

**Minutes**

WiredWest Board of Directors and Executive Committee Meeting

Online

Wednesday, February 17, 2021, 6:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting on your computer

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85143188312?pwd=VFNrVjQ0QVVRNVloODBhaXBhZ0gvQT09

Meeting ID: 851 4318 8312 Passcode: 1S1Z9i

Attending: Doug McNally, Jim Drawe, Don Hall (Windsor alternate), Kent Lew, Jeff Piemont, David Dvore, MaryEllen Kennedy

Called to order at: 6:32 pm

**Approval of the warrant by Executive Committee**  5 minutes

Moved Kent, 2nd David

Roll Call Vote:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Doug McNally | Y |
| David Dvore | Y |
| Kent Lew | Y |
| MaryEllen Kennedy | Y |

**Approval of Minutes** *January 20* 5 minutes

Withdrawn, not distributed. To be approved at next meeting.

**Report from the Executive Director** 10 minutes

Refunds – 5637 completed. Requests have slowed down considerably.

A customer who moved within Washington was not charged another activation fee since the account was the same. Doug suggests we expand this to moves between WW towns. WCF policy for disconnected premise is to leave equipment in place in the house, they do not ask for it to be returned to Town Hall. Jeff suggests we publish this as a policy. WCF did want the router previously but have changed their policy. Kent has collected equipment from some homes – if next resident does not take service, equipment may be lost, some folks have changed passwords on routers. WCF told Jeff they can remotely reset the router. Doug asked Jim to clarify this with WCF.

Distribution spreadsheet – Jeff found a bug in the calculations & Jim has updated and it will be in the Dropbox at the top level (it was in a monthly warrant folder). Overall profit margin is 28%. On the Profit & Loss report, passthrough fees not included are to the MLPs & WCF. We had originally estimated maintenance costs at $75-100/mile but they have been much lower so far, so Jim now is using $50/mile. We’ll have a better idea after a few years but should be pessimistic. We should discuss how much to reserve before distributing excess revenue at the July Board meeting.

David asked about FCC map identifying our towns as WCF, not WiredWest. That is because WCF is reporting to the FCC – form 477. Jim has sent last year’s out to delegates. David notes that sites which show Internet options for our towns do not show that fiber is available, but the FCC does. Kent has contacted realtors about properties which do not show that high speed Internet is available. Doug reminds us that towns should publicize the availability on their websites.

Lisa has replied to Jim, and we should all have access to billing information. He says the aging report is still not correct. Query about EFT vs. credit cards – Jim will see if they can be identified in the P&L.

We have one customer so far with an international calling plan.

Hut monitoring – Jim forwarded the estimates from John Leary. There were several inconsistencies, he has asked John to correct. He has had a followup from JL saying they are doing a home grown solution – Washington will be testing this.

Backhaul bandwidth for towns

Question from Becket – 50% of households are seasonal, so they expect bandwidth needs will double in the summer. They’d like to know if it’s possible to reduce bandwidth, Jim has asked WCF, waiting for an answer.

Doug expects Windsor will need to increase bandwidth within a few months.

Bandwidth is a WiredWest expense, not per town since we had planned on being able to share bandwidth. If that is not what happens, we can revisit the expenses.

Jim displayed the Services and Applications sheets. Becket has almost 50% signups now, Jeff expects it will increase. Many folks are confused about whether they have signed up, adding complications to outreach. He audited the billing and sent some corrections to Arlene. He has had them update the town pages to show that they will be billed for the $99 activation fee. Kent asked if the bill could show it as a WiredWest activation fee.

Drop cost discussion

Doug asked if anyone has gotten good information for drop costs. He is asking for the final cost per drop. Becket plans to do the collections themselves, not through WW or WCF, and will collect before construction. Windsor is planning to do the billing and collections. Kent pointed out that it is more expensive to run fiber through microduct than conduit, so it may be cheaper to install conduit. Doug had one customer who installed a long run of microduct and then was told it was not usable.

Approve Policy for phone during service suspension15 minutes

Jim found 4 customers who have suspended more than 120 day and asked their bills to be changed to phone only charge of $49.99 (not the $19.99 for phone with Internet). Kent says many of his customers would suspend for 6 months and are willing to pay the $99 activation fee. Doug thinks we should not press our users for the extra charge. Kent – current policy is that if not resumed after 1 year, customer will be disconnected. David reminds us that we need approximately $30/customer to cover our expenses, so we may have trouble meeting our costs if we have too many suspended for a long period with phone. Doug suggests we don’t change policy until we have more experience. If the customer does cancel Internet but keeps phone, then they will be charged at phone only rate.

WCF does put in an automatic reconnect 120 days in future.

**Town updates** 15 minutes

Jeff reports Becket construction is 13 days behind schedule. He expects Sertex to assign some extra crews. They are installing MSTs in the first FSA.

Doug – Windsor is now 2 months behind. Doug feels the construction equipment is not suited for the hill towns.

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

Jeff Piemont – question about activation fee. They are concerned that many seasonal folks will be gone for more than 4 months and may choose not to subscribe if they will need to pay an activation fee every year. Kent – WCF charges us a $99 reconnect fee if subscriber is resumes after suspending more than 4 months. But if the customer cancels and then later is re-activated, WW receives the $99. Kent – we could decide not to charge the $99 for activations, though that could be an issue for WCF. WCF told Jeff they do track the names and premises so can identify if it is a previous customer. Jim wants to know if they keep the customer records after cancellation, which they do. Jim thinks we may not need the suspension policy then. If they cancel Internet, the phone charge should increase to stand-alone. Jeff feels it is better to get 2 months rather than none. Jim will write up the policy for approval at next board meeting. Cancellations & suspensions always occur at the end of the billing cycle. Jim notes that WCF no longer has a suspension policy.

**Confirm next BoD meetings**

March 17 6:30pm

Future - every 3rd Wednesday at 6:30pm

**Adjourn** 8:44 pm

Moved Jeff

Seconded David