



CVFIBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtually on MS Teams

January 16, 2024

Minutes Short Summary

The Executive Committee delayed approval of prior meeting minutes. Jennille Smith reported that 3 line and 2 service drop installation crews have been working this week, which is one more than last week. Jennille Smith reported on conversations with NEK broadband about sharing warehousing and scope of work. Jennille Smith reported that installations are the main construction focus and that Waitsfield has agreed to increase installations to 15-20/week. Olivia Kantyka reported that her role is transforming from branding to ensuring customers are satisfied with CVFiber's customer service. David Mannix reported that the Finance Committee is creating a short list for the Executive Committee each month with eight matrices to review based on the 2024 plan. Jennille Smith reported that she has started working with the Finance Manager on the expanded scope of work. Jennille Smith reported that there will be two levels of HR training, one for management, and one for all board members.

Executive Committee Members:

Present:

Allen Gilbert (Worcester), David Healey (Calais), Chuck Burt (Moretown), Jeremy Matt (Plainfield), Siobhan Perricone (Chair, Orange), Jerry Diamantides (Berlin), David Mannix (Marshfield Alternate), John Reid (Woodbury)

Others Present: Jennille Smith (Executive Director), Olivia Kantyka (Community Relations Manager), Lucas Stubbs (Operations Manager), Sybil Schlesinger (Note taker; Moretown Alternate), David Lawrence (Middlesex), Tom Fisher (East Montpelier)

Call to order: Siobhan Perricone called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

Additions to the agenda:

- None

Public comment

- None

Prior Meeting Minutes

- Approval of prior meeting minutes was delayed.

Construction Update & Outlook

- Jennille Smith reported that 3 line and 2 service drop installation crews have been working this week, which is one more than last week. NBI is pushing to schedule in-person meetings with Hardwick Electric to get more miles in CL03. Siobhan Perricone asked if having RS01 and RS02 testing complete will help speed the rate at which we will complete installs. Lucas Stubbs agreed that this will likely help. CVFiber is live in CL02.
- David Mannix asked about meeting the goal plan for 27 miles in January. Jennille Smith said as of 1/11, RS02 was complete and there was one mile remaining in CL01, two miles in CL02, three miles in RS02 and 43 miles remaining in CL03. Construction in CL03 is being slowed due to difficulties getting responses from Hardwick Electric. Jennille Smith agreed that her future reports would compare the plan to actuals for construction.
- Tom Fisher asked if we will be doing more installations now that the cabinet in CL02 is lit. Olivia Kantyka noted that the press release for CL02 is going out tomorrow. We are staggering these releases. We also can't perform underground installations in the winter if conduit also needs to be installed. We will not be releasing any more DAs for signups until the backlog is lower. The backlog is currently 200 installations.
- Allen Gilbert asked which customers are delayed. Olivia Kantyka said that anyone who needs buried conduit, and if they need conduit pulled. Jerry Diamantides said his understanding was they could pull conduit. Lucas Stubbs noted that especially for customers who installed their own conduit, it might not be clean. David Healy installed his own conduit and his service was installed. Allen Gilbert noted that in Worcester many residents installed conduit, which was capped.
- Allen Gilbert noted that CVFiber is losing about \$4,000/week because customers who want to be connected are not being connected. At ten installations/week, CVFiber is too far behind. Jennille Smith said there were 15 last week and eight this 4-day week. She added the expectation is for 20/week.
- Jerry Diamantides noted that Waitsfield would also like to be paid. If CVFiber averages 15/week, it will take 71 weeks for a 40% take rate. This is not acceptable: once DAs are open, installations need to be completed more rapidly
- Tom Fisher asked about the expense for installation, which is \$1500. David Mannix said that the plan includes installation costs. He reiterated that the conversation should be comparing the actual to planned expenditures. To overcome this challenge, CVFiber will do a review every quarter.

Materials & Warehousing

- Jennille Smith reported on conversations with NEK broadband about sharing warehousing and scope of work. We have started accounting for the materials audit. We are looking at ways to be more efficient so future materials audits as faster and cleaner. David Healy asked if the audit included the Finale database; the Finale should be close to perfect but it is not. Lucas Stubbs agreed that Finale is not accurate and will not be until after the audit, which will put CVFiber behind for ordering materials for this year.
- Jerry Diamantides asked if CVFiber knows the extent of the mismatch and is this a matter of waiting for a backlog to catch up for data input. Lucas Stubbs said when the audit is

done, this will true up the materials. Jennille Smith said this was supposed to be done in 2023.

- Siobhan Perricone asked who is updating the Finale database. Jennille responded that Straight Line Broadband is contractually obligated to keep Finale up to date. Jennille Smith made it very clear that this backlog is not the result of the reduced warehouse hours.
- Jennille Smith said there is a physical audit and then the software is updated. Lucas Stubbs said the audit date was 1/24. If materials are in the truck, they are not counted, however, and some materials are brought back in. David Mannix suggested that there might need to be a check in and check out process. David Mannix and Lucas Stubbs will continue this conversation.
- David Healy is concerned that Straight Line Broadband cannot do Finale, and he suggested that another firm be hired. Jennille Smith is talking to NEK about sharing inventory warehouse data. Lucas Stubbs said he can do Finale once the numbers are accurate.
- Jennille Smith agreed that there needs to be a dedicated inventory management system with personnel assigned.

Operations Update & Outlook

- Jennille Smith reported that installations are the main construction focus and that Waitsfield has agreed to increase the number of installs to 15 per week. Ideally, we hope to get to thirty/week. Lucas Stubbs would like to wait to review this until there has been a full week of work.
- Tom Fisher asked if thirty/week would be too aggressive.
- Olivia Kantyka noted that the 200 installation backlog only covers CL01 and CL02. As the other DAs open up, there will be more installations needed.

Marketing Update & Outlook

- Olivia Kantyka reported that her role is transforming from branding to making sure customers are satisfied with our customer service. A customer service survey has gone out with a 40% response. At this point, all customers say they prefer CVFiber. Some customers have said they have not gotten a quick response from Waitsfield, and we are moving to improve this.
- Olivia Kantyka is also at work on a statement of value with the Policy Committee. The install costs in excess of our standard \$99 install fee have confused some customers, so we are working on clarifying these costs. Olivia Kantyka will meet weekly with NEK's newly hired Community Relations Manager. CUDs are promoting the same goals, so we want to work together.
- Tom Fisher asked if Olivia Kantyka was talking about the residential page and the 2,500 foot standard. The distributive split system is harder to explain to customers. We need to make clear the reasons for additional charges above the \$99 installation charge. We are working on this with Waitsfield. Lucas Stubbs said the measure is from where CVFiber has strung the fiber.
- Jennille Smith said this is on the top of the list. We want to write clearly for the customer first, and then we can develop the policy. Olivia Kantyka added that she wants it to be clear why CVFiber is charging the way we are.

- Jerry Diamantides pointed out that personally CVFiber should make every effort to minimize installation costs for the customer.
- Tom Fisher noted that the average costs are not going to be \$99 so there is an equity issue.

Finance Update

- David Mannix reported that Thursday the Finance Committee will review the 2024 plan, which was loaded into QuickBooks. We will develop a short list for the Executive Committee each month with eight matrices to review based on the plan.
- We are also looking at developing a forecast for 2025 to get a better look at timing for new revenues for loans and grants. We are following our cash burn rate.

Finance Manager Contract Update

- Jennille Smith reported that she has started working with the Finance Manager on the expanded scope of work. Forecasting is number one and planning for 2025 generally. The offer has been extended and the work has begun.

HR Training

- Jennille Smith reported that there will be two levels of HR training. The more in-depth training for people in management roles (staff and Committee Chairs) is scheduled for the morning (8:30am-12:30pm) of 2/23 with HR Happens (as Clerk, Jeremy Matt is not required to attend but may if he chooses to do so). All relevant guests should have gotten the invitation. The second training is going to be a remote webinar for all other primary and alternate Governing Board delegates. We are working on adding a password-protected FAQ and dashboard to the website where Board members can access this information.
- Chuck Burt noted that WordPress doesn't provide true security, so care should be taken about what is posted even if it is password protected. Chuck Burt also noted there should also be a security audit for the website annually.

Adjourn at 6:57pm

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Siobhan Perricone.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Matt, Clerk