

**Minutes**

WiredWest Board of Directors and Executive Committee Meeting

Online

September 1, 2021

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

Guests: David Gordon (Heath), John Jones (Windsor), Jessica Drawe (for warrant questions)

Called to order at: 6:30

**Approval of Minutes by Executive Committee**

August 4, 2021

Moved: Kent, Second: David

Result: Approved unanimously

**Approval of the warrant by Executive Committee**

Moved: Doug, Second: MaryEllen

Discussion: Kent reported that for a custom install in Rowe, the amount changed due to billing error. (line 2258 in warrant) – but it should not be billed. Kent also notes that some items in the WCF bills were changed by Jessica – she has noted a change in the backhaul expense that she was not paying (since it was contractual), but then added a make up payment since it’s been unresolved with WCF.

Kent made a motion to amend – strike line 2258, amend 2261 by adding $10 to match WCF bill. Seconded by MaryEllen. Amendment approved unanimously

Vote on warrant as amended:

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

**Approval of Minutes**

 August 18, 2021

Moved: Sheila, Second: Jeff

Discussion: MaryEllen added “not” to David’s feeling about WCF

Result: approved unanimously.

**Hut monitoring**

Jim reported that the email he received from Joe Parda included things which should be noted and addressed. Jim forwarded to Tom Fitzgerald of WCF but has had no response yet. It Included other vendors & WCF managing fobs for building access. Joe P said his company would be willing to manage the fobs. Proposal by Cebula – monthly monitoring $18/month (other company $55). Installation costs seem similar. Possibly have neighbor town as customer to allow for signaling if Internet connection went down – about $1,000 extra. Jim feels they would be acceptable. Doug – the ability to monitor the generator was included in huts that town purchased – Windsor, Heath & another town were tested. He spoke to Joe P – this may be included. Towns have just been informed that Kinsley was mistakenly billing United Concrete for generator maintenance, they are contacting towns for billing information. Doug feels the Cebula proposal meets our requirements and reminds us that we could use ARPA (Covid) funds for the installation costs. These funds can’t be used for operational costs, but will cover improvements to service, security, resilience. Jim sent the Cebula proposal to delegates on August 20. Kent questioned whether their generator (bought separately) would be monitored. Sheila met with Heath SelectBoard last week and found that the only construction costs which are not eligible for ARPA are debt payments. DLS is the contact for this and have been telling towns to use this money for Broadband. Only costs incurred after March 31, 2021 are eligible.

**Backhaul resilience** 10 minutes

Doug says Tom Fitzgerald’s estimate for the cost to a town would be about $20-25,000. This would also be an allowable expense under ARPA. Kent reports that ARPA money is distributed in 2 buckets: directly to town from treasury or allocated to counties (apportioned to individual towns). It is to be dispersed in 2 tranches: 1 in FY22, 1 in FY23.

All towns participating are grouped in clusters by geography. WW towns are in 3 different clusters, which also include non-WW towns. In the central cluster, all towns want to proceed with phase 1. Cost estimate is up to $25,000, but may be less if some parts already done – e.g. fibers meeting and spliced. This is MLP business, which does not need to be signed by the Selectboard: the MLP Manager has ability to sign contracts. The Selectboard should be informed (Doug – and reminded that it can be covered by ARPA). WCF had sent a document to sign for phase 1, so it should be sent back to them to initiate the process. We have asked to be included in the planning process during Phase 1. Jim thinks implementing the MBI second circuit may be taking time from the Phase 1 planning, but this is already underway. It could be up to a year before the more resilient network could be implemented. New Salem is waiting for an updated proposal including Leverett, Jim will inquire but says it’s good for the towns to push independently.

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

Jim has followed up with Tom on the new contract and reminded him of our “favored nation” status, so we are being offered a lower price for the renewed contract. Jim feels we may be able to complete the contract by next month.

**Confirm next BoD meetings**

September 15 6:30pm

October 20 6:30pm

November 17 6:30pm

Future - every 3rd Wednesday at 6:30pm

**Adjourn** 7:41pm

**Jeff**

**Sheila**