



CVFIBER OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtually on MS Teams

May 8, 2023

Minutes Short Summary

The minutes for the April 10, 2023 Operations and Planning Committee meeting were approved. Lucas Stubbs reported that a fourth crew should be working shortly; CVFiber has laid 21 miles of strand and 16 miles of fiber. Jennille Smith reported that we expected to have the NRTC design proposal soon. Lucas Stubbs reviewed the make ready progress, and noted Moretown should start next. Jennille Smith reported that for construction progress, we have a scope of work for Duxbury, Eustis is getting us one for Middlesex, so then we can assess the one for Marshfield. For the WCVT update, Jennille Smith reported that we have six friendlies in CLO 1 and CLO 3; Waitsfield has done all their site assessments. David Healy was confirmed as Chair and Linda Gravell as Vice Chair. David Healy led a discussion of how to fairly and transparently charge for the costs of drops when the distance from each house to the pole will vary. The Planning and Operations Committee adopted the revised charter. David Healy led a Roundtable discussion.

Present:

Operations & Planning Committee Delegates: Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield), Linda Gravell (Waterbury), Henry Amistadi (Duxbury), Tom Fisher (East Montpelier), David Healy (Calais)

Absent: Ray Pelletier (Northfield), Christopher Shenk (Alternate, Waterbury)

Others Present: Jennille Smith (Executive Director), Lucas Stubbs (Operations Manager), and Maggie Tuck-Sauer (Community Relations Manager)

Call to order: David Healy called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

Additions to the agenda:

- None.

Public comment

- None.

Prior Meeting Minutes

- MOTION (Jeremy Matt, Second Siobhan Perricone)

Move to approve the 4/10/23 meeting minutes as drafted.
Passed unanimously. No discussion

Updates/Discussion

- **Operations Manager Report:** Lucas Stubbs reported that we've added a third crew so we expect to see an increase in miles constructed. We're also working to add a fourth crew. We currently have 21 miles of strand and 16 miles of fiber completed. We're working on a design for the Moretown OLT and have received our environmental permits for Calais.
- Jerry asked if we are still working on getting an adder; Lucas said we are working on this but we might end up paying a bit more to avoid our having to get the adder ourselves.
- **NRTC Design:** Jennille Smith reported that we got a per foot DA cost, so NRTC is going to take this data to work out a proposal directly related to the increase. We expect to hear back shortly. We also got approval for more designs, including one today for Washington 02. NRTC has to submit their designs to the State contractor, so when we say they are approved that means the designs have been submitted to the State and approved.
- Jeremy asked if delegates could get shape files to view. David Healy said that NRTC has been reluctant to do that too but he will try.
- **Make Ready Progress:** Lucas Stubbs went over the mapping this morning. Lee at MBI is negotiating for permits, and Hardwick Electric in CLO2 and 3. Moretown is progressing too.
- Henri Amistadi asked if there was any interest in the pole inventory, which Henri analyzed for make ready issues; he will share this analysis with Lucas Stubbs.
- **Construction Progress and Issues:** Jennille Smith reported on the timing for the scopes of work for the next areas: we have a scope of work for Duxbury, Eustis is getting us one for Middlesex, so then we can assess the one for Marshfield. We would expect to wrap up Middlesex by the end of next week. We do want to make sure we can complete all the construction on Calais before we move on to Marshfield, which doesn't need an environmental permit. We do want Calais to be lit first. Lucas Stubbs added that there is a site meeting for Marshfield next week. The OLT site in Plainfield has been identified.
- **WCVT Operations Update:** Jennille Smith reported that we have six friendlies in CLO 1 and CLO 3. Waitsfield has done all their site assessments. We are also in final discussions with them about additional add-ons and fees. We are working out the timeline for what it means, step by step, to have a subscriber lit up. We meet weekly with Waitsfield.
- David Healy noted that there could be a decision for partial lighting. Jennille Smith said this could raise costs.
- Linda Gravell said that as we begin to light up the zones, there should be database training to move zones into "live."
- Jerry Diamantides wondered whose responsibility this is and the answer is CVFiber. David Healy did the original zones. There needs to be a task force created to handle this.

Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair

- Jeremy Matt nominated David Healy for Chair. The Clerk cast the one ballot for David Healy who is now elected.

- Siobhan Perricone nominated Christopher Shenk. Linda Gravell offered to be Vice Chair. Siobhan Perricone withdrew her nomination of Christopher Shenk because he was absent. The Clerk cast the one ballot for Linda Gravell who is now elected.

Ideas for Accounting and Charging for Customer Drops

- Discussion: David Healy identified that there is a vast difference between where customers are in terms of the distance from their house to the pole. Drops are included in the budget, which was \$1,500/drop regardless of the distance. The design was based on 400 miles of fiber. The question is how to cope with this variation in costs.
- Jeremy Matt noted that people who live far from the road also get benefits from that, particularly privacy, so they should have to pay more.
- Linda Gravell said that more data analysis is needed. We need to know how many houses are involved and the costs of alternatives. Siobhan Perricone and Tom Fisher agreed.
- Jerry Diamantides noted another issue, which is that we are running MST, which are more like a plug and play than a splice, so we do need to know the costs. The grant money goes all the way to the house for the underserved. We have ARPA money that is not restricted in that way. If a subscriber is underserved, we could go all the way to the house; if we are passing by, we could use ARPA money, but what happens when the ARPA money runs out. All CUDs have exactly the same issue.
- Jeremy Matt noted that it would be good for us to choose a clear and rational designation. Does the grant require us to cover the costs?
- David Healy said the word used in the grant is “installation.” We need to know how this is defined.
- Jennille Smith offered to go to Rob and Ellie at VCUDA to see what the other CUDs are doing and report back.

Adopt Revised Charter for Operations and Planning Committee

- MOTION (David Healy, Second Siobhan Perricone)
To adopt the Revised charter for the Operations and Planning Committee.
 Passed unanimously.

Roundtable

- David Healy encouraged the new staff to let the Operations and Planning Committee know how we can best support you.
- Maggie Tuck-Sauer also agreed that the drop cost decision needs a formula, which best serves the people we have been tasked to serve with a clear rationale.
- Jerry Diamantides is realizing that when he puts together his agenda for the Executive Committee and the Governing Board, he doesn't really have a “roll out” update. He wants to add this item as a stand-alone.
- Jennille Smith suggested an “Operations Update.”
- Tom Fisher noted that as we get closer to having Internet at our house, my family, especially my children, are more and more excited.
- Henry Amistadi thanked everyone for the good work and hoped to be more engaged.

- Linda Gravell volunteered to step up as vice chair because she sees a lot of intertwining between construction, operations, website and marketing. Linda suggested that she talk shop with David.
- Jeremy Matt thanked Linda Gravell for all the work she did to put together the scenarios for the website.
- Jennille Smith noted she's been on board for a year and that CVFiber is at its five-year mark. She's seen incredible progress. Her Pinocchio joke is we are turning into a real boy! We have to consider employees and top line, and although we need to keep the lights on and therefore make money, we also need love and passion.
- Lucas Stubbs reiterated that he is there to answer questions so please feel free to reach out for information. He is honest about timeframes.
- Siobhan Perricone said this is her five-year mark and her town still doesn't have an alternate. She is very excited for all the work we are doing.
- David Healy noted that Ray, Jerry, Jennille and Lucas meet all the time so please bring your questions to us. David is also not unhappy about the slow down on Front Porch Forum.

Adjourned at 6:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Matt, Clerk