



CVFIBER GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Virtually on MS Teams
September 12, 2023

Minutes Short Summary

Jennille Smith introduced Olivia Kantyka, the recently hired Community Relations Manager. Approval of the August 8, 2023 meeting minutes was delayed. Reconciled financials will be forwarded to members of the Board this evening. Four crews are in the field and splicing is happening at the same time so the speed of construction has picked up. CVFiber has ordered enough materials for 400 miles of construction and expects to be able to complete 200 miles with current funding. Jennille Smith reported that six friendlies in CL01 are operational. CVFiber has 192 subscribers, and marketing events are planned for the Barre Heritage Festival, as well as a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Calais in October. The Policy Committee has received a revised HR Policy from legal counsel, which the Committee needs to carefully review before bringing it back to the Governing Board. The Governing Board entered into Executive Session to discuss the 2024 budget.

Present:

Governing Committee Delegates:

Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Siobhan Perricone (Orange), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield), Linda Gravell (Waterbury), John Morris (Marshfield), Chuck Burt (Moretown), Ray Pelletier (Northfield), David Healy (Calais), David Lawrence (Middlesex), Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), Mike Milo (Barre Town), R.D. Eno (Cabot)

Alternate delegates:

David Mannix (Marshfield), Jon Hosford (Plainfield – Alternate), David Wendt (Duxbury - Alternate), John Russell (Worcester – Alternate)

Others Present:

Jennille Smith (Executive Director), Olivia Kantyka (Community Relations Manager), ORCA

Town Representation on 9-12-2023 (13/21 towns represented)				
Barre City	Barre Town	Berlin	Cabot	Calais
Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present
Duxbury	East Montpelier	Elmore (left)	Marshfield	Middlesex
Present	Absent	Absent	Present	Present
Montpelier	Moretown	Northfield	Orange	Plainfield
Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present
Roxbury	Waterbury	Washington	Williamstown	Woodbury
Absent	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent
Worcester				
Present				

Call to order: Board chair, Jerry Diamantides, called the meeting to order at 6:01PM

Additions or changes to the agenda

- None

Public Comments

- None

Introduction of Community Relations Manager

- Jennille Smith introduced Olivia Kantyka, the recently hired CVFiber Community Relations Manager. Olivia shared a brief overview of her background.

Meeting Minutes Approval

- The DRAFT minutes were not available until shortly before the meeting, so approval was delayed until the next meeting.

Treasurer's Report

- Ray Pelletier said that the reconciled financials came in today, so members of the Board will have these later in the evening.

Construction Update and Outlook

- Jennille Smith reported that CVFiber has four crews in the field and splicing is happening simultaneously which means we are working much more quickly.

Materials & Warehousing

- CVFiber has ordered most of the 400 miles of materials needed for this season and next season. Warehousing is going well despite the floods. We did not have any damage. Our fiber will also be well protected over the winter.

- Jeremy Matt asked if we also have funds for construction and Jennille Smith said CVFiber has enough for 2023. Jerry Diamantides said that we do not have sufficient funds for 400 miles, but only for about 200 miles.

Operations Update and Outlook

- Jennille Smith reported that CVFiber is operational with six happy friendlies connected in CL01. Once the network is tested, more subscribers can be signed up and connected.

Marketing Update and Outlook

- Jennille Smith reported that we have 192 sign ups for packages as of today.
- Olivia Kantyka read positive testimonials from our first friendlies. For CL02, letters to friendlies have been sent out. Our messaging does need more clarity, particularly our website home page. We are also integrating with SmartHub so we can take payments.
- Chuck Burt referred to Jerry Diamantides' comment that CVFiber is moving from a volunteer organization to a business. Olivia Kantyka is making great strides. She explained that SmartHub is a payment system, which some customers may already use for their utility bills. Jeremy Matt noted that WEC also uses this system.
- Allen Gilbert said SmartHub works well.
- Olivia Kantyka reported that CVFiber will be at the Barre Heritage Festival on September 22 and 23rd. Volunteers have already stepped up but more are needed. This will be more informational.
- John Morris noted that on September 30, there will be a cheese festival in Cabot, which CVFiber may wish to attend for brand recognition.
- Olivia Kantyka also said a ribbon-cutting event is planned for Calais in October as a celebration with media contacts, congressional delegates, and CVFiber members. We want the Calais town hall to be lit so attendees can sign up at the event, so we need to be sure this has happened before we set a date.
- Olivia Kantyka also wants to strategically place materials for CVFiber to increase brand awareness.

HR Policy Update

- Allen Gilbert reported that legal counsel has reviewed the HR Policy, and transformed our 13-page document into a 34-page document. The Policy Committee has had a special meeting to review the new policy and plan a second special meeting to continue this review. We plan to present this piecemeal to the Executive Committee, but we want to have the entire document ready before we bring it to the Governing Board, which may be in October or November.
- Siobhan Perricone noted that the Policy Committee meetings are open and she encourages all who are interested to attend.

2024 Budget Discussion

- Jerry Diamantides reported that CVFiber has a funding gap. As a result, we want the 2024 budget to be as accurate as possible. We also want to maintain construction through 2024 despite the likely lack of grant funding.

- Ray Pelletier said that in October the Board will approve a budget, which will be sent to the 20 towns for feedback, and in November there will be a budget hearing. The budget will be approved in December. At that point, there should be more information available. For the last five years we have been an incubator but now we are becoming operational. The business will be taking on the operational aspects, but the Board will still be handling governance. Our budget is also aspirational in the sense that we hope we can get a funding stream to continue construction.
- MOTION (Ray Pelletier, second Jeremy Matt)
Move that we enter executive session to discuss records that are confidential pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(6), specifically Budget, Strategic Plans & Funding that relate to our strategic planning and invite into executive session all staff, delegates, alternates, and the Treasurer IAW 1 V.S.A. § 313(b). Passed unanimously. No discussion.
 - Enter: 6:37
 - Exit: 7:19
- No action came out of executive session.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:19PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeremy Matt, Clerk