

Approved _____, 2024

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Addison County Communications Union District (dba) Maple Broadband

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2024

3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

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

PRESENT

Steve Huffaker (Ferrisburgh) - Chair

Nancy Cornell (Starksboro) - At-large

Shannon Haggett (Vergennes) - At-large

Jeff Glassberg (Waltham) - At-large

Ellie de Villiers – Executive Director (ex officio)

Noah Price - Intern

1. Call to order / agenda approval

Recording announced. The meeting was called to order at 3:32 pm by the Executive Director. MOTION to approve the agenda as presented was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote, and an honorary thumbs up from Noah.

2. Previous meeting minutes approval: June 6, 2024

MOTION to approve the minutes as amended with typo corrected, was APPROVED by show of hands/voice vote, 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstained (Nancy and Jeff).

3. Public comments - none

4. Executive Director Report - Ellie dV.

- VCBB released the list of BEAD eligible addresses, but not in a format (fabric IDs) that is immediately useful. Lukas, the GIS consultant, is currently joining this list with the existing database, mapping the fabric IDs with e-site IDs, so that the location of each address can be seen. Once this work is complete, the RFP can be sent out for the engineering work for the remaining scope of work. Steve has been assisting Ellie with this RFP.
- Ellie gave Syracuse and Mission the go ahead to build out the transportation route, as there are sufficient construction grant funds and ARPA funds to do so.
- Vantage Point Solutions is working on the design for 3 miles in Middlebury. Once these 3 miles are built out, the network will have the shape of the loop that is needed for resiliency.
- Between the work Noah has been doing and the work of Lukas, the GIS consultant, we are getting closer to have a more granular understanding of take rates by area.
- The scope of work yet to be funded can be looked at in two parts: as construction funded by the BEAD grant (assuming it is awarded), and construction funded by private funding (including town ARPA funds). The need for financing remains a variable.
- The VCBB approved the VCBB's staff's recommendation of how to distribute the 30 million dollars approved by the Vermont legislature and earmarked to match federal funds for broadband in Vermont.
- VCBB is expected to sign off on Phase 1 soon and will then be releasing ~\$700,000 to Maple Broadband.

5. Chair Report - Steve H.

- Total subscribers are 322 as of today.

- The second central hub is being planned in Middlebury. The first central hub is in Vergennes. Central hubs are hubs that have a router. The central hub in Middlebury may ultimately serve up to 2,500 addresses.
- Three more areas went live recently: Orwell-4 on June 11, Vergennes-7 on June 12th, and Vergennes-4 on June 13.

6. Calls for decision / key discussion topics

a. WCVT operations

- Noah has completed CrowdFiber automation in Google. He has been analyzing how long customers have to wait from sign up to installation, and will be reporting his findings at the July 11 meeting.
- Phase 2 includes more densely populated neighborhoods and the rate of installations there has increased.

b. BEAD update

- Ellie and Steve have a call scheduled with the BEAD lawyers to discuss proposed changes to the network management agreement. Changes are needed to “clean up” the agreement to reflect how Maple Broadband and WCVT are working together now, and to be ready for BEAD. The revised agreement needs to be signed prior to applying for BEAD.
- Kickoff call with the accounting consultants was delayed, in the hopes that a new Treasurer would be on board soon, but now it is being arranged with Cy as the Treasurer.

c. Treasurer update - the two people Cy has been talking with did not want to apply for the Treasurer position. The committee discussed it, and two other names were mentioned. Jeff offered to reach out to one of them. Ellie will ask Adam to reach out to the other person. The position is part time and comes with a stipend, if the person wants it. When

network construction is complete, the position will be even more part time.

d. Act 133 changes - last week the Secretary of State did a presentation on Act 133, changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Ellie talked about 2 changes that affect Maple Broadband:

- As of January 1, 2025, CUDs must either meet all in person, or have hybrid meetings where at least one person is in the designated physical meeting place. Addison County Regional Planning Commission has offered their office as the physical meeting place, but there needs to be a hard stop at 5pm, when that office closes, for Executive Committee meetings.
- As of July 1, 2024, recordings of the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Governing Board need to be posted on the website for 30 days after the minutes of those meetings are approved. Ellie will take care of this task for now.

e. Parking lot - the following items were discussed:

- ACORD tracking - all updated and handed off to Shannon to manage.
- Marketing search - RFP in process
- Leicester hub search - Steve has been working on the hub design for some time and believes that a suitable location has finally been found. Next steps included getting the easement executed and identifying a contractor. The Chair of the Select Board of Leicester is working with the Town lawyer on the process, which is expected to take two months.
- Town by town progress update - will be presented at the July Governing Board meeting.

7. Updates

a. Financial - Cy reports that Maple Broadband continues to be solvent. Cy is working with Darlene on journal entries for asset capitalization. Jeff expressed his concern that 2023 end of year is still not complete. Jeff and Shannon both advised that reports should have a column that shows the comparison between current and past year for

each line item, with the variance shown as a dollar amount and the percentage of variance. Ellie agreed that financial reporting an area for improvement.

b. Marketing - Maple Broadband has another month or so with Pivot. Pivot has been working on social media updates, the June newsletter, and welcome kits. Older customers will get a thank you postcard, with a call to action to leave a Google review. A second pull up banner is being made, to be ready in time for Field Days. A tent has been purchased, to be used for the Vergennes Energy Fair and other events. Marketing RFP process is underway, with bid opening on June 27.

c. VCBB and VCUDA - VCUDA has been focusing on mapping out, as related to BEAD, what potential consultants would do vs what CUDs would do vs what VCUDA itself would do in order to make sure that all parties understand the scope of work before bringing it on. BEAD-related topics under consideration are cyber security, supply chain risk management, National Environmental Protection Act, Historic Preservation Act, and Buy America Build America and related waivers.

d. Affordability - VCBB and VCUDA will be collaborating on 2 tracks on the issue of affordability. Track 1: VCUDA will work with Christine Hallquist and staff at VCBB to build a case to take to the Legislature next session. Track 2: work on a simplified streamlined accountability policy, led by Holly Groschner.

f. CCI docket - last week CCI filed rebuttal testimony.

8. Other Business

- The committee discussed ways to simplify the Performance Review Process, in a way that is most helpful for Ellie and for the organization. All agreed to send comments to Steve, who will compile.
- Ellie said she needs another person to assist with marketing bidder interviews. She will ask Cy, and Steve offered to be available as a back up.

9. Future meetings/ adjourn

- Bid opening meeting: June 27, 2024
- Governing Board meeting: July 9, 2024
- Next EC meeting: July 11, 2024

MOTION to adjourn was APPROVED unanimously by show of hands/voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 4:32 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Minute-taker