



CVFIBER GOVERING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Virtually on MS Teams
September 13, 2022

Present:

Governing Committee Delegates:

Allen Gilbert (Worcester), David Healy (Calais), David Lawrence (Middlesex), Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), R.D. Eno (Cabot), Raymond Pelletier (Northfield), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Tom Fisher (East Montpelier), Henry Amistadi (Duxbury), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield), Linda Gravell (Waterbury), Michael Gray (Woodbury), Ted Barnett (Williamstown), Chuck Burt (Moretown), John Morris (Marshfield)

Alternate delegates:

Dan Souza (Barre Town – Alternate), Christopher Shenk (Waterbury – Alternate), Jeremy Hansen (Berlin – Alternate), John Russell (Worcester - Alternate), Walker Blackwell (Washington – Alternate)

Others Present:

Jennille Smith (Executive Director), John Walters (Participant), Laurie Beth Putnam (Treasurer), ORCA, Christian Meyer (CVRPC), Andrew Gaidys (NRTC Project Manager)

Town Representation (17/21 towns represented)				
Barre City	Barre Town	Berlin	Cabot	Calais
Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present
Duxbury	East Montpelier	Elmore	Marshfield	Middlesex
Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present
Montpelier	Moretown	Northfield	Orange	Plainfield
Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present
Roxbury	Waterbury	Washington	Williamstown	Woodbury
Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present
Worcester				
Present				

Call to order: Board chair, Jerry Diamantides, called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

Additions or changes to the agenda

- None

Public comment

- John Walters mentioned that he will be sending materials out for each delegate to repost on their local Front Porch Forum in the coming days.
- Michael Gray introduced himself as the alternate delegate from the Town of Woodbury.
- Ted Barnett, the new representative from the Town of Williamstown was acknowledged.

Meeting Minutes Approval

- MOTION (Jeremy Matt, SECOND Siobhan Perricone) *to approve the Governing Board meeting minutes from August 9, 2022, as modified.*
 - Discussion:
 - Allen Gilbert proposed minor edits. The friendly amendments were accepted.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

- Laurie Beth Putnam presented the treasurer's report, noting that she is working through correcting several minor errors with the bookkeeper and is ensuring invoices are prepared to meet required timelines.

Executive Director's Report

- Jennille Smith reported that Fences have been installed at the Montpelier storage location and a significant amount of materials have been received. CVFiber is working with NRTC on the delivery of equipment. NRTC is working with CVFiber on the design, where Andrew Gaidys is one of the project managers.
- Andrew Gaidys discussed their process to develop designs, noting that the information is stored in a geographic file (GIS). The designs are very detailed, accounting for each nut and bolt required for installation. They are creating schedules for all CVFiber communities with major milestones. The NRTC trucks are out in the region with the CVFiber magnets. The NRTC design and inventory is used to develop the bill of materials (BOM).
- R.D. Eno asked if he could get access to the fielding maps. Jerry Diamantides thought it was too massive to share. R.D. Eno would like to share some of the geography with the Cabot Select Board.
- Discussion ensued

Town ARPA Funds

- Jerry Diamantides shared a list of the ARPA commitments towns have made, noting that the dollars will all be matched. Jerry Diamantides thanked all the delegates for their hard work to make this happen. He will be signing MOUs in coming days and weeks to secure these agreements.
- MOTION (Jerry Diamantides, SECOND Linda Gravell)
Whereas the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) provides the State of Vermont funds to develop community broadband networks, and

Whereas ARPA provides funds directly to towns for the provision of government services including community broadband networks, and

Whereas the Vermont Community Broadband Board has set aside State ARPA funds to be used as a dollar-for-dollar match for Town ARPA funds committed to CUDs, and

Whereas CVFiber and its member towns have collaborated on identifying the potential use of Town ARPA funds and the associated State ARPA fund match.

It is moved that the CVFiber chair be authorized to enter into agreements between CVFiber and member towns committing CVFiber to use Town ARPA funds and associated State matching funds within the town as determined by the negotiated agreement

- Discussion
 - Henry Amistadi asked about the timeline. Jerry Diamantides stated that VCBB has asked for a commitment to be made by September 15. The commitment can be made by a letter, a vote, or an MOU. Once a commitment has been made, the MOU with CVFiber should follow as soon as is feasible, but there is no hard deadline. Henry Amistadi followed up to ask if Jennille Smith be in touch with towns to follow-up on the MOU. Jerry Diamantides stated she would.
 - Ted Barnett asked how he could proceed in Williamstown. Raymond Pelletier noted that he would provide him with a template letter of commitment.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Webinar Overview

- Jerry Diamantides ran through the highpoints of the forthcoming webinar. CVFiber has made progress toward everything that was presented at the June webinar. CVFiber is on track for the fall construction schedule, though work has not begun yet. Materials are being purchased and much has already been received. CVFiber has a secure warehouse in Montpelier. Additional materials are being stored at the WEC facility. Grant funding has been received the master schedule for work is complete. CVFiber is working with contractors who expect to be able to work through the fall and winter. Make-ready work is ongoing and has been successful. Permits and easements are under development.
 - Siobhan Perricone asked about a correlated local issue. Jerry Diamantides expects this kind of issue to arise throughout the building process. CVFiber is collecting all the facts and will discuss options for going forward.
 - Linda Gravell asked what items made up the critical path. Jerry Diamantides responded that at this point, everything he had discussed was part of the critical path.
 - David Lawrence brought up a local concern regarding using alternative equipment to connect a household with a long driveway. Jerry Diamantides thought this was interesting and CVFiber would be willing to learn more.

Jerry Diamantides continued that CVFiber is moving forward to build the subscriber base and working regularly with Waitsfield Telecom. CVFiber is developing subscription fees and considering affordability and equal access programs, both individually and with Waitsfield Telecom. The marketing and outreach contract is complete and close to being signed. Jerry Diamantides also plans to report on the committed town ARPA funding.

Finally, Jerry Diamantides will acknowledge that while things are going very well, there are risks. The materials market is tight and delays could happen. CVFiber is minimizing this risk by accepting smaller orders and looking at alternative sources. Labor issues could also pose a problem, but CVFiber is actively pursuing flexible deployments to move everything as fast as it can be moved. Make-ready could pose problems; to address this risk CVFiber is developing design alternatives.

- Jerry Diamantides thought these webinars would likely occur every two months given how fast things are moving.
- Linda Gravell noted that the Waterbury senior citizen center will open its facility for the webinar and will rerun it during a lunch about a week after. They have been very generous.
- Henry Amistadi noted that a common question he receives is whether or not customers will pay for the customer drops. Jerry Diamantides stated that there will be a standard drop fee, it is possible that some portion of the cost could fall to the customer but this has not yet been determined. He continued that he does not want the drop fee to be a barrier to entry for customers.

Construction Schedule

- No further information shared at this time

2023 Budget

- Raymond Pelletier reviewed the budget schedule: in October the Governing Board will approve the budget, then towns will review the budget and submit comments, in November there will be a public hearing, and in December the Governing Board will adopt the budget for 2023. It can be adjusted throughout the year.

MOTION (Raymond Pelletier, SECOND Jeremy Matt) moved that the Governing Board enter executive session to discuss records that are confidential pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(6), specifically construction and budgeting details that relate to CVFiber's strategic planning.

And that alternates, committee vice chairs, the treasurer and staff are invited as they have information that is needed. 1 V.S.A. § 313(b).

Motion passed unanimously. No discussion.

- Executive Session entered: 7:07 PM
- Executive Session exited: 7:34 PM
- No action came out of executive session.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:38

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeremy Matt, Clerk