA presently has \$10.8 MM to dole out to 9 CUDs. She added that VEDA is essentially a small community lender that has yet to make a loan to a broadband entity.

Steve Huffaker noted that he understood there was an interest on the part of the House Energy and Technology Committee in allocating VEDA \$27 MM, a portion of which would be used to bolster loan loss reserves which could lead to a greater interest on the part of VEDA to lend to broadband.

Nancy Cornell shared that at the VCUDA meeting, she learned that VEDA gave money to a private provider. Magna Dodge shared that she knew they gave out \$1.8 MM and that Cassie Polhemus, VEDA’s CEO, had noted that the legislation was broad enough that they could make that loan. Arabella Holzapfel noted that the legislation seemed to be very inclusive of CUDs., Steve Huffaker noted that he received an email suggesting there would be \$2.5 MM available for line extension assistance program and \$1.5 MM available for a statewide pole data harvesting study. Magna Dodge noted that the monies available may not stretch very far with given cost estimates for those activities.

5. Committee Structure Memorandum

Steve Huffaker noted that he had circulated the Committee Structure Memorandum and invited comments. Billy Sneed noted that on the second page, under the Operations Committee he wanted clarify the hardware systems comment and did not want to suggest there was hands-on work. Steve Huffaker noted this could be scratched and confirmed that software systems can be left in. Steve Huffaker noted an interest in sharing the workload and an interest in reviewing assignments. Billy Sneed suggested they come together with volunteers once they are on board to review responsibilities.

Adam Lougee noted that he had set things up so that each person on the Executive Committee would have a separate Committee responsibility based on their experience and explained how responsibilities were split up. Dan Sonneborn noted he was happy to support the Committee work and said he thought Mark Boltz-Robinson, Monkton’s delegate, could be of great value. Steve Huffaker noted this was set up with delegates and alternates and Executive Committee Members could choose to be involved with other types of work.

6. Operator interview next steps

Arabella Holzapfel noted that prior to next steps it may be wise to talk about what they have learned, and Steve Huffaker agreed and pointed out that in chronological order, they

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interviewed ValleyNet, NRTC, Sertex, WCVT, and Great Works Internet and they will be interviewing Otelco. Steve Huffaker also noted they may be interviewing CCI.

7. Executive session

Steve Huffaker moved that he found that premature general public knowledge of Maple Broadband’s next steps would clearly place Maple Broadband at a substantial disadvantage because it risks disclosure of Maple Broadband’s negotiations if it were to be communicated to the public, the motion was seconded by Magna Dodge and all members present consented to the motion.

Steve Huffaker moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss next steps under Title 1, Section 312, Subsection A of the Vermont Statutes which was seconded by Nancy Cornell and all members present consented to the motion.

Steve Huffaker moved that the Executive Committee move out of Executive Session at 4:23 pm, which was seconded by Magna Dodge and all members present consented to the motion.

8. Marketing report: Addison County Chamber of Commerce 1/29, ACEDC board 2/18, Bristol Planning Commission 2/23. Bristol Selectboard pending.

Steve Huffaker explained he would be at the Chamber of Commerce on the 29th, and other meetings in the coming days. Dan Sonneborn explained he had a conversation with the Bristol Town Administrator and the loan fund had a balance of \$300,000 and he was referred to the Town Treasurer for follow-up. Dan Sonneborn explained that they could present at the Selectboard meeting on 2/8, but this was separate from the loan application and process and this funding source seemed promising.

Steve Huffaker expressed an interest in participating in the meeting on the 8th and asked if Magna Dodge would be able to join him, which she consented to. Dan Sonneborn was asked to collect as much information on the loan program as he could.

9. Future meeting: January 28, February 4

It was agreed that the conversation and agenda could continue at the meeting on January 28th.

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 5:30 pm.

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