

NEK Community Broadband Annual Public Hearing

November 12, 2020 - 7:00 to 8:00 pm

Attendees: See list (20)

Roll Call of Board Members - 3 Min

Introduction of Speakers - 2 Minutes

New Business - 20 Minutes

7:05 - Report of 2020 activities and 2021 plan -Evan Carlson, NEK Broadband Chair

- CUD focused on bringing affordable internet to the rural areas of the NEK. We currently have 32 towns. We hope to extend across orleans and essex. As we were closed down for pandemic, the need was highlighted for those who needed to do online schooling and working.
- March 27th CARES act, legislature began looking into how to improve the community needs. All of our governing and meetings were moved to zoom.
- April 30th CUD held an organizational meeting, establishing the Executive Committee (ppl) and the bylaws. Clerk Annie/Jami Treasurer Dave
- May 6th NEK CUD recognized by the legislature.
- Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Reports can be found on www.nekbroadband.org
- May created Finance and Tech committee
- June the NEK adopted a mission statement, (recording) operating models
- Operating model: hybrid public/private model, the CUD would not be an ISP, but would help service the fiber network.
- CUD joined with Tilson, VELCO, GMP in the RDOF auction. Signed to join VCUDA to

help inform policies across the state.

- August: Finance Committee's 2020 budget was approved. To hire Christine Hallquist as the Administrator and Jami Jones as the Clerk. Approved to connect 100 addresses with Kingdom Fiber.
- October: adopted the draft budget and annual report, approved second Connected Community with Tilson, will connect 100 address to fiber
- November: Tilson will give us a feasibility study and will move ahead with a business plan
- Next year: looking forward to getting addresses connected, building up the network and working with an ISP long-term to get others connected.

7:20 - Financial Report - Christine Hallquist - NEK Broadband Administrator and Treasurer

- This year: The majority of funding is coming from the State of Vermont through the grant processes. The bulk of the money will be spent on fiber. Low overhead expenses.
- Next year: additional fundraising for administrative and overhead costs. Will leverage our current assets and the VEDA to get a \$4mil loan. This would potentially give 1000 installations. We will have a foundational plan that will be driven by the business plan made with Tilson. The NEK will build a 3 year and a 10 year capital plan from the business plan. Other funding are other grants, a few private equity, low interest loans (cobank, cbc- funding rural telecommunication build-outs loaning 70 percent of the capital business plan). The business plan will be revised annually and will guide us for the rest of the year.

7:30 Public comment and questions

- The NEK will need multiple offices to give to all the service areas to deploy fiber, assets and people. The cost vs customers for a single central office depends on the general physical area (1000 in an urban) varying depending on the needs. The

distance that light can travel (15-19mi radius) around an office that you can capture people. The cost projected is an all in cost. We will be working with VCUDA to see what the standard needs to be set for the deployment of the fiber.

- Utility fiber: we are in discussions to work with utilities and see our missions as aligned. Green Mountain Power is interested in getting fiber to every home and business to achieve climate change goals. This sort of thinking with the utilities creates an opportunity with the CUD.
- The NEK CUD largest asset is community support. We need to be able to get the word out and receive communications to the surrounding communities. Attendees are able to go to their town planning commissions and select boards and look into what their plans are for the internet in their area. Our facebook page: www.facebook.com/nekcommunitybroadband
- Some areas of the NEK are not “underserved” but it is not a good solution for lower income addresses. There is an effort in the FCC to acknowledge that some addresses are served and some are not. The NEK CUD board may be able to bring this concern to the legislature next year.

Other Business - 5 Minutes

Public hearing ended at 7:54pm

Information on how to access the remote meeting:

- By telephone: Dial 1-929 205 6099. When prompted enter the meeting ID: 994 1554 8419.
- By computer: Join the meeting by clicking here: <https://zoom.us/j/99415548419>. You may be prompted to enter a meeting ID: 994 1554 8419.
- By smartphone, tablet, or other device: Join meeting by clicking here: <https://zoom.us/j/99415548419>.

Please review our "Informational Handout for Remote Public Meetings" below to

understand how these electronic meetings will be managed. If you wish to make a public comment but do not have the ability to comment remotely during the meeting, please email your comment(s) to the Board at board@nekbroadband.org.

To ensure smooth access, we recommend that you test your remote meeting software in advance of the meeting. **If you have difficulty accessing the meeting, please call 617-909-3408 or email board@nekbroadband.org.**

Informational Handout for Remote Public Meetings

Remote Public Meetings

All public body meetings for the NEK Community Broadband CUD will be conducted remotely via electronic means for the duration of Governor Scott's State of Emergency declaration.

Whenever feasible, the public will also be able to access and participate in the remote meetings by dialing in through telephone.

Accessing a Meeting

Please refer to each public body's notice and agenda for information on how to access a remote meeting. Please note that whether you join by telephone, computer, or device, you may be put on hold or in a waiting "room" until granted access to the meeting. You also may be muted or restricted from using any chat function until the public comment portion of the meeting.

Participation

All meetings will be conducted in accordance with the respective "Rules of Procedure" of each public body, to the extent practicable. The public body will follow its agenda and allow public attendees to participate through voice (audio) means where feasible or alternatively using any chat function during the designated public comment periods on the agenda and at other applicable times as needed.

Initially, the meeting's host/organizer will mute all participants that are not members of the public body. This is necessary to control background noise. The host/organizer will then unmute participants or allow participants to unmute themselves when invited to speak by the Chair of the public body.

Please review the following guidelines:

- The Chair will invite comment:
 - during the time designated on the agenda for public comment;

- after the public body discusses each agenda item;
 - before the public body takes action;
 - during any open public comment period, if applicable; and
 - other times as determined by the public body.
- When a participant/attendee is unmuted, they must state their name before commenting.

If the public body successfully moves to enter an executive session, the meeting's host/organizer will then place everyone that is not part of the executive session on hold or a virtual waiting "room." This will prevent attendees from hearing or participating in the meeting during the duration of the executive session. When the public body exits executive session, the host/organizer will then grant access back to the remote meeting.

When the public body adjourns the meeting, the host/organizer will end the electronic meeting by turning off/closing the remote meeting software. Attendees will be automatically disconnected.

Minutes and other public records that were part of the meeting will be made available in accordance with VT's Open Meeting and Public Records Laws.

To learn more about Remote Public Meetings and the Open Meeting Law, please visit the Secretary of State's Municipal Assistance webpage at <https://sos.vermont.gov/municipal-division/laws-resources/covid-19-response/>.

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			William?					
Burke	Jennifer Barone			Todd Vendituoli					
Concord	William Humphrey								
Coventry	David Barlow			Phil Marquette					
Craftsbury	Katherine Sims			Rudy Chase			Brian Machesky		
Danville	Jonathan Baker			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			Malcolm Doak					
Lowell	Marjorie Kramer			Faye Starr					
Lyndon	Shawn Tester			Marty Feltus	x				
Newark	Mark Whitworth	x	x	Jean Paul Calderone					
Peacham	Jock Gill			Jim Barlow					
Ryegate	Shaun Burroughs			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								
Waterford	Bill Piper			Gary Allard			Fred Saar		
Westfield	Carrie Glessner			Laura Emery					
Westmore	Erik Townsend			Linda Michniewicz					
Wolcott	Michael Davidson			Bruce Wheeler					
Wheelock	David Stahler	x	x	Tyler Harter					
Administrator (non-voting)	Christine Hallquist	x							
Clerk (non-voting)	Jami Jones	x							

Judy Lavelly
 Susan Terry
 Michael Birnbaum
 Michael Rooney
 Ray Lanier
 Patricia sears
 Barb Nolan

Delegates P/V	11	11	Member Towns	32
Alternates P/V	2	0	Towns Represented	11
Votes total	11		Quorum	No
Votes to pass	6			