

NEK Community Broadband

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2021 - 3pm - 4:30pm

Attendees: Jami Jones (clerk), Michael Strait (governing board), Jonathan Baker, Kristen Fountain, Christine Hallquist (Admin), William Piper, Noah Armstrong, Nick Anzalone, Evan Carlson (3:09pm), Kevin Fitzgibbons (NRTC), Katherine Sims (4:40pm)

Agenda Review - 2 Min

Updates - 20 Min

- Action Items Check In
- Administrative Update
 - NRTC is coming at 3:30. Had a kick off meeting with them yesterday. Plan on having them come to every executive committee meeting for updates. If there are any additions to the contract to be made, send to Christine. Have received feedback on the mapping project.
 - What are the metrics to track and how are they shown on the maps?
 - Identified that the CUD needs to flush out what the key performance indicators for short-term and long-term successes and for the business plan. So that the CUD doesn't align themselves with another company with different values. The NRTC will help set measurable and achievable goals.
 - An online map where people can check connectivity for the public? Need to help the public set realistic expectations for connectivity, which means that the CUD may not give dates for individual addresses, but rather towns/streets.
 - What is the immediate work and the steps after? NRTC will give us a better idea.
- Meeting Roundup

- VEC discussion- going to offer a program similar to GMP, discounting for addresses that are unserved (4/1). The CUD could piggy back on VEC construction plans if the CUD will share the plans with them. Sent links to the shape files to NRTC, but have not worked on priorities. Will follow up when we have priorities figured out.
- Eli (from the CUD Accelerator) coming to discuss open meeting law for 30 minutes at the governing board meeting.
- Nick shared some interesting things about the CUD Accelerator on Finances. One of the things that we could do a better job of is community outreach in the form of soft sales. We may want to be more intentional about the board members pushing soft sales to gain interest from the general public in order to get more funding for the construction projects.
 - Important after we lock in an ISP partner
- The Bond market wants to see a business coming in with a debt service higher than 45% (Of all of the expenses).
 - More information in the recording.
 - Christine will take a look at the recording and perhaps contact Stan for more information.
- Should the CUD have one consistent ISP partner for the business case?
- Sample offering Memorandum was discussed.
- Finance Committee discussion on bonding and other types of debt. Mike will add it to the agenda
- Committee Updates(Comms FAQ, ad hoc Policy group, etc)
- Christine's Update

New Business - 40-70Min

3:25 - NRTC Business Plan Kickoff

- Kevin Fitzgibbons will be the point of contact for NRTC
- Member owned Co-operative 1500+ rural electric and telephone companies across the country. No debt \$2mil in capital. Goal to support the members with all of their needs with utility solutions, they see how rural communities have been made hollow promises. And, they do their best to inform and work with the communications

through various practices. Up front about costs to the members, and fill in the needs that they have, big or small.

- Participated in the RDOF auction.
- Looking at the shape files that Christine sent. Hoping to be looking at assets and the area that we are open to discussing. There seems to be a lot of opportunity to co-operate with other CUDs or with WEC. Was very interested in introducing the CUD with possible other partners.
- Question: What are the success measures of a business plan?
 - Solid idea of Capital expense: metrics, tiers, debt service, operational expenses. What infrastructure are we looking at? What are the CUDs goals
 - There is no unilateral design for a network. Planning is based on projected growth. Do not want to overbuild
 - Review the deliverables
 - Goal: to get something actionable
 - Maps, demand points, how to get them, how they will be served and by which ISP, showing what it will take to build that out, (5 yr model), crews, operational costs, laying out all of the details out of all the plans, and revenues.
 - Two pronged approach: mapping and documentation (actionable)
 - Not just what can we do in 5 years, but also across the whole NEK. Will have a very clear map that will include everyone the NEK wants to include
 - Christine will check in with VEPSA on the poles
 - Questions: How do you propose that the CUD provide accountability for the towns? How can we build measurables?
 - The CUD needs to build this year?
 - We need a strategic planning strategy, where we are building and why we are building there. We also need an actionable business plan to go to the bank
 - Associated miles, phases, and trackable progress. Will receive a propagation study for fixed wireless.

3:50 - ISP & Utility Partnership Discussion

- Need to know which ISP we would like to work with. Evan presented some ISP criteria to consider for establishing a long-term relationship with an ISP.
- The ISP would have self-evaluation and interview with the Executive Committee.

- What is a Customer Service Level agreement?
 - The ability to deliver to the end customer. (99% uptime, responsiveness, tech support needs, etc)
- Discussion was held over Kingdom Fiber and what we should ask for the potential partnership.

4:10 - State & Federal Broadband Legislation

- Katherine got the public language from Christa to the legislation. And is working very hard for the CUDs.

Other Business

Action Items

Adjourn at 5pm

*Respectfully Submitted,
Jami Jones, Clerk*