



## CVFIBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtually on MS Teams

August 15, 2023

### **Minutes Short Summary**

The Executive Committee delayed approval of the June 20, July 4, July 8 and August 1, 2023 minutes. Ray Pelletier reported that there are no financial report changes since the August 1, 2023 meeting. Jennille Smith reported the new Community Relations Manager starts on August 28<sup>th</sup>. Jennille Smith reviewed marketing steps taken and planned. Significant construction progress has been made in CL01 and CL02, and CVFiber is moving towards RS01 and RS02. Both Lucas Stubbs and Jennille Smith reported that CVFiber has the materials on hand needed for construction through 2023 and highlighted this success. The Executive Committee unanimously adopted additional rates for incidentals and fees.

### **Present:**

**Executive Committee Delegates:** Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Ray Pelletier (Northfield), David Healey (Calais)

**Absent:** Chuck Burt (Moretown), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield)

**Others Present:** Jennille Smith (Executive Director), Lucas Stubbs (Operations Manager), David Lawrence (Middlesex)

**Call to order:** Jerry Diamantides called the meeting to order at 5:03pm.

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

- None.

### **Public comment**

- None

### **Prior Meeting Minutes**

Approval of the June 20, July 4, July 8, and August 1, 2023 minutes was delayed as Jeremy Matt could not attend this meeting.

### **Treasurer's Report**

- Ray Pelletier reported that there are no changes since the August 1, 2023 meeting. The report is still preliminary.

### **Community Relations Manager Update**

- Jennille Smith reported the new Community Relations Manager is starting on August 28<sup>th</sup>. She is on boarding now. She will have an in-person meeting on Day One in Barre.

### **Marketing Update & Outlook**

- Jennille Smith reported that we have hired a firm to help us with CrowdFiber. A postcard went out on Thursday, so we should see an uptick in subscriptions shortly. We are gathering friendlies in RS01 and RS02. CL01 and CL02 friendlies are already assisting us with testing. We will be at the Barre Heritage Festival in September. We may attend some farmers markets. Siobhan Perricone suggested VCUDA should have a table at the Tunbridge Fair. Jennille Smith said she is planning an operations launch in Calais. The governor has the event on his calendar tentatively for September 20<sup>th</sup>. The location is still TBD.

### **Construction Update and Outlook**

- Lucas Stubbs reported that we have everything in the 2000 cabinet installed. Our friends at NRTC came, including top brass. The splicers were there, too, to do testing. We ordered the wrong length of fiber jumpers. This is minor and should be settled by tomorrow. We are now moving to the 1000 cabinet. We expect great progress by the end of the week. The electric with WEC has worked out, and we are connected. For now it is a very minimal draw. We officially have our first bill.
- Ray Pelletier said that he and Jennille Smith met with Lee earlier today and he said there might be a friendly in CL01 by the end of the week.
- Allen Gilbert asked if CL01 is the focus now for drops with CL02 to follow. Residents in RS01 have been asking if they can get service yet, but this is still on the horizon. Ray Pelletier noted that there is a backbone for RS01 and RS02 that GMP hasn't yet installed. Lucas Stubbs said this is actually a WEC permit, which we do have, but we need some tree trimming, which is minor; WEC is aware. Our power is run from Rumney School, but we are not yet tied in. Once the cabinet is there, we are ready. Ray Pelletier concluded that we might see friendlies for these areas by the third week in September.
- Jerry Diamantides noted that we work with NRTC every week to determine where construction is going to take place. Allen Gilbert pointed out that on the Elmore Road, there are only nine houses. Allen Gilbert knows these people, and he doubts CVFiber will get customers there. Lucas Stubbs said that continuing there has gotten more reasonable. Jerry Diamantides also noted that Starlink doesn't count as having service.
- David Lawrence said that he also has Starlink, and it has improved, but he is still looking forward to having CVFiber.

### **Materials and Warehousing**

- Jennille Smith reported that they are working closely with Graybar, who is giving CVFiber a good deal. We are also working with the warehouse on audit support to prepare for quarterlies and year-end. It is still in the works to donate our reels to goats. We are looking at non-goat-related ways to dispose of used reels. We hope to recycle and reuse as much as possible to reduce waste.

- Lucas Stubbs added that he was at the warehouse today and we are not waiting for any materials to come in and not running short of anything we need for the rest of the year.
- Both Jennille Smith and Lucas Stubbs highlighted that CVFiber has what is needed for construction for this year, and this is a huge success, especially given all the supply chain issues.

### **Fees and Incidentals**

- Jennille Smith explained that CVFiber has passed our subscription rates for customers, including Internet and telephone, but as we get into operations, we find we might be able to offer other services. If we offer telephone, could we offer batteries with or without service plans to replace the batteries. Another option is “Wi-Fi everywhere.” We also talked about seasonals and what we will need for reconnects. While Internet can be paused, Waitsfield will not pause telephone service. Telephone and Internet can be separate lines. Telephones take priority for emergency purposes.
- Jerry Diamantides noted that none of us were in the Internet business prior to our involvement in CVFiber. We are following Waitsfield’s lead because they are our experienced partners. Jerry Diamantides added that our pricing is in line with others in the business. Allen Gilbert noted that Consolidated has raised their rates again, so he thinks that CVFiber will offer both superior phone service as well as Internet service.
- David Healy noted that only 16% are taking phone service; Ray Pelletier said that we only expected 15%, so this is a success.
- **MOTION** (Ray Pelletier, Second Siobhan Perricone)

**Whereas CVFiber has developed pricing for its subscriptions and add-ons** and those rates and charges have been previously approved, and

**Whereas** additional offerings have been identified in discussions with CVFiber's operator Waitsfield & Champlain Valley Telecom, and

**Whereas** WCVT charges negotiated rates to CVFiber under an operating agreement, and

**Whereas** services and offerings continue to be determined in the best interests of the network and its customers as CVFiber becomes operational;

**It is moved that the Executive Committee adopt** the following additional negotiated costs and policies

- (1) Wi-Fi everywhere at a cost of \$6/mo. per extender or \$99 per extender to buy with the number and type of extenders to be subject to site assessment;
  - (2) Standard backup battery for voice service at a cost of \$100 to purchase and \$10/Mo optional service plan which comes with a replacement battery as needed;
  - (3) Reconnect fee of \$50 for seasonal customers and non-payments requiring reconnection;
  - (4) Voice service will not be seasonally paused, and
  - (5) The billing practice is to apply partial payments first to telephone and then to Internet.
- Passed unanimously.

### **Adjourn at 5:37pm**

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeremy Matt, Clerk