

WiredWest Executive Committee Meeting

Date / time: Wednesday, March 15, 2017 6:00 PM

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

Attending: Jim Drawe, Charley Rose, Jeremy Dunn, David Dvore, Bob Labrie

Guests: Al Woodhull, Craig Martin

Called to order at: 6:08 pm

1. Approve minutes of previous meeting – March 8 unanimous, David abstained

Recessed for 15 minutes for business discussion

Reconvened at 6:30 pm.

1. Approve agenda for March 18 BoD meeting – agenda was revised and agreed version posted.
2. Regional Broadband Solution

Jeremy – Becket Broadband committee didn’t want to form an elected MLP board. There doesn’t seem to be a need for the elected board. Jim – there’s a specific exemption from 30B rules for an MLP board only, but MLP-MLP interactions are not subject to 30B.

Website currently says speed is 25/3, we were planning on symmetrical service. We will need a reasonable use policy.

Motion: recommend to the BoD that we change to 25/25 standard, 1G/1G premium. MaryEllen moved, ? seconded, approved unanimously.

WG&E wants help with determining the order of construction. Towns need to decide their policy on distances for drops, edge conditions, estimates of growth. Jeremy – instead of travelling to towns, could do a workshop bringing the towns together to work on those issues. Could help with edge conditions. Jim – we could have counsel present to discuss intermunicipal agreements, etc. Jeremy has heard there’s a lag time for fiber or 18 months. He’d like to get input from towns and ask WG&E to order in advance. WG&E uses connectorized fiber, this needs some engineering in advance of the order.

Jeremy – operator choice? We had additional responses from both re repair costs. OTT – activation is fee basically for marketing, could waive for pre-subscribed folks. Goal to propose a solution to the BoD at the April 15 meeting, so need to decide by April 12.

Use of excess funds – we will vote on adding “MLP related” to current wording at the BoD meeting.

How to achieve high take rate? Jeremy suggested incentives for sales, Craig had mentioned town actions which could lower take rate. Jim – our operator request includes marketing and sales – they will want to have a high take rate. Craig – we should try to prevent extreme actions by towns, e.g. very high cost per drop. Charley – if we are only about operations, we can’t dictate how towns will do a build. Jim – we need to support towns in “value engineering” to ensure they can afford to build the network. David thinks that towns will be motivated to ensure a high take rate to continue support for the network. Jim would like to see the operators incentivize their sales force, not WW. CR – could make policy that towns under X% subscriptions won’t receive excess revenue. JD – what is a reasonable floor? 50% would be a good number, that’s what we need for break even.

Motion – recommend to the BoD modification to Plan A2 that we place a floor of 50% of potential subscribers before a town is eligible to collect excess revenue. Charley moved, Bob seconded. Passed unanimously.

1. MBI update

Jeremy – should town have MBI do the pole survey? Yes, no reason not to do this.

Report on Sandisfield meeting – Jim pointed out inconsistencies in the evaluations and comparison with WW plan.The town decided to open negotiations with Frontier and withdraw from WW. New Marlborough also negotiating with Frontier, but not withdrawing.

1. Committee Updates
2. Review other ongoing work, including meetings, conference calls
* Need start work on budget
* Need to develop materials for Town Meetings
1. Other business which could not be reasonably foreseen within 48 hours of meeting

Bob – Peru meeting with WG&E. Aaron pushed the need for regionalization, Bob pointed out the surrounding towns who have approved the resolutions. The SelectBoard approved the [WW suggested] resolutions.

Charley – Crocker presentation to Worthington, they met with MBI, who asked Crocker to take 11 towns which have not participated as well as 10 towns that Crocker wanted to target (includes Worthington and Chesterfield) and to remove the take rate requirement, Fujitsu to put in more money. Crocker would take out a loan and then add to the subscription cost instead of asking subscribers to take out a loan themselves. Charley thinks the town is interested in Matrix’s offer.

1. Set next EC meeting: Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at 6:00pm in Northampton.

Adjourned: 9:11 pm