

LAMOILLE FIBERNET COMMUNICATIONS UNION DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Dec 2, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.
MINUTES

Attending: Larry Lackey, Doug Molde, Jane Campbell, Tim Humphrey, Lea Kilvadyova, Jeff Tilton, Michael Rooney

Also attending: Lucy Rogers, Sam Lotto, John Meyer, Tim Nulty, Leslie Nulty

Call to order, changes to the agenda, public comment

Jeff Tilton opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. No agenda changes. No public comment.

Michael Rooney joined at 7:10 p.m.

Mansfield Community Fiber Introduction

Leslie Nulty introduced Mansfield Community Fiber (MCF). MCF was found in 2016 by five private investors; Is committed to be a socially responsible and community company; Worked to establish EC Fiber and to conduct a crowdfunding campaign that, over five years, raised \$7 million. Upon retiring from EC Fiber, contemplated to resurrect earlier efforts to establish a CUD in Jericho, Underhill and Westford. In the end decided to form a private company instead. To date, MCF has 87 network miles passing 1,100 premises in Underhill, Cambridge and Fletcher. Currently working to submit a VEDA application to build in Fairfield, Sheldon, a large part of Cambridge, Waterville and Belvidere. www.mcfibervt.com has the pricing structure. Leslie and Tim Nulty have background in business planning, finance and broadband. Partners have extensive technological expertise. MCF is interested in partnerships with CUDs where they make sense.

Q&A

Q: Please describe your activity in Cambridge

A: MCF has quite a lot of fiber in Cambridge now. Next year, they will build at Pollander Road to 108 and 109 to Waterville. Next will be western Cambridge - Iron Gate Road and toward Westford and Jericho. By this time next year, the majority of Cambridge will have fiber through a buildout by both MCF and Stowe Cable.

Q: Why are you talking to Lamoille FiberNet?

A: We believe in public utilities. We are afraid you will fail. We want to see you succeed.

Q: What forms of partnership you envision?

A: Partnerships can take many forms. Two examples: 1. ECFiber - municipality owns the fiber and contracts with an operator. 2. Town of Fletcher. MCF builds about 20 miles in a town and continues onto

other towns. Roads omitted from the initial buildout will be built later. If towns wish for an earlier completion of town-wide networks, they will need to raise the capital. MCF will then partner with the towns to build and service the network. In case of Fletcher, since the town-sponsored portion of the network will connect to the existing MCF network, MCF will assume ownership of the town-sponsored network. MCF is flexible to consider other scenarios.

Q: What do you see that Lamoille FiberNet has that you do not have?

A: CUDs have a positive rapport with their communities and can earn strong support of the population. CUDs also have access to the markets at attractive rates.

MCF does not believe it is viable to separate network ownership and network operation. Both should be tied to one company.

Minutes Approval

Jane Campbell moved to approve the Not 18th minutes. Jeff Tilton seconded. All voted yes, motion passed.

EDA grant application update

Lamoille FiberNet has partnered with NEK Broadband and Northwest CUDs to work on a capacity building proposal to EDA. Lamoille is leading the proposal development process. This would be a two-year grant with the maximum EDA ask of \$400,000 for the three CUDs. The collaborative process will enable the CUDs to evaluate potential for partnerships and if awarded, the grant will help boost the CUDs management and consultant capacity.

Technology Committee Request for Discussion

Technology Committee is seeking direction from the Executive Committee regarding its task to develop a framework for Lamoille FiberNet's expansion. Sam Lotto said that the Tech Committee is best poised to focus on technical aspects of the expansion. Lea suggested that the expansion discussion should begin by evaluating effects of the expansion on the long-term financial sustainability of the CUD. Larry Lackey said that our feasibility study as well studies completed for other CUDs offer beneficial insights on the topic. Further opportunities to examine the topic will arise during the development of the business plan. It was agreed to pause the technical analysis for now.

Adjourn

Tim Humphrey moved and Jane Campbell seconded to adjourn at 8:59 p.m. All voted yes, the motion passed.