

WiredWest Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date / time: Friday, February 24, 2017 6:00 PM

Location / address: Hampshire Council of Governments, 99 Main Street, Northampton, MA

Called to order at 6:04

Attendees: Jim Drawe, Jeremy Dunn, Charley Rose, MaryEllen Kennedy

Guests: Steve Nelson, Al Woodhull, Craig Martin

1. Approve minutes of previous meeting – February 15 – not distributed, no vote

1. Regional Broadband Solution
   1. Criteria for choosing a partner

Discussion of comparison between OTT & WG&E

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **OTT** | |  | **WG&E** | |
| Pro | Con |  | Pro | Con |
| Size | Not locally based |  | Good Politics | Capacity |
| Experience with White Label | Not known |  | Known Quantity |  |
| Peering | Publicly traded |  | Continuity of Design & Construction |  |
|  |  |  | MLP <-> MLP |  |
|  |  |  | Local Hiring |  |

Action items:

* pricing on truck rolls,
* tour of facilities,
* “what facilities will they put in the region?” – we’ll need to define what response time needed and the timeframe. (Craig – there is an FCC page explaining service calls)
  1. Independent town actions: (Craig handout arguing for “Federalist” ) Jim – crux of issue is distribution of excess. Jim thinks excess money should go to debt repayment, Charley thinks rate reduction is more visible to customers than their RE tax. If towns pay for the network construction, should we be concerned about the take rate? WW could agree to subsidize – either town MLP could do on credit, or town may have received excess revenue from WW they can use. WW is the “owner” of the revenue and should decide on the policies for distribution any excess to the towns. Steve – the towns will not be acquiring customers, our service provider will be doing that. A2 says 2/3 majority of the board must approve spending excess revenue. Al Woodhull – could distribute some excess revenue back to towns and keep some in reserve (A2 supports this).

Jim – we have the mechanisms in place to manage this. Our bylaws and/or contracts with town will include the clause on approval of use of any excess revenue by 2/3 vote – this will give us needed flexibility. Charley – thinks the default should be that excess revenue be returned to towns. Our decision was to take no action, since we have the situational flexibility with the 2/3 rule.

* 1. Town surcharge policy: (Additional fees) Steve – thinks fee must relate to MLP cost. Jim– if provider & WW cover all operational costs, what might town want? Charley – MLP manager stipend. Towns can put debt service on. Jim – town will have to prove that the surcharge will be MLP related. Craig – could limit the amount that towns can add. Jim thinks putting debt service could make the surcharge very high. Charley – if town take rate is sufficient to cover the pole costs/insurance, why does it matter what they add? Concern that lower take rate impacts everyone. Jim – could limit the surcharge to small amount. This can be revisited later. To be continued – Charley did not find a limit to use of surcharge in Plan A2.

1. Committee Updates
2. Review other ongoing work, including meetings, conference calls
3. Other business which could not be reasonably foreseen within 48 hours of meeting
   1. Steve Nelson – we need to post the RBS information that Steve wrote – Outreach Committee should be working on this. JD moved (MEK 2nd) – motion to have Steve’s summary posted by OC – passed unanimously.
   2. Jim thinks efforts to remove MBI is worthwhile, with no downside if we lose. MBI will delay at least 4 months. MBI does not seem to be looking at a regional design (they specify one town or a small group of town). Steve – Todd says they have had a regional network in mind during their design. Jim thinks we’ll do better if we work direct with vendor, rather than through MBI. Jeremy – MBI will generate multiple RFPs, taking more time and overhead. Steve does not think WG&E has the capacity to design for multiple towns at once. We can do business with WG&E as MLP coop, without following state procurement. Craig – Osmose is slowing down the Shutesbury pole surveys, because MBI wants them to choose Charter. There’s concern that MBI is turning “Professional Services” money into a general pool. Jim – will suggest to Larry Parness that they request detailed information on MBI spending so far.
   3. New Marlborough sent 4 page questionnaire to be answered by WW before meeting with the 4 towns. Jim may ask for help.
4. Next meeting – Feb 1. Plan for meeting with Carolyn Kirk

Adjourned 9:30 pm