

**Minutes**

 WiredWest Board of Directors Meeting

Online

Wednesday, December 6, 2023, 6:30 pm

**Attending:** Doug McNally, Sheila Litchfield, David Dvore, Kent Lew, MaryEllen Kennedy, Bob Labrie, Jeremy Dunn, Don Hall, Jim Drawe, Simon Zelazo, Kathy Soule-Regine

**Guests:**

**Called to order at:** 6:32 pm

**Approval of Warrant #11**

Moved: Kent moved to approve the revised warrant for a total of $70,046.88.

Seconded: David

Discussion: Jeremy notes that many repairs are done after hours and wondered if we have discussed this with WCF. Kent recalls we have talked to them. Jim, sometimes repairs started during normal hours and carried over, sometimes customer must be there and is only available at night, some repairs are critical. Sheila reminds us that customers losing Internet may also lose phone service. Doug – service is advertised as 7x24.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Member Town** | **Vote** |
| Becket | Y |
| Heath | Y |
| New Salem | Y |
| Rowe | Y |
| Washington | Y |
| Windsor | Y |

Result: approved unanimously

Kent reminds us that Jessica reported there was a negative balance with Becket. Jim would prefer that we invoice Becket for the overpayment for drop fees.

Moved: Sheila moved that WW should bill Becket for the overpayment.

Seconded: Kent

Discussion:

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| --- | --- |
| **Member Town** | **Vote** |
| Becket | Y |
| Heath | Y |
| New Salem | Y |
| Rowe | Y |
| Washington | Y |
| Windsor | Y |

Result: approved unanimously.

David reports that the Bluehost charges on the warrant were already paid. The domains wiredwestfiber.net and wiredwestfiber.com will be transferred to our ownership within a couple of days.

**Approval of Minutes**

November 15, 2023

Moved: Kent

Seconded: David D.

Discussion: 1 reported typo was corrected.

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| --- | --- |
| **Member Town** | **Vote** |
| Becket | Y |
| Heath | Y |
| New Salem | Y |
| Rowe | Y |
| Washington | Y |
| Windsor | Y |

Result: approved unanimously

**Executive Director’s Report**

Jim sent notes to the delegates. The audit of FY22 is complete and was sent to delegates. The FY23 audit is started and should be ready in the first quarter of 2024. Jim and Kent are working to get more information on how WCF decides if repairs are caused by customers. Jim has asked for quotes for fiber reels to be returned to WCF and the cost to pick them up.

**Payment plans for new installations**

Some towns can’t pay the cost of installations now if customers want a payment plan. Kent proposes that WW could front the customer cost of the installation to the town, though there is a credit risk. It is in the interest of the business to take this risk. Jim will write a process for discussion at the next meeting. He was thinking about a 10-month maximum, with a minimum of $50/month.

**Investment Diversity**

Bob reports that we have $465,000 in our checking account. The initial plan was to open an account with Fidelity containing multiple CDs which would mature around when we do distributions to the towns in August. When we transfer money, it will be held briefly in a money market account (not insured), so Bob wants Fidelity to discuss what our exposure is. David – Fidelity has an insured core account with a lower interest rate.

Kent – Jeff Piemont was the 3rd member of the Investment Subcommittee, he’s no longer a delegate, so they need an additional member. Doug is willing if no one else is. Kent will ask Bob Gross.

**Resume Executive Session**

To discuss contract negotiations. We will go back to regular session when it is recessed.

Moved: Sheila

Seconded: Kent

Discussion:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Member Town** | **Vote** |
| Becket | Y |
| Heath | Y |
| New Salem | Y |
| Rowe | Y |
| Washington | Y |
| Windsor | Y |

Result: Resumed Regular Session at 7:17PM

**RRR update**

Doug sent out the IRU contract to Central Cluster members, has had no response yet. Jeremy suggests that he look at the documents used by Northern and Southern Clusters.

**Finance Report**

About $18,000 under budget on expenses, $15,000 over budget on revenue.

Jim has asked WCF to publicize Digsafe – we’ve had at least 2 incidents of contractors digging up fiber because they did not check. WCF is working on a notice for customers on being charged for problems they cause and will include a note about Digsafe to improve customer awareness of the need for checking.

**Town updates**

Jeremy reports Eversource is doing a large electrical project, installing new poles in Becket and Washington. They are unsure who will move the fiber, not wanting Eversource to do the work and are meeting with WCF about it. No costs are anticipated, since Eversource is causing the move but the towns might have to pay if we have contractors do the work and then bill Eversource. Doug discussed the ‘one touch’ process, where one utility does all the moves. Eversource did a similar job in Windsor, and they moved the fiber. Kent asked if the replacements were close to the current pole, in this project they seem to be changing the locations of poles. They are installing taller poles with shorter spans.

Sheila reports National Grid is doing a 5-year plan for tree trimming in Heath, starting in January. Heath tree warden is doing the rideouts with Grid.

Jim is meeting with some of the Northern Berkshire towns who are interested in fiber and looking at federal funding. They are all Spectrum towns.

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

**Confirm next BoD meetings**

December 20, 6:30pm

January 3 2024, 6:30pm

Future – every 1st & 3rd Wednesday at 6:30pm

**Adjourn** moved Sheila, seconded Kent 8:12 pm