



CVFIBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Maplewood Travelers Service Center, 159 Paine Turnpike N, Berlin, VT
and virtually via GoToMeeting
September 16, 2021

Present:

Committee members: Chuck Burt (Moretown), David Healy (Calais), Jeremy Hansen (Berlin), Ray Pelletier (Northfield), Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield)

Absent: Siobhan Perricone (Orange)

Others: Jerry Diamantides (Project Manager), Phil Cecchini

Called to Order: 5:01PM by Jeremy Hansen.

Additions or changes to the agenda:

- Jeremy Matt suggested approval of the August 12, 2021 meeting minutes

Public comment:

- Jeremy Hansen was very glad he was able to launch the meeting correctly this time and thanked Chuck Burt for helping him get up and running

Bills to pay

- Phil Cecchini shared a summary of the bills that need to be paid, a table of estimated expenses, and a summary of grants. Phil Cecchini noted that some of these bills have already been paid to avoid late payments to contractors. The bills that need to be approved are:
 - \$810.00: Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramper PC (legal fees)
 - \$1,575.00: Jerry Diamantides (Project Management services for July)
 - \$680.00: Jerry Diamantides (Reimbursement for out-of-pocket advertising expenses)
 - \$2,137.50: Jerry Diamantides (Project Management services for August)
 - \$155.88: R.D. Eno (Reimbursement for out-of-pocket advertising expenses)
 - \$141.50: MBM Associates (Bookkeeping)
 - \$655.85: CVRPC (Administrative Services)
- MOTION (Ray Pelletier second Chuck Burt) To approve payment of the bills listed above. Passed unanimously. No discussion.
- There followed additional discussion of the details of our finances and what grants can be spent for what purposes. Jeremy Hansen noted that since we're scraping to pay some categories of expenses, having the VEDA loan to draw on would be useful.

- MOTION (Ray Pelletier second Jeremy Matt) Move to approve payment of a \$3,840 invoice for the Microsoft Suite. Passed unanimously. No discussion.

Office 365 (new seats, encouraging adoption)

- Chuck Burt provided an update on the number of Microsoft seats that we need for the Governing Board and our community volunteers. With the addition of Moretown and two community volunteers, we may eventually need more than the 40 seats originally authorized.
- MOTION (Chuck Burt second Jeremy Matt) to approve increasing the maximum number of Microsoft seats from 40 to 44. Passed unanimously. Discussion:
 - Phil Cecchini asked how much this would increase the cost of the Microsoft suite. Chuck Burt said that this would increase the cost by \$576/year when we start using the additional accounts (assuming that these seats are for the “thin” client – IE no desktop apps).
- MOTION (Chuck Burt second Jeremy Matt) would like approval to provision the “thick” Microsoft suite of services for John Walters. Passed unanimously. Discussion:
 - Chuck Burt noted that this will increase the cost from \$144 to \$288
- Chuck Burt noted that there has been some difficulty setting up meetings via Teams. He’s available to help the committee Chairs if necessary.
- Chuck Burt also noted that we are only at around 50% adoption of the official CVFiber email addresses and asked how aggressively we want to push adoption. Allen Gilbert noted that he’s been locked out of his personal computer all day as a result of trying to get the Microsoft suite set up and suggested going slow as there may be other less-technically-savvy people who are also having trouble. There was agreement that we should not be forcing people to switch.

Approve Minutes: August 12, 2021

- MOTION (Jeremy Matt second David Healy) to approve the August 12, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. No Discussion. Passed unanimously.

Committee emails

- Ray Pelletier noted that he wants the public to be able to send emails directly to the committees
- Chuck Burt noted that the google groups were set to not allow emails from the public because there were problems in the past
- Jeremy Hansen and Jeremy Matt said that they think that the public should not be able to email committee groups due to concerns relating to spam emails.
- Ray Pelletier said that he thinks the delegate list on the webpage should include email addresses.
- Chuck Burt suggested using the contact form rather than publishing the email addresses.
- The consensus is to move to a more robust contact page. Chuck Burt will work with CodeWryter to make this happen. There was no official vote on this.
- Later in the meeting Chuck Burt noted that he tried to forward the old google groups to the new Microsoft groups, but that he can’t do this unless the Microsoft groups allow emails from outside email addresses. Therefore, he’s going to open them to outside emails unless there’s any objection. No objections were raised.

Preconstruction grant application

- MOTION (Ray Pelletier second Jeremy Matt) That the Executive Committee approves the submission of a Preconstruction Grant Application to include funding requests for Pole Inventory, Administration, Detailed Design, and Make-Ready work. The details of the funding request to be determined by the CVFiber Chair, the chairs of the PDC and Finance Committee, and the CVFiber Project Manager.

Passed unanimously. Discussion:

- Jeremy Hansen noted that we really need this money ASAP.
- Jerry Diamantides noted that the application is incredibly detailed, but that we don't really know how they're going to evaluate these applications. He noted that when we learn more about what is important in the application, we will want to adjust the application to highlight the most important evaluation criteria. This is the reason Ray's motion includes flexibility to adjust the application.
- Ray Pelletier noted that, because we want to keep the pole inventory contractors in the field, we're looking to submit the application next week.
- Jeremy Matt noted that this is another argument for getting the VEDA loan application in and approved.

Upcoming annual report

- Ray Pelletier noted that we need to submit an annual report. We have completed a lot of work that we should present, and we don't want to skip on the report. Jerry Diamantides said that he thinks that there's some existing text from grant applications that can be recycled, and that he'd be willing to put something together for review. Jeremy Hansen brought up the text in John Walters' monthly reports and suggested that John might be able to help. Phil Cecchini noted that the report a sales tool and suggested that we should pass it by the communications committee folks. There was consensus that Jerry Diamantides should prepare a DRAFT report and share it with John Walters and other folks who might be able to help with wordsmithing. This report will be presented for approval at the next Governing Board meeting.

Construction schedule update

- Ray Pelletier provided an update on the CVFiber construction schedule. There have been delays that are resulting in shifting construction of Area A later. Ray Pelletier noted that he's been talking to the operators, and they generally seem to be ok with us hiring multiple construction contractors for them to oversee. This will be necessary if we are to catch up to our schedule for construction in Area A and to maintain our anticipated schedule for Area B.

Northfield/Roxbury/Moretown projects update

- Jeremy Hansen noted that ECFiber/Valleynet are moving forward with the Northfield/Roxbury project, and we'll hopefully be getting invoices soon. We'll need to figure out the Moretown project soon or we'll need to give the money back.

High-level design update

- David Healy reported on the status of the High-Level Design. He met with Vantage Point yesterday to make sure they understood the data we sent them. It was a very productive meeting in terms of passing

along data and getting them up to speed on our expectations. David Healy suggested that we might consider skipping the High-Level design for towns that already have fiber (Barre, Montpelier, and Berlin), and instead simply develop a design that includes connection points to connect those cities at some later date.

- Jeremy Matt suggested having Vantage Point do the High-Level design to include underserved areas in those towns.
- Ray Pelletier noted that we have the money and that it won't delay any of the detailed design work. David Healy noted that the cost for the high-level design is \$90/mile. Jeremy Hansen said he thinks that this is a small marginal cost and that he thinks we should do the complete high-level design for all the towns. The general consensus was in agreement with preparing a High-Level design for all towns including Barre, Montpelier, and Berlin.

Pole inventory update (Area A; Areas B & C RFB)

- David Healy reported on the status of the Area A pole inventory. He did a ride-out with WEC and of the 15 poles that were inspected in detail, only one needed makeready work. He noted that the contractors are hesitant to pass no-trespassing signs. Jerry Diamantides reported on some meetings that he's had with WEC, including regarding no-trespassing signs. David Healy noted that WEC just ignores no trespassing signs, and that due to easements CVFiber and our contractors have the right (through WEC) to access the pole lines. There followed additional discussion about how to make people aware of the pole inventory.
- Ray Pelletier gave a brief update on the Area B and C pole inventory RFPs. The contractors are currently producing at the daily average we expected, but one contractor has added crews. He said that he expects the pace of work to increase as the crews become more familiar with the work. He also noted that we'll use the results of the Area A pole inventory work as selection criteria when assigning the work in Areas B and C

Business plan/feasibility study updates

- Ray Pelletier gave a very brief update on the business plan and feasibility study updates.

Make-ready execution update

- Ray Pelletier noted that we've talked about issuing an RFP to get contractors on board for makeready. However, we'd only get to the point of needing makeready contractors if the utilities don't do the work themselves. GMP has identified approved contractors, and WEC is approaching that point and Ray Pelletier is hopeful that they'll have a list of approved contractors that we'll be able to sole source from. Therefore, he's not sure that it makes sense to spend our time developing an RFP.
- David Healy noted that the WEC crews he was in the field with were in the dark with about what they were doing out there with him. Apparently, they were not told that the purpose of the work was to build fiber.
- Jeremy Hansen noted that WEC has a new general manager who may need some updates on the fiber work.

Executive Committee authorization changes

- Ray Pelletier noted that NEK Broadband and ECFiber have provided their Executive Committees with greater authority than CVFiber has provided. He thinks that CVFiber should delegate more authority to the Executive Committee to allow us to be a bit more agile. He said that NEK has sent over their bylaws that we might be able to poach text from. He thinks that these will be amendments to the charter that the Board will have to approve. The general consensus was that this is a good idea as the number of decisions will need to be acted on will be increasing rapidly.

Funding technical consultant for dev/op review

- David Healy reported on a proposal for funding a technical consultant. The proposal we got back is way higher than David had expected. He suggested that perhaps they misunderstood what we're looking for. David Healy said that he thinks we should authorize spending up to a certain amount on this to keep things moving as fast as possible.
- Chuck Burt noted that he thinks the blended hourly rate they're proposing is very reasonable.
- Ray Pelletier noted that Christa Shute reviewed the contract for NEK and that she might have some time to help us out.
- Jeremy Hansen said that he thinks that we can select an operator ourselves (both top candidates are very good and would likely provide us with similar levels of quality) and just draw in the technical consultant when we're negotiating the contract.
- Jerry Diamantides noted that responses to our questions are due tomorrow and that we will hopefully get additional information that will help us select an operator.
- The consensus is that we don't think we'll need help selecting from the operator applicants, but that we will need technical help when we're hammering out the contract with the selected operator.

Housing request

- David Healy reported that he was contracted by Rob Fish regarding a low-income housing complex that falls under the "impacted by COVID pandemic" category as the residents are low income. Rob specifically asked if we could help with this project. It sounds like we'd mostly be a conduit for funding. The general consensus is that we would like to help with the project as it is in line with our goals of providing service to those who need it and because we want to help Rob Fish out. However, the general consensus also was that we are spread extremely thin at the moment and that we can't take on a project that will require any substantial level of effort from us. David Healy will check on the level of work that will be expected from us.

Meeting Adjourned

- MOTION: (Jeremy Hansen) to adjourn at 6:08PM. No Discussion. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Matt, Clerk

Summary of Tasks Assigned:

- Phil Cecchini will present Jeremy Hansen with a list of checks that need to be cut
- Jeremy Hansen will pay the approved bills
- Chuck Burt will:
 - Forward the old google groups to the new Microsoft groups
 - Work with CodeWryter to beef up the CVFiber contact form
 - Provision the Microsoft Suite for John Walters
- David Healy will check with Rob Fish to determine the level of effort expected from us for the Barre project.