

**Agenda**

WiredWest Board of Directors Meeting

Cummington Community House

33 Main Street, Cummington MA 01026

Wednesday, February 14, 2018, 7:00 pm

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Approval of Minutes**

January 10, 2018 – Bob moved, Doug 2nd. Approved unanimously – Brian Hawthorne, Trevor Mackie & Al Woodhull abstained.

**Report from the Chair**

WG+E contract is also complete, but additional clause proposed by WG+E is under discussion: our customers’ monthly service charge should not be less than what WG+E charges its Westfield customers for the same service. Consensus of the group is that we should push back on this; it would remove flexibility and could be an issue if they raise prices.

First draft of IRU document was received, sent to EC for comments, should go to our counsel by Monday, expects 2-3 weeks to be ready. Towns will also need a contract to have edge customers in one town served by another town. Chapter 164 allows an MLP to serve customers in another town, but construction costs may be an issue. Windsor & Plainfield are developing documents for the large buildout to a remote location in Windsor, unreachable through Windsor – they will share.

**Vote to approve FY19 dues**

Doug McNally moved to charge all member towns $1,000 for FY19. Jeremy Dunn seconded. Approved unanimously.

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**Regional Broadband Solution**

*Revenue sharing* – Jim sent out the formula. Town of Rowe suggested that service drops be included (currently distribution only proposed). One issue – total length of service drops will not be known. Jim suggests it could be recounted once a year to capture changes. Consensus of the group is to include the aerial service cables.

*Insurance update* – no update

*Edge cases* – discussed during the Report of the Chair

*Budgeting* – towns can use state funds for expenses before operation. Towns which may be operating in FY19 will need to budget for that. Jim will be working on a WW budget for towns which come up in FY19. It was generally agreed that the telecom-only MLPs do not need to make their fiscal year starting on Jan 1.

*Tiered pricing structure* - $59 chosen to compete with DSL available in many towns. Concern that many people will sign up for the lower tier and take away from the 1Gb. Doug McNally is going to bring this question of price structure to his town. Brian Hawthorne - consider price separate from tiers: we could have 1Gb service at the lower price. Chris Lynch – once online, folks may start streaming, trade off satellite TV for the higher tier. Doug McNally – folks in Windsor expecting taxes will pay for the construction, don’t expect relief from WW (Plainfield too). Jim – first 2 years of borrowing is interest only. Consensus is that most towns want to retain 2 tiers; we’ll be voting later.

WG+E contract / terms – Vote to approve – contract has not been finalized. We’ll vote next month – plan to distribute 1 week in advance.

**Town updates**

Goshen – working on hut. Selectboard published job opening for MLP Manager (volunteer) position with a challenging list of qualifications.

Wothington – meeting with Comcast Friday. Soon moving to vote on whether to build or choose another offer.

Plainfield – detailed design for all FSAs (Fiber Service Areas) complete, submitting pole applications in next few weeks, talking about hut.

Windsor – working on hut, 1 of 4 FSAs designed, working on contracts. Direct bury - $7.64/ft to install underground fiber. WG+E suggested having people install the conduit, they may be willing to provide conduit for towns to sell. Windsor plans to have folks do their trenches, 12-18” deep, using dig safe to plot the location of existing services.

Charlemont – PVC working on first FSA. Talked with Bill Ennen re: make ready – he said document on “allowable expenses” will be sent in about 2 weeks. Concern that WiValley for Hawley proposed putting tower in Charlemont – could reach subscribers in Charlemont.

Leyden – MLP is working without sharing with WW rep. PVC will be doing mapping. They may still be considering that Greenfield will help them.

Wendell – Hut visit – they will likely use. Working on possible expansion. Pole applications in next few weeks.

Washington – design has been cleaned up. Pole attachment agreements in a couple of weeks. Working on pole attachment preparation.

New Salem – 1 FSA01 (of 3) complete. Looking at the pole maps. Will start pole applications for FSA01. WG+E said we can review poles before submitting applications. Shutesbury had return from National Grid for pole applications as a lump sum cost, no detail on specific poles. New Salem working on installation of new poles – requires easement from all abutters (Plainfield working on 1 easement). KP Law working on this for New Salem; will share with other WW towns.

Cummington – design for first FSA being reviewed. They have Facebook page & newsletter to inform the town.

Blandford – PVC mapping in progress.

Becket – PVC finishing up, map reviews in progress. Wanted to submit pole applications mid-March. Discussed turnpike crossings with WG+E; options are all expensive.

Heath – wrote job description for MLP manager.

Middlefield – has not decided yet.

Trevor – there’s a company in Charlemont that does trenching for major projects (horizontal drilling).

Jim – entry permission. Towns should see if we need legal help with those permissions.

Towns may want to set up FaceBook, web pages, etc. to keep town informed,

**Reports from Committees**

*Finance* – Bob distributed draft of invoices – asking delegates to vet the addresses and take them. Bob will mail the rest. Income statement as of December was handed out.

Escrow account – Bob created a database with all checks deposited; working party helped matching with entries recorded with CrowdFiber. Will have another work party this Saturday. Goal is to return all checks for towns who are no longer WiredWest members.

Charley will send communication to town leaders list informing them of FY19 dues.

There will be additional $7-8,000 payment to make escrow account whole and the cost of mailing the refunds.

Bylaw review – Charley, Kimberly and Steve met. They are not rushing changes, must be approved by the towns who are in. He propose changes to definition of quorum – first reading (get wording, put on agenda for next meeting).

**Other Director Input**

**Confirm and Schedule next BoD meetings**

March 7

April 4

May 2

**Other business which could not be reasonably foreseen within 48 hours of meeting**

**Adjourn**

Moved by Bob Labrie, 2nd by Charley Rose