

Vermont Community Broadband Board Meeting Monday, December 11th, 2023, 12:00pm – 4:00pm

Draft Minutes

I. Meeting Call to Order, Roll Call, & Approval of Agenda

Patty Richards called the meeting to order at 12:04 and completed roll call.

- Patty Richards, Chair (Remote)
- Laura Sibilia (Remote)
- Holly Groschner (Remote)
- Dan Nelson (Remote)
- Brian Otley (Remote) arrived late.
- Christine Hallquist - Staff (Remote)
- Robert Fish – Staff (Remote)
- Toni Clithero – Staff (Remote)
- Herryyn Herzog – Staff (Remote)
- Chance Payette – Staff (Remote)
- Alexei Monsarrat– Staff (Remote)
- Kristin Brynga– Staff (Remote)

Patty Richards made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Dan, with the following changes due to time constraints: Items 7, 8, and 9 after item 4. Discussion by the Board of items to include in next month's meeting such as update on financial, programmatic and onsite inspection procedures from staff, also would like to see clarification as to how pole attaching entities cooperate and coordinate under Rule 3.700 *The motion to approve the agenda with changes as follows: moving items 7, 8, and 9 behind item 4, and other items for next month with a clarification on item 11. Unanimously approved by Patty, Laura, Holly, and Dan.*

II. Public Comment

Ellie de Villiers commented on the need for Accountability and looking at responsibility as well to ensure Act 71 requirements for consumer protection. Affordability provides a specific challenge for CUDs but should be thought of as a Vermont problem with ACP in doubt and nearly 30% of Vermonters cannot afford internet.

III. Approval of Minutes (September 11th, November 13th, November 21st Meeting minutes)

Patty made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 11th, seconded by Laura. No further discussion. *Unanimously approved by Patty, Holly, Laura and Dan.*

Patty made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 13th, seconded by Holly. No further discussion. *Unanimously approved by Patty, Holly, Laura and Dan.*

Patty made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 21st, seconded by Holly. No further discussion. *Unanimously approved by Patty, Holly, Laura and Dan.*

IV. Town Match

Rob Fish presented information to the Board on the ARPA Town match Program for Broadband. Discussion on what the motion would need to look like. *Holly made the motion to allocate construction grant funds from our ARPA program to match each of the municipal ARPA allocations for broadband in the amounts as follows, pursuant to conditions placed on the match by each town : Chittenden County CUD (\$50,000), CVFiber (\$863,000), DVFiber (\$217,852), Waitsfield Champlain Valley Telecom (\$243,830), Lamoille FiberNet (\$225,900), Maple Broadband (\$415,000) and NEK*

Broadband (\$816,334), further subject to amendments of each Grantee's Construction Grant agreement that contains the conditions placed on the funding by the municipality in making that ARPA fund allocation. Seconded by Dan. Further discussion included ensuring matching funds would have accountability for the funding. All 57 towns have sent a letter of agreement and the specific details of each letter will be contained in the Construction Grant agreements. *Unanimously approved by Patty, Laura, Holly, and Dan. Brian abstained due to not having been present for the entire conversation.*

V. Digital Equity Plan Review

The item was not discussed and should be moved to the next meeting.

VI. Legislative Priorities including Restoration of Funding include Letters to Committee

This discussion item was moved to after item #10 due to time constraints. *Patty made a motion to enter Executive Session with the Board and all VCBB staff at 3:17, Seconded by Holly, No further discussion. The Board returned from Executive session at 3:44. No action was taken by the Board.*

VII. Contract matters

Patty made a motion to enter Executive Session with the Board, Christine, and Toni at *Seconded by Holly at 12:45, No further discussion. The Board returned from Executive session at 1:36.*

Patty made a motion that the Board is requiring from staff reports from the CUDs on a monthly basis with key parameters and the development of the key parameters that would be sensitive to confidential information, Seconded by Holly. Unanimously approved by Patty, Laura, Holly, Brian, and Dan.

VIII. Otter Creek Update

The item was not discussed and should be moved to the next meeting.

IX. DV Fiber Update

Patty made a motion to enter Executive Session with the Board, staff including Christine, Toni, Alexei and DV Fiber staff at 1:40. No further discussion. The Board returned from Executive session at 3:13. No action was taken by the Board.

X. Board approval of the process for approval of working group policy's drafts

This was discussed after Item 9 due to time constraints. *Patty made a motion to approve this process as submitted in the board packet, seconded by Laura. No further discussion. Unanimously approved by Patty, Laura, Holly, and Brian.*

XI. Rule 3.700 (Make Ready) – Including GMP underground challenges

The item was not discussed and should be moved to the next meeting.

XII. Budget Presentation

The item was not discussed and should be moved to the next meeting.

XIII. VCUDA Updates

This item was moved after item #6.

Rob Vietzke commented on all of the successes for the year around the state. He thanked everyone for their support on the SPICES grant, support of make ready, policy work that has been completed and shared financial services. VCUDAs Legislative agenda looks a lot like the staff shared Priorities in the Board packet with a couple nuances. As we contemplate the timeline

through the holiday season, the challenge process and the pre-application. Hoping for as much time as possible, and having the timeline reflect the application period. Having the application templates out as soon as possible. Have started to review the Digital Equity Plan and will refile public comments on Policy drafts once published and mentioned the current draft for comment is missing the reference.

The board asked to ensure all policy drafts are circulated to the Board and the public. Staff will send links to the Board for the website location containing Board Policy.

XIV. Public Comment

No public comments

XV. Parking Lot.

Christine went over the newly added and completed items. *Laura and Holly will be added to the meeting to review the RFP applications.*

XVI. Executive Session. Update on Executive Director Review and Board Performance

The item was not discussed and should be moved to the next meeting.

XVII. Confirm Meeting 1/8/2024 & Motion to Adjourn

The next scheduled VCBB Board meeting is Monday, January 8th from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm. *Items that were not discussed and the added agenda items will be moved to the 8th meeting. Patty made a motion to adjourn at 4:01, seconded by Holly. Motion was approved unanimously by Patty, Holly, Laura, and Brian.*