

**Addison County Communications Union District**  
**DbA Maple Broadband**

**Monthly Meeting Minutes**

**December 2, 2020**

**5:00 p.m. – 6:30p.m.**

**VIA ZOOM Join**

**Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89422191775?pwd=ZlJlYlVlVGSEhEVm4lUUhOSHEpS2YzUT09>

**Meeting ID: 894 2219 1775**

**Passcode: 571606**

**Join by phone: 1 (646) 558-8656**

Steve Huffaker, Chair of the Addison County Communications Union District (“ACCUD”) welcomed the representatives of the member towns and called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

**1. Welcome/Introductions/Roll Call**

The following people were present:

Mark Gibson, Alternate from Bristol;  
Magna Dodge, Delegate from Cornwall;  
Jeremy Grip, Alternate from Ripton;  
Ellie Hagopian, Alternate from New Haven;  
Carl Seibecker, Delegate from Shoreham;  
Dan Sonneborn, Representative from Bristol;  
Jessica James, Alternate from Ferrisburgh;  
Nancy Cornell, Delegate from Starksboro;  
Ross Conrad, Delegate from Middlebury;  
Steve Huffaker, Delegate from Ferrisburgh;  
Arabella Holzapfel, Alternate from Ferrisburgh;  
Jim Walsh, Representative from New Haven;  
Andrew Martin, Delegate from Waltham;  
John McNerny, Alternate from Monkton;  
Spencer Putnam, Delegate from Weybridge;  
Paul Forlenza, Delegate from Lincoln;  
Bill Johnson, Alternate from Cornwall;  
Mark Boltz Robinson, Delegate from Monkton;  
Howard Hall, Delegate from Pantons;

Adam Lougee, Clerk, non-member representing Addison County Regional Planning Commission (“ACRPC”), Maddison Shropshire, ACRPC.

2. **Agenda Approval.** Steve asked for additions or changes to the agenda. **Hearing no changes, Magna Dodge moved the agenda. Mark Boltz-Robinson seconded the motion, which passed without dissent.**
3. **Adoption of November Meeting minutes:** The minutes were provided with the meeting package. **Magna Dodge moved to adopt the minutes. Ross Conrad seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote.**
4. **Executive Committee Report for November:** Steve noted that the Executive Committee had worked hard on the Board's behalf during the month of November. He listed the following accomplishments:
  - a. Received an additional grant for \$20,000 from VCF;
  - b. Amended its CARES Act grant to receive an additional \$30,000 for advertising outreach and a customer database tool;
  - c. Created a letter of intent to apply for a \$30,000 USDA grant in the new year;
  - d. Began work on a logo for Maple Broadband, which we will share choices of next week;
  - e. Began work on direct mail piece for outreach to all;
  - f. Began work on an outreach tool to enhance the website;
  - g. Supported local Wifi hotspots. This led to a discussion regarding signage. It concluded that **Steve will work with DPS to secure a list of all of the public wifi hotspots in the region they had supported. Steve will share that list with the delegates, request they contact the landowners in their town and secure permission to put a sign advertising the wifi availability in that location.**
5. **Name Change Approval:** Steve noted that the group had originally endorsed the name Green Mountain Broadband. However, even though it was available from the Secretary of State's office, several people expressed concern that it was too close to existing names in the Vermont market, some of whom we wanted as allies. The Executive Board decided that it would be better to change the name and move forward with another quickly, before we got too attached to it and had developed marketing around it. Time being of the essence, the Executive Board moved to the third name on the list, Maple Broadband, and instructed our marketing consultants to proceed. **Paul Forlenza moved to adopt the dba "Maple Broadband". Ross Conrad seconded the motion, which all approved.**
6. **Feasibility Study:** Steve reported that the Executive Committee had conducted two meetings following up on the feasibility Study RISI had presented at the last board meeting. Steve reminded the Board that the study concluded **it is feasible for ACCUD to find a path forward to viability. Paths available include partnering with an existing provider and/or merging with Otter Creek (Rutland) CUD to the south.** Copies of the PowerPoint presentation and of the complete feasibility study are available in ACCUD's page on the Addison County Regional Planning Commission website here:

<http://acrpc.org/files/2020/11/Addison-Feasibility-Presentation.pdf>

**Paul Forlenza moved that Maple Broadband accept the Feasibility Study and move forward with the business plan pursuing a public private partnership. Spence Putnam seconded the motion, which all approved.**

7. **Annual Report and Budget.** Steve noted that he had created an annual report for delegates to share with their selectboards. Nancy Cornell will prepare a package for the delegates to bring to their selectboards on their own timeframe. Several delegates expressed interest in speaking directly with their selectboards on behalf of Maple Broadband.
8. **New Addison County Members:** Adam reported that Panton had joined ACCUD at the last meeting bringing the membership to 16. Since Panton, Adam had presented to Whiting and Shelburne but no new members had come forward. Rick Scott noted that he had joined the call on behalf of Bridport and would be requesting that they join soon. Andrew Martin also noted Vergennes was aware of Maple Broadband and may consider joining even though it is well-served by cable.
9. **Treasurer's Report.** Arabella noted Maple Broadband had a fund balance of \$94,000, expected to receive an additional \$20,000 from the Vermont Community Foundation and had spent \$19,000 to date on advertising.
10. **Clerk's Report:** None.
11. **Other Business:** None.
12. **Future Meeting Schedule. January 6, 2021.**
13. **Adjourn – Paul Forlenza moved to adjourn and the members voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Lougee, Clerk