

NEK Community Broadband

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2020 - 3pm - 4:30pm

Attendees: Jami Jones (clerk), Christine Hallquist (Admin), Kristen Fountain, Michael Strait (non-voting), Nick Anzalone, Evan Carlson, Noah Armstrong, William Piper, Katherine Sims (3:33pm)

Agenda Review - 2 Min

- **Motion to move January 1st meeting to the following Friday (Jan. 8th).
Motedioned: Noah, Seconded: William, Carried: (5-0)**

Updates - 25 Min

- Administrative Update
 - Go through the google docs so that people can find information successfully and have a "Table of Contents" type key to help everyone be able to find information.
 - Email from Dave Snedecker for Tilson. Continuing discussion with Tilson to get the information that the CUD has previously requested.
 - Annual Report and Budget has gone out to the town clerks and board
- Meeting Roundup
 - VEC call, GMP call, and VCUDA call.
 - May be able to have more of a conversation in VCUDA about state assets given to the CUD.
 - The meetings with the electric companies were to find out what they needed from the legislature (Tilson/GMP)
 - GMP Wants to go through PUC rather than the legislature. Looking into low-cost/no-cost pole attachment for unserved customers (anyone with 4/1 or less, and then a tiered discount).
 - GMP interested in working with us before the deal goes to the PUC

- CUD would like to have involvement from accountability to the incentives coming through the CUD.
 - VEC is not as interested.
 - Rob Fish: RDOF impacts vary around the state. Other CUDs may be working with ISPs to take some of the weight off of the CUD.
- Finance Update
 - Looking for a chair. Michael Strait volunteered. Will connect with Jami and Christine
 - **Motion to appoint Michael Strait of Brighton to be the chair of the Finance Committee. Motioned: Kristen, Seconded: William, Carried: (5-0)**
 - Continuing the process of setting up all of our finances in Quickbooks.
- Tech Committee Updates
 - Noah has forwarded technical information to Shaun B. Looking into wireless networks, 5G, and others.
 - The Technology Committee will prepare a presentation for the Executive Committee.
- Christine's Update
 - June Terney- Working to get the Electric companies to work with the CUDs for internet in the Electric Companies
 - The EDA grant is continuing to scale down (\$200K). May no longer be as useful as the CUD had wanted at first. There may be other grants that we can apply for with the EDA moving forward, just perhaps not this one.
 - There may be other solutions that the CUD needs to explore with the EDA.

New Business - 40-70Min

3:30 - Debrief Gov Board

- Gave a lot of information to the Governing Board, but may not have given them a clear direction of where and how the CUD is moving forward.
- Evan and Christine may want to do more direct communication with the board members so that they are confident in the work that is being done and going into year 2 with continued support.

- The NEK CUD is moving at a rapid pace with urgent growth. The CUD could continue to have mapping and Q&A sessions, while also trying to move forward with the overall goals and work.
- The RDOF and Tilson study could make the understanding muddled. Perhaps the overall question being: What then, is the NEK CUDs role and what are the next steps?
- The Governing Board may need to be reassured of the resource that we have received through the Tilson Feasibility study. The CUD is not nixing the data gathered, but see it as a useful resource. May be helpful to have visuals available for the Governing Board.
- The NEK CUD has a very diverse set of people. Some wanted to have more details. A monthly/quarterly governing board meeting may not be enough for those who can invest more in the CUD and may want more information or detail about what is going on.
- The CUD would like to continue to focus on NEK CUD mission and goals not individual pet projects.
- The CUD ought to come out with guidelines on policy for how board meetings, email and communications work in order to focus in on the mission and goals. While also continuing showing a “road map” forward and communication with the governing board (Ex. 5yr timeline).

3:40 - Feasibility Study, RDOF & Business Plan RFP

- Can compare the RDOF and Tilson routes. We know there are still unserved blocks. RDOF will only provide portions of the funding.
- We do not know what tech Consolidated is going to be using, fiber vs. bonded DSL
- May not be able to make decisions on business planning, but need to dissect the information to get a better overall scope.
- Would we need to hire a consultant to combine the results of the feasibility study and the RDOF results.
- Put forth more clarity from the CUD in order to receive good results that cross-reference with our goals and mission as a CUD.
- Owning infrastructure can help to give ownership to the community to leverage or be able to make decisions to help the CUD’s regions.
- Working with other consultants may be able to provide the CUD with an objective 3rd party path.
- Do we want to own middle mile fiber? The CUD may need to clarify their priorities.

- A shared level of ownership.
- Would like a clear set of shape files for the business plan.
- Brian Webster resources, Tilson, and RDOF blocks that give the CUD a lot of varied mapping assets. Perhaps someone could organize it and give it to the CUD in a format that is easy to digest.
 - With a consultant, we could have an interactive presentation for the boards to be able to intake information for end users.
- There are assets that we paid for with Tilson that need to be made usable for us.
- Ask Brian for a “work spec” and write out a full spec for him to know exactly what the CUD would like and what would be usable for the CUD and end users.

4:00 - Christine's Time review

- A discussion was held over Christine's priority list.
- Each CUD region has unique challenges or questions that may need to be addressed. Perhaps the Executive, Tech, or governing board could help field the questions from the towns.
 - Suggestion for a town outreach committee.
 - Make sure that other towns are able to join as member towns.
- Need a robust interactive way to get regular updates and give communication to the towns/region. (i.e. a town recruitment strategy)
- Need more selectboard pitches in Essex and Orleans Kristen will set up a spreadsheet and Nick, Katherine, Michael, and Evan are available to give the presentations.

4:10 - Finance Committee Appointment

4:15 - Communications committee charter review & recommendation

- The role of the committee needs to be more concise. And the document needs to be outlaid in a more common format for the charter.
- Make a recommendation for the next executive committee meeting.

Apply for direct projects.

- Katherine Sims gave a report about challenges with the VTA and DPS.

Other Business

Adjourn

- **Motion to adjourn**

Action Items

- Develop an email “board norms” policy-Nick
- 5yr plan- Nick and Katherine
- Christine will reach out to Brian Webster to develop a “work spec”
- Need more selectboard pitches in Essex and Orleans Kristen will set up a spreadsheet and Nick, Katherine, Michael, and Evan are available to give the presentations.