



## **CV FIBER BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

GoToMeeting (virtual meeting only)

October 13, 2020

### **Members Present:**

Michael Birnbaum (Plainfield), David Healy (Calais), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield), Ray Pelletier (Northfield), Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), Greg Kelly (Barre City), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Jeremy Hansen (Berlin), Ken Jones (Montpelier)

### **Others Present:**

Henry Amistadi (Duxbury), Andy Gilbert (Cabot), Chuck Burt (Moretown), Tim Shea

**Called to order:** 5:02PM by David Healy via GoToMeeting

### **Additions to the Agenda:**

- None

### **Public comment:**

- None

### **Approval of the September 24, 2020 meeting minutes:**

- **MOTION** (Jeremy Matt, second Ray Pelletier): to approve the September 24, 2020 minutes. Motion passed unanimously. (Siobhan Perricone abstain) No discussion

### **Additional COVID Grant \$ - Items recommendation to board:**

- Tim Shea said that the Committee needs to recommend to board what to do with the additional funding the Legislature has approved and suggested that we should provide the legislature with a prioritized list. An additional \$300,000 per CUD has been allocated from the CARES funding in addition to the \$100,000 that we've already received. Jeremy Matt said that much of the \$100k has been spent, correct? Tim responded that yes, but there is still some that hasn't been spent.
- David Healy shared a list of potential items. He noted that some of the distinctions seemed somewhat arbitrary. For example, demand aggregation software would not be allowed, but tracking software to manage potential customers and survey data would be. He said that he'd discussed a FTTP project with

ECFiber and they are willing to build out the suggested locations at \$30k per mile. He also had conversation with WCVT to see if they would also be interested in extending – they also seem like they're game but those discussions are more preliminary. David also suggested two fixed wireless projects. Both towers would be in Marshfield, with one serving mostly people in Cabot. However, neither project would reach many people.

- Jeremy Matt asked what is the benefit of the FTTP projects to CVFiber? He said that if these projects don't benefit CVFiber, the other tasks should be prioritized more highly.
- Henry Amistadi asked what happened to the pole inventory. David Healy said that it turned out to be an ineligible cost item. Ray Pelletier asked if that is because State is going to be doing it? David Healy said no, it's totally ineligible. He said he thinks the funding allocation is a mess and that there will likely be money left over because of it.
- Chuck Burt said that if this is in essence giving money to another provider to build fiber and asked if we have thought about how overlap of those might impact pilot routes. David Healy said that the two proposed projects do not overlap the pilot routes. Chuck Burt said he thinks that it does overlap substantially. David Healy said that he will have to check on the overlap
- Ray Pelletier asked if the FTTP projects are subject to the 30<sup>th</sup> December deadline. Tim Shea said that this doesn't have the same handcuffs that the connectivity funding does. Michael Birnbaum said that the fiber would need to be built past houses by December 20<sup>th</sup>, but that drops don't need to be run. Similar with fixed wireless; the towers need to be broadcasting but customer connection can happen in 2021.
- Jeremy Matt asked if we can pass the clawback provision through to whoever builds TFFP?
- In response to questions about the feasibility of building FTTP this year, David Healy said that ECFiber was sure they could do it but that WCVT was a bit more cautious
- Michael Birnbaum noted that Green Mountain Power has offered to expedite make ready and attachments for CARES connectivity projects. They want rules to be followed but they have said that they will permit "temporary" connections to allow these projects to go forward, with formal approval to follow.
- Michael Birnbaum noted that different CUDs have different philosophies. ECFiber is more strictly fiber-only while CVFiber is open to including wireless but both are focused on providing actual internet service. On the other hand, NEK CUD seems to be following a third route – acting almost like a neutral host. He said that we should be thinking about our goal. Is our objective to protect territory so we can build ourselves, or is it simply to get highspeed internet to everyone regardless of how that happens?
- Ken Jones said that he wanted to put in a word for FTTP. He supports the FTTP projects because it will build relationships with entities, particularly ECFiber.
- Chuck Burt noted that Moretown is fine with splitting the town and having WCVT build part of the town. He said that the only red flag he sees is the potential to make our pilot projects more difficult
- MOTION (Jeremy Matt, second Greg Kelly) To recommend to the Governing board that the following prioritized list should be submitted to the Public Service Department: 1) the marketing package (Tracking software, customer outreach, and website upgrades), 2) the FTTP project with ECFiber in Roxbury, 3) the FTTP project with WCVT in Moretown, and 4) the Fixed Wireless projects. Passed by unanimous consent (Ray Pelletier abstaining). No discussion

### **ISP/Operator RFP Update:**

- Tim Shea reported that we are getting responses to the RFP, which has a Friday deadline. He said he expects to get the responses organized and ready to share by the end of next week.

**Business plan for VEDA update:**

- Tim Shea reported that he's working on figuring out what we need to do for VEDA application

**WEC Partnership / RDOF Update:**

- David Healy will discuss this in the Governing Board meeting

**Update on schedules and assignments:**

- No update

**Other Business – Status of Money:**

- Tim Shea will give an update in the Governing board meeting

**Roundtable:**

- No substantive comments

**Meeting Adjourned at 6:57PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeremy Matt, Clerk