



CVFiber Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 24, 2022 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Virtual meeting

Present: Committee members Phil Cechinni, Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Linda Gravell (Waterbury), Ray Pelletier (Northfield alternate), and Siobhan Perricone (Orange); and Jerry Diamantides, board chair.

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Gilbert, chair.

Changes to the agenda. Gilbert asked that an item “Moving forward on FAQs” be added to the agenda after item 6; omission of this item on the warned agenda was an oversight, he said. No objections, and the item was added.

Public comment. There was none.

Approval of minutes. The draft minutes of the Feb. 24, 2022 Policy Committee meeting were approved unanimously on a motion by Gravell seconded by Perricone. (Gilbert noted two typos in the minutes, which he will correct before the minutes are posted on the CVFiber website.)

Review of proposed revisions to Grants Policy. Pelletier, who had drafted the revisions, explained the changes he’s proposing be made to the current Grants Policy. Questions were raised about section 4, which states that “Grant awards will be posted to the CVFiber website.” There were concerns that confidential or proprietary information that fall under public records law exemptions would be posted. Gilbert thought the language simply meant we would post the name of any grant received, the grantor, and the amount received, all of which would be accessible public information. Pelletier, though, had in mind that the entire grant

document would be posted. After further discussion, Pelletier moved to drop section 4 and recommend to the Executive Committee approval of the amended revisions, with subsequent review and approval by the Governing Board. Gravell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board member / alternate responsibilities. Gravell had requested we revisit this topic from our last meeting. She wanted to know what progress had been made in addressing poor attendance at board and committee meetings, which in some cases has led to insufficient quorums to conduct the meetings. Gilbert noted what Governing Board Chair Diamantides had said at the last meeting, that he was going to start sending Board meeting minutes, which include an attendance list, to the select boards of CVFiber's member towns. Gravell asked if that had been done, and Diamantides said not yet. Gravell then suggested that the CVFiber executive director, or Diamantides, send a letter with the minutes and attendance list, to all member town select boards, mentioning that it's time for reappointment by the select boards of delegates and that they might want to check the attendance list to see if their current delegate was adequately representing their town through steady attendance at meetings, or making sure the town's alternate attended the meeting when the delegate could not. Cechinni suggested that if a town doesn't appoint a delegate or alternate, then we shouldn't count that person as part of the quorum pool. Gilbert said he wasn't sure if the state statutes governing CUDs allow that. Pelletier showed a recent attendance chart covering the last four Governing Board meetings; several towns had had no representatives present at any of the meetings, which all agreed was a problem. Perricone pointed out that we can't compel delegates to care about, or to participate in, our meetings. We can't kick out delegates; we can't get rid of a board member without the action of the member's select board. We've got no power. She felt that contacting the towns about this situation is a good idea. Diamantides wondered if it was proper to send letters only to the select boards of towns where delegates haven't been showing up at CVFiber meetings. Gilbert said he thought that was ok, although it might be a good idea to send reappointment letters to those towns whose delegates or alternates haven't regularly been attending meetings, as well as to towns whose current delegate has said to the Governing Board chair or other officers that s/he no longer wishes to serve on the board. He pointed out that current delegates who have not expressed a desire to leave the board do not need to be reappointed each year; the statutes include automatic reappointments if a select board does not appoint a new delegate.

Cechinni mentioned, as part of the responsibilities of board members, alternates, and other volunteers, that we should be documenting the number of hours we spend on CVFiber work. Some grantors require this information in order for organizations to apply for, and receive, grants. Cechinni said there are simple ways to build a tracking system that would do this. Incentives were suggested for those board members and other volunteers who keep and submit a time log of their hours.

Moving forward on FAQs. Gilbert explained that this item was a follow-up to the discussion the committee had at its February meeting regarding additional information we should have ready to post on our website, or elsewhere, as we get closer to beginning construction of the CVFiber network. He said he had gone back and looked at the CUD websites he had reported on at the last meeting and determined that the new information we'll need to develop could be collected under a new tab on the website labeled "Getting Connected". Within that tab would be first an introductory "landing page" and then sub-categories on specific issues, each with its own set of FAQs:

- Connecting to the network (general information about connections)
- Service plans (internet and phone)
- Policies, agreements, specifications
- Customer support

Developing information on the first two sub-categories must come from the people involved with the building of the network and the people working on fees and rate structures. The third category, he said, is something the Policy Committee should begin to work on: documents dealing with policies, agreements, and specifications. He suggested a "library" where these documents are kept. Reviewing other CUDs' websites, with a focus on ECFiber's website, the following documents should be prepared:

- Subscriber agreement
- Privacy policy
- Acceptable use policy (policy not available on ECFiber website)
- Open internet transparency policy (net neutrality)
- Underground conduit specifications and contractor list
- Installation letter of permission
- Copyright Infringement Policy (how CVFiber responds to claims of copyright infringement created by information on our website; the policy is apparently required by the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Gilbert said all of these documents have been developed, and are posted (except for one, as noted above) on the ECFiber website. He noted that the ECFiber website is copyrighted, so we can't copy any text of these documents verbatim without ECFiber's approval. That is something we might want to seek if we can't develop our own versions of the principles and expectations the documents contain. He suggested we look at other CUD websites for similar information, as well as the websites of other nonprofit ISPs outside Vermont. And ultimately, most of the documents will likely have to be reviewed by legal counsel.

To get this work going, Gilbert suggested that any Policy Committee member so inclined choose one of the specific documents in the list above, research the topic by

reviewing documents written for other CUDs or other nonprofit ISPs, and take a stab at developing a similar document for CVFiber.

Gravell said she likes the approach of putting documents in a separate place. Perricone volunteered to take a stab at developing a policy.

Gilbert said that he would develop a memo to Policy Committee members inviting them to choose one of the document topics and explore how a CVFiber policy on that topic could be developed.

Broadband equity issues – continuation of discussion. Tabled for the next meeting due to lack of time. Gilbert noted, however, that there's growing statewide interest in this topic, and at least one effort is underway – creation of a nonprofit through ECFiber called Equal Access to Broadband – to address the challenge of internet affordability.

Other business. None

Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.

-- Allen Gilbert

Approved May 26, 2022