

Chittenden County Communications Union District (CCCUD) Board Meeting

Governing Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 11, 3:00pm

Municipal representatives participating: David Solomon, representing Shelburne, Hubie Norton, representing Essex Town, Angelike Contis, alt. representing Jericho, Brad Holden, representing Underhill, Mike Vance, representing Williston, Regina Mahony, Chair, representing Essex Junction, Julia Andrews representing Westford, Tim Barritt, representing South Burlington

Absent: John Abbot, representing Jericho

Others present: Charlie Baker, CCRPC Executive Director and CCCUD Treasurer, Ann Janda, CCRPC Senior Energy Project Manager and CCCUD Clerk, Jeff Nevins from Mission Broadband (MBI), CCCUD's Consultant, Mike Reed (MBI), Jason Gay, (MBI), and Alexei Monsarrat, Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) staff.

1. **Call to order** Regina Mahony called the meeting to order at 3:01pm.
2. **Public comment period on items NOT on the agenda** | There was no public comment.
3. **Consider approving minutes from September 13, 2023**

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

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

Jeff Nevins of Mission Broadband (MBI) staff shared a preliminary summary report of their broadband data analysis. Before doing some clean-up of the data, there are 840 unserved/underserved locations. Julia Andrews asked if this means there is a potential of 840 customers. Jeff said that depends because the ISPs must be willing to serve them. Julia said that people in Westford are wondering if they should be asking carriers to give them bids to consider paying for line extensions now. What is the timeline for CCCUD? Mike Vance said that those people should go ahead and get bids because there are other reimbursement funds available that they might be able to take advantage of if they don't want to wait. Mike Reed of MBI said that BEAD funding probably won't start flowing until early 2025 and the ARPA funding that is available may not go that far. For each location the cost could be anywhere from \$6,400 to \$12,000. So, there are no guarantees timewise. Jason Gay of MBI noted that the map shows FCC location data and each providers' technology types with speeds as of December 2022. He expects to receive the balance of the data that was filed at the end of September 2023 to be available soon. The map currently doesn't show fixed wireless. That layer could be added if there is interest in that. For example, Shelburne Museum currently shows about 24 unserved sites, but may be considered a non-standard, no-DSL location. Mike Vance said that Shelburne Museum has carrier-grade wireless service and clearly has broadband available, so those 24 locations will likely come off. Mike Reed says there is also an issue with Shelburne Self Storage showing 8 locations. We can refine the data enough with each representative to prepare an RFP.

Mike Vance said he thinks we don't need to worry because the carriers will all know these are bogus sites and we should just get going with the RFP. Brad Holden says that recent E911 changes now show addresses for multiple structures on a property, like Shelburne Self Storage. The VCGI website has all this information. David Soloman asked if we should just leave the map as is or refine it more before going out with the RFP. Mike Reed said MBI could just take out the obvious ones because once the RFP is released, we will definitely get questions like "Do you expect us to serve Shelburne Museum?" He thinks work on the obvious issues will take about an hour. Alexei Monsarrat noted that for the ARPA funding, the responses need to show how service will get to everyone. Regina said that the plan is to do one RFP but receive responses from several providers in order to develop a plan for the whole district. Will this work? Alexei said he would take that question back to VCBB to get an answer. Mike Vance asked if we could offer some amount of money for each site to get covered, like a voucher program. This would be available to any carrier willing to get to all the dots. Mike Reed said he doesn't expect any response from one carrier that can do all eight towns. Hubie Norton asked if we could get carriers to partner to get economies of scale. Could we offer opportunities for partnerships? Mike Reed said we will word the RFP that we need 100/100 service to each red dot. Ann Janda noted that BEAD funding prefers fiber. However, if there is no reasonable fiber bid, BEAD would consider any bid that meets the required speeds.

5. MBI: Next steps with RFP process

Regina asked if MBI could bring a draft RFP to the next meeting. Mike said that MBI can refine the map while working on the RFP. Jeff asked if MBI could present a draft at the following meeting on November 8. Mike Reed said that MBI can provide an update at the October 25th meeting for sure. Regina said that at the meeting on October 25, the CCCUD would like to at least discuss different strategies for the RFP and will need to know about the ownership issue and how we get to universal service. Mike Vance said that carriers won't agree to anyone but them owning lines on their network. Mike Reed said that with line extensions, CUD ownership won't work. BEAD doesn't require this, but ARPA funding might. It is possible that ARPA funding just won't work for us. Brad Holden said he would hate to see carriers just cherry pick where they want to serve. Mike Vance said they already have, so all that is left now is long drops.

6. Consider inviting Sean Kio, ED of Norhtwest FiberworX and Lisa Birmingham, ED of Lamoille FiberNet to an upcoming meeting to discuss coordinating with those CUDs as we work on RFP.

Hubie Norton asked if we should also invite someone from Maple Broadband to the South. Mike Vance said that Charlotte is covered by Champlain and Waitsfield Telecom [and so is Hinesburg] so this isn't needed. Regina asked Ann Janda to invite Sean Kio and Lisa Birmingham to the October 25 meeting.

7. Clerk's Report

Since it is long, Ann suggested that representatives read the [Clerk's Report](#) and contact her with any questions.

8. Treasurer's Report

Charlie Baker's said he will share the September financial report at the next meeting since it isn't ready yet.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 4:17.

Mike Vance motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Tim Barritt. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted, *Ann Janda, Clerk*