

Approved January 18, 2024

Addison County Communications Union District (dba) Maple Broadband

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 4, 2024

3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Location: 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury, VT

VIA ZOOM

PRESENT

Steve Huffaker (Ferrisburgh) - Chair

Carl Seinbecker (Shoreham) - Vice-chair

Nancy Cornell (Starksboro) - At-large

Shannon Haggett (Vergennes) - At-large

Jeff Glassberg (Waltham) - At-large

Ellie de Villiers – Executive Director (ex officio)

Cy Tall - Treasurer (ex officio)

1. Call to Order / Agenda Approval

Recording announced. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm by the Executive Director. MOTION to approve the agenda as modified with addition of 2 items under #6: long drops and 1A materials sale, was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

2. Previous meeting minutes approval: December 14, 2023 - tabled until next meeting.

3. Public comments - none

4. Executive Director Report - Ellie dV.

- Ellie took one week off for the holidays.
- Her recent focus has been operational (“keeping the trains running”).

- VCBB Digital Equity Plan - Ellie has been preparing to submit comments via VCUDA by the January 6 deadline.
- Ellie has been finishing her financial analysis of the period before and after BEAD funding.
- She has been working on marketing issues with WCVT - see #10 Marketing below.

5. Chair Report - Steve H.

Steve and the committee discussed the first draft of a 5-year operational plan dated 1/4/24 and also discussed the status of construction in Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 and maps that display the status graphically to be presented at the next governing board meeting. These maps are a simplified version of the publicly available maps on the Maple Broadband website.

6. Calls for decision / key discussion topics

a. Bylaws amendments - Shannon H. has reviewed the bylaws and the relevant Statutes. He is recommending only one change: to add the Executive Director as a member of the Executive Committee. This bylaw change will require 2 votes. The committee agreed to first recommend the proposed bylaw change at the April meeting of the governing board and again at the Annual Meeting.

b. Financial policies - the committee reviewed and discussed the proposed financial policies, and discussed the separate roles of the Bookkeeper, the Treasurer, and the Executive Director in a financial system designed to prevent fraud. It was pointed out that the bookkeeper is permanent position at Maple Broadband, in line with best practice. Jeff G. suggested some clarifying language to describe each financial position. Ellie will incorporate his astute suggestions into the document.

c. WCVT discussion - the management team at WCVT has been invited back on January 18 to finish their presentation and to answer questions. Shannon and Ellie will be receiving a CrowdFiber

tutorial tomorrow. Cy T. (who is now a Maple Broadband customer) told the committee that when she received her first bill, it was not identified as being from Maple Broadband or WCVT but rather was only identified as being from SmartHub (the name of the software) This might be confusing for some customers, especially at first, who might mistake it for junk mail. This issue will be included in what is discussed with WCVT at the next meeting.

d. Long drops - after discussion on the issue of long drops (defined as an aerial drop greater than 400 feet), MOTION to empower the Executive Director to work with WCVT to waive installation fees for long drops and to determine policies and procedures by which that is done, and report back to the committee, was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

e. 1A materials sale -Ellie reported that Syracuse has made an offer for all of the remaining surplus materials (except 80 aerial clamps). MOTION to sell the remaining inventory that Syracuse wants in the amount of \$21,973.81, was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

7. Operations

a. Active service status - is as described in Steve's chair report and illustrated on the service area maps.

b. Phase 1 update - Cornwall 6 (the northern part of Shoreham) is scheduled to go live next week. Shoreham 2 is scheduled to go live 10 days after Cornwall 6. The remaining areas of Shoreham are expected to go live at the end of January or early February.

c. Phase 2 and 3 update - Construction will continue through the winter. The transport route to the South Meet Point has 100% fiber installed and the splicing is 80% done. In other Vergennes service areas, fiber installation is in process.

d. Other - none

8. Financial - Cy reported that she has been working on the ledger reports and will present the financial dashboard to the governing board at the next meeting.

9. Affordability - no update today

10. Marketing - Ellie has been working on the marketing wish list document. She said marketing has two components - strategic (helping us tell our story) and tactical (imagery, social media, communications). Maple Broadband has two options for meeting both strategic and tactical marketing needs: either find one larger agency that does both, or contract with two separate companies, each providing one component. Ellie will send out the marketing document for committee review and discussion at the next meeting. Ellie added that she meets weekly with NEK Broadband and CV Fiber, the other two CUDs that partner with WCVT, to discuss marketing and other needs.

11. VCBB/VCUDA status updates - VCUDA met this week, with discussion focused on the digital equity plan. VCUDA's best financial practices work continues. VCBB Board meeting is next week. Ellie has continued conversations with potential financiers. The Vermont legislative session has begun. The House Appropriations Committee has a hearing on the restoration of 20 million dollars to match contributions to CUDs from Vermont towns. Vermont House Chair Diane Lanpher testified in support of this restoration of funds. The restoration is now part of the Budget Adjustment Act. If it passes, \$30M will be allocated to VCBB to be used as match for federal programs.

12. Parking lot, other business - no items to discuss today

13. Future meeting

Next regular meeting: January 18, 2024

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Minute-taker