

NEK Community Broadband

Communication Committee Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2021, 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Attendees: Christa Shute (ED), Jami Jones (clerk), Caro Thompson, Carrie Glessner, Kathleen Monroe, Nick Anzalone, Sarah Lyons, Kurt Gruendling (WCVT), Bailey White (CrowdFiber/NRTC), Roger Nishi (WCVT), Lee Willette (Mission Broadband), Jim Lavoie (WCVT), Curtis Strole (NRTC), Alana Pilkington

Not present: Jonathan Baker

- Review and Approve Minutes from [9 07 21](#)
- **Motion to approve the minutes from 9-7-21. Motioned: Kathleen, Seconded: Nick, Carried:(4-0).**

Presentation about CrowdFiber -½ to ½ hour

The purpose is to become familiar with how Crowd Fiber works as a tool for signing up customers and what we will need to do to be successful. The committee members will need to leave before the end of the presentation to attend to our agenda.

- Introductions given.
- Crowd Fiber is a mapping tool supported by NRTC to work with and amass support from the community. It works with the people to understand the needs and communicate the company's transparency to the community.
- Christa- can you support transparency in differing areas?
 - Bailey - yes.
- An example was given of the sort of site maps that can be made customer facing.
 - Admin may review and change settings to make them customer-facing from the back-end site editor.
- Can also run a message board, where the CUD can answer and moderate conversations. The system also has the ability to see who has signed up for peer-to-peer marketing. The person signing up and the CUD has the option for their involvement to be made public or private.
- Caro- We have just started redesigning the website, how do we pick what to use, pricing and also give it to the vendor who is doing the redesign.
 - Bailey- The address widget can be placed in the site, it is a line of code that you can embed. The system locates where the residence is, so they may confirm their location.
- Caro- Are the tools all widgets?
 - Bailey- the widget is the best way to go. The tool can also help track where

the high-demand areas are by surveying people ahead of time.

- Christa- The widget is connected to the construction management, therefore real-time development and completely up-to-date information
- Sarah- What is the elevator speech?
- Crowd Fiber is a way to handle inquiries in an intelligent and automated way. The construction areas can be uploaded, and the CUD can decide what sort of workflow a resident can go through within the designated areas. It can show products and promos, but does not have to. It is important to balance excitement and reality (managing expectations). The tool also has the ability to build a “waiting list.” The tool also has the option to choose multiple crowd fiber sites depending on who the CUD is working with (such as Waitsfield, GMP, WEC, etc).
- Nick- We are facing a website redesign and do not have a lot of money, what is the spectrum of options that you offer, what is the integration with wordpress, and what is the pricing?
 - Bailey- CrowdFiber can give you everything from a widget to a full website.
- Nick- What is the framework?
 - Bailey- There are different themes to choose from, quick and easy to get started.
- Nick- it is a custom CMS that you have used?
 - Bailey- uses liquid templates, not a lot of training needed.
- Caro- how do we start using it?
 - Bailey- Crowd Fiber would assign someone to the CUD to communicate with us and teach someone in the CUD to use the CrowdFiber tools/site/ and how to navigate (all of the things)
- Christa- how does the pricing work?
 - Bailey- a few tiers of service based on features and how many passings there are. Covers use of system as well as support. The buckets are large.
- Sarah- The widget in the WP website, what is the experience of a potential customer?
 - Bailey- The widget goes to a subdomain, and it would be seamless, they can go right back to the previous screens, but no menu navigation from the previous site. When they are finished, it could return them back to the website, as well as potentially an automated “Welcome” email.
- Caro- What is the next assignment for the Comms committee?
 - Christa will gather more information.
- Christa- how will they get to billing?
 - Kurt- it would be a different link. Crowd Fiber is a stand alone system that can be integrated into the website and allows you to have consistent communication with your customers as you start to build out.
- Bailey- Whenever you draw or upload an area that you will be serving, CrowdFiber locates them to be able to send them mail. As people interact with the site, they can input email. Facebook and other social media platforms are also integrated into the CrowdFiber sites. Bill pay can be linked in an app off the website.

- Nick left the group at 4:45pm
- Questions after presentation:
- Carrie- What is the actual pricing? Will it be cost effective for the CUD?
- Sarah- Who are the competitors? Is anyone else in VT using this? Concerned with how to integrate it.
 - Jami- it is a possibility for the link to open a new window.
 - Sarah- the possibility of a "skin" that could still navigate the website.
- Caro- Christa has been enthusiastic about CrowdFiber, are they a part of the NRTC?
- Carrie- are they supporting those tools? Or how much work would the committee have to continually do?
- Sarah- Valuable for gathering information and advertising/marketing purposes.
- Caro- has confidence in Christa's due diligence and working with other companies, such as Waitsfield in their depth of experience.
- Caro will compile the questions for Crowd Fiber, send them for additions to the committee, and forward them to Christa.

Moving forward with Stride:

- There were additional questions that Jonathan put in the spreadsheet. There is a question of integration with the site and Crowd Fiber.
- There will need to be a subgroup to orchestrate/manage the interactions with Stride (program management role) of deadlines, and examples given. The group would create the questions and review the work.
- Sarah- when is the deadline?
 - Caro- the basics need to be completed in the next couple of months for interest in registration of service. The subgroup can order the steps of the webdesign.
- Mike Gaiss will be stepping off of the committee. Willing to be available, but cannot be a part of a subgroup.
- Sarah is willing to be a part of a subgroup, Jonathan Baker is also willing (non-business hours)

Sarah left at 5:05pm

- Caro- who else can we add to the subcommittee?
 - Caro will ask what the Executive Committee's expectations are for the subcommittee and if anyone from the Executive Committee would like to be a part of the meetings with Stride.
- Kathleen- does Stride and CrowdFiber need to work together?
 - Caro- The platform seems pretty user friendly.
 - Carrie- the widgets should be compatible with wordpress and the maps are supported by CrowdFiber.

Administrative

- Committee leadership structure, meeting frequency and work plan groups - Caro 10 minutes
 - The committee will continue to meet every two weeks to push through the website development project.

Old Business

- Logo & Website development next steps - create small working group, determine sequence of the process -
 - Before next meeting, please review two telecom websites on the spreadsheet that will be made available after today's meeting. Our discussion about these points will provide a beginning of creating key points to make with the vendor.
 - CV Fiber <https://cvfiber.net/>, <https://www.maplebroadband.net/>
 - List five things you like about each home page.
 - List any other elements you find easy to navigate or like for other reasons.
- The Committee will review the content above to be discussed at the next meeting. Caro will email the content to the committee.

New Business

- New Shared Drive Structure - tabled for another meeting
- Items needed for the next agenda? - Caro - 5 minutes

Adjourn

*Respectfully Submitted,
Jami Jones, NEK Broadband, Clerk*