

Chittenden County Communications Union District (CCCUD) Board Meeting

Governing Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 25, 3:00pm

Municipal representatives participating: David Solomon, representing Shelburne, Angelike Contis, alt. representing Jericho, Mike Vance, representing Williston, Regina Mahony, Chair, representing Essex Junction, and Julia Andrews representing Westford

Absent: John Abbot, representing Jericho, Hubie Norton, representing Essex Town, Tim Barritt, representing South Burlington, and Brad Holden, representing Underhill

Others present: Charlie Baker, CCRPC Executive Director and CCCUD Treasurer, Ann Janda, CCRPC Senior Energy Project Manager and CCCUD Clerk, Mike Reed (MBI), Lee Willette, (MBI), Lisa Birmingham, Executive Director, Lamoille FiberNet, and Sean Kio, Executive Director, Northwest FiberworX.

1. **Call to order** Regina Mahony called the meeting to order at 3:09pm.
2. **Public comment period on items NOT on the agenda** | There was no public comment.
3. **Consider approving minutes from October 11, 2023**

Mike Vance moved to approve, seconded by Julia Andrews. Motion passed.

4. **Discussion with Sean Kio, ED of Northwest FirberworX and Lisa Birmingham, ED of Lamoille FiberNet regarding coordinating with those CUDs as we work on RFP.**

Lisa Birmingham, Executive Director, Lamoille FiberNet worked for Comcast for 20 years before taking the role at Lamoille FiberNet. Lisa said that Lamoille FiberNet looked at several options before partnering with Consolidated to reach several chronically unserved areas. The Lamoille FiberNet Board thought this was the most efficient, cost-effective strategy and have a 20-year contract. Drops have been a significant issue. Lamoille FiberNet raised local ARPA match funds to fund drops. They have asked the Vermont Communications Broadband Board (VCBB) to extend the match program. They considered partnering with local incumbents to do line extensions, but it was too costly. Lamoille FiberNet owns assets but gives Consolidated extensive use. Consolidated is considered the subcontractor and they file the reports. Lamoille FiberNet looks at customer complaints and provides oversight to ensure service standards. Currently looking at how to sustain governance after construction in order to provide oversight. Lamoille FiberNet collaborated on certain addresses with NEK CUD and could discuss collaboration in Jericho and Underhill if needed.

Sean Kio, Executive Director, Northwest FiberworX, worked at Burlington Telecom previously. He said Northwest FiberworX went through the same process and ultimately partnered with Great Works Internet (GWI). Northwest FiberworX will own infrastructure, but GWI will operate. Northwest FiberworX is currently doing high level design refinement. They have a bit more of a hybrid model than Lamoille. If it makes sense at certain addresses, he said we should talk about collaborating as they come up. When looking for partners, five expressed interest but only two parties were willing to offer ACP [Federal Affordable Connectivity Program], which is required by the funding. Lisa Birmingham suggested that given CCCUD's geography, the board should

consider asking the VCBB for an exception to the ACP requirement. Mike Reed of Mission Broadband (MBI) said that they will structure agreements to ensure the CCCUD meets oversight requirements and will address affordability. Do not anticipate we will own network.

5. MBI: Next steps with RFP process

Mike Reed of Mission Broadband (MBI) said they expect to have a draft RFP at the next meeting on November 8. Jeff Nevins will meet with each board member to refine the map to make it as accurate as possible.

6. MBI: Comments on BEAD Volume II

Mike Reed said that MBI provided a letter with some feedback to VCBB on one issue that is unique to the CCCUD that VCUDA didn't include in their comments. This letter was circulated to the CCCUD Board.

7. Clerk's Report

Ann said that she and MBI staff and VCBB staff will meet regularly twice a month going forward to get questions answered on issues like ownership and affordability. Otherwise, Ann suggested that representatives read the [Clerk's Report](#) and contact her with any questions. Ann also noted that a reporter from the *Colchester Sun* contacted the Town of Essex regarding Fidium Fiber's plans to do a broadband rollout in Colchester, Essex, and Essex Junction. Regina Mahony noted that she was also contacted and will speak to them on Friday.

8. Treasurer's Report

Charlie Baker's said there were no new expenses in the September financial report since CCRPC still has other funding to pay for staff time.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 4:20.

Respectfully submitted, *Ann Janda, Clerk*