

Approved September 14, 2023

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

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**August 31, 2023**

**3:30 pm - 5:00 pm**

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

**VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT**

Steve Huffaker (Ferrisburgh) - Chair

Carl Siebecker (Shoreham) - Vice-chair

Nancy Cornell (Starksboro) - At large

Dan Sonneborn (Bristol) - At large

Shannon Haggett (Vergennes) - At large

Ellie de Villiers – Executive Director (ex officio)

Cy Tall, Treasurer (ex officio)

Adam Lougee, Clerk (ex officio)

1. Call to Order / Agenda Approval

Recording announced. The meeting was called to order at 3:31 pm by the Executive Director. MOTION to approve the agenda as presented was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

2. Previous meeting minutes approval: August 17, 2023 and August 24, 2023- MOTION to approve both sets of minutes as presented was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

3. Public Comments - none

4. Chair Report - Steve Huffaker - Steve H. reported that the shelter at the Vergennes central hub was unloaded from the flatbed truck and lifted by crane onto the concrete pad this past Monday. Both Steve H. and Ellie dV. were present at the Vergennes hub for this momentous event. The vinyl roof for the shelter was also built and added. Steve H. showed photos of the crane work, the roof being put together, and the shelter with its roof in place on the site. He said that the next step of turning on the power at the site should be done within the next couple of weeks.

5. Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB)/Vermont Communication Union Districts Association (VCUDA) status updates

a. BEAD update - Ellie dV. reported that VCBB voted to approve the 5 year plan and submitted it to the NTIA. VCBB and the Vernonburg Group are reviewing and incorporating the comments from VCUDA regarding BEAD Volume 1. BEAD Volume 2 will be going out for comments in late September or early October.

b. Accountability policy update - Ellie dV. and Steve H. have signed up for the working groups they are part of. The working groups have begun to meet.

c. Finance update - VCUDA received two responses to the RFP, candidates were interviewed, and the consultant position was awarded to Denise Sullivan, a Vermont based CPA. The scope of the work includes consulting on finance and HR. During the month of September she will be conducting interviews to identify needs, as step one. The second step will include a bid process for work tasks identified by the needs assessment. Denise S. may want to be among the bidders for these work tasks.

d. Other updates - Gigi Sohn is coming to the VCUDA meeting next Tuesday to talk about the American Association for Public Broadband, the trade organization that Maple Broadband just joined.

Ellie dV. said that she was recently on a call with the coalition that is advocating for an alternative to the letter of credit requirement for BEAD funding. Adam L. suggested the Vermont Bankers Association as a possible ally. Ellie dV. will follow up with them.

## 6. Financial

a. 1A Materials sale update - Ellie dV. continues to explore inventory management options and to document in writing exactly what Maple Broadband needs, including the type of information needed for grant reports.

b. Ripton - no update. Ellie dV. will follow up with the Town of Ripton.

c. Procurement - cable and misc. hardware - bids from three companies were opened at a public meeting on August 24. Each company submitted three separate bids for cable and miscellaneous hardware. Ellie dV. and Steve H. completed the bid leveling. Power & Tell was the lowest bidder for all three bids. After discussion, MOTION to award all three bids to Power & Tel up to the total dollar amount of \$220,000 and pending due diligence review regarding the option of Superior Essex cable, was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

## 7. Affordability - no update

## 8. Marketing

Maple Broadband is more active on social media, including Facebook and Instagram.

## 9. Operations update

a. Phase 1A sign ups - 67 subscribers are active, 21 orders are pending service. The committee discussed the slow rate of activating subscribers who have ordered service. Ellie dV. said that WCVT says it is moving as fast as possible.

b. Phase 1B/1C permitting and construction - 20 orders in 1B, none are active yet. Ellie is managing and closely tracking the permitting process. All the buried permits have been obtained. Syracuse's boring and trenching crew is scheduled to begin work mid-September.

c. Vergennes central hub - Shannon H. is working on obtaining an E-911 address for the central hub site. An E-911 address is needed

in order to receive electric service. Shannon H. expects to have the E-911 address and electricity to the site within 2 weeks. The plan calls for Vantage Point Solutions to build out the interior in early November. The generator will be installed around that time as well.

d. Other - Ellie dV. added that Shannon H. has also been helping with splitter cabinet permitting for Phase 2.

#### 10. Other Business

a. Cy T. and Ellie dV. will meet on September 7 at 3:30 pm to review the budget.

b. Steve H. will do a first draft of the Annual Report and will circulate it for committee review. A very short version of the Annual Report will be needed for member towns to include in their Town Reports.

c. The next Maple Broadband Governing Board meeting is September 12. It was suggested to reach out to the Governing Board ahead of that meeting to see if members have specific questions they want to see addressed. Ellie dV. will follow up with this very good suggestion after Labor Day and reach out to the Governing Board.

#### 12. Future Meetings: September 14, 2023

Adjournment - MOTION to adjourn the meeting was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Minute-taker