

Lamoille FiberNet Communications Union District Annual Report

A Communications Union District (CUD) is an organization of two or more towns that join together as a municipal entity to build communication infrastructure together. Vermont legislation, VSA 30 Chapter 82, enabled the formation of CUDs, and “Lamoille FiberNet” is the name we chose for our CUD.

Our member towns include Belvidere, Cambridge, Eden, Johnson, Hyde Park, Morristown and Waterville, and our mission is to make locally-controlled, affordable, and reliable high-speed internet service available to every address in our member towns.

The official organizational meeting of the Lamoille FiberNet Communications Union District (LFCUD) was held on July 14, 2020. During our six months of existence, we focused on standing up the new organization, fundraising, and launching a utility pole assessment which is the first step in constructing the fiber optic internet network. The fiber network will be built in stages, offering higher broadband speeds than what are currently available in the region.

Our Governing Board has 17 representatives appointed by Selectboards of the member towns. We have an Executive Committee, a Technology Committee, and a Marketing & Communications Committee. Meeting times, agenda and minutes are posted on our website <https://lamoillefiber.net/>

Between July and November 2020, we raised \$115,000 in grants to support the startup of the organization. Green Mountain Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation awarded \$5,000. The Vermont Community Foundation provided additional \$10,000 grant to support general operating expenses. Finally, the Vermont Department of Public Service awarded \$100,000 in CARES act funds which allowed us to retain administrative and consulting services of the Lamoille County Planning Commission and Matrix Design Group.

The Lamoille County Planning Commission provides daily administrative support as well as overall governance guidance to the Board and the Committees. The Matrix Design Group was hired to conduct a utility pole assessment. The pole assessment will evaluate the utility poles for readiness and capacity to support the fiber optic network. The pole assessment will also enable design and engineering of the entire network, which is necessary before construction.

Submitted by LFCUD Governing Board,

Jeff Tilton (Vice Chair) and Lucy Rogers (**Waterville**)
Jane Campbell, John Meyer and Carl Fortune (**Morristown**)
Charlotte Reber, Doug Molde and Paul Warden (**Johnson**)
Michael Rooney (Chair), Jack Wool and Carol Fano (**Hyde Park**)
Liza Jones and Stephanie Van Blunk (**Eden**)
Timothy Humphrey and Sam Lotto (**Cambridge**)
Carol Caldwell Edmonds and Kipp Verner (**Belvidere**)

For more information, please reach out to your town representatives or Lea Kilvadyova, LFCUD Clerk, at info@lamoillefiber.net.