



CVFIBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtually on MS Teams

January 30, 2023

Minutes Short Summary

- January 5 and 12, 2023 meeting minutes were approved.
- Construction continues in Calais, and a statement of work is in progress for OLTs for the Rumney School.
- The Executive Committee unanimously recommends the Governing Board approve the award of a statement of work for Grant-Loan Readiness and Strategy Professional Services to NRTC, and the authorization of the Executive Committee to oversee the implementation of the work for the timely submission of grant and loan applications as appropriate to the needs of CVFiber in the construction of the CVFiber network.
- The Executive Committee unanimously recommends that the Governing Board approve the posting of the CVFiber community relations manager and authorizes the Executive Committee to manage the application process, the appointment of a community manager application review working group and make a hiring recommendation to the Board.
- Adjusting the CVFiber meeting schedule remains a work in progress.
- The Executive Committee unanimously authorizes Jennille Smith to finalize the subscription package description and Installations/Connections Description after resolution of comments provided by the end of this week.
- The Executive Committee unanimously approved the hiring of a developer or developers with CSS & HTML experience for the scope outlined here and approve a total budget of up to \$5,000 for the purposes of the initial scope of work.
- The Executive Committee unanimously approved a protected CrowdFiber sandbox for purposes of development for a period of up to six months.
- The Executive Committee unanimously recommends that the Governing Board approve the posting of the CVFiber community relations manager and authorizes the Executive Committee to manage the application process, the appointment of a community manager application review working group and make a hiring recommendation to the Board.
- The Executive Committee unanimously approved an upgrade to a paid MailChimp subscription and a subscription to Zapier.
- The decision was made to review all the Delegates and Committee memberships to determine their accuracy and to try to obtain contact information.

Present:

Executive Committee Delegates: Ray Pelletier (Northfield), David Healy (Calais), Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), Chuck Burt (Moretown), Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield)

Absent: Siobhan Perricone (Orange)

Others Present: Jennille Smith (Executive Director), Linda Gravell (Waterbury), John Walters (Vice-Chair of Communications Committee), Laurie-Beth Putnam (Treasurer)

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

Additions to the agenda:

- None

Public comment

- None

Prior Meeting Minutes

- MOTION (Jeremy Matt, second Chuck Burt) *To approve the January 5, 2023 and January 12, 2023 meeting minutes as drafted.* Passed unanimously.

Bills to Pay

- None

Construction Update

- Jennille Smith reported that construction is continuing in Calais, and in two weeks a second crew will be added.
- Jerry Diamantides noted that our contractor pulls construction crews if temperatures get too cold. Jennille reported that fiber cannot be hung in temperatures below about 30 degrees F. Strand can be hung in somewhat colder temperatures.
- Jennille Smith reported that CVFiber issued a new statement of work for the Rumney School OLT. The Agency of Natural Resources assigned an individual for the ARPA projects, and this individual gave CVFiber approval for the Romney School OLT, which is why CVFiber was able to move ahead.

NRTC Additional Support

- Jerry Diamantides noted that we have a master services agreement with NRTC, and they have a branch that specializes in funding. We've been talking to them about what they can do for us. They can provide support for tasks that we don't have band width for (for example, finding appropriate grants and filling out paperwork).
- Ray Pelletier noted that since NRTC is doing our design work, they will be able to easily fill out the portions of the grant applications that require us to state our plans, etc. Ray Pelletier noted that the BEAD grant will be competitive (we won't be guaranteed a certain percentage) and NRTC is uniquely positioned to assist us with these applications.
- MOTION (Ray Pelletier, second Jeremy Matt) *Whereas CVFiber has entered into a Master Services Agreement with NRTC dated 21 December 2021*

Whereas the Governing Board has approved multiple statements of work with NRTC to perform such services as Construction Management, Engineering Services and Design Services pursuant to which NRTC is performing the detailed design for the 1,200 mile CVFiber network,

Whereas CVFiber expects to pursue additional grants and loans in 2023 and beyond,

Whereas those applications require design drawings and collateral information for which NRTC is uniquely qualified,

Whereas NRTC has a division engaged in the research and preparation of applications for grants and loans

It is moved that the Executive Committee recommend the Governing Board approve the award of a statement of work for Grant-Loan Readiness and Strategy Professional Services to NRTC and the authorization of the Executive Committee to oversee the implementation of the work for the timely submission of grant and loan applications as appropriate to the needs of CVFiber in the construction of the CVFiber network. Passed unanimously.

- Discussion:
 - Allen Gilbert says that it sounds like a no brainer, but asked is there any reason why we shouldn't do this. Jerry responded that it will cost us money, but it will be money well spent.
 - Linda Gravell asked if this would be in time to fill the grant gap. Jerry said that it might not be in time, but hopefully will.
 - Ray Pelletier noted that the Executive Committee can approve short term loans, but any longer term loans need approved by the Board.

Community Engagement Manager

- Jennille Smith noted that after we hire an operations manager, CVFiber would hire a Community Relationship Manager. This position will work with the Communications Committee and will work with Crawford to interface with our communities.
- Chuck Burt noted that this position would also take over certain tasks that Jennille is currently handling, such as management of some of our vendor relationships (e.g., Crawford).
- MOTION (Jerry Diamantides, second Chuck Burt) *Whereas it has become necessary to hire a community relationship manager due to the increased need for public engagement, managing the relationships among our communications committee, Crawford Agency, and partners, and due to the increasing need to set and manage consumer expectations;*

Whereas the CVFiber 2023 budget has accounted for the hiring of a community relationship manager;

Whereas a hiring group has been invited to finalize the job description and post the job description;

It is moved that the executive committee recommends that the governing board approve the posting of the CVFiber community relations manager and authorizes the Executive Committee to manage the application process, the appointment of a community manager application review working group and make a hiring recommendation to the Board (as amended). Passed unanimously.

- Discussion:
 - Jeremy Matt noted we are appointing a hiring working group, not a committee (accepted as a friendly amendment).
 - Allen Gilbert noted that since there are multiple entities, the phrasing should be “managing relationships among our vendors” (accepted as a friendly amendment).

CVFiber Calendar

- Jerry Diamantides noted that it is very hard to automate meetings on the Julian Calendar, and that we may need to simply have someone manually put our calendar in for the year.
- Allen Gilbert concluded that he thinks we need to take the changes slowly so we don't lose what has been working. He said that he would like the ability to talk to his committee members and see when they can meet.
- Chuck Burt supported allowing Policy to change their meeting schedule as they're less dependent on CVFiber's “workflow.” He said that more thought would need to be put in to the Communications Committee, as it is much more dependent on the workflow as Communications must follow Planning & Development.
- Ray Pelletier said that he is going to move Finance to the first Thursday of each month so they can review the last month's financials.
- There followed additional discussion regarding how the specifics of the calendar might be adjusted.

Subscription Package Description & Installations/Connections Description

- Jerry Diamantides noted that the subscription package description and installation/connections description would be handled together.
- There followed additional discussion regarding the specifics of the documents in question.
- MOTION (Jerry Diamantides, second Chuck Burt) *Move to authorize Jennille Smith to finalize the subscription package description and Installations/Connections Description after resolution of comments provided by the end of this week.* Passed unanimously. No discussion.

Subscriber Platform Development Support

- Chuck Burt provided context for the motions that are going to be made. In particular, CVFiber has a lot of custom work that we need to have completed because the Crowd Fiber stock platform is not polished enough for our brand. We've received proposals through UpWork, which range from \$40-\$52/hr. On the other hand, Crawford has offered to do this work, but would charge \$150/hr.
- David Healy asked if we would own the code. Chuck said that that is a grey area. Crowd Fiber will have access to our code, and anyone with a web browser will be able to reverse engineer the code.

- MOTION (Chuck Burt, second Jeremy Matt): *Whereas CrowdFiber is a Software As A Service tool, owned by NRTC, that allows Internet service providers such as CVFiber to register subscriber interest, display subscription packages, allow users to select subscription packages, start service onboarding, collect payments, perform marketing activities, and more,*

Whereas the CVFiber Executive Committee approved a new Exhibit K to our existing NRTC contract to enable CVFiber access to leverage CrowdFiber software services on October 13, 2022 and it was subsequently executed and paid for,

Whereas CrowdFiber has indicated we have leveraged as much of their ability to support our development needs as we likely can in the near term

Whereas we still need to conduct some additional custom HTML and CSS programming to get our subscription registration customer experience ready to be launched;

Whereas Executive Committee at its meeting on 1/12 and Communications Committee at its meeting on 1/19 discussed the need to hire a front end developer;

Whereas following research from a working group that included Linda Gravell, Chuck Burt & Jennille Smith, obtained pricing to retain a developer or developers with CSS & HTML experience for the immediate scope and option for further development scopes;

It is moved that the Executive Committee approve the hiring of a developer or developers with CSS & HTML experience for the scope outlined here and approve a total budget of up to \$5,000 for the purposes of the initial scope of work. Passed unanimously.

- Discussion:
 - Jeremy Matt asked about security concerns. Chuck noted that this is the next agenda item.
 - Allen Gilbert noted that NRTC is buying CrowdFiber, and asked if this might be seen negatively by NRTC. Jerry Diamantides noted that the need to customize is common to out-of-the-box software as a service.

CrowdFiber Sandbox Development

- Chuck noted that we need to have a sandbox environment in order to test updates to CrowdFiber before they go live. We also need to protect personally identifiable information. CrowdFiber will set up a second environment for us to use as a sandbox. The cost is \$500/month.
- Jeremy Matt asked if there would be the opportunity to insert backdoors. Chuck noted that the bulk of the work will be in HTML and CSS, which won't provide opportunities to insert backdoors. There will be a very small amount of JavaScript, which absolutely could be used to insert backdoors. Chuck noted that there will only be maybe 10-20 lines of JavaScript, and he will personally be reviewing every single line very closely.
- David Healy asked about the time frame. Chuck said that it might take up to six months. David asked if we could use the stock CrowdFiber interface in the meantime. Chuck said

that yes, as long as we don't mind if it is buggy. David said he didn't want to wait 6-months to start taking subscriptions.

- MOTION (Chuck Burt, second Jeremy Matt) *Whereas CVFiber has the need to develop accurate and user-friendly content on a safe platform on its website for the offering of its retail subscriptions and other data within the CrowdFiber interface;*

Whereas Executive Committee at its meeting on 1/12/23 and Communications Committee at its meeting on 1/19 discussed the status of CrowdFiber and the need for a "sandbox" for development that does not include access to our customer data;

Whereas following research from a working group that included Linda Gravell, Chuck Burt & Jennille Smith, we have obtained pricing from CrowdFiber for the development of a sandbox (\$500/month to maintain, estimated ongoing need for up to six months with the option to come back to executive committee to allow for ongoing development);

It is moved that the Executive Committee approve a protected CrowdFiber sandbox for purposes of development for a period of up to six months. Passed unanimously. No discussion.

Email Management Tools

- Chuck Burt noted that thus far CVFiber has used MailChimp for email marketing. As the number of subscribers grows, CVFiber is going to exceed the limits of the free tier.
- Chuck Burt described the Zapier tool. It allows for automated piping of data from our subscriber base directly to MailChimp.
- David Healy asked if we're going to be using the direct mail services that CrowdFiber offers. Chuck said that yes, we most likely will.
- MOTION (Chuck Burt, second Jeremy Matt) *Whereas streamlining and enhancing mail capacity is necessary as we collect more email addresses for potential subscribers;*

Whereas it has become necessary to implement a customer relationship manager tool to manage the influx of emails;

Whereas Communications Committee, through its chair, in collaboration with the executive director, obtained pricing from MailChimp to upgrade from the unpaid subscription we currently use to manage emails and for which we have run out of capacity on the free subscription (up to \$69/Mo)

Whereas Communications Committee, through its chair, in collaboration with the executive director, obtained pricing from Zapier (up to \$59/mo.) for the purpose of managing customer emails;

It is moved that the Executive Committee approve an upgrade to a paid MailChimp subscription and a subscription to Zapier. Passed Unanimously. No discussion.

Committee Membership

- Jerry Diamantides noted that it is questionable if the Delegate list and committee memberships are up to date, and this risk falling short on a quorum.
- Jeremy Matt said he would contact Town Clerks to get Delegate confirmation and also get letters of approval.
- Jerry Diamantides stated that once a Delegate has been appointed unless this person is officially replaced, the person continues in this role, which Ray Pelletier confirmed.
- Ray Pelletier said we will be asking the Board to confirm the appointments to our Committees at the February 14th meeting. We also don't have contact information for all of our Delegates. Again, quorums are impacted.
- David Healy agreed we have out of date Delegates, for example, Henry was appointed, but he is not listed. David would also like to have phone numbers but these can be difficult to get.
- Jeremy Matt said if someone is added, he will update the website but if people are removed, Jeremy does not necessarily know.
- Jerry Diamantides agreed that the shared drive should be the source document and kept updated with phone numbers, and that Jeremy Matt needs to be kept informed, as he is the person who updates the website. Only the Board appoints Committee members and this should happen at the February 14th Board meeting.

Adjourn at 7:56pm

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Jerry Diamantides.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Matt, Clerk