

Chittenden County Communications Union District (CCCUD) Board Meeting

Governing Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, September 13, 3:00pm

Municipal representatives participating: David Solomon, representing Shelburne, Hubie Norton, representing Essex Town, John Abbott, Vice Chair, representing Jericho, Brad Holden, representing Underhill, Mike Vance, representing Williston, Regina Mahony, Chair, representing Essex Junction, and Julia Andrews representing Westford

Absent: Jessie Baker, representing South Burlington

Others present: Charlie Baker, CCRPC Executive Director and CCCUD Treasurer, Ann Janda, CCRPC Senior Energy Project Manager and CCCUD Clerk, and Jeff Nevins from Mission Broadband (MBI), CCCUD's Consultant

1. **Call to order** Regina Mahony called the meeting to order at 3:04pm. Mike Vance asked if we should talk about the CCCUD taking a position on Bill H.419. Noted that VCUDA members like it. Regina said we need to learn a bit more about it and can include in a future agenda.

2. **Public comment period on items NOT on the agenda** | There was no public comment.

3. **Consider approving minutes from August 23, 2023**

Brad Holden moved to approve, seconded by David Solomon. Motion passed.

4. **Public Records Request - Discussion**

Regina Mahony noted that we received a request from an organization that appears to track RFPs and we provided all materials requested.

5. **MBI: Status of broadband coverage mapping and gap analysis for all eight municipalities**

Jeff Nevins of Mission Broadband (MBI) staff said that MBI is still working with new data from the FCC on mapping. Getting there, but need to ensure that all are true sites, not outbuildings or garages. Brad Holden observed that it appears that a lot of the sites marked underserved are at the end of long driveways. Mike Vance said that long driveways increase costs and Comcast may have offered the resident an expensive drop fee and the resident said no. Jeff noted that some sites are just too far from main lines to easily serve. The cost per location will be fairly substantial. David Solomon asked if we will have the ability to fund these extensions. Mike Vance said he imagines we could offer to offset the cost for the carrier to extend. David asked how fiber plays in? Mike said fiber may not be necessary and Comcast can provide the speed needed. Hubie Norton asked if Comcast has a standard rate for long drops. Mike said that beyond required lengths, it is variable. There is no flat rate. Hubie proposed the idea of finding a contractor that will provide a flat rate for 15 long drives. Mike said we could offer x amount per foot pricing to the carrier. Jeff said the RFP could solicit these types of responses. He said next steps are deeper dives on locations with town-by-town analysis so MBI can provide actual numbers per town. Brad Holden noted that local knowledge is very important. Jeff said MBI

could work with each board representative to incorporate local knowledge. Regina Mahony asked if MBI will schedule these meetings. Jeff said he will share all the feedback internally with MBI and will come back with next steps.

6. MBI: Next steps with RFP process – see above

7. Discussion: Shelburne to use \$50,000 of ARPA funds for startup costs related to Chittenden County Communications Union District. David Solomon to provide language from Selectboard Motion

David Solomon said the Shelburne Town Manager will send exact wording, but he says all it specifies is to cover start-up costs.

8. Review and consider approval of DRAFT FY24 Budget for public hearing

Charlie Baker gave an overview of the draft budget for FY24.

David Solomon moved to approve a DRAFT FY24 Budget for comment at a Public Hearing, seconded by John Abbott. Motion passed.

9. Consider setting the public hearing for November 8 meeting and method for inviting legislative bodies of district members.

Charlie Baker noted that legislative bodies can send written comment or attend. Ann Janda said she could send legislative bodies an email asking for comment or attendance at the public hearing. Brad Holden suggested we do an official warning. Charlie said it needs to go out by mid October, but we could easily send sooner. He suggested that Ann draft a memo along with the warning and budget and send to legislative bodies with the CCCUD Board cc'd. Brad Holden offered to draft the warning.

Julia Andrews moved to approve setting the Public Hearing for the FY24 DRAFT Budget for the November 8 meeting at 3pm, seconded by Mike Vance. Motion passed.

10. Clerk's Report

- **Public Records Request:** Ann Janda received a public records request regarding the CCCUD's RFP for Consultant Services from PublicResearchAI. She provided the information requested.
- **VCUDA:** Ann and Jeff Nevins Attended 9/5 VCUDA Meeting. Most relevant info:
 - **Gigi Sohn**, Director of [American Association of Public Broadband](#) gave overview of her work advocating for community broadband and affordability. Gave example of work in [Bountiful City, Utah](#).
 - Says states should all work to have Title 2 authority over broadband. Rob Vietzke said that Representative Sibilia is working on this (Bill H.419).
 - Thinks survival of ACP program is critical to affordability (21,485 current ACP households in VT)
 - Two members pointed out that some companies are using ACP to engage in predatory behavior to offer free internet with a stripped down smart phone with data caps. Fees kick in once data caps are

exceeded. [Free Internet with the Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\) | Xfinity](#)

- VCUDA creating BEAD subcommittee.
- BEAD 5-year plan: Vol 1 = mapping (complete), Vol II = how state will select subgrantees, matrix, compliance with federal requirements, etc. - first draft will be avail. as part of VCBB board packet 9/5 for meeting on 9/11. ***Lucy Rogers asks that we wait until public comment period opens on September 18 to begin edits.***

11. Treasurer's Report

Charlie Baker's shared the August financial report. Minimal expenses in August. There is \$276,923 left in preconstruction grant funding. Shelburne's contribution will add \$50,000 to this total.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30.

Brad Holden motioned to adjourn. Seconded by John Abbott. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted, *Ann Janda, Clerk*