



## CV FIBER BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

GoToMeeting (virtual meeting only)

December 17, 2020

### **Present:**

**Business Development Committee delegates:** David Healy (Calais), Tom Fischer (East Montpelier), Ken Jones (Montpelier), Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), Michael Birnbaum (Plainfield), Ray Pelletier (Northfield), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Henry Amistadi (Duxbury)

**Others:** Tim Shea CVFiber Project Manager

**Called to order:** 5:31 PM by David Healy via GoToMeeting

### **Additions to the agenda:**

- Grant extension for CARES funds

### **Public comment:**

- None

**Approval of December 1st Minutes:** MOTION (Siobhan Perricone second Michael Birnbaum) Passed unanimously. No discussion

### **Update on Canvassing, COS Systems, and VEDA Loan Application Activities:**

- Tim Shea reported that Last Mile Community Connections (LMCC) has made over 1,000 phone calls in the last week. They are adding more phone staff to increase the call volumes. Some of their staff are full-time, but a majority are part-time as supplemental employees. They are well over half way through the 3,000 phone numbers and will try to reach those they did not reach the first time when completed. The average call for someone to fill out the survey is 5 minutes, but some people are on over 12 minutes. They will begin the door-to-door operations early next week. They will be doing a literature drop, but no knocking. They will begin a text campaign in the coming week as well to encourage participation.
- David Healy did report that nearly 300 surveys were completed last week and some impressive metrics with those willing to presubscribe and potentially loan CVFiber monies.

- COS Systems is up and running. Chuck had a call with COS and was concerned with the survey data being imported, but Tim is confident that COS can import customer data at a minimum. David and Chuck are setup as administrators on the software. This software will be implemented with the website role out in the coming weeks.
- Tim Shea has been in touch with Eun-Young at VEDA about the application process. The majority of the application online is financial data in which CVFiber has little to report. The narrative sections have been drafted and sent to Ray Pelletier for review. Tim is confident that an application can be submitted in January which will include the feasibility study and business plan.
- David Healy stated that he was on a VCUDA call with two legislatures and there is some confusion on the intent of the VEDA loan including what can be included for loan funds. More work and clarity need to happen and CVFiber maybe the first to work through this process.

### **Project Manager Next Steps:**

- Tim Shea shared his thoughts and experience as CVFiber Project Manager. He stated that the role is very diverse and has not included much project management. Tim felt that for the short term you need someone to help with the VEDA application, issue the ISP RFP, continue grant reporting, and continue to work on the efforts of CVFiber. Tim felt that you do not need an Executive Director and Project Manager at this time, but as you install fiber and onboard customer the need would develop.
- Jerry Diamantides asked Tim how the reporting structure worked. Tim stated it was a bit difficult. Tim suggested that he report to the Committee Chairs as a possibility and report out to this constituency on a regular basis.
- Ray Pelletier expressed that most of the work that Tim has done is really closer to an Executive Director function.
- David Healy mentioned that 4 of the 9 members of VCUDA are staffed through the Regional Planning Commissions. David asked if CVFiber should consider this as different way to staff our needs. He said we need to revive our job description, select a hiring committee, and start the search.
- Siobhan Perricone prefers to use the same process that was used to advertise, interview and choose our current Project Manager.
- Jerry Diamantides sees two distinct jobs for CVFiber, one being the project management function and the other as an Executive Director and should we consider combing the two in the short term?
- Siobhan Perricone asked whether we would want an employee or contractor to fulfill this need?
- Ray Pelletier approached his Town Manager to ask if would be interested in having a staff person who works on behalf of CVFiber on their payroll. They were possibly open to that suggestion. Ray sees a need for a part-time ED to handle minutes, administrative responsibilities, website updates, and supporting the Board needs and possibly hiring a consulting firm to handle the specialty needs of CVFiber.
- Siobhan Perricone mentioned that one of the prior Project Manager candidates was interested in a part-time role and could possibly move into the ED role as the need develops.
- Ray Pelletier suggested the next steps is work on a statement of work to define the role and needs and work in parallel with finding the monies to support this labor need. The contract is based on the premise that funding is found to support the work.

- Michael Birnbaum shared the experience of NEK Broadband. They hired Christine Hallquist as their Administrator that was funded through a USDA grant to pay her salary. Michael is confident we could find someone who would be willing to work part-time in the PM and ED roles for CVFiber.
- David Healy asked to contact the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to support the efforts of CVFiber from a resource need. He feels there is no harm in asking for assistance. Ray Pelletier affirmed support of this action for the ED role at no cost to CVFiber.
- Tom Fischer said he has had experience working with a consulting firm with a versatile and knowledgeable workforce that has the PM/ED and technical expertise to help CVFiber and encourages us to explore this avenue.
- Siobhan Perricone will take the lead on looking at the job description with the help of Ray Pelletier on the writing aspects updating the statement of work. The timeline is to report back with something by the time the Business Development Committee meets during the last week in December. Henry Amistadi offered to help review the materials before the next meeting.

**Community Outreach:**

- MOTION (Jerry Diamantides second Greg Kelly) To direct Tim Shea to develop presubscription materials. Passed unanimously. No discussion

**Roundtable:**

- None

**Meeting Adjourned at 6:10 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Tim Shea