



Date Approved: June 8, 2021

Addison County Communications Union District dba Maple Broadband

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2021

1:00 PM - 2:30 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 1:02 pm.

Steve Huffaker, Chair, Ferrisburgh;
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 representative from Ferrisburgh;
Adam Lougee, Clerk, ACRPC;
Cy Tall, Bookkeeper;
Fyn Fernandez, Intern
Robyn King, Minute Taker

2. Approve the Agenda

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

3. Previous meeting minutes approval - May 20

Steve Huffaker asked for a review of the May 20 meeting minutes, and there being no additional questions or edits requested, Dan Sonneborn made a motion and Magna Dodge seconded to approve the meeting minutes for the May 20 meeting, and the motion passed unanimously.

Maple Broadband Member Towns

Addison
Ferrisburgh
Monkton
Ripton
Vergennes

Bridport
Leicester
New Haven
Salisbury
Waltham

Bristol
Lincoln
Orwell
Shoreham
Weybridge

Cornwall
Middlebury
Panton
Starksboro
Whiting

4. Future Meetings

Steve Huffaker explained that there was a meeting planned for two days after this meeting on June 3rd, but given the proximity and conflicting schedules, there could be an alternative schedule. Steve Huffaker noted that there could be a cancellation of the meeting on June 3rd, a meeting held on June 8th, and a cancellation of the meeting on the 10th. Steve Huffaker gathered consensus that this schedule worked for members present, and noted he would follow up via e-mail to confirm a time for the meeting on the 8th.

5. Operations Report

Ellie Hagopian noted it was a busy week in terms of people filling out forms, and there was a transition meeting planned for Jancy's role. Ellie Hagopian noted that two people signed up for the newsletter, and one person was in touch via snail mail. Ellie Hagopian explained that since the last meeting on the 20th and this meeting, there were 7 people who filled out the form of being interested in fiber, with one person signing up twice for two different businesses and one person signing up from Ripton and the other four being from Ferrisburgh and North Ferrisburgh. Ellie Hagopian noted that the Ferrisburgh cluster seemed to be people who all may have seen marketing and signed up together.

a. Ticketing System

Ellie Hagopian noted she created a 2-pager on the objectives of a ticketing system, and she has circulated that through the subcommittee and she was waiting to hear back on a review of that document. Ellie Hagopian explained that a ticketing system had not been selected yet, and she was aiming for there to be a ticketing system available by services launch and she did not see a need to rush the decision as there would be a number of funding opportunities in the future. Steve Huffaker noted that he would take this agenda item off for the time-being, given the status of this effort.

6. Marketing Report

Dan Sonneborn explained that Fyn was with them, and was going to join Dan on a call with Ed Harris, the owner of Blue Hills digital as he was interested in volunteering. Dan Sonneborn noted that the intent of the call was to meet, review the content calendar, and to look at how the marketing tasks could be executed so that a workplan could be created.

7. Financial Report

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a. **Grants Management**

Steve Huffaker noted that the Round 1 Grant had been, but that the DPS had given Maple Broadband the grant. Steve Huffaker mentioned that the Executive Committee could discuss the Round 2 Grant during the Executive Session. Steve Huffaker explained that the NTIA grant was still a ways out, timing-wise. Magna Dodge explained that she and Nancy Cornell intended to connect on this grant, but it is one that would highlight a public-private partnership.

b. **Treasurer Report**

Arabella Holzapfel noted that a credit card bill for \$13 was paid, but there were no other changes to report.

c. **Other**

Steve Huffaker noted that there was nothing else to note.

8. **Other Business**

Magna Dodge noted that she and Steve Huffaker met a week ago with Laurie Patton, David Provost, Sue Ritter, and Matt Curran at Middlebury College and she felt like this was a very positive meeting. Magna Dodge noted that there was an ask for \$3 MM in subordinated debt and that while she did not anticipate that they would see this exactly, she anticipated that there would be support. Steve Huffaker explained that they were hopeful they would get some clarity in the next week, and there had been discussions with an engineering firm that some of the pre-construction costs may need to come out of these funding sources. Steve Huffaker went on to explain that one of the attorneys at Middlebury Colleges might be able to contribute his services to help offset normal legal fees that Maple Broadband may incur.

Magna Dodge noted that the Town of Cornwall Selectboard would be meeting that evening and she was hopeful there would be a commitment to a \$150,000 contribution from ARPA funds. Magna Dodge noted that there was an anticipation that if this was successful, there could be some publicity around the commitment, including writing a story on the effort that could be shared with other towns.

Steve Huffaker explained that he saw a need for a document that legalizes the transfer of funds from a town, and commented that there had been document drafting that needed review by others, such as Adam Lougee, so there could be a similar



template used for other towns. Magna Dodge noted that she was reviewing a document with the Town of Cornwall, and there was a focus on the accounting needed with the ARPA funds. Adam Lougee explained that there needed to be an accounting to the federal government for the money and he was comfortable with Maple Broadband being under similar accounting standards.

Dan Sonneborn noted his excitement, and explained that the marketing team would be happy to support and distribute any messaging around the success through any identified channels. Magna Dodge noted she anticipated the messaging may depend on pre-existing relationships with Selectboards, and made note that she created a document for the Middlebury conversation that could be used for other efforts as well. Steve Huffaker noted that he was far along with his presentations to the towns, and that he had a presentation scheduled in Bristol that did not go forward.

Dan Sonneborn confirmed that the intent was to spread the news about the Town of Cornwall activity, and Steve Huffaker noted that there could be a discussion of how to distribute the information to Selectboards. Steve Huffaker explained that he anticipated they may need to advocate to the towns their desire for APRA allocations, and he saw promising feedback from his presentation to the Town of Lincoln, and Magna Dodge noted she thought other smaller towns may also be supportive, given the intent and restrictions of the ARPA funding.

Arabella Holzapfel asked about H360 and H315 and the relationship with the Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA). Magna Dodge noted that VEDA will do up to \$4 MM, and there was some easing of restrictions, so she was keeping them in mind. Magna Dodge explained that she had been in conversations with the National Bank of Middlebury and Middlebury College and there may be a willingness to provide support for pre-construction financing. Magna Dodge noted that there would need to be an assessment of the different funding sources and when they may come in to identify needs.

9. Executive Session

Steve Huffaker moved that he found that premature general public knowledge of Maple Broadband’s discussions about the operating agreement and RFP status report 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 Magna Dodge and all members present consented to the motion.

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

10. Adjourn

Magna Dodge made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and the Executive Committee adjourned the meeting at 2:42 pm by consensus.

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