

**Minutes**

WiredWest Board of Directors and Executive Committee Meeting

Online

Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 6:30 pm

Attending: Doug McNally, Jim Drawe, David Dvore, Kent Lew, Art Schwenger, Sheila Litchfield, Bob Labrie, Don Hall, MaryEllen Kennedy, Kathy Soule-Regine, Jeff Piemont

Guests: Bill Fontes (soon to be Heath MLB member)

Called to order at: 6:31 pm

**Approval of the warrant by Executive Committee**

 Moved: Kent, Seconded: MaryEllen.

 5 minutes

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| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Vote** |
| Doug | Y |
| David | Y |
| Kent | Y |
| MaryEllen | Y |

Result: Approved unanimously

**Approval of Minutes** March 17, 2021

Moved: David Dvore, Seconded: Doug McNally

Result: Approved

**Report from the Executive Director** 10 minutes

Whip City Fiber (WCF) should have sent MLPs a notice about Lifeline before announcing to subscribers. Some folks in Washington have been notified already. WiredWest (WW) has 2 folks on Lifeline so far.

There will be no credits for service disruption.

Jim met with WCF and discussed our preferred cancellation options based on discussion at March 17. WCF does not have ability to do ‘soft’ disconnects. The customer must pay full cost for phone to maintain their number; we can’t have a different rate for this. Customer can disconnect/reconnect anytime within 12 months with no penalty. Over 12 months, must pay the $99 fee to WiredWest. (WW policy) WCF is willing to pro-rate charges for partial months (start/end), but we get the wholesale monthly charges in full.

The letter written by Jim and sent to MBI and other Commonwealth officials about middle mile lack of resilience was also signed by 15 MLP Managers (including all 6 WiredWest MLPs). There was also a news story in the Berkshire Eagle. They encouraged us to do an op-ed, so Jim is working on it.

CRM access – all MLP managers have access. WCF is working on reports, possibly with ability to customize.

Jim heard from an auditor who is willing to work for us. Jim has sent them information and will meet with them next week.

Revenue - Last month $30,358 up $7,000 from previous month. This fiscal year to date $226,026.

Remaining deposits from Worthington to escheat next month.

Environmental monitoring – some testing in Washington. Jim asked for feedback on how they are testing. Kent reports no camera, key fob or communication backup yet. Jim has heard WCF is going to bid for a monitoring service. WW does not want to do our own solution, because WCF should be receiving the alarms and dispatching. Kent proposes Jim ask WCF to do initial troubleshooting on alarms before calling the contacts. Doug – Joe Parda says having the camera will help in doing that initial check.

Retainage for emergency crews – cost/mile is fluid. WCF still negotiating the new contract. WCF will cover FSAs as they come online.

We have 5 months until the end of current WCF contract.

Billing – Rowe had 3 potential disconnects, 1 didn’t respond, but paid up after disconnect. Jim will get a report on disconnects 24 hours before, will inform MLP Managers. They can throttle to VoIP speed for 1 month and will only charge the Ooma price.

Tree trimming – other non-WW towns have been asking WCF about this. WCF is willing to include the towns but will be subject to prevailing wage. Asplundh said WW would have to pay that rate. Kent – prevailing wage for utility work is less than for street work. Kathy notes that MBI should be doing maintenance on their lines. Jim is working to have Asplundh meet with towns to do ride outs to assess the scope of work. Doug, as town official, calls Eversource about any issues and they respond quickly.

Digsafe – waiting for as built for Washington & New Salem. Jim will share with the towns.

**Approve Policy for phone during service suspension**

If Internet Service is cancelled, the customer must pay the full monthly phone charge to maintain phone service, not the price when included with Internet. This was our policy already so does not need a vote.

**Policy for customer cancelation of internet and/or phone and reinstatement.**

 Discussion and possible vote.

Replace suspension policy w/ cancellation policy (above)

David would like to see a minimum of 1 month after resuming. MEK – we’ll still be charged per month the same, so don’t think we should pro-rate. Kent – if we pro-rate, should have 1 month minimum.

Motion to adopt the following cancellation policy: customers can cancel for up to 12 months without a charge on resuming service, over 12 months there will be a $99 re-activation charge. (They are considered new customers)

Moved: Doug, Seconded: David

Result: Motion passes with 1 opposed

Doug moved that we make it retroactive, David seconded.

Result: motion passes

**Prorated final bills** - discussion and possibly vote on policy

Motion “We will not prorate bills”

Moved: Doug, Seconded: Sheila

Result: motion passes

Jim thinks there may be a consumer protection issue. He will check with Deidre.

**Letter to MBI on network reliability** – passed over, letter has gone out.

**Annual billing for municipal accounts**.

Jim checked on annual billing for municipal customers. Arlene says that is a problem due to how WCF bills, so they must continue to be billed monthly.

**Finance Report**

Jim has put the financial information in drop box. Send Jim the names and email addresses of any new folks who need access. The customer signup information is there also. Over all about 17% are taking the 25Mb service, 37% (?) taking phone.

Refund status

4 in the last month.

**Town updates**

Heath – Sheila is online!

Becket – The first FSA has been turned over to WCF for testing. There still are make ready issues in first FSA, preventing connection to several homes.

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

Note: next EC meeting is on Thursday, May 6

**Confirm next BoD meetings**

June 16 6:30pm

July 20 6:30pm

Future - every 3rd Wednesday at 6:30pm

Doug moved we go into Executive Session to discuss an issue of personnel and not return to regular session. Kent seconded.

Motion passed unanimously

**Adjourned** 8:10pm