

## NEK Community Broadband

# Governing Board Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2021 5:30-7pm

**Attendees: See list**

### Role Call & Agenda Review - 2 Min

No changes to the agenda were made

### Public Comment - 5 Min

No public comment was made

### Consent Agenda - 2 Min

- Approval of Meeting Minutes
- FYI: Committee Minutes, Administrator updates.

**Motion to approve Consent Agenda, Motioned: Dana Casperson, Seconded: Kathleen Monroe, Carried: (33-0)**

- Correction to the minutes (6/4/2021) for clarity of purpose describing the time of Executive Session. The subject of the Executive Session on 6/4 was to review the Business Plan.
- ARPA doc suggestion: letterhead, non editable format.
  - Update: is no longer editable.
  - Communications committee is discussing the process for which communication will be put out in the future.
- Suggestion for branding on documents to make them look cohesive across the CUD

### Updates

5:45 - Administrative & Committee Update Discussion

5:50 - Updates from District Administrator

- Currently moving forward with the Waterford/Concord project.
- Questions on how to communicate the ARPA funds.
  - Some information put out by VLCT, but NEK has not decided on how to communicate about the ARPA funds. Discussion is continuing.
  - It is not yet clear how/when the funds will be distributed.
- Communications committee will be developing talking points around the business plan as well.
- The Executive Committee will also take steps to communicate to the towns and selectboards about the ARPA funding and the business plan.

- Would be helpful for some reps to know about what information they can share and what questions should be sent to the Executive Committee.

## New Business

### 6:00 - Legislative & Funding Update

- H360
  - Covid has created opportunities in federal funding to accelerate the work that the NEK CUD wanted to do anyway.
  - Thanks to the ARPA funds and potential future funds we have access to larger buckets than we would have been able to have before. Opened up opportunities in the business plan.
  - Total allocation for VT ARPA: \$1.3 Billion
  - County level gov.- funds are being funneled to the towns, as VT has no county governments.
  - Legislative session was used to figure out how to best use the dollars from federal to advance the future of VT.
  - \$150 Mil to build out broadband for unserved and underserved. Preconstruction, Network Construction, CUDs, private providers, and towns who are not a part of CUDs.
  - \$20-25 Mil is going out through DPS this year, the rest from Vermont Broadband Board.
  - Possibly another federal infrastructure bill being put forth.
  - \$100 Mil has been allocated for next year, but has not been stated how it will be allocated. To be determined next year.
  - Thanks was given to those reps who reached out to the legislature.
- NEK may be eligible for \$40 Mil in the next couple of years
  - Requirements- universal service plan, contracts executed require approval through DPS.
  - This funding will get us through the first two phases.
- Questions: County money was not necessarily coming to the towns as anticipated, but will go back to the state, then to the towns?
  - The treasury has given guidance to go to the county level, but they can only utilize 75% of their organizations budget, after the money will return to the legislature and it may be 6-8 months before the money is reallocated back to the towns.
  - The authorizing language made it that utilities and broadband were important, but it is to be seen.
- Question: probability is that it will go to the towns, but could go to other municipal entities?
  - Its a possibility, but could also have the money go back to the state, and then to the towns, not necessarily directly to the CUDs.
- It will most likely be a year before the ARPA funds are concluded.

6:20 - Business Plan (Executive Session)

- The plan is firmly rooted in the NEK mission statement

**Motion to go into Executive Session under 1 VSA ss 313 to discuss the proposed business plan and confidential information with Jami Jones, Christine Hallquist, and Christa Schute.**

**Motioned: Dale Urie, Seconded: Mark Whitworth, Carried:(33-0)**

- Discussion took place about the process for notes during Executive Session.

**Motion to exit Executive Session Motioned: Katherine Sims, Seconded: Mark Whitworth, Carried: (33-0)**

No action was taken during Executive Session.

- Conversation with ValleyNet to give a 3rd party review of the business plan

**Motion to adopt the proposed business plan as recommended by the Executive Committee contingent on a third party review in understanding that this plan will and could change over time based on design and engineering. Motioned: Morgan Wade, Seconded: Mark Whitworth, Abstain: Jock Gill, Carried: (32-0-1)**

- Discussion: who has the authority to change the plan?
  - Substantive changes will be presented to the governing board, but the engineering, small changes, the executive committee will make the change. If who is getting served changes it will be brought before the governing board.

6:50 - What Is An Operator Model?

- RFP update will be coming soon. Tabling the next agenda item. The summary of models is in the packet, Evan will send out an updated version to the board.
- EC Committee is open for the GB members to join, feel free to come.

## Other Business

## Adjourn

**Motion to adjourn motioned: Noah Armstrong, Seconded Shawn tester, Carried:(33-0)**

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Jami Jones, NEK Broadband Clerk*



