

Addison County Communications Union District dba Maple Broadband**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes****April 22, 2021****4:00 PM - 5:30 PM****VIA ZOOM****1. Call to order**

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, and called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

Steve Huffaker, Chair, Ferrisburgh;
Nancy Cornell, Vice Chair, Starksboro;
Ellie Hagopian, at large representative from New Haven;
Magna Dodge, at large representative from Cornwall;
Dan Sonneborn, at large representative from Bristol;
Arabella Holzapfel, Treasurer, ex-officio, Ferrisburgh;
Adam Lougee, Clerk, ACRPC;
Robyn King, Minute Taker

2. Approve the Agenda

Nancy Cornell made a motion and Magna Dodge seconded to accept the meeting agenda, all members present consented to the agenda.

3. Discussions regarding Operating Partners

It was noted by Steve Huffaker that moving forward, all discussions regarding potential operating partners should be reserved for Executive Session, given the sensitive nature of information discussed and that it was likely there would be Executive Sessions at most meetings moving forward.

4. Previous meeting minutes approval - April 15

Steve Huffaker asked for a review of the April 15 meeting minutes. There being no questions or edits requested, Nancy Cornell made a motion and Magna Dodge seconded

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to approve the meeting minutes for the April 15 meeting, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Operations Report

Ellie Hagopian explained that there had been no responses to any of the forms. Ellie Hagopian noted that she was monitoring new email sign-ups on the website and there were two new sign-ups on the email, which totals six over the period of time observed.

6. Marketing Report

Dan Sonneborn noted that had been waiting on news about a potential intern before moving forward on some of the Committee work.

7. Financial Report

a. Grants

Nancy Cornell confirmed that there were no updates to share.

b. Treasurer Report

Arabella Holzapfel noted there was nothing to report at this time.

c. Other

Magna Dodge noted there was interest in Cornwall in allocating funds to Maple Broadband in terms of the ARPA monies, and this could amount to \$150,000. Magna Dodge noted there was an interest in understanding how these monies could be documented in terms of reporting or other requirements. Magna Dodge noted that other CUDs may have this issue and it could be beneficial to create a standardized document for all to use for reporting. Magna Dodge explained that there should be a focus on this in the future so that they are ready for this funding.

Steve Huffaker explained that the Treasury has not yet informed the states on the constraints and demands for the provision of these funds and asked if it was fair to hold off until expectations were communicated. Magna Dodge noted that it may be advantageous to bring this up at the VCUDA level to see if there's interest in taking this on. Adam Lougee explained that there may be advantages to Maple Broadband creating a template that could be shared with VCUDA, especially as the groundwork had already been done and there was a good framework for how these monies would be spent. Magna Dodge noted

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that with the CARES Act, there were additional reporting requirements, and it was her assumption that it would be Maple Broadband’s responsibility to meet these requirements.

Adam Lougee noted that this could be fairly simple, acknowledging the contribution and explaining its use for high-level design or pole survey. Magna Dodge explained that this documentation could be at a high-level and Adam Lougee noted the importance of maintaining receipts to show how the monies have been or would be spent. Nancy Cornell explained that under the CARES Act, vendors that have been hired were not required to do the reporting and the bulk of the reporting was on Maple Broadband. Adam Lougee noted that the invoices backing the expenditures were in the financial files, which assisted with reporting.

Nancy Cornell noted that it may be a good idea to understand if Town funding will cover pre-construction costs or will go further than pre-construction costs, and Magna Dodge noted that she imagined that the funding would not go beyond pre-construction costs. Magna Dodge explained that pole surveys and make-ready is included in pre-construction which will likely take up the available resources. Steve Huffaker explained that he and Magna could work on the document, and Magna Dodge explained that the Cornwall attorney agreed to review the document for consistency.

It was clarified that the first round of ARPA funding was expected in June, which may give clarity to the requirements. It was noted that May 11th would be the date that the Treasury would inform the states of the requirements, and Magna Dodge noted that communications indicated that requirements and funding may be released on May 11th, but it may take some time for the state to process the funds. It was noted that Magna Dodge would be the lead on communications with Cornwall.

8. Middlebury College Intern Next Steps

Magna Dodge noted that she is thankful for what was sent to her by the other members of the Committee and she had made contact with the coordinator at Middlebury College with a short description and has not heard back and was trying to access a portal that the College uses. Magna Dodge explained that the coordinator at the College would be circulating the description to those who may be interested and that the College is eager for Maple Broadband to have an intern. Magna Dodge

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explained that there was a meeting on May 20th with the President and CFO of the College.

9. Executive Session

Steve Huffaker moved that he found that premature general public knowledge of Maple Broadband’s discussions about potential network operator and other RFP next steps would clearly place Maple Broadband at a substantial disadvantage because it risks disclosure of Maple Broadband’s negotiations strategy if it were to be communicated to the public, the motion was seconded by Nancy Cornell and all members present consented to the motion.

Steve Huffaker moved to enter into Executive Session for a discussion regarding the network operator and RFP updates and other confidential matters under Title 1, Section 313, Subsection A of the Vermont Statutes which was seconded by Dan Sonneborn and all members present consented to the motion.

10. High-Level Design RFP Report

Steve Huffaker made a motion that he and Ellie Hagopian would prepare an RFP that captures both pole survey and detail design and breaks this out in such a way where there can be financial analysis, and that this should be prepared and issued as quickly as possible with the goal to complete the process and receive bids within the next two to three weeks. The motion was seconded by Nancy Cornell.

Adam Lougee asked when the Full Board meeting was taking place, and Steve Huffaker explained that it was in the next two weeks and he anticipated being able to report out to the Full Board at that time.

There being no further questions, the motion passed unanimously.

11. Other Business

Nancy Cornell noted that Equal Access to Broadband was proceeding with its plan, and that the software that would be used by people in schools and human services to qualify people for access was being moved forward. Nancy Cornell explained there is a contract in place with an organization to help plan the training of the people in schools and human services to use the software. Nancy Cornell noted that a key state-level stakeholder with connections has proposed a different plan for low-income access which involves using ARPA money for subsidies for a system that would sunset in three years, and there would be training of a cadre of people to work with low income

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residents to ensure they have access to a number of different services. Nancy Cornell explained that she attended a hearing with the ATT and Holly Groschner of EAB testified and it was clear that Ms. Groschner had a good handle of the subject matter.

Nancy Cornell further noted that she had inquired as to whether or not EAB could accept donations for subsidies and it had been noted that the organization had not been in a position to accept these monies to-date. Nancy Cornell explained that EAB met monthly and she imagined this would be a topic of conversation.

Magna Dodge asked if she planned on making a contribution, how there would be certainty that that contribution would make it back to her community. Nancy Cornell explained that EAB was trying to organize so that they could have CUDs join, and that they were well positioned to do so as an established non-profit. Magna Dodge clarified that she wanted to ensure that money donated would be for Cornwall residents specifically, and Nancy Cornell noted that she would inquire about this. Nancy Cornell went on to explain that part of the strategy was to both pursue private funding as well as funding already available at the federal and state level, as there was an awareness that these funds are often underspent due to administrative burden. Magna Dodge explained that locally directed funding would likely be an interest for private donations, and Nancy Cornell agreed.

Nancy Cornell explained that part of Tom Evelynson’s proposal included a requirement for CUDs and big or small ISPs to provide subsidies immediately, which Ms. Groschner explained was not feasible.

Ellie Hagopian asked about the timeframe for H360 and it was noted that this would likely conclude when the legislative session ends, which should be forthcoming.

12. Future Meeting: April 22

13. Adjourn

Magna Dodge made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and the Executive Committee adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm by consensus.

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