

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

**Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**October 5, 2022 5:00 p.m. – 6:30p.m.**  
**VIA TEAMS**

**To attend the meeting via your computer or mobile device:**

[https://teams.microsoft.com/#/pre-join-calling/19:meeting\\_OGQxMTg2OTMtZTRiOC00ODRILWFmZjAtOTJmYzIxNDYzNjYz@thread.v2](https://teams.microsoft.com/#/pre-join-calling/19:meeting_OGQxMTg2OTMtZTRiOC00ODRILWFmZjAtOTJmYzIxNDYzNjYz@thread.v2)

Steve Huffaker, Chair of Maple Broadband opened the meeting at 5:07 p.m. and welcomed the representatives of the member towns. Nancy Cornell confirmed a quorum was present. The following people were present:

Paul Nikolich, Delegate Addison;  
Rick Scott, Delegate Bridport;  
Mike Sheets, Alternate Bridport;  
Dan Sonneborn, Delegate Bristol;  
Mark Gibson, Alternate Bristol;  
Magna Dodge, CFO, Delegate Cornwall;  
Steve Huffaker, Chair, Delegate Ferrisburgh;  
Ross Conrad, Delegate Middlebury;  
Hugh Mc Laughlin, Alternate Middlebury;  
Ellie de Villiers, Executive Director, Delegate New Haven;  
Jim Robinson, Delegate Orwell;  
Howard Hall, Delegate Panton;  
Carl Seibecker, Vice Chair, Delegate Shoreham;  
Nancy Cornell, Delegate Starksboro;  
Richard Warren, Alternate Starksboro;  
Shannon Haggett, Delegate Vergennes;

Maddison Shropshire, Assistant Clerk, non-member representing Addison County Regional Planning Commission  
Cy Tall, Treasurer Cornwall

1. Agenda Approval. Steve asked for additions or changes to the agenda and requested that two items, an update on the executive committee appointments and an update on ARPA contributions and VCBB match policy, be added to the agenda between items 5 and 6. **Nancy moved to approve the agenda. Howard Hall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote/show of hands.**

2. Approve Meeting Minutes from September 7, 2022. **Shannon Haggett moved to approve of the September meeting minutes. Nancy Cornell seconded the motion to approve the minutes. All approved the minutes, by a voice vote/show of hands.**
3. Public Comments: none.
4. Chair Report: Steve reported that Waitsfield Champlain Valley Telecom received a \$9.1m construction grant for fiber network construction in MapleBroadband towns. This brings the total funding commitment in Addison County up to \$17-18 million.
5. Executive Committee update. Steve reported that Ellie de Villiers has changed roles from Vice Chair to Executive Director. Following the example of the VCBB leadership structure, Ellie will not have an executive vote. Magna Dodge was recently replaced on the executive committee by Carl Siebecker. These changes leave vacant seats for both Vice Chair and the Executive Committee. **Magna moves to appoint Carl Siebecker to Executive Committee Vice Chair. Nancy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote, show of hands.** Steve advertised for a new member of the Executive Board. Shannon Haggett of Vergennes has volunteered. **Steve moves to appoint Shannon Haggett to Executive Committee. Magna seconded the motion, which passed with all in favor but one abstention by a voice vote, show of hands.**
6. Update on ARPA Contributions and Vermont Community Broadband Board. Steve announced that Waltham has contributed \$45,000 of ARPA funds to Maple Broadband. Magna reports that VCBB will match funds of previous or new ARPA fund contributions from towns. Steve requested that members provide feedback and input on town capacity to increase fundraising in light of this change. Ross Conrad suggested that recent changes including the new VCBB policy be advertised in the newspaper in addition to 1:1 communication with towns. Nancy requested that Steve or Ellie provide talking points for conversations around funding requests at town meetings. Steve clarified that Maple Broadband will need to communicate all recent changes carefully using the marketing firm. Rick Scott requested that forewarning be given to delegates when funding requests go out. Delegates in towns that have already contributed will struggle with going back to select boards for additional funds until other towns have also contributed. Nancy emphasized that any amount contributed from grant funding will reduce the need for loans and will ensure lower rates for customers in the future.
7. Annual Budget. Ellie presented the Maple Broadband 2023 Budget. **Carl moved to approve the 2023 Budget. Dan Sonneborn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote, show of hands.** Ross raises the question of the current line of credit used to begin construction. Cy and Ellie reported that all of the expenses against this line of credit should be repaid in the near future as construction grant funding becomes available. Magna reported that this line of credit can only be used for construction purposes and will no longer be needed in that capacity. Maple Broadband is in discussion with the bank and College to determine if greater flexibility in uses for this line of credit is possible.
8. 2022 Annual Report. Steve distributed the Annual Report ahead of the meeting recognizing a need to reflect the new changes in executive committee members. Cy thanked the volunteers for the executive committee and the group at large for a swift

resolution of these appointments, fulfilling important requirements for financial purposes. **Shannon moved to approve the Annual Report. Nancy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote, show of hands.**

9. Underground drops contractors process review. Steve previously requested contractor recommendations from the members capable of providing the underground infrastructure for fiber entry to subscriber homes. Aerial extensions will be completed by WCVT. Following the DC Fiber example, Maple Broadband will not underwrite or directly provide underground extensions for subscribers. Instead a list of pre-qualified contractors will be listed on the website. Pre-qualification will mean the contractors are trained to required specifications. Mike Sheets requested the documentation on what is required of a contractor be shared with members.
10. Construction Phase 1A status report. Construction of phase 1 began on October 4, 2022. Current activity includes running strand between poles as a precursor of cable installation. Vantage Point is the acting onsite supervisor.
11. Construction Phase II active cabinets pre-order. Steve reported that the first order of hub cabinets is not due to arrive until November, indicating the order lead time is about nine months. An additional two hub cabinets are required for phase 2 of construction. An RFP will not be used for this purchase because Maple Broadband has chosen to continue with the same standard product from Clear Field throughout construction for simplicity. In addition to the two hub cabinets, a central hub will also be required during phase 2 of construction. However, this will involve a larger conversation in the future due to building requirements. **Steve moved to approve the purchase of two cabinets. Rick seconded the motion.** Magna inquired if the existing line of credit previously discussed can be used to purchase a larger number of cabinets to take advantage of available financing and reduce risk of increased prices in the future. Paul Nikolich requested that the spending limit be included in the motion. **Steve moved to approve the purchase of two Clear Field cabinets not to exceed \$50,000 per cabinet. Paul seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote, show of hands.**
12. Construction Phase II central hub process review. Due to an increase in demand and poor service available in Ripton, Maple Broadband is considering options to cost effectively build out the Ripton network during phase 2 of construction. Currently, Ripton is not scheduled for construction until phase 3.
13. Delegate appointments reminder - Leicester, Whiting. Steve asked that members continue to seek out potential delegates from Whiting and Leicester.
14. Marketing report. Dan Sonneborn presented the new materials being prepared by the marketing team. These included door hangers, sandwich boards, palm cards, postcards, and CrowdFiber online. WCVT will act as the call center and has two phone numbers reserved. Ellie responded to Jim Robinson's request for more information on VCBB's overbuild policy. The policy has been sent back to VCBB staff and is not expected to be

updated until next month. It is unknown if the policy will change significantly at this time, but CrowdFiber will display the most accurate information available.

15. Town contributions update. Steve thanked Waltham for the recent \$45,000 dollar contribution.
16. Other business. Steve clarified that he would follow up this meeting with greater detail on the requirements for underground extension contractors.
17. Next meeting: November 2, which will include the mandatory annual Hearing.
18. Adjourn. Nancy moved to adjourn the meeting. Carl seconded the motion, which **passed unanimously by a voice vote, show of hands at 6:54 PM.**