Marketing & Communications Committee Meeting
February 15, 2023, at 6:00 pm
Location: Online Virtual Meeting
Minutes – Approved 3/15/2023

6:00 pm Call to Order and Roll Call: Jeff Tilton called the meeting to order.

Committee Members Attending
(V=Present and Voting, A=Absent)

P/V	Representative
V	Carol Caldwell-Edmonds, Co-Chair
V	Jane Campbell
A	Teelah Hall
V	Charlotte Reber (arrived 6:02)
V	Jeff Tilton, Co-Chair
V	Paul Warden

Other Lamoille FiberNet attendees: Lisa Birmingham (arrived at 6:02)
Public/Guests: none

6:01 Agenda Changes - None

6:01 Public Comment - None

6:01 Approval of January 18, 2023 Minutes
Carol moved to approve the minutes as presented, Paul seconded, motion passed unanimously.

6:02 2023 Priorities and Responsibilities - Update and Discussion
1) Website Improvements
   a) FourNine has begun coding; we should be able to review a draft site in a week or so.
   b) We, not FourNine, will be responsible for editing content before website is live.
   c) Logo will stay as is for now; website will use a font that complements but isn't the same as the logo.
   d) The 2/22/23 meeting packet will include screenshots to keep the Governing Board updated.
2) Budget
   a) FourNine was paid for initial services out of VT Community Foundation grant. Ongoing hosting/maintenance fees need to be included in the soon-to-be-revised budget.
   b) When we are onboarding customers, there will be more communications funds needed than the current $20,000 marketing in the 2023 budget. Since the increased marketing/communications expenses need to be included in the Pre-Construction grant, which is due in March, Lisa will

email a draft 2023 budget for marketing/communications to the committee before its inclusion in the grant. We will budget for two years' worth of marketing.

3) Outreach Plan - including Local ARPA Funds (deadline is May 2023)
    a) The VCBB match of up to $100,000 can help towns double the amount of ARPA funds directed to broadband. It's important to request ARPA funds from the towns before we ask the VCBB to help fund long drops, trenching and other challenges.
    b) Cover letter and one-pager:
        i) Anticipating questions towns may ask, Lisa will provide each board member with the statistics for each town. (In Cambridge, Waterville, Eden and Belvidere, we know totals by towns and approximate roads. In other towns, we have totals and roads.)
        ii) Edits:
            (1) Include edits emailed prior to the committee meeting.
            (2) Section on Universal Service Plan: reword to say "There is a Universal Service Plan; if there are specific questions about a particular town or location, please contact the CUD."
            (3) Letter to be signed by Governing Board member, not the ED.
        iii) An email to the Governing Board and also the 2/22/2023 meeting packet will include the letter and one-pager, with a request to Governing Board members, asking them to bring to their town, bringing a CUD staff person to the meeting as needed and also noting that the match offer is time-sensitive.
    c) Example: In NEK, towns committed to specific roads and addresses, in other towns, the towns committed a certain amount of funds without such specificity.

4) Other initiatives or communication materials
    a) Our Front Porch Forum missed doing two in January…again)
    b) The committee looked at several Front Porch Forum ideas and the committee selected the second one for the next post; Jeff offered to draft and Jane will edit & post in February:
        i) **Why do people in more densely populated areas get better Internet?**
        Explain take rates and the reason why areas with less population generally have poorer internet and why it's tougher to bring broadband to those areas, noting that CUDs were created to ensure that all Vermonters can have adequate service, and also noting that our grant funds are targeted to serving homes and businesses that are un/underserved (and define that). Also mention that running Fiber in areas with buried power lines can cost three (two? four?) times as much per mile than bringing fiber to areas with poles.
        ii) **Why fiber? Also, how fast is fast enough?**
        Give examples of how many devices can work at which levels of speed, noting that with fiber, dropped connections, slowwww speeds for uploading images to the cloud, having to limit how many devices your family uses at one time, etc. will be things of the past—and reiterate that reliable, fast speeds will make a huge difference for online learning, remote work and telehealth.
        iii) **What is the "Internet of Things," anyway?**
        Explain the IoT, and describe what we are missing by not having energy efficient IoT devices such as Nest thermostats, lighting fixtures etc. that exchange data with other devices a network. Note that while these kinds of devices may seem to some people to be superfluous or luxuries they will be necessary parts of our homes in the very near future.

 6:15 Wrap-Up and Adjournment
Charlotte moved to adjourn, Paul seconded, motion passed unanimously.