

**Minutes**

WiredWest Board of Directors Meeting

Online

Wednesday, May 15, 2024, 6:30 pm

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

**Guests:**

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

**Approval of Minutes**

May 1, 2024

Moved: Sheila

Seconded: Kent

Discussion:

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

Result: approved

**Approval of Warrant #22**

Moved: Kent moved to approve the warrant in the amount of $129,479.70

Seconded: Sheila

Discussion:

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

Result: approved

**Discuss and vote on customer repair billing policy**

Jim shared his proposed policy online. Kent asked if we should include problems which were not foreseeable or avoidable. Doug – these policies often allow for customers to appeal. Jamie Cincotta stated that some MLP managers have elected not to charge the customer, he’s hoping a policy would help with consistency. Jeremy would like to see customer negligence included in the wording, but Jim proposes that action could cover it. Jeremy reminds us that there are network extensions that go on customer property but are considered part of the distribution fiber. The proposed policy does not include those cases. Doug suggests we approve the policy and then send it to Jamie for review and feedback.

The proposed text shared by Jim:

Whenever the on-site repair tech determines that the breakage was the direct result of a customer’s action or the action of a customer’s contractor, the customer shall be billed for the repair. If the cost of the repair is greater than $500 the customer may choose to finance the repair cost over 6 months.

Moved: Sheila moved that we approve the repair billing policy.

Seconded: David D

Discussion:

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

Result: approved

**Executive Director and Finance Report**

Please read Jim’s notes in advance and ask any questions during this time.

Sheila asked about CAFII statement – are we asking WCF to change the charges? Jim – yes, he has been pushing for towns to be charged proportionally based on the proportions of the expected award. Kathy asked if there was any update on expected distributions – Jim replied not until the Letter of Credit was resolved with the Commonwealth – this has been done. Doug expects a larger reduction due to towns which did not participate (Florida,e.g.). Brian told Sheila that he will give the WW town information to Jim, not to the towns. David D got an estimate – the reduction was not huge.

David D. reports that the rideouts have begun.

Jeremy reports that Eversource has completed work in Washington and is halfway through Becket. The poles won’t hit NJUNS until work is complete. Unsure if the MBI fiber would be moved at the same time as the towns’. The poles in Becket are solely owned by Eversource. Doug reports that Verizon does not remove poles or move their wires. Kent reports that the Municipal Empoofwerment Act includes ability of towns to force removal of double poles. Jim reminds us that Eversource will pay for pole moves, but National Grid will not. WW will cover the cost of moves required by NG.

Jim reports the MBI will be billing Windsor for backhaul charges that were missed.

Jim asks us to think about offering 2.5Gb service – after we are ready with newer ONTs and upgraded SFPs in the 7310? Kent – we may not need to replace all SFPs – could install higher capacity SFP in a spare slot and connect customers who want higher speeds there. Doug feels that people are happy with the service now that RRR has been implemented and that we don’t need to invest in network upgrades. He suggests replacing ONTs as needed with 2.5G capable ONTs. Jim feels that 10% of customers would be interested in 2.5G for $100/month – and it could be done incrementally. David sees surplus CAFII funds at the end of the distribution which must be used for broadband. Kent would like to see the costs. Jim reminds us that depreciation reserve funds could be used. He will work on determining the costs.

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

Becket needs to inform the bank of how much they will pay for the debt by July 21. He’d like to know when we will have the distribution amounts. Jim – after the books are closed for June, Jessica works on this starting about July 10 – he will try to have it in time, but can’t promise.

Jeremy reports that WW has about $130,000 in customer signup fees for Becket. This was designed for cash reserves, but now we have a line of credit. Do we need a safety net this large? This will be put on the agenda for a later meeting. Kent - the investment subcommittee was charged with developing an investment policy, including for the reserves. At the time, it was felt that the amount we are reserving was correct. Doug – the reserve added to the line of credit is needed to cover WCF’s request for disaster coverage. Jim – the agreement with WGE includes paying in advance in a disaster situation and WCF expects us to cover those costs. Kathy doesn’t think the non-WW towns are prepared to pay and may not be aware of that clause.

David asked about signing the Service Agreement. Jim – fill in first page and signature page, send to the clerk. The last page should have the MLP name and address.

Jim - the agreement says we MAY provide payroll, but we are not able to do it at this time.

**Confirm next BoD meetings**

June 5, 6:30pm

June 19, 6:30pm

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

**Adjourn** 7:38pm Sheila moved, Jeremy seconded, approved by voice vote.