

**Minutes**

WiredWest Board of Directors Meeting

Cummington Community House

33 Main Street, Cummington MA 01026

Wednesday, January 16, 2019, 7:00 pm

**Welcome and Introductions**

Called to order at 7:00pm

**Approval of Minutes**  December 19, 2018

Moved: Art Schwenger

Seconded: Russ Jolly

(Abstentions not recorded)

**Report from the Chair**

Doug McNally has some concerns about achieving quorum for Board meetings and towns withdrawing (e.g. Plainfield and Ashfield considering going directly to WG&E). We need to have some commitment from remaining towns who do plan to stay with WiredWest. Doug feels that make ready is holding up the project, Jeremy reports that Bill Ennen emphasized they are pushing the utilities to complete make ready in a town, rather than spread crews around.. Kent has seen reports that the Commonwealth has been effective in moving this forward. Some towns have not seen MBI fiber being moved for make ready, David Dvore says Axia has not done any work to move their fibers in Rowe.

*Second Reading and Vote of Amended Bylaws*

Jim distributed the updated copy of the bylaws and did the second reading.

Motion to approve the bylaws as distributed.

Moved: Art Schwenger

Seconded: David Dvore

Motion passed, with Brian Hawthorne of Plainfield abstaining

*Town Network Operations and Services Agreement Vote*

Motion to approve the agreement as distributed.

Moved: David Dvore

Seconded: Mark Klitzke

Approved unanimously – Brenda Arbib of Cummington & Brian Hawthorne of Plainfield abstained

Rowe is willing to sign if it appears that 5 towns will be signing the agreement. Doug asking the group to state if they are planning to go with WW. Windsor probably yes; New Salem – yes; Washington – yes but Selectboard may ask for legal review of agreement; Chesterfield - can’t commit until after the WG+E meeting on January 22; Cummington – don’t count on joining; Plainfield - likely going with WG+E; Becket – too far out to make a choice; Wendell - not sure, may do RFP; Heath - hasn’t decided, will be comparing with other alternatives; Ashfield - David Kulp sent email indicating they will go with WG+E; New Ashford - reported they are going direct. Doug – while not naming towns, we can indicate that 7 towns are expecting to join WiredWest now. Windsor was reluctant to join the original, much larger coop, feels this will be more manageable. Kathy Soule-Regine – there are towns which are lagging behind who will be able to see the benefits of membership.

Kent feels going with WW gives the benefit of services from WG+E, plus additional benefits of the coop – sharing admin costs and responsibilities.

***First town signs with WiredWest***

David Dvore, delegate from Rowe, signed the Network Operations and Services Agreement at the meeting.

*Insurance Update*

WiredWest is now a member of PURMA and has business/employer’s insurance in place.

MIIA now has an underwriter and is offering reasonable rates. Question on named storms – PURMA has said the deductible would be divided among all affected towns which are members, so each town would not be liable for the full deductible amount. FEMA typically covers 70-80% of repair & restore, including deductible and the state typically contributes 10% later.

PURMA membership $1300/year. David Dvore reports that cost of insurance + membership was less expensive than MIIA quote. We are recommending that towns join PURMA. Jim feels first year costs are part of establishing the network and can come from construction budget – WW will pay insurance charges for following years. David – WG+E included builder’s risk insurance during build period. Kent reports that he read the construction contract and it includes that insurance.

*Pricing Vote*

Jim distributed the pricing document. We used WG&E’s formula for business services. 2-year contract with a minimum payment of 12 months of service to prevent people signing up to be connected and then drop service immediately. Battery backup? According to Brian Hawthorne, WG+E said they are not supplying. Jim feels it’s only crucial with VoIP. Kent – not sure if Washington can afford free standard installation. Jim will remove mention of installation at this time. Brian Hawthorne – Plainfield construction was more than estimated, no money remains so they may go back to the town for additional funds. Kent suggests saying that we will be participating in Lifeline program and give them pointers to information – they will have to sign up – WG&E will be outsourcing management of the program, so there will be a cost – Doug reminds us it can come from CAF II money, since we will only be eligible to participate in Lifeline if we win the CAF II award. Jim removed Lifeline for now. We don’t have fees from WG+E for VoIP only, fees for keeping number for a suspended account. Jim asked to remove “no charge for seasonal suspension” for business & municipal customers. Business pricing proposals are based on WG+E rates – now $100/150/250. Brian Hawthorne – the current WG+E ISP/NO contract includes specified bandwidth, with increased charge if additional bandwidth is required. Doug thinks schools should be separate, they are not part of the municipality, but proposes we charge the school at the municipal rate. Kathy stresses we should inform folks that there will be an MLP fee in addition to the prices we’ve determined. We will create an acceptable use policy.

The pricing document was amended as follows:

* Municipal rate $90/month
* Small business – up to 5 concurrent users $100/month
* Medium business $150/month
* Large Business – up to 50 concurrent users $250/month
* Schools – custom assessment based on population

Motion: To approve WiredWest Pricing for Internet and VoIP Services as amended

Moved: Doug McNally Seconded: Steve Nelson

Approved unanimously, with Plainfield and Becket abstaining.

*Review updated Onboarding document* 30 minutes

Jim handed out an updated copy. WG&E had agreed to add extra customer charges, not sure if they will do individual charges. WG&E has agreed to bill customers for installation, but towns will be billed if customers default. Several towns are reluctant to finance drops – Jim added to the document for discussion with WG&  
E. He has contacted Stripe to see about volume discounts. One possibility is to charge extra for credit cards to cover the processing. Doug – remind folks that this business is our business, so savings minimize our costs.

*Outreach* 30 minutes

**Town updates**  10 minutes

**Other Director Input** 5 minutes

**Confirm and Schedule next BoD meetings**

February 13 (snow date 20)

March 13 (snow date 20)

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

**Adjourn** 9:30pm