

NEK Community Broadband

# Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2020 3-4:30pm

**Attendees: Michael Strait, William Piper, Kristen Fountain, Evan Carlson, Noah Armstrong, Jonathan Baker, Jami Jones (clerk), Christine Hallquist (Administrator), Nicolas Anzalone**

Agenda Review- 2 min

Updates-

## **Administrative Update**

- Grant application approved.
- Would like to put Christine and Jami on the bank account and leave Christine as treasurer. NEK is looking for a new treasurer (via David Tucker). It is best practice that we have a separate treasurer and administrator.
- Kristen is willing to be the treasurer for the finance committee if someone else would be willing to be the chair (to be decided at the next meeting).
- Christine is scheduling a communications committee meeting.
- It is important that the Communications Committee has a charter.

## **Tech Committee Update**

- Christine gave a presentation about fiber.
- It is important for the tech committee to be the advisors for the board.
- The executive committee would like to see some information about 5G, Starlink, Althea (jock gill).

## **Finance Committee Update**

## **Meeting Round-Up**

Old Business-

- Tilson Proposal Vote-

- Christine talked with Andrew Spurgeon to increase the take rates in exchange for assets (fiber miles).
- Added the Danville route and Lunenburg routes to the plan
- Christine proposes a review at 5 years and not 10 year IRU.
- As the grant stands, it is to connect 10 addresses and Tilson will connect more as they gain revenue.
- There is a discrepancy between the value that we are offering and what they perceive the value of what we are offering to be. NEK is offering infrastructure and Tilson thinks the cost to themselves will be higher.
- The deadline to sign the grant proposal is this week.
- Question to the Executive Committee: What can we recommend to the governing board?
- We can recommend this deal without the aspect of future cooperation.
- Other things we could negotiate for: split the margin after 40% take rate (in the form of additional strand miles)
- Would like move forward with this Tilson project pending the Monday meeting to get more clarity on the strand miles
- We do not want the CUD to take up the risk for damage of non-performance.
- The changes that we are requesting: not taking risk for damage for non-performance, fiber miles in exchange for building infrastructure, a 5 year IRU agreement with the option to renegotiate instead of the 10 year IRU.
- **Motion to approve the Tilson agreement with the changes that Christa and Christine are working to get implemented. Motion: Kristen, Second: William, Carried (6-0)**
- Kingdom Fiber Update
  - Door hangers have been given, and postcards have been sent with the exception of Craftsbury.
  - We have about 12 people signed. Our target is to sign up 15 in October and November with the rest of the 100 in December.
  - Christine has talked with Michael Birnbaum about making phone calls to the addresses that are not in Craftsbury to get the word out more effectively
  - A question was raised that if the businesses and town offices would be included in this deal.
  - Future recommendation to include monthly rates on advertising/marketing stationary.
- Northern Enterprise Update
  - Currently waiting on signing the MOU.

- Need to communicate with Dave Senedecker for the last board seat. He is to appoint someone to sit on the board from the NVDA.
- Northern Enterprise will need to change their bylaws for quorum numbers.

## New Business-

- Public Hearing Agenda Review
  - Evan will be giving talking points, Christine will present the financial reports and then time for public comment
  - Who needs to attend the public hearing: The board members are not necessarily required to be there
  - The statute: the meeting would be coincident with the regular board meeting.
- Governing Board Meeting Agenda
  - A lot of updates, the final tilson proposal, legislative items for next year
  - Legislative action: get a statement on the record to have the state transfer assets to us.
  - We may want the board to speak with the legislatures of the town about NEK information to lobby for NEK.
  - Discuss with the governing board talking points for communication with the legislatures.
  - Moving to quarterly meetings will require more communication and more planning. Would be accomplished more easily if more authority was given over to the Executive Committee to make decisions. Policy changes and development to support directional changes for the NEK.
  - Christine will gather more information for what kind of policies/ operational changes need to be in place.
  - Would like to give the GB an update on the steps to the acquisitions
  - Start with "where we were," to "where we are" presented to the Governing Board.
  - Katherine has decided to stay on the governing board and remove herself from the executive committee because of scheduling conflicts
  - Discussion to possibly add Michael Strait to the executive committee as a voting member
- Communications Process & CUD Role
- **Motion to recommend to the governing board that they remove Dave and Annie as signers and make Christine a signer and give Jami informational access to the account. Motioned: Kristen, Seconded: Bill, Carried (6-0)**

## Other Business

- Nic- RFP Process (marketing/logo)
  - Nic will send around a pricing sheet. For good practice we would need an RFP.

**Motion to allow Christine to develop an RFP for a branding project, Motion: Nick Anzalone Seconded: William Piper, Carried (6-0)**

## Action Items

- Between now and our next meeting the Executive committee will have talking points in preparation for the December meeting.
- Christine will reach out to Tilson for a what they can present to the Governing Board (i.e.Draft Feasibility Study)
- Evan will reach out to Paul Joulani for more clarification about quorum for the meeting
- Christine will ask Christa/Dave about who the third board member will be for Northern Enterprise.

## Adjourn

**Motion to adjourn. Motioned: William Piper, Seconded: Kristen**

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Jami Jones, NEK Community Broadband Clerk*

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