

NEK Community Broadband

Governing Board Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2021 5:30-7:00pm

Attendees (see list)

Roll Call - 3 Min

Agenda Review - 2 Minutes

Motion to change the Policy Committee conversation to be moved in advance of the business plan. Motioned: Dana Casperson, Seconded: Paul Fixx, Carried (25-0)

Public Comment - 5 Minutes

Consent Agenda - 5 Minutes

- Approval of Meeting Minutes
- FYI: Exec. Comm Minutes; Finance Comm. Minutes, Tech Comm. Minutes, Christine's weekly updates

Motion to approve Consent Agenda. Motion: Dana Casperson, Seconded: Shawn Burroughs, Carried: (25-0)

New Business-

5:45 - Administrative & Committee Updates

- We have begun the process of legislative agenda, Christine has a meeting with June Tierney. Christa will be on to discuss legislation later on.
- The mapping: it is confirmed that we can transfer files from Arc GIS through the Vermont CGI website

5:50 -Policy Discussion

- Building policies now will help the CUD more effective. We need to have a number of policies in place to streamline processes between meetings if we are to have quarterly board meetings instead of monthly.

- There are policies that got us started, but the CUD would like to have a review of the current policies as well as new policies and changes to be made.
- Examples: Ideally the selectboards would re-elect the representatives, and policy could help shape that. The Chair and Executive Committee having term limits. Operating agreements, memorandum with other CUDs
- The governing board could help to identify what sort of policies need to be in place as well as policies about how policies need to be written.
- The policies need to allow the flexibility for growth within the CUD
- Where does the policy committee and Communications committees crossover or meet? No changes will be made to the communications committee charter
- An ad hoc committee can be put together

Motion for recommendation of a policy committee and formation of an ad hoc committee to move forward on the charter. Motioned: Mike Strait, Seconded: Caro Thompson, Carried: (25-0)

- Discussion on the spending policy. Does not distinguish between agreements of spending and actual spending (i.e. contracts).

Motion to approve the Spending Policy. Motioned: Kristen Fountain, Seconded: Carrie Glessner, Carried (25-0)

6:15 - Business Plan Request for Proposal

- The Business Plan outlines how funds will be used over the next 5 years.
- Takes us from high-level to construction and fiber to the home.
- This document will be shared with banks, strategic partners and ISPs
- Christine gave a presentation on the details of the proposal.
 - The shape files will be made available on the Drive
 - Tilson has given the CUD a good start with the maps. The Business Plan builds off of the Tilson maps. The Plan starts with readjusting the construction costs that Tilson proposed.
 - NEK CUD has enough to go into construction, but at the same time the CUD would like to move forward for this year.
 - The Business Plan provides cash-neutral areas in 10 years.
 - VEDA has a \$4mil limit on what they will loan.
 - With aggressive construction we will need to go to other lending sources to be able to achieve the majority.

- We will not be able to reach every single address, but significantly more than proposed by Tilson.
- The Business Plan will also help to get the CUD grants
- The Business Plan is detailed so that the CUD gets what they want and need out of the consultants that it decides to do business with.
- Questions:
 - 5 year plan will identify areas that will be cash neutral over 10 years?
 - They will provide areas of profit after 10 years
 - If an area is within RDOF spheres of other ISPs, is there a build up within that area or is it only that ISPs domain?
 - The CUD needs to determine where the gaps are even with the RDOF funding. The ISPs may need support and there could be opportunities for collaboration with the winners of the RDOF auction.
 - There is nothing that actually prevents the CUD from building in those areas, except that we do not want to be compete with ISPs
 - RDOF participants cannot speak with the CUDs until January 29th.
 - The RFI will reach out to ISPs (Consolidated)
 - What does cooperation with ISPs look like?
 - The value that the CUD brings is community buy in and low interest capital and non-profit entities. This could especially help in less dense populated areas.
 - The CUD is unsure about what “cooperation” will be, but would like to provide affordability to the people
 - Space X
 - Space X requires radio frequency and is not possible for them to get the speeds that you would get with fiber
 - Space X may not be available in Vermont, finding the density is hard within Vermont (30 residences per 3 mile radius within the town).
 - Are we asking the potential customers what they would like while we are working on the long-term solution?
 - The CUD is looking for long-term because state offices or ISPs have looked into short-term ideas and disappointed communities.
 - The Tech Committee is looking at the interim services that we are looking into.
 - How do you see the board monitoring milestones on the parallel efforts?

- There will be a timeline reported to the board, monthly. The Executive Committee will be bi-weekly reports
- The CUD will be circulated to the providers that we proposed the feasibility study to. If the board has other recommendations, please notify the Executive Committee.

Motion to approve the distribution of the RFP of the Business Plan. Motioned: Mark Whitworth, Seconded: Jennifer Barone, Carried: (25-0)

6:25 - Communications Committee - Charter & Appointments

- The Communications Committee role is to distribute materials for public communication, and increase communication between committees and the broader Governing Board.
- The ad hoc committee has been working on the charter, and they have self-nominated to be on the actual committee. Carrie Glessner, Caro Thompson, Katherine Sims, Mike Gaiss, Nick Anzalone, Kathleen Monroe.
- Evan nominated Carrie Glessner as Chair of the Communications Committee.

Motion to approve the Communication Committee Charter as recommended by the Executive Committee. Motioned: Kristen Fountain, Seconded: Jennifer Barone, Carried: (25-0)

Motion to appoint Carrie Glessner as Chair of the Communications Committee and appoint Carrie Glessner, Caro Thompson, Katherine Sims, Mike Gaiss, Nick Anzalone, and Kathleen Monroe to the Communications Committee. Motioned: Dana Casperson, Seconded: William Piper, Carried: (25-0)

6:35 - Mapping Proposal

- We have a lot of different information, but it is hard to ingest. The Executive Committee would like to make it more digestible to the public and gain Arc GIS profiles so that we can have the information in a useful way.
- The proposal tries to address the various types of people who will be looking at the maps.
- A developer account can give the CUD the power to export and upload.
- Arc GIS account would be used for internal board use, with 5 viewer licenses.
- Brian Webster is working on getting all of the shape files in place. Christine will be putting them into a usable format on Arc GIS, and then the CUD would provide the maps through the VCIG (the state) website to the public.

- Concerns were raised about only having 5 licenses and public information could be placed on a public server.
- What is the level of confidentiality?
 - Businesses would make this confidential, but as a municipal we can give the data to the people to promote transparency. Other companies would have more data, and more sophisticated maps, so we may not have much value for the ISPs.
 - In the future, when working with businesses, we may need to keep some of it confidential, but it is not as applicable right now.
 - The Arc GIS rep recommended that we have shared licenses, the reason for 5 is if multiple people want to get onto the maps at the same time.
- Brian will be creating overlays out of all of our existing data and putting them all together and making them presentable.
- The CUD would like to build rapport with Brian so that we can have a clean set of maps as new data comes forward and need to be integrated into pre-existing files.
 - The maps will be available by the next governing board meeting
- Feedback
 - Cost: \$3610 for Brian Webster, \$1200 for the Arc GIS.
 - What happens after the maps?
 - The maps help to make more informed decisions of how we outline the CUDs network.
 - It will help us to decide what will be the best pilot projects and will be able to give them to the ISP to reduce the overall work that the ISP would have to do. We will have a more realistic idea of where to go and what to do in a couple of months.
 - The maps are a decision making tool, then we find funding, make the pole logs, etc.
 - Tilson outlined 8 project areas. If we plan on doing 5 million this year, we can select it via the areas that are within the feasibility study.
 - The overlay of maps would allow for the board to be more engaged in the process and give feedback about your area and what would work in the reps neighborhoods.
 - A & R maps, would it be compatible?
 - It should be very similar

Motion for Christine to contract with Brian Webster to complete the proposed mapping project and purchase the proposed Arc GIS license. Motioned: Mark Whitworth, Seconded: Carrie Glessner, Carried (25-0)

6:45 - VT Legislative Discussion w/ Christa Shute

- We have been having conversations with Christa about the EDA, Northern Enterprise assets and legislation.
 - Trying to get changes made in the scope of the CUDs being informed on changes or advancements made within their area,
 - to get some opinion or guidance around protecting sensitive business information,
 - obtaining and honing existing assets i.e. Vermont Fiber.
 - building development capacity through grant funding and resources taking into account the conditions of each CUD (high-level about the formula as the formula will change based on what the grants are supposed to fund.
 - Involvement from the CUDs to help ensure accountability and open access.
 - Borrowing capacity issues (\$4mil) increasing to \$35-38
 - Figure out ways to facilitate make-ready funds
 - The importance of broadband connectivity in the state government as its own office, reporting to the governor and having an advisory board.
- The legislature as a whole sees broadband as an issue for this session, and seeing the CUDs as a part of the solution. There was receptivity to their technology committee from our CUD.
- Integrating the Northern Enterprise Fiber would give us a good start in terms of a network.
- How do we put in place incentives so that other entities in the sphere will cooperate with the CUDs?
- These points can help smooth the way for the legislature. The CARES funding may help, but also there may be a need for state funding.
- The CUD needs to present a solid plan to the legislation.
- We are proposing a hybrid between the VTA and the CUDS, creating accountability while also creating a state-level office for strategy.
- Can coordinate () to help the CUDs
- The representatives are the key to this legislation, and that is how we can provide accountability within the towns to the legislation
- Questions

Other Business-

reappointments of representatives need to be discussed with town selectboards before the next Governing Board meeting.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. Motioned: Jennifer Barone, Seconded: Mark Whitworth (25-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Jami Jones, NEK Community Broadband Clerk

NEK COMMUNITY BROADBAND GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

OTHER MEETING ATTENDEES

Town	Delegate	P	v	Alternate	P	V	Alternate	P	V
Albany	Kristen Fountain	x	x	Robert DeWees			Jeremy Wintersteen		
Barnet	Kathleen Monroe	x	x	Charlie McAlpine			Carolyn Holliday		
Barton	Philip Roberts								
Brighton	Michael Strait	x	x						
Brownington	Calvin Page	x	x	William Davis	x				
Burke	Jennifer Barone	x	x	Todd Vendituoli	x				
Concord	William Humphrey								
Coventry	David Barlow			Phil Marquette					
Craftsbury	Katherine Sims			Rudy Chase	x	x	Brian Machesky		
Danville	Jonathan Baker	x	x	Sean Franson					
East Haven	Lyonel Tracy			Francie Loynd			Kerri Fillion		
Glover	Noah Armstrong	x	x	Shaun Campbell					
Greensboro	Carol Fairbank	x	x	Mary Metcalf					
Groton	Mike Gaiss	x	x						
Hardwick	Paul Fixx	x	x	Doug McClure					
Irasburg									
Kirby	Dana Caspersen	x	x	Malcolm Doak	x				
Lowell	Marjorie Kramer	x	x	Faye Starr					
Lyndon	Shawn Tester	x	x	Marty Feltus	x				
Newark	Mark Whitworth	x	x	Jean Paul Calderone					
Peacham	Jock Gill	x	x	Jim Barlow					
Ryegate	Shaun Burroughs	x	x	Nelson Elder					
Saint Johnsbury	Nick Anzalone	x	x	Bobbie Wagner			Keith Whitmore		
Sheffield	Anne McLean			Carolyn Crankshaw					
Stannard	Steve Pickard			Joanna Polsenberg					
Sutton	Evan Carlson	x	x	David Tucker	x				
Walden	Caro Thompson	x	x						
Waterford	Bill Piper	x	x	Gary Allard			Fred Saar		
Westfield	Carrie Glessner	x	x	Laura Emery					
Westmore	Erik Townsend	x	x	Linda Michniewicz			Ray Lanier	x	
Wolcott	Michael Davidson	x	x	Bruce Wheeler	x				
Wheelock	David Stahler	x	x	Tyler Harter					
Administrator (non-voting)	Christine Hallquist	x							
Clerk (non-voting)	Jami Jones	x							

scott campbell
woodman page
wendy matthews

Delegates P/V	24	24	Member Towns	32
Alternates P/V	8	1	Towns Represented	25
Votes total	25		Quorum	Yes
Votes to pass	13			