



CV FIBER GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

GoToMeeting (virtual meeting only)

September 8, 2020

Present:

Governing board delegates: Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Michael Birnbaum (Plainfield), Andrew Gilbert (Cabot), Chuck Burt (Moretown), David Healy (Calais), Philip Hyjek (Middlesex), Jeremy Hansen (Berlin), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Ray Pelletier (Northfield), Ken Jones (Montpelier), Tom Fisher (East Montpelier), Hendy Amistadi (Duxbury), Greg Kelly (Barre City), Tim Sullivan (Roxbury), Josh Jarvis (Barre Town), Frank Moore (Williamstown).

Alternate delegates: Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield), John Russell (Worcester)

Others: ORCA, Lee Youngman (Treasurer), Tim Shea, Nick Charyk

Called to order: 6:06PM by Jeremy Hansen via GoToWebinar

Additions to the agenda:

- Jeremy Matt suggested approval of the August 18, 2020 and August 25, 2020 Governing Board meeting minutes
- Jeremy Hansen suggested discussion of an upcoming meeting with Representative Welch

Public comment:

- None

Project Manager Introduction:

- Introduction of Tim Shea. He's been meeting with a few board members, has attended legislative meetings, and generally been working on reading documents and getting an understanding of CVFiber's background.

Treasurer's report & bills to pay:

- Lee Youngman reported that we have almost \$93,000 in our bank account. She just got access to the bank account today and is still getting up to speed.

- Jeremy Hansen found out from Rob Fish that we need to submit an invoice to get our \$100,000 portion of the CUD grant funding (we don't need to do any work, just submit an invoice). An invoice submitted today by Jeremy Hansen. Frank Moore asked if this was CARES funding. Jeremy Hansen responded that this is CARES money and as such needs to be spent by the end of the year.
- Jeremy Hansen noted that the executive committee needs to put together a budget for next year. He thinks this budget needs to be approved at next meeting so we can provide it to the towns for comment. The budget will need to include line items for wireless and wired infrastructure.
- Michael Birnbaum asked if we haven't received any of the \$100,000, is Interisle still waiting to be paid? Jeremy Hansen noted that Interisle hasn't been paid, but the reason is not the delay in the \$100,000 grant. We haven't been paid by the Broadband Innovation Grant despite having submitted an invoice in early August. Jeremy Hansen has sent an email to Clay Purvis to get that rolling – their failure to pay us is preventing us from paying our accounts payable. Michael Birnbaum asked if the Department of Public Service has approved the business plan. Jeremy Hansen said that he assumes it has, but that he hasn't heard anything definitive one way or the other.

Grant/funding update:

- David Healy noted that the Senate and Governor are looking at earmarking more money (perhaps 1.5 to 2 million) to help CUDs with matching funds for construction
- Jeremy Hansen had more communication with the Vermont Community Foundation, and they have money set aside to help CUDs. To get this money we would need to have a specific ask in mind. The grant would likely be on the order of \$10,000.
- Jeremy Hansen noted that there's only \$8 million in the VEDA pot. This is only enough to provide the maximum \$4 million loan to two CUDs, but there are now 9 CUDs in the State. Michael Birnbaum noted that he thought it was 11.8 million. Jeremy Hansen said that regardless, that is only three CUDs. He has suggested to the legislature that they might want to put more money in the VEDA pot.

Pole audit discussion:

- Jeremy Matt asked if we could ask the Vermont Community Foundation for money to do a portion of the pole audit?
- Greg Kelly noted that spending money on pole audit will really help firm up our construction budget
- Jeremy Hansen reported that ECFiber asked the legislature if they would appropriate 3million to do a state-wide effort for pole audit for imminently buildable CUD projects. There's discussion of this on the Senate Finance Committee
- Nick Charyk spoke up to say that he has put together an organization that can perform pole audits. He is trying to put proposals together to put under-employed Vermonters to work doing the pole audit. Would appreciate talking to us further. Jeremy Hansen responded that we would have to put this out to bid like any other municipality and that there will have a selection process

Meeting with Peter Welch:

- Jeremy Hansen reported that Peter Welch is having a meeting for CUDs to raise concerns. They've asked to have only one speaker from each CUD. The meeting is to be on Wednesday September 16th

from 11AM to 11:45AM. He said that he could speak, or he would be happy to let someone else (perhaps David Healy) speak instead

- David Healy asked people to send him any questions they have for Peter Welch
- Siobhan Perricone brought up the idea of telling Peter Welch that CVFiber thinks the internet should be considered a utility.
- Jeremy Hansen asked that anyone planning on attending the Peter Welch send an email notifying Jeremy of their intent to attend so we can warn as meeting if necessary

Approve meeting minutes:

- **MOTION** (Jeremy Hansen second David Healy) to approve the August 18, 2020 and August 25, 2020 meeting minutes. No discussion. Passed by unanimous consent.

Next meeting:

- Jeremy Hansen asked if we should have a meeting in two weeks. The informal consensus seemed to be that we should have a meeting to talk about the budget

Roundtable:

- Henry Amistadi noted that there was great testimony last week and asked if there are other VEDA requirements we need to be thinking about. Jeremy Hansen asked Greg Kelly if there's an update on the financial audit. Greg Kelly will follow up with the audit company. Jeremy Hansen noted that we need to be going to start making decisions based on the Interisle spreadsheet from the business plan. Henry Amistadi also asked what priorities Tim has been given to focus on. Jeremy Hansen said that so far, he has been tasked with getting paperwork in order and getting ready to execute paperwork (VEDA, bills, etc.) and with getting up to speed on the wireless project in case that gets funded. Henry Amistadi mentioned that it would be important to start defining CVFiber's needs/goals for RDOF. Henry Amistadi also noted that he just completed Duxbury broadband needs assessment that has a bit more detail regarding use cases. Henry Amistadi asked if we considered using television or radio antennas for the fixed wireless project? Jeremy Hansen responded that yes, all the existing towers were considered
- Jeremy Matt gave a quick update on the proposed line extension and CARES funding projects proposed for our territory. Jeremy also asked if there was any info on where WEC is with RDOF. Jeremy Hansen noted that we cannot talk about RDOF in open meeting. Michael Birnbaum said that he thinks that it would be premature to discuss WEC's position on RDOF at this point
- Michael Birnbaum said that the issue of whether broadband falls under Title 1 or Title 2 has been to the supreme court and that he thinks for us it's a waste of time to be chasing that. He said that we should support the people in Washington who are trying to change that, but we need to work under the rules that exist now.
- Tim Sullivan suggested that we put out short info releases every month to keep the select boards up to date. Tim also suggested doing a survey in Roxbury. Jeremy Hansen noted that he spent a lot of time getting survey results from Roxbury and that we have that information.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:06PM

Respectfully submitted,

DRAFT