



July 9, 2019 Governing Board Meeting
Comfort Inn (CHANGED LOCATION)
213 Paine Turnpike N, Berlin, VT

Present: Governing Board Delegates: Greg Kelly (Barre City), Jeremy Hansen (Chair, Berlin), Andrew Gilbert (Cabot), David Healy (Calais – left at 6:30 pm), Tom Fisher (East Montpelier), Jonathan Williams (Marshfield), Phil Hyjek (Vice Chair, Middlesex), Ray Pelletier (Northfield), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Michael Birnbaum (Plainfield), Rama Schneider (Williamstown for Frank Moore), John Russell (Worcester); **Alternates:** Jeremy Matt (Plainfield), Allen Gilbert (Worcester); **Other Officers:** Becca Schrader (Clerk and Treasurer); **Other Attendees:** ORCA camera person

Absent: Joshua Jarvis (Barre Town), Robert Burley (Elmore), Dan Jones (Montpelier), Jon Guiffre (Roxbury), Skip Lindsay (Woodbury)

Minutes

1. Call to order

Meeting was called to order by Hansen at 6:22 PM, and quorum was determined. Berlin Elementary School was locked, and the meeting was moved to the conference room at Comfort Inn down the street from the school.

2. Additions or changes to the agenda

The agenda was adjusted to move the Business Development Committee report back earlier in the agenda due to David Healy having to leave the meeting at 6:30 pm.

3. Public comment

There was no public comment.

4. Business Development Committee update

Topics covered included: how to handle board members potentially being hired as subcontractors, Calais survey, running in electric space, website development, and needed components of a feasibility study.

ACTION: Motion by Hansen, second by Pelletier to appoint two CVFiber board members to serve as liaisons with Washington Electric Coop (WEC) on their feasibility study on providing internet service. Vote was unanimous, motion carried.

Discussion included what the role of the liaisons would be, Healy responded that it would be to maximize efficiency and reduce redundancy. There was also a question about what other organizations might also liaise with WEC to work together on services.

ACTION: Motion by Hansen, second by Kelly to request that WEC appoint two staff or board members to serve as liaisons with CVFiber. Vote was unanimous, motion carried.

5. Treasurer's Report, Becca Schrader

As of July 9, CVFiber had \$6,932.80 total, with \$4,560 in checking, \$2,347.82 in Snowball Fundraising online, and \$25.00 in its savings account. There is one donor donating on a monthly basis. In order to match the full Think VT! Grant, we need to have \$12,500.

Schrader is working with Gilbert (Cabot) to gather required invoice documentation to receive \$500 grant from the community investment fund, as well as working with Schwab to enable CVFiber to receive donations from their donor advised funds.

6. Number of Towns, Jeremy Hansen

Hansen has discussed with Moretown and Duxbury the possibility of joining CVFiber, but they have not brought it to their selectboards at this time.

Discussion included both advocating that more towns will give us more political influence and also concerns about CVFiber getting too large.

Contiguous area is one important consideration. Should we wait for feasibility study results or include towns that aren't currently members in the feasibility study? Do we set a deadline? How vigorously should we pursue towns that haven't responded or reached out to us? Consensus was to reach

out specifically to Washington and Moretown and not set a deadline or “close the door” for anyone else.

7. H.513 and Broadband Summit Update, Jeremy Hansen

Summit was good, Lyndonville has already done a feasibility study. There were also representatives from VEDA there that were looking to gather information to inform the loan program that was part of H.513. NEK Collaborative is looking to create an umbrella organization for CUDs.

8. Progress on Insurance, Joshua Jarvis

Jarvis had a change in work shifts and was not able to attend tonight. Hansen spoke to Joan Goldstein from ACCD and there is a waiver process for insurance that we can apply for, Jarvis is working on that.
ACTION: Motion from Fisher, second from Hyjek to authorize Jarvis and/or Hansen to pursue the insurance waiver.

9. Initial Survey Results

Healy had to leave early but did mention he had received 21 responses for the survey he posted on Calais Front Porch Forum. There was discussion of ideas to garner better survey response rates. Suggestions included having a prize drawing for respondents and paying for posts on Front Porch Forum.

10. Policy on Grant Submissions, Phil Hyjek

Hyjek reported on the updated grant policy, which was read by Hansen: Whereas, CVFiber may wish to apply for monetary, or in-kind grants, as opportunities arise;

1. Any board or committee member may apply for an appropriate grant on behalf of the Central Vermont Fiber Board, within the limitations set forth below.
2. All grants, except for those less than \$1,000, or have an in-kind value less than \$1,000, require the approval of the full board prior to submission.
3. Grants under \$1,000 are largely considered donations and members do not require prior approval to apply; however, the individual or committee should inform the chair of their intent to apply for said grant.
4. The Chair shall designate an individual or committee to track and report on each of the grants.
5. Grant submissions, award letters, etc. shall be posted to the CVFiber website. Periodic reports and progress monitoring shall also be posted to the website.
6. All grant agreements shall be signed by the chair after review by the full board and vote to accept the conditions of the award.

ACTION: Motion by Hansen, second by Perricone to adopt the Grant Policy as presented. Hyjek will bring a clean copy for board member signature to the next meeting.

11. Open Discussion: next steps, budgets, and annual report

We need to begin working on the annual report and budget. Schrader will provide a budget vs. actual report for the 2019 budget at the next meeting. Annual report and draft budget need to be presented to selectboards in October to request feedback.

Discussion included questions about terms on the VEDA loans (which are outlined in statute), as well as ideas about where to start service. Valley Net has proposed providing service as the operator, likely to start adjacent to existing services. Hansen asked for volunteers to go talk about details of a potential contract with ValleyNet – Kelly, Pelletier, Gilbert (Cabot) and Birnbaum volunteered. Concerns were raised that if we continue to discuss details like type of equipment, etc. too long, we will lose the opportunity to get the VEDA loan funds. On the other hand, there were also concerns about moving forward without a feasibility study or other information.

There was also discussion about how to put together the budget and it was determined that the Executive Committee would draft the budget before the next meeting. Members should send their “wish lists” to Jeremy.

12. Review of back burner items, committee assignments and membership

Schneider mentioned that he will be tied up with other obligations for the next couple of months and won't be available to be very active with the Finance Committee. It was agreed that there won't be too much activity for the Finance Committee in the next couple of months, so he will continue as chair, with Perricone serving in his place as needed.

Perricone raised the idea of having a grants committee to search for grants, assess CVFiber's eligibility, complete grant applications, oversee grant management, and complete grant reporting. There was not enough interest to create a committee of four, so it was proposed instead that Perricone be appointed as a grants coordinator.

ACTION: Motion from Hyjek, second from Hansen, to appoint Perricone as grants coordinator. Vote was unanimous, motion carried.

13. Approval of June meeting minutes

ACTION: Motion by Hansen, second by Perricone to approve June 11 minutes as presented. Vote was unanimous with one abstention, motion carried.

14. Roundtable

There continue to be concerns about our funding levels, suggestion about using fire alarm cable space for fiber, question about whether some committee functions should be split into more committees, USDA grant app is currently being scored, H513 was passed by House and Senate and allows for loans up to \$4 million (\$10 million total available).

15. Adjourn

ACTION: Motion from Martin, second by Hansen to adjourn. Vote was unanimous, motion carried and meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.