

Approved February 29, 2024

Addison County Communications Union District (dba) Maple Broadband

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2024

3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Location: 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury, VT

VIA TEAMS

PRESENT

Steve Huffaker (Ferrisburgh) - Chair

Carl Siebecker (Shoreham) - Vice Chair

Nancy Cornell (Starksboro) - 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: January 25, 2024

MOTION to approve the minutes as presented was APPROVED by show of hands/voice vote, with 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained (Nancy).

3. Public comments - none

4. Executive Director Report - Ellie dV.

- Received and deposited the check from the Town of Lincoln (ARPA funds), and the associated signed contract.

- Received notice from the VCBB that CTC's formal review of the Phase II design has been formally blessed. Ellie will file the approval memo in Teams, and Ellie and Cy will issue an invoice to the VCBB for this grant milestone.
- Cy T. and Ellie have been working on the new dashboard. Ellie recognized Cy for being way ahead of the game in doing the monthly grant ledgers for January.
- Interviewed a potential summer intern and have another potential summer intern to interview next week. Both candidates are Middlebury College students. Ellie said she is looking for a combination of GIS and research and analysis skills.
- Filled out a potential BEAD sub-recipients application requesting \$100,000 for legal and accounting work. It is on the agenda for Board approval on Monday.
- Sent out the January newsletter.
- Participated in CUD Day at the Legislature last Wednesday.
- VCUDA retreat last Thursday focused on identifying resources that will help with the challenge process and potential strategies for CUDs to collaborate on BEAD.
- Top priorities for Maple Broadband going forward are getting RFPs out and then working with the Executive Committee to pick the winners.

5. Chair Report - Steve H. said he has no Chair Report today, to allow time for the parking lot issues he wishes to be discussed.

6. Calls for decision/key discussion topics

a. Legal / financial BEAD RFP - Ellie said that legal services need to be procured to ensure that, for services under the Maple Broadband brand and in the Maple Broadband territory, that Maple Broadband's agreement with Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT) covers all the new BEAD obligations. Another need for legal services is the need for back-to-back legal agreements to cover what WCVT does on infrastructure that Maple Broadband owns that is in WCVT service territory. Financial services need to be procured to account for assets that will comprise hopefully up to the entirety of the 25% BEAD match. Both Maple Broadband and WCVT need to account for match in the same way. Ellie is

writing the RFP. On both the financial side and the legal side, familiarity of the firm with BEAD is essential so that we are not paying by the hour for firms to come up to speed on the basics.

Ellie suggested a timeline of one month to select the winning bidder, and the next two months to perform the work. Adam volunteered to assist on the legal side with Ellie, and Ellie will reach out to Jeff about the accounting RFP review.

b. WCVT operations - Steve said that issues are ongoing, as expected, as the partnership with WCVT develops, and issues are being resolved as they arise. Maple Broadband now can see how many new installations are completed each month, and can compare that with Maple Broadband's business plan. While data as of this Tuesday shows that 143 customers have had the scouting completed but are not yet live nor cancelled, it is not easy to find from the data whether WCVT is waiting for the customer to do something (like have culvert installed for an underground drop) or the customer is waiting for the installation.

c. Ellie vacation - Ellie requests that the deadline for taking vacation days be extended to the end of April or May, rather than the end of March. She advocates this would benefit the organization as well as her personally. MOTION to approve the extending of Ellie's vacation days deadline to the end of May was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote.

d. VCBB documentary - Shannon H. said that he spoke with the Opera House as a possible venue for showing the documentary. He learned that they offer free space for Town sponsored events. He plans to ask the Town of Vergennes if they would like to co-sponsor an event where the documentary is shown. Ellie suggested that the event celebrate the launch of service in Vergennes. She will follow up to make sure the documentary is finished before proposing a date to the Town and the Opera House.

e. Parking lot issues - the following issues were discussed:

#2 - ACORD tracking - needs to remain open because all the subcontractors are not in hand. Ellie will complete the data file and hand it over to Shannon to maintain.

#3 - CrowdFiber / customer pipeline analytics - needs to be renamed "Customer pipeline analytics" because CrowdFiber data has been mined as deeply as possible. Next steps: the CUD partners of WCVT need to come to agreement on what they need and then go to WCVT with unified requests.

#6 - Ripton ARPA resolution - still open - Ellie will follow up with Laurie Cox again.

#7 - Network security enhancements/2F - completed (Cy said that the QuickBooks account has 2 factor authorization also)

#12 - CUD technical corrections bill is actively moving through the Senate finance committee.

#17 - still in progress - see 6d above.

7. Operations updates

a. Active service status - 169 active customers as of this morning.

b. Phase 1 update - splicing progress picked up with more splicers working. There was a big service launch in Shoreham 2, and parts of Orwell and Cornwall. There are two more remaining service areas in Phase 1 that need to go live and that should happen by the end of March.

c. Phase 2 & 3 update - Pricing is being obtained from Syracuse for work in Orwell. Labor is going up 3% with materials remaining the same. Ellie commented that 3% is a below average labor price increase and reflects on the good working relationship between Syracuse and Maple Broadband.

8. Other updates

a. Financial - Cy reported that the audit is moving along well.

b. Marketing - Pivot is working on the customer welcome kit and the door hangers are close to completion.

c. VCBB and VCUDA

- VCBB Board Meeting is next Monday. Holly Groschner and Laura Sibilgia have been reappointed to the Board.

- Accountability policies drafts continue to go back and forth between VCBB and VCUDA.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is in draft form.
- The latest version of Vermont's Digital Equity Plan has a deadline of mid-February, so there is no further opportunity for comment, but Ellie noted that it is a living document.
- Funding opportunities on the horizon from the Digital Equity Act include a national competitive grant and a digital equity federal allocation (separate from BEAD).
- There is a bill moving through the House Ways and Means committee that changes how phone customers are taxed, and proposes various new fees from which CUDs are currently exempt.

d. Shoreham town -

- Customer issue - complaint was made to the Public Service Department concerning number portability. Customer was given the wrong information by customer service representative at WCVT. The correct information is that GoNetspeed is able to port the telephone number, but WCVT's upstream provider is the obstacle. Ellie said that Roger from WCVT needs to talk with the upstream provider to clear the way for number portability.
- Town of Shoreham issue - Under terms of the hub lease agreement with the Town of Shoreham, Maple Broadband provides free broadband service to 3 Shoreham municipal locations, which is 3 times the number of free services for other hubs. However, the Shoreham Select Board interpreted this to mean that free phone service was also included under the terms of the hub lease agreement, but this is not the case. Ellie wanted the committee to be aware of this misunderstanding, which caused some upset on the part of the Select Board.

e. Pedestal damage - Ellie reported that WCVT's subcontractors damaged two of the pedestals belonging to GoNetspeed during recent customer

connections. WCVT has taken full responsibility for repairing the damage and is making sure it will not happen again. Steve H. will also follow up with WCVT regarding a specific subcontractor.

9. Other business - none

10. Future meeting/ adjourn

Next regular meeting: February 22, 2024

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Minute-taker