

Approved January 8th, 2024

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

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**January 25, 2024**

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

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

**VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT**

Steve Huffaker (Ferrisburgh) - Chair

Carl Siebecker (Shoreham) - Vice Chair

Shannon Haggett (Vergennes) - At-large

Jeff Glassberg (Waltham) - 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. Ellie announced that the transcribing function is now turned on, to assist the minute taker. MOTION to approve the agenda as presented was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

2. Previous meeting minutes approval: January 18, 2024

MOTION to approve the minutes as amended with typos in two last names corrected, was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

3. Public comments - none

4. Executive Director Report - Ellie dV.

- Ellie continues to examine the BEAD program. Discussion regarding BEAD will be on the agenda of a future meeting.
- At the meeting of the finance committee yesterday, Denise reported that she is finished with her recommended chart of accounts. Ellie is reaching out to Christa (Denise is now on vacation) to get this file to shared with the Treasurer and bookkeeper.
- Ellie said she gained some useful insights into capitalization strategies that can be used at least as a reference.

#### 5. Chair Report - Steve H.

Steve and Ellie have weekly calls with Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT). A challenge that is coming up recently in Shoreham has to do with number portability. While the Town Office in Shoreham is eager to have fiber internet from Maple Broadband, it does not want to give up its phone number. The importance of keeping their current phone number is a barrier for potential residential customers as well. GoNetspeed has agreed to do number portability but operationalizing this within WCVT without incurring new costs is the challenge. Ellie continues to work on this problem with Roger Nishi at WCVT.

#### 6. Calls for decision/key discussion topics

a. BEAD application - recent talks with WCVT resulted in agreement in principle to apply jointly. There is a legal component that must be in place between Maple Broadband and WCVT before the joint application is submitted. Ellie is researching the legal costs and casting a wide net for a qualified firm to do the work. She expects to have a finalist firm to recommend to the committee within 3 weeks.

b. Financial policies - after review of the latest draft of the financial policies, all agreed that the monthly financial dashboard is sufficient for the Executive Committee for now, that, in the most recent Financial Policies, the word “monthly” be deleted from the Treasurer’s responsibility to provide financial reports, and that the full financial report continue to be provided quarterly to the Governing Board. MOTION to adopt the revised Financial Policies, per tonight’s discussion, was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

c. ACP wind down - the FCC issued the wind down order on January 11, 2024, and mandated that internet providers send out the first of three required communications to customers. After discussion on the options of what to offer the two Maple Broadband customers who currently receive and will be losing the ACP subsidy, MOTION to increase the Maple Broadband subsidy for these two customers to \$30 per month was APPROVED. Carl Siebecker, Shannon Haggett, and Jeff Glassberg voted in the affirmative. Steve Huffaker abstained.

d. WCVT analytics, etc - Ellie reported that the following limited information can be found in CrowdFiber:

- Number of placed orders not yet canceled
- Number of canceled orders
- Number of live customers
- Number of scouts completed; customer not yet installed
- Number of orders in the system not yet scouted

Ellie added that she has not yet tallied the reason given for the 45 cancellations stored in CrowdFiber. The committee discussed the above data shown in a spreadsheet by Ellie. Shannon added that since November, when he first explored the data in CrowdFiber, WCVT has been responsive Maple Broadband's needs and has added filters that help improve access.

e. Marketing - the committee discussed the process to obtain marketing resources. Ellie will be drafting an RFP with two parts (strategic items and tactical items). Bidders can bid on one or both parts of the RFP. In addition to the usual places that CUDs post RFPs, she wants to cast a wider net to reach qualified firms. In the next two weeks Ellie plans to finalize the bid package and the list of firms. Ellie will take the lead and Cy offered to help with vetting and recommendations. Ellie will contact Nancy C. to see if she also wants to be involved. Ellie added that Pivot will be retained until a new provider of marketing services is in place.

f. VCBB documentary - Vergennes Opera House was suggested as a possible venue for a screening in Vergennes. Shannon will make the initial contact to see about this possibility.

g. Parking lot - the committee discussed how to organize and review items in the Parking Lot. It was agreed to put the Parking Lot under Calls

for decision/key discussion topics in the agenda and rely on committee members to bring up specific items for discussion. Ellie added that items in the list will not be re-numbered, in other words a running number system will be used.

## 7. Operations updates

- a. Active service status - 153 active customers (same as last week)
  
- b. Phase 1 update - splicing progress has been slowed down due to winter weather.
  
- c. Phase 2 & 3 update - construction crews continue to hang fiber in the Phase 2 area. A directional bore railroad crossing permit is in process, with two more to follow. Pricing is being obtained from Syracuse for the new scope of Phase 3.

## 8. Other updates

- a. Financial - Cy reported that the audit is underway, year-end tasks are done and accounts reconciled. 1099s go out tomorrow.
  
- b. Marketing - Pivot is working on finalizing the customer welcome kit. Ellie is in conversation with Pivot to wrap up deliverables, including door hangers for WCVT to leave when they complete scouts and drops.
  
- c. VCBB and VCUDA - Legislative Day is on Wednesday of next week and the VCUDA retreat is Thursday. On the agenda for the VCUDA retreat is defining what will make for a successful BEAD application. On the docket to be developed ASAP as it relates to BEAD are:
  - what VCUDA can do for the CUDs at no cost as part of the SPISES grant
  - shared services with shared costs that CUDs can opt into
  - things that VCUDA cannot do for CUDs

## 9. Other business

The following items were reviewed:

- #1. 5-year operational plan - Ellie will move this item to the calendar.
- #7. Network security enhancements / 2F - Carl will follow up as it appears that some members have 2-Factor authentication and some don't.

#16. Financial policies review - completed on 1/25/24.

10. Future meeting/ adjourn

Next regular meeting: February 8, 2024

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Minute-taker