



Governing Board Meeting
August 28, 2024 at 7:00pm
Meeting by Video Conference ONLY
Draft Minutes
Recording

7:00 pm Call to Order: Jeff Tilton, Chair, called the meeting to order.

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

Town	P/V	Representative	P/V	Alternate
Belvidere	V	Carol Caldwell-Edmonds	P	Pam McKenna
Cambridge	V	Sam Lotto	P	Matthew McCabe
Eden	V	Carey Earle		
Elmore				
Hyde Park	A	Michael Rooney	V	Carol Fano
Johnson	V	Paul Warden		Mark Woodward
Morristown	A	Jane Campbell	V	John Meyer
Stowe	V	Stephen Friedman	P	John Woods
Waterville	V	Jeff Tilton	P	Scott Johnson
Wolcott	V	Andrew Ross		

Other Lamoille FiberNet Attendees: Colette Jurnak, Ex-Officio, Treasurer

Public/Guests: Trevor Braun

7:01pm Agenda Changes: none

7:01pm Public Comment: none

7:02pm Chair's Update:

- Trevor Braun from Elmore will be joining the Board and introduced himself to the group. We expect the resolution from the Elmore Select Board any day. Carol F will establish a LFCUD account.

- Phishing email: Jeff noted he received what looked like a phishing email in his LFCUD email account and advised the group to be wary.

- SoVT just voted to approve the sustainability plan and triumvirate MOU.
- Paul and Scott are conducting housekeeping on our organizational documents as well as policies and procedures to identify any potential inconsistencies with practice, including where names have been used instead of position. Expect proofed documents for board approval, if necessary, in September.
- October reports to towns deadline is closing in. Lisa and Colette are working on the financial reports. Pam and Carey will work on the narrative and have a draft for approval for the September meeting. Lisa outlined what the final Annual Report document should look like and added that the narrative will be something most towns include in their town meeting report.
- Our transition to only contracted- or consultant-supported organization without employees in 2025 needs to be planned out. Engaging with LCPC makes sense due to their pool of skillsets, especially with grant administration. Will have to RFQ in any case. A stipend-compensated consultant will be necessary to get the Planning Commission up to speed with their responsibilities and to help oversee the P2 construction buildout. Jeff will work with Lisa, Carol, and Andy, Sam to identify key responsibilities and make a draft outline and recommendation for the board to consider in September.

7:17pm Approval of July 24th Meeting Minutes: Andy noted that the minutes reflected him being a designated check signer, and he no longer is. Paul moved to approve the minutes from the July 24, 2024, Governing Board Meeting with the correction. Carey seconded. Motion passed 7 in favor, one abstention (Stephen)

7:20pm Phase 1 Construction Update: Lisa provided an overview of the construction in progress. The group again reflected on one major milestone: a Board Member (Stephen) was logged into the meeting over a Fidium connection. Jeff noted construction in Waterville was well underway. CCI has yet to provide a breakdown of the “organic build” addresses. There have been several complaints related to the work underway, but at a level that would be expected with the size of the project. Sam thanked all the workers and thinks a public kudos is in order and the board agreed. There were several remarks commending the outstanding job the line workers have been doing. Regarding transitioning traditional phone lines to VOIP-only, Lisa pointed out that customers will not be transitioned to VOIP without permission a recommended a public posting be made regarding this. A major difference between VOIP and landlines is the requirement of a backup power source in the event of a power outage.

7:28pm Drop Task Force Update: Sam Lotto gave an overview of the Task Force’s work on this project and highlighted possible criteria that will be used if the demand exceeds the money available in a town. The communications Committee put together a newsletter and article and are in the process of a media-blitz to get the word out that this money is available in certain towns for non-standard drops. There is an online form for households and businesses with non-standard drops. Depending on the number of responses, the group will determine how long to leave the form active. The group will use this feedback to gauge the demand for subsidies and to help decide how to equitably split the money. The form will be made available in town offices. Trevor recommended reaching out to other organizations that may have insight into addresses that would benefit including social services, etc. Several board members volunteered to reach out to the organizations they had connections with. Lisa will talk with CCI at Thursday’s meet-up to see if their installers can help identify as well.

There will be additional money available state-wide from leftover Act 71 funds for long drops soon, but we are waiting on guidance from VCBB.

7:58pm USP (Universal Service Plan) Phase 2 Plan and Construction Grant Amendment Update: Lisa noted that the only additional item that was not on her update in the packet was that SoVT voted to approve the sustainability plan MOU that Jeff mentioned earlier. She reiterated that with the awarded funding to finish P2, we will not need to apply for BEAD funding. The VCBB meets on Sept 9th and will have final answer then. Jeff noted that since we have secured construction funding to see the USP out, we will be able to use the pre-construction funds as they were intended. Carol asked about budgeting money to administer the town ARPA funds. Lisa noted that it would be best to have someone adept with grant administration help with the record-keeping associated with this. Paul asked about the VCBB's request that we propose an upfront payment from CCI in 2027, instead of annual payments. Lisa answered that the proposal had been made to CCI, but ultimately denied in favor of staying with the agreed-to terms. Having an annual payment will force the triumvirate to operate in a disciplined manner.

8:08pm Financial Update and Treasurer's Report:

- Colette provided an overview of the monthly report. Carol asked about the cost of Front Porch Forum, which is \$1200 every 6 months.

- We will take a one time hit on accrued wages in 2023 that is not reflected that will need to be paid out now, but reflected in 2023. Jeff pointed out that the issue is with how we expensed employee hours in 2023 and 2024. We have mitigated all issues for 2024, but it would be responsible to update the personnel policy with a section on comp time to prevent any issues in the future. Jeff recommended updating the Personnel Policy "comp time policy" in January when we have planned to change the health care section.

- 2024 Budget Q3-Q4 forecast: Colette walked through the 2024 forecast. There are several items slightly low and some slightly high. Lisa pointed out that the budget is a planning tool. The end of the year forecast shows us to be roughly \$7k over mid-year planning, with the biggest addition being that the 2024 single federal audit estimated cost was added. We were slightly up on subscriptions and treasurer stipends, down on insurance and legal. Biggest addition is added 2024 audit expense.

- 2025 and 2026 budget: Recommended adjustments made since securing the funding we requested. The update gives us the ability for more conservative estimates and leaves us with some contingency. 2025 will look familiar. Looking to approve this draft budget in September in time for the October Annual report. Will adapt in December after November public hearing. Andy requested a break-down of assumptions for the 2025 draft budget to look over before next month. Lisa thought this was a good idea and will provide the group with this information next week.

Paul moved that the board acknowledge the 2023 budget will reflect higher than previously approved due to higher-than-expected audit costs and a one-time accrued wages payout. Stephen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Sam moved to approve the 2024 Budget forecast as presented and described in the meeting. Carey seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

8:38 pm Communication Update: no further updates.

8:38pm Other Business: Looking ahead Nov, Dec.. Sam moved to reschedule Nov and Dec EFC meetings to 11/6 and 12/4 and the Governing Board meetings to 11/13 and 12/11 to align with statutory requirements and avoid holidays. Carey seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

8:40pm Wrap up and Adjournment: Stephen moved to adjourn. Sam seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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