



Lamoille FiberNet Communications Union District

Executive and Finance Committee

Wednesday December 4, 2024, 7 PM

Approved January 15th, 2025

[Recording](#)

Call to Order and Roll Call (7:05pm)

Members Present: Jeff Tilton, Jane Campbell, Andy Ross, Stephen Friedman, Paul Warden
Ex officio: Lisa Birmingham, Collette Jurnak

Agenda Changes - None

Public Comment - None

Chair's Update – Tilton. No separate report: Jeff's updates provided as topics are discussed.

Treasurer's Report (2023 Audit 2024 Forecast and Proposed 2025 Budget) – Jurnak

Standard (finalized) report for the month prior not available as the meeting was so early in the month. Major wire transfer to CCI for \$2M (mistakenly short paid by \$2k but discussed with CCI and will catch up on next payment - Jane asked that we document clearly to avoid any subsequent audit issues). 2023 audit- is complete, essentially unchanged from draft previously seen, EFC should recommend Governing Board accept audit report in 12/14 meeting. 2024 Projection updated; we are \$1.5M under budget for Construction, which will be discussed later re drop program. Still need to address Lisa's 2023 comp time and finalize her 2024 comp time and pay by end of December (Lisa, Collette and Nicole will meet). Re expenses, Lisa and Colette explained we are under budget for legal expenses because amended CCI contracts not completed.

ED Update - P1 and P2 Construction Updates – Birmingham

Lisa covered three topics: RFQs, 2025 Budget, Long Drop Program.

1. RFQs: Grant Administrator – 2 responses; Legal Services – 0 responses (closes Dec 10th, Lisa said we can expect at-the-deadline responses); Auditor – 1 response. There was discussion regarding the importance of an auditor for our Single Federal Audit and the need to get on an auditor's schedule (audit due Sep. 30, 2025, without exception).

Jane moved to extend the Auditor RFQ deadline until Jan. 17, 2025 to help ensure we get qualified responders and have a choice. Andy seconded. Passed unanimously.

2. 2025 Budget: (General & Administrative and Construction; see Lisa's deck)

Construction: Lisa reminded us that we have now applied for and been awarded all ARPA funds by the VCBB. In the G&A budget, we have \$141k unallocated. In the 2024 Construction budget, we are under budget by \$1.5M, which means we have funds we can use for long drops – this amount has been added to the 2025 Construction budget as follows: \$1.19M long drops, \$35k Project Manager, and \$268K as Contingency. The need for a Project Manager was discussed – the amount of work involved in qualifying addresses and administering an expanded Long Drop program (which will now include all 10 towns) is significant – and CCI is unable to assist because this long drop assistance program is unique to Lamoille County (and unknown in their call centers). The PM will also oversee CCI’s dedicated long drop construction team. Lisa stated that CCI’s intent is to complete construction in 2025 and close this funding source. The Local ARPA funds and VCBB match were not spent on network construction and are now available for other purposes (within the donating towns).

General & Administrative: Lisa made a minor increase to the proposed 2025 budget (\$216.2k in Sept, now \$220.2k) to include money for contractors (legal review of amendments, etc.). 2026 proposed budget is still \$170k – continuing reduction to sustainable level.

Jane moved that the EFC recommend that the Governing Board accept the proposed General & Administrative and Construction budget for 2025, assuming no substantial changes prior to the Governing Board meeting. Paul seconded. Passed unanimously.

3. Long Drop Program:

This program has changed in terms of funding (from being funded solely with local ARPA funds (and match) to being funded by local ARPA *plus* remaining construction funds) and in scope (was just the 7 ARPA donating towns, will now be all 10 towns). These changes require us to restart the long drop program and communicate clearly with our constituents. Lisa explained that Phase 1 construction was tied to a specific set of addresses (un/under served and incidental passings) – and that VCBB has approved using remaining construction funds for Long Drop assistance within these addresses. VCBB has agreed that Phase 2 U/U/I addresses should also be eligible also; we are waiting for execution of a grant amendment from VCBB covering this. Stephen asked about the conundrum: what about addresses in areas served by another ISP – but that require a long drop and are therefore unaffordable? (Not really “served”). Lisa: Act 71 funds can ONLY be spent on un/underserved addresses and incidental passings. Also, state grant funds can’t be directed to individuals (we could with local ARPA funds because they were cash to the CUD). There was robust discussion about how to expand the long drop program within the constraints of Act 71 and who/how to best communicate with the public. General agreement that our initial drop program was necessarily limited and that we need to essentially start over and reach out to specific addresses that were previously “out of scope” and the “failed install” addresses (CCI list) – and also to the general public in all 10 towns. Stephen felt strongly that we need to reach out quickly to prevent anyone from installing conduit at their own cost – let them know more money is available for 2025. Lisa said the VCBB Long Drop Program is another source – also restricted to Act 71 addresses and will also be means-based. Jane volunteered to write a summary of the revised Long Drop program to simplify explaining the changes to the Governing Board for their approval and will post it for review.

2025 Planning – Governance Meeting, status of RFQs – Tilton – Skipped due to time constraints.

Communications Committee Update - Campbell. Jane stated a summary will be sent to all members prior to the Governing Board meeting.

Other Business

- **Approval of Prior Minutes – Vote** Jane moved acceptance as submitted, Paul seconded, unanimous.
- **Agenda for 12.11.24 Governing Board Meeting** – Jeff will develop, reminder in person, upstairs at the Tavern in Jeffersonville (next to Post Office).
- **Schedule for January Meeting** – To be determined, Jeff mentioned consideration of every other month or quarterly Governing Board meetings to lessen the administrative burden.
- **Adjournment 9:05pm**

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Warden, Johnson Rep.
2024-1206