

1 **Northwest Communications Union District**
2 **October 13, 2020 DRAFT Minutes**
3 **Virtual Meeting (Zoom Meeting ID: 878 3758 0469)**
4

5 **Attendance:** Emily Klofft (NRPC), Sean Kio, Chair (Enosburgh), Christopher Cota, Vice-Chair (Fairfax), Stu
6 McGowan (Alburgh Alt), Domin DeRosia (Berkshire Rep), Catherine Dimitruk (NRPC), Everett McGinley
7 (Montgomery), Tara Wright (Georgia Alt.), and Shaun Coleman (NRPC).
8

9 **Call to Order and Adjustments to the Agenda**

10 Chair S. Kio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. No adjustments to the agenda.
11

12 **Roll Call**

13 See Attendance above.
14

15 **Approval of Minutes**

16 *E. McGinley motioned to approve the minutes. C. Cota seconded. Motion carried.*
17

18 **Treasurer's Report and Bank Account - NRPC**

19 C. Dimitruk reported the bank account is open. The \$10,000 grant to NRPC from the Vermont Community
20 Foundation for the CUD has been deposited into the account. Catherine, Chris and Sean are signatories on the
21 account.
22

23 *C. Cota motioned to make payments on insurance (\$4,660) and website services (\$156). E. McGinley seconded. Motion
24 carried.*
25

26 There will be \$5,184 in the account after the payments have been made.

27 There will written reports for future meetings.

28 We will also go over some draft financial procedures so the CUD doesn't have to have a meeting to pay invoices.
29 NRPC has created a Quickbooks account for the CUD and once the CUD is self-sufficient the account information
30 can easily be transferred.
31

32 **Broadband Innovation Grant RFP**

33 E. Klofft presented the draft RFP for the \$60,000 grant. NRPC is the grant recipient with the intent that the CUD is
34 supporting this. It includes \$30,000 for feasibility study (3 months) and \$30,000 for business plan (3 months).
35 Hoping to select a consultant by November. The grant deadline is end of March but we may be able to get an
36 extension to a year but it will require legislative action. No guarantee.

37 *E. McGinley motioned to accept the RFP. T. Wright seconded. Motion carried.*
38

39 **CUD Subcommittees**

40 S. Cota reported a Doodle Poll was sent out to members for subcommittee sign-up but only 3 responded. Potential
41 assignments based on interest/response include:

- 42 • Finance – Sean Kio, Everette McGinley and Stu McGowan
- 43 • Communications/Marketing – Chris Cota, Moustaffa Mends-Cole
- 44 • Project Management/Operations – Everette McGinley, Moustaffa Mends-Cole

45 The subcommittee meetings are public meetings and have to be publicly warned.
46

47 **Wi-Fi Hotspots**

1 S. Kio reported that not all communities have submitted their locations. Public Safety offering another round of
2 funding. The goal is to target communities that didn't apply the first round. PSD approved the CUD funding
3 additional spots for communities that already applied. CUD cannot piggy back with state on vendor selection. Need
4 three responses for RFP (State vendor, Clear Bearing in Williston, plus another).

5
6 *S. McGowan motioned for Chair to review and accept quotes of vendors.*

7 Tara asked how long the hotspots are good for. Sean explained that the State vendor supplies equipment as well as
8 5-year license to operate plus installation. After 5 years, the equipment is likely at the end of life. Maintenance
9 would fall on the town. It could be installed inside or outside.

10 There was a discussion about choosing locations.

11
12 *C. Cota seconded. Motion carried.*

13 14 **Legal**

15 S. Kio reported that there is an individual making a lot of public records requests from VCUDA. There was general
16 discussion and support for having an attorney on retainer. Other CUDs share an attorney which would be
17 beneficial.

18
19 Tara noted at a recent VCUDA meeting a vote was taking place on funding for CUDs. She did not take action because
20 the NWCUD hadn't discussed the action item. All concurred with her decision.

21 22 **Fiscal Agent/Procurement**

23 S. Kio noted that will come with time when we have assigned a Treasurer.

24 25 **Round 2 Covid Planning Grant**

26 S. Kio shared his screen and reviewed Department of Public Service's RFP. This is a competitive round for up to
27 \$100,000. We can put in a proposal if we think we can spend the funds by the end of the year. E. Klofft noted that
28 anything funded now has to lead to some sort of improvement in broad band access such as the Fairfax Community
29 Center wi-fi deployment. It cannot be used for pole data surveys. It can fund activities retroactively to March 20 for
30 community expenses related to extra connectivity or drops.

31
32 There was a discussion about whether or not the District should apply. It is unknowns what additional connectivity
33 costs are for municipalities across the District without a survey. Shaun noted that many communities applied for
34 such expenses through the Local Government Expense Report. Chris concluded by noting that having listened to
35 hours and hours of Senate Finance Technology Committee meetings, they are watching the money closely. If we get
36 funded and can't do something that benefits the community then it will detrimental in terms of our attempts to get
37 future funding. We should have a business case to support a request for funding.

38 39 **CUD Roadmap**

40 C. Cota recommended having some milestones. He offered to develop a draft 6 month project plan for vote for the
41 next meeting. All agreed.

42 43 **Special Meeting Roundup**

44 S. Kio said the Special Meetings are to learn about other businesses and how they operate. It is not an attempt to
45 lobby them to join. It is more for Q&A. There was a late comment at the last special meeting about data sharing. The
46 survey is paid for by state funding so care must be given about how the data is handled. C. Cota added we are not
47 trying to negotiate anything and we need to careful of preferential treatment to avoid a conflict of interest.

1
2 Chris is waiting to hear back from other local companies to invite them to future Speical Meetings.

3
4 **CUD Planning Grant Survey**

5 Work still needs to be done for the survey. Sean and Chris are working on the questions. Chris is talking to Rob
6 about a GIS survey. Moustaffa offered to assist. Everette still working on the VEC raw data. Not a lot of responses
7 from those that were surveyed.

8
9 **Department of Public Service Update**

10 No report.

11
12 **Other Business**

13 VCUDA: NWCUD is not a voting member. VCUDA does not represent NWCUD and does not speak on our behalf.
14 Once VCUDA works out their organizational issues, NWCUD will have to take a formal action whether to join or not.

15
16 Website: Sean presented the newly created website. <http://www.nwcud.com>.

17
18 Annual Report and Budget: E. Klofft presented the FY20 annual budget and Annual report that required by statute.
19 A copy of the report and budget will be sent to the legislative body of members for comment. By November 15th a
20 public meeting must be held to receive comments on budget. On or before December 15, the NWCUD must adopt
21 the budget and obligate the funds.

22 *C. Cota motioned to approve draft budget to send to municipalities for comments. E. McGinley seconded. Motion*
23 *carried.*

24 *C. Cota motioned to approve the FY20 Annual Report. E. McGinley seconded. Motion carried.*

25
26 **Member Updates**

27 Members referred to previous agenda items for their updates.

28
29 S. Coleman noted that NRPC completed the public wi-fi survey for location, ISP, range of signal strength,
30 upload/download speed and site POC.

31
32 **Public Comment**

33 None.

34
35 **Adjourn**

36 *E. McGinley motioned to adjourn. C. Cota seconded. Motion carried.*

37
38 Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.
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