

Approved November 18, 2021

**Addison County Communications Union District (dba) Maple Broadband**

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**October 28, 2021**

**3:30 PM - 5:00 PM**

**Location: 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury, VT  
VIA ZOOM**

**1. Call to order**

Recording of the meeting was announced and the meeting was called to order at 3:35 pm by the Chair.

**PRESENT**

Steve Huffaker, Chair, Ferrisburgh

Nancy Cornell, Vice-Chair, Starksboro

Magna Dodge, at large representative from Cornwall

Ellie de Villiers, at large representative from New Haven

Cy Tall, Treasurer

Adam Lougee, Clerk, Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC)

Stan Fedynshyn, Regional Account Manager, Walker and Associates, Inc.

Julie Koontz, Contracts and Proposals Specialist, Walker and Associates, Inc.

John Gautieri, District Sales Manager, Power & Tel

Tami Sherman, District Sales, Power & Tel

**2. Approve the Agenda**

Magna D. MOVED / Ellie dV. SECONDED a motion to approve the agenda. Motion approved by show of hands/voice vote.

**3. Previous meeting minutes approval: October 7**

Magna D. MOVED / Ellie dV. SECONDED a motion to approve the minutes of October 7 in the draft version distributed. Motion approved by show of hands/voice vote.

**4. Fiber Cable RFQ Bid Opening**

Proposals from 3 companies have been received by the deadline and meeting the requirement that the proposals be submitted in hard copy. The following quotes were received:

From Walker and Associates:

- Year One - CommScope - \$665,299
- Year Two- CommScope - \$776,376

From Graybar:

- Year One - Prysmian - \$833,422
- Year One - Incab America - \$936,484
- Year One - Corning - \$729,745

From Power & Tel:

- Year One - STL Tech - \$611,000
- Year One - Superior Essex - \$636,866
- Year Two - STL Tech - 693,000

Note: there is a lot of fine print on these bids especially concerning the timing of delivery, to be further discussed in the bid process. The next step in the process is for the Executive Committee to have a discussion with the Governing Board at the November 3 meeting of that body. The agenda of that meeting with Zoom link is posted on the Maple Broadband website and is open to all. The representatives of Walker and Associates and Power & Tel were thanked for their presence at the opening of the bids.

## 5. Executive Session

Steve H. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to find that premature general public knowledge of Maple Broadband's business strategy would clearly place Maple Broadband at substantial disadvantage and risk disclosure of Maple Broadband's pending activities, if they were to be communicated to the public. Motion approved by show of hands/voice vote.

Steve H. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to enter into executive session to discuss Maple Broadband's business strategy related to Maple Broadband's progress under Title 1, Section 313, Subsection A of Vermont's Statutes. Motion approved by show of hands/voice vote.

The Executive Committee came out of Executive Session at 4:41 pm.

## 6. Financial

- a. Grants - Steve H. reported that the grant agreement with the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) has been signed. The amount of this grant is over 2.3 million dollars, for pre-construction costs and capacity building. Kudos were shared all around.

Magna D. said that VCBB is considering funding more "shovel-ready" projects. If this stance prevails, Communication Union Districts (CUDs) that have been around for longer would receive more than their proportional share of funds than they would if funds were divvied up based on road mileage or population. Maple Broadband might be advantaged or disadvantaged by this stance, but regardless of the impact on Maple Broadband, it would not be fair or equitable to all Vermonters. Magna D. received two emails about this issue, which she will distribute to the committee.

- b. Auditor RFP - Ellie dV. said she has been working on the Q & A section together with Cy T. and Adam L. The revised Q & A section will go out to the bidders tomorrow.

- c. Treasurer Report - none this week.

## 7. Operations

- a. Ellie report - no update this week, no forms filled out on the website. One person did make a request to receive broadband service immediately, and received an answer about the expected timeline.

- b. VPS field data collection - the committee discussed the discrepancy between the Vantage Point Solutions (VPS) assessment of how much underground cable will be needed and the projections in the business plan and model. It was suggested that VPS is using Green Mountain Power data which is incomplete. All agreed to focus first on getting clarity for the need for underground cable in the Phase One area. The vastly different assessment numbers will need to be reconciled during the first part of 2022, as costs to install underground cable greatly exceed the cost of installing overhead cable.

8. Marketing - Dan S. will be standing in for Nancy C. to represent Maple Broadband at the press conference in Montpelier on November 1.

9. Other business

The committee discussed the proposal from the Vermont Communication Union District Association to purchase cable on behalf of the CUDs. All agreed that the model at this point in time has too many risks and lacks clarity on accountability. Maple Broadband will purchase cable on its own for now, while keeping options open for a group buying process in the future.

10. Future meeting: November 4

11. Adjourn

Ellie dV. MOVED / Nancy C. SECONDED a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved by show of hands/voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Minute-taker