



## MINUTES

WiredWest Board of Directors Meeting  
Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Rd., Sandisfield  
Saturday, April 30, 9:30 am

Noting a quorum present, Jim Drawe called the meeting was called to order at 9:32 am.

**Welcome and Introductions** – Jean Atwater-Williams welcomed everyone to the Sandisfield Arts Center. Attendees went around the room and introduced themselves.

**Approval of minutes of April 2, 2016 meeting** – Jean Atwater-Williams moved to accept; Bob LaBrie seconded; all in favor with 1 abstention (Al Woodhull)

**Report from the Chair** – Jim Drawe reported that it has been an interesting month. A meeting with the governor is upcoming on May 10; the committees

### **Election of Officers –**

- Jean Atwater-Williams is resigning effective today from the Executive Committee and from the office of Clerk and To fill the opening. Jean nominated MaryEllen Kennedy as EC Member and Clerk. Leslie Rule seconded. All in favor.
- Jim Drawe is resigning as Treasurer effective today. Tim nominated Jim to be Vice Treasurer. Steve Nelson seconded. All in favor.
- Leslie Rule nominated Bob LaBrie as Treasurer. Tim Newman seconded. All in favor.

**Governor's meeting** – There was a discussion about who was being invited. Tim Newman expressed concern that Berkshire County is not represented. Tim also recommended the meeting be recorded. Discussion ensued surrounding this meeting.

**Plan A2 update** – Jim led a discussion about his efforts to more fully flesh out Plan A2. It is a complex process and requires a great deal of delegate and town input from all towns and Jim's work has raised a number of questions that will need to be answered. Jeremy moved that a task force be appointed to solicit input from the towns on plan A2 and to come up with a consensus recommendation in time for the next WiredWest board meeting. Tim Newman seconded. Discussion ensued and some raised concerns about how quickly this will need to move. All in favor with 1 abstention (Glen Cardinal). Jeremy Dunn, Steve Nelson, MaryEllen Kennedy, Bob Handsaker, Craig Martin, and Tim Newman volunteered. Jim Drawe will organize the first meeting.

**Regionalization Discussion** – Tim Newman presented an analysis of the regional model. He presented the financial realities. Tim said that this information will be going to towns and delegates and asked delegates to ask that their towns read the information carefully and assert their right to participate in a regional model if they so choose. Jeremy Dunn also suggested that delegates share with their towns that a regional network is also lower risk. Bob Handsaker suggested how using MBI's own recommendations, the lower risk of a regional approach can be quantified.

**Fixed Wireless Primer** – Tim Newman and Tom Wyatt of the Outreach Committee led a discussion about point to point wireless (The technology MBI's will study) as well as some of the enhancements in Wireless 2.0. Some towns are actively pursuing it, but it is unlikely to work in all towns. Further, it will not likely be a robust enough infrastructure to support economic development. Tim also talked about the capitol expense of FTTH vs Wireless. Although FTTH is more expensive to install initially, due to the frequency (every 3-5 yrs) of wireless equipment replacement, it is similar in cost over 20-30 years (30 years is the minimum useful life of fiber optic cable). A comprehensive draft document has been created and will be distributed by the end of the week. Delegates need to be responsible to understand and explain to their towns so that towns can be prepared to accept (or not) a wireless "solution".

### **Committee Reports:**

- Bob LaBrie shared that the Outreach Committee has launched a petition(created by Gail Huntress and others) on change.org to petition Governor Baker to release funds for last mile broadband and allow towns local control. The goal is 10,000 signatures by May 10<sup>th</sup>. Bob LaBrie has created a sandwich board sign asking Governor Baker where our networks are. Bob will make this image available to anyone. Outreach is also embarking on speaking with the media about the petition and other WiredWest efforts. Discussion ensued about some ideas
- Tim Newman reviewed a new draft layout for the WiredWest website. Jean Atwater-Williams moved that we move forward with making the new draft version of the website live within the next few days. Tom Wyatt seconded. No discussion. All in favor.
- The Risk Committee has not recently met, but their work is posted on the website. Jim recommended everyone look at that.
- Finance – we have received the signed grant from MBI, Jim has submitted approximately \$20,000 worth of invoices. There are still approximately 20 people per month who are asking for their deposits back.
- EC has been meeting jointly with the Outreach committee. It has been suggested that the EC issue and RFI for high level network construction and operations. Tim has gotten info from HG&E
- Holleran will be working on technical specs for the RFI as the questions about the A2 model are more fully answered.
- Glenn Cardinal reported that the last several weeks have been completely silent with regard to progress with the cable towns.

**Other Director Input** – Jim Drawe announced that the Governor filed an omnibus bill to streamline municipal governing. In that, there is language about town 1 year notes borrowing that may be favorable to WiredWest towns, which could avoid the need for bonding. Jim has asked USDA to look at the RUS Community Facilities loan program to see if it could be used for broadband. If it can be used, it would allow 40 year borrowing with no pre-payment penalty. Jim gave an update about our current status with WiredWest and indicated we need to influence at a level higher than the MBI. Bob Handsaker suggested that towns who don't want to consider wireless make that publicly known. Outreach offered to create a poll. Steve mentioned that the deal for Charter to purchase Time Warner is clearing hurdles at the FCC.

**Confirm and Schedule next BoD meetings** – May 21<sup>st</sup> in New Salem.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:19**