

Maple Broadband
Addison County Communications Union District
Monthly Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2022 5:00 p.m. – 6:30p.m.
VIA TEAMS

1. Call to Order:

Steve Huffaker, Chair of Maple Broadband opened the meeting at 5:05 p.m. and welcomed the representatives of the member towns and members of the public. The following people were present:

Steve Huffaker, Chair, Delegate Ferrisburgh;
Carl Siebecker, Vice Chair, Delegate Shoreham;
Ellie de Villiers, Executive Director, Delegate New Haven;
Paul Nikolich, Delegate Addison;
Rick Scott, Delegate Bridport;
Mike Sheets, Alternate Bridport;
Dan Sonneborn, Delegate Bristol;
Ross Conrad, Delegate Middlebury;
Hugh McLaughlin, Alternate Middlebury;
Mark Boltz-Robinson, Delegate Monkton;
Howard Hall, Delegate Panton;
Paul Vaczy, Delegate Salisbury;
Justin Baoer, Alternate Salisbury;
Nancy Cornell, Delegate Starksboro;
Richard Warren, Alternate Starksboro;
Spencer Putnam, Delegate Weybridge.

Adam Lougee, Clerk, non-member representing Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Cy Tall, Treasurer Cornwall

Roger Nishi, VP Waitsfield Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT)

2. Agenda Approval. Steve asked for additions or changes to the agenda. **Ross Conrad moved to approve the agenda. Carl Siebecker seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote/show of hands.**

3. Approve Meeting Minutes from December 13, 2022. **Ellie de Villiers moved to approve the December meeting minutes. Paul Nikolich seconded the motion to approve the minutes. All approved the minutes, by a voice vote/show of hands.**
4. Public Comments: None.
5. Chair Report: Steve reported that Ellie had recently represented Maple Broadband before the House Energy and Environment Committee. She did a great job. That is an important committee for us, chaired by Amy Sheldon of Middlebury. Laura Sibilia, another ally, serves as Vice Chair of the committee.

Steve also reported that the situation on the ground in Addison County continues to change and Maple Broadband is amending its building phases to adjust accordingly. In particular, he noted that Fidium Fiber (Consolidated Communications) has already strung fiber to Ripton and portions of Middlebury. They will beat us to those locations. This changes Maple Broadband's Plans for our Phase 2 build and the Executive Committee is working to react accordingly.

6. Procurement Policy: The Executive Committee has recently updated Maple Broadband's procurement policy to reflect new guidelines. It is posted on the website. Steve wants to make sure the entire board has access to our operational procedures. He also thanked Shannon for his help in updating the document.
7. Biannual Network Status Report: Steve noted this is our second report. He thanked Roger Nishi from WCVT for joining us and participating in the report. Steve stated that Maple Broadband had passed 304 addresses. **Paul Nikolich asked that for the next report we also add connections as an important datapoint.**

Roger Nishi reported that WCVT had completed 104 new passings this year, mostly in Bristol. Roger also noted that this year has been largely a year of planning for WCVT. They have created engineering plans for Pantton, Weybridge, Addison, and Bridport, which they intend to implement in their next build phase. Steve noted that together, Maple Broadband and WCVT will be spending nearly \$20M in construction funds in Addison County over their next construction phases.

8. Construction Phase 1 Status Report: Steve reported that our construction phase 1A is nearly completed. We are currently in a soft launch having hooked up the first customer today. We hope to open it to all by the end of January. Steve also noted that we are finalizing the bid package for Phase 1B, including areas that we did not serve in Phase 1A and the remainder of Phase 1, with the exception of areas that are designated as "served." Steve hopes to launch Phase 1B as the weather allows this spring. Steve noted Maple Broadband continues to work with GMP on "make ready" work for Phase 1B.

9. Service Launch Status Report: Steve reiterated that we hope to Launch Phase 1A by the end of January.
10. Construction Stage 2 Planning: Ellie noted we are in the planning phase for Phase 2 construction. The changing conditions on the ground are making that difficult, but we are adapting and moving forward. Ellie noted we are still focusing on covering the most underserved addresses in the densest configurations available to provide the most economic impact, and she plans to bring a recommendation to the Executive Committee soon.
11. Marketing report. The CrowdFiber platform is up and running. Ellie reported that to date we have sent direct mailers to all Phase 1A potential customers. She also noted that people seeing Maple Broadband construction vehicles has been our best advertising for inquiries. She noted we will also be in several newsletters in the coming weeks. Dan noted that in 2023 Maple Broadband will focus on creating brand awareness. We will issue another press release at launch. Ross Conrad suggested working with other local co-ops to promote our services and to create a list of talking points for selectboards at town meetings.
12. Financial Dashboard: Cy Tall, Maple Broadband's Treasurer, presented Maple Broadband's financial dashboard. She will share it on a monthly basis. She noted that Maple Broadband has access to \$9M dollars, \$2.7M of which are in our bank account. She also reviewed expenses. Hugh McLaughlin asked, and Cy confirmed, that we are maintaining our line of credit. Lastly, Cy noted she will expand the dashboard to include operating revenues and expenses as we start to hook up subscribers.
13. Q4 and FY 2022 Financials: Cy noted Maple Broadband is solvent. She expects to complete our end of the year numbers tomorrow. She encouraged members to ask her or another member of the Executive Committee if they have financial questions. She also noted we would be updating our financial policies as Maple Broadband in the coming weeks.
14. Delegate appointments reminder – Leicester, Whiting, and Orwell. Steve asked that members continue to seek out potential delegates from Whiting, Orwell, and Leicester.
15. Other business. Ross asked for a presentation he could make at town meeting. Ellie noted that the Annual Report, which was approved last meeting, was available and provided a good overview of Maple Broadband activities, and that she would work with our marketing firm to put this into Powerpoint form.
16. Next meeting: February 14th, 2023.
17. Adjourn. **Nancy Cornell moved to adjourn the meeting. Dan Sonneborn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote, show of hands at 6:18 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted, Adam Lougee, Clerk