



## CVFIBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtually on MS Teams

June 27, 2022

### **Present:**

**Executive Committee Delegates:** Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), Raymond Pelletier (Northfield), Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Chuck Burt (Moretown)

**Absent:** David Healy (Calais), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield)

**Others Present:** Linda Gravel (Waterbury), Laurie Beth Putnam (Treasurer), Jennille Smith (Executive Director)

**Call to order:** Jerry Diamantides called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm

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

- None

### **Public comment:**

- Jerry introduced David Mannix of Marshfield who is interested in getting high speed internet and how he can assist the organization.

### **Prior Meeting Minutes**

- MOTION (Allen Gilbert, seconded Siobhan Perricone): To approve the May 31, 2022 and June 13, 2022 minutes with one small change.
  - Allen noted that in the May 31, 2022 minutes under call to order there is a duplication of “the meeting” that needs to be struck. Passed unanimously.

### **Treasurer’s Report & Bills to Pay**

- Ray advised that Phil Cecchini would not be present to provide a treasurer’s report but that he would present the bills to pay.
- MOTION (Ray Pelletier, seconded Siobhan Perricone): The following bills be paid: 2 bills for Round Hill Fence & Security (\$18, 289.40 each); 2 bills for CVRPC – (\$922.07 & \$921.04); Blue Cross/Blue Shield (\$1,550.82); Montroll (\$675.00); Mission Broadband Inc. (\$16,897.50); and Richard Enos (\$196.91). No discussion. Passed unanimously.

### **Fiber Fence and Security Update**

- Jennille provided an overview on the status of fence installation which is being completed at this time. It was confirmed that the gates were installed.

### **Pole Applications, Ride-outs, Permits Update**

- Jennille reported they have provided 11 total applications to WEC averaging one application per ride-out day and have requested additional personnel go on ride-outs. Make ready lists are provided at the end of day in preparation of hanging wire.
- Jerry noted the poles are owned by WEC and the make ready is moving forward nicely but would like to obtain more manpower to move it forward more quickly.
- Ray confirmed the 11 applications are for approximately 70 miles of make ready and that there is a significant amount of tree trimming work required.

### **Utility Make Ready Fees Expedited Payment**

- Jerry reported that making payments to WEC is necessary prior to their performing the work. Following the ride out there is an estimate provided with an invoice of the make ready work that needs to be completed. They would like to loosen the payment process for paying these make ready invoices without Executive Committee approval for each invoice.
- Motion (Ray Pelletier, seconded Siobhan Perricone): Whereas the CVFiber 2022 Budget provides for make ready expenditures, and

Whereas make ready is performed solely by the utility pole owner or those under contract with them, and

Whereas make ready work will not commence until payment has been received by the pole owner, and

Whereas make ready work is essential before construction can commence, and

Whereas therefore time is of the essence in the processing of the payment of make ready invoices.

It is moved that the Executive Committee authorizes the Executive Director to approve payment of accepted make ready invoices as they are presented, and that such payments be included in the Treasurer's report for each month.

Discussion: Allen raised a question regarding charging WEC for the service of using CVFiber's fiber to run their smart grid system. It was confirmed that services that will be provided to WEC in the future have not been determined to date.

Passed unanimously.

### **Construction RFP Update**

- Jerry reported that there is a construction RFP distributed and the submissions are due June 30<sup>th</sup>, and that they have received four to date. NRTC will assist with the evaluation process of the submissions prior to selection.

### **Warehouse, Materials, and Materials Management Contract Update**

- Jerry and Jennille reported they have been working with KGP who has been very helpful and will in the future be providing a plan for materials housing and management for review and negotiation.
- Ray noted there are two agreements in the works – one for the warehouse itself and if it can support two CUDs; and the second agreement would be between CVFiber and NEK to split costs should they utilize the warehouse. He noted warehousing and supply chain services will take time to negotiate.

### **Materials Purchase Update**

- Jennille reported a lot of materials have long lead times and KGP is procuring materials for CVFiber and the application and ordering process has begun.

### **Warehousing Update**

Jerry and Jennille reported KGP is assisting in this process as well; as additional warehousing space will be needed if they move forward with the St. Johnsbury shared space. Ray shared pictures of the warehouse being considered.

### **Public Relations and Marketing RFP**

- Chuck provided an overview of the need for the RFP. He noted it was intentionally being called public engagement in order to think holistically about how to engage constituents and gain a strategy to reach intended audience and subscribers. He provided details on the scope of service that would be expected of a selected provider.
- A discussion of process was undertaken regarding timing, distribution, evaluation of the RFP.
- Allen noted he would need to abstain from any vote as he had not read the material yet.
- Ray noted he was in favor of issuing an RFP. There was clarification of what a motion might entail to move the RFP process forward.
- MOTION (Chuck Burt, seconded Siobhan Perricone): Whereas CVFiber is a public municipality and as such has an obligation to try to keep our public constituents informed and engaged on the progress of our construction plans and build out, and

Whereas CVFiber being successful also necessitates reaching certain quotas of potential customers actually purchasing a CVFiber service package in order for the business to be viable in a sustainable fashion and CVFiber will need to execute successful marketing campaigns to reach and activate potential customers, and

Whereas the CVFiber Communications Committee is recommending that CVFiber conduct an RFP to find a vendor or vendors to execute important activities in the public engagement and marketing services space and has approved an RFP for such purposes,

It is moved that the Executive Committee approve the issuance of an RFP for Public Engagement and Marketing Services, to be issued on July 5, 2022.

A show of hands was requested. Motion passed with one abstention.

- Chuck reported on CrowdFiber and their services and how they would fit with CVFiber's needs and the costs associated with contracting for these services and discussion ensued.
- MOTION (Chuck Burt, seconded Siobhan Perricone): Whereas CVFiber will need to aggregate potential customers, understand addresses of interest, create and offer pre-subscription and/or subscription bundles, and conduct regular email campaigns to engage those potential customers, and

Whereas CrowdFiber is an NRTC affiliate that provides such services and the services have been deemed to be a better fit to our needs than our previous vendor, COS Systems, and

Whereas the Communications Committee recommends CVFiber adopts and integrates CrowdFiber with our website,

It is moved that the Executive Committee recommend to the Board to approve a budget item of no more than \$15,000 per annum to adopt and integrate the CrowdFiber "Advanced" tier of service and also set aside funds for seamless integration purposes. Passed unanimously. No Discussion.

- Chuck reported on the content that Cornerstone provides and how they may be utilized to help reduce costs related to content customization for promotion of CVFiber's services and discussion ensued.
- MOTION (Chuck Burt, seconded Siobhan Perricone): Whereas CVFiber will need to conduct numerous public outreach campaigns by many channels, including printed flyers, social media, email campaigns, website ads, and more, and

Whereas Cornerstone, an NRTC affiliate, provides a service catered specifically to telcos to create a library of advertising and engagement materials that can be customized to our specific region, and

Whereas this is a subscription service that comes as-is and is a very niche service with no comparable competition we can find rather than being a commodity service nor a custom service produced specifically for us and thus is not a good candidate for an RFP process, and

Whereas the Communications Committee recommends CVFiber subscribe to a Cornerstone package to allow our public engagement and marketing efforts to move more quickly,

It is moved that the Executive Committee approve a budget item of no more than \$4,000 per annum to subscribe to Cornerstone entry-level tier of service.

Discussion: Should it be Executive Committee or Board who approves the budget item and it was confirmed incidental items between \$1,000 and \$10,000 can be approved by the Executive Committee. Passed unanimously. No Discussion.

**Other Business:**

- There was discussion on the potential for creating a “customer journey map” and the importance of the voice of the customer.

**Adjourn**

- Adjourned at 7:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Chartrand, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission