

**Maple Broadband**  
**Addison County Communications Union District**

**Meeting Minutes**

**March 12, 2024 5:00 p.m. – 6:30p.m.**

**VIA TEAMS and live at ACRPC**

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 to Maple Broadband's March meeting. The following people were present:

Paul Nikolich, Delegate, Addison;  
Mike Sheets, Alternate Bridport;  
Rick Scott Delegate, Bridport;  
Steve Huffaker, Delegate Ferrisburgh;  
Ross Conrad, Delegate Middlebury;  
Hugh McLaughlin, Alternate Middlebury;  
Ellie de Villiers, Delegate New Haven;  
Bill Goddard, Delegate Orwell;  
Nancy Cornell, Delegate Starksboro;  
Rich Warren, Alternate Starksboro;  
Shannon Haggett, Delegate Vergennes;  
Leslie Huston, Delegate Waltham;  
James Nadeau, Alternate, Weybridge

Cy Tall, Treasurer and non-voting member;

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

2. Agenda Approval. Steve asked for additions or changes to the agenda. **Nancy Cornell moved to approve the agenda. Shannon Haggett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote/show of hands.**
3. Approve Meeting Minutes from February, 2024. Tabled for the time being to reach quorum.
4. Public Comments: Hugh McLaughlin spoke as a member of the public. He requested that Maple Broadband update its website to show the public all of the progress that it had made, is making, and will make next year. He also suggested that Maple Broadband should take some credit for pressuring both Consolidated Communications and GoNetspeed to improve their service.

5. Chair Report: Steve Huffaker noted we continue to make good progress on construction and that Phase 1 as launched is now COMPLETED to serve unserved and underserved areas. Steve noted he is pleased with that progress.

Steve also noted that Maple Broadband anticipates launching some of its Phase 2 service area next week. All the strand is up. All the cable is up. We still have a lot of splicing to do. We also need to connect most service areas to the Vergennes central hub, which is live. The HVAC and the generator are connected to the hub, so we can start connecting customers.

6. Financial update:

- a. February Dashboard. Cy presented the financial statement that had been distributed to the Board ahead of the meeting. She noted projections show us spending all of our ARPA funding by the end of 2024. Our goal will be to replace that with BEAD funding and to keep moving forward with construction. As of now, we are in good financial shape. Revenues and expenses remain in line with the business plan.

**Minutes: Having gained quorum, Ross Conrad moved to approve the February meeting minutes. Nancy Cornell seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The Board approved the minutes by a voice vote/show of hands. Paul Nikolich abstained.**

- b. Treasurer's Update. Cy Tall announced she would be stepping down as Treasurer upon completion of the 2023 Audit. Prior to stepping down she will also complete helping to update the bylaws and financial procedures to reflect our current operations. Cy shared a summary of things that had changed, noting that the Treasurer's duties have increased substantially. Cy asked the Board to consider people they know to find a new Treasurer. Cy noted because of the build, we have a big budget right now. However, upon completion of the build, the operations will go back to being much smaller.

Paul Nikolich thanked Cy for her work and asked for a sheet explaining the Treasurer's duties.

7. Operations Report:

- a. Service availability. On the Operational side of the business, Ellie noted subscribers continue to increase and that our actual numbers are on track with the projections in our business plan as are mileage and passings. Our biggest bottleneck is with services needing conduit, which we could not install in the winter. Other than that, most of the construction and service reports were covered in the Chair report. Ellie noted we had also started to build Phase 3 in Orwell.
- b. Marketing. Maple Broadband is planning to issue a press release noting Phase 1 of the build is completed and announcing the launch of Phase 2. We will send out postcards to

the Phase 2 area when all service areas are active. Friday, April 12th at 6:30pm Maple Broadband will host a showing of a documentary on Vermont's Broadband network at the Vergennes Opera House followed by a short open house. All Board members are encouraged to attend and invite their friends.

c. Other. None.

8. VCBB/VCUDA/BEAD Update.

a. BEAD. Ellie focused this discussion on the BEAD applications. She noted Maple Broadband will apply to BEAD jointly with Waitsfield Champlain Valley Telecom ("WCVT"). Ellie noted we secured a \$100,000 grant for legal and accounting work to help Mable Broadband work with WCVT and maximize our chances of securing BEAD funding.

VCBB will open its BEAD challenge process in a week. BEAD will define who is served and who is unserved, so the challenge process has a big impact on the grant. Ellie hopes the BEAD RFP will open in the summer.

b. Other business. None.

c. Delegate reappointments. Steve asked that members continue to ask their selectboards to reappoint them to Maple Broadband for next year after the annual meeting.

d. Next Meeting: April 9, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

9. Adjourn. **Paul Nikolich moved to adjourn the meeting, Nancy Cornell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a voice vote/show of hands at 6:08 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Lougee, Clerk