

Southern Vermont Communication District Board

Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2021

Table 1 Roll Call

Town Name	Representative Name	Voting = V Present = P Absent = A	Alternate Name	Voting = V Present = P Absent = A	2 nd Alternate Name	Voting = V Present = P Absent = A
Arlington	Cynthia Browning	A	Matt Bykowski	A		
Bennington	Eric Hatch	V	Ron Dubreul	A	Beth Hardesty	A
Dorset	Mike Chase	V	Jim Salsgiver	P	Mike Oltedal	
Landgrove	Jim Swartzentruber	A	Susan Lenox	A		
Londonderry	Jeff Such	V	John Hankin	A		
Manchester	Terrence Dorsey	V	Kathleen James	A		
Peru	Alex Sheets	A	Peter Bradford	A		
Pownal	Caitlin Randall	A	Karlan Eberhardt	V		
Rupert	Bill Meyer	V	Jed Ruben	P	Charles Rockwell	A
Sandgate	Sheila Kearns	V	Betsy Rathbun-Gunn	A		
Shaftsbury	Tim Scoggins	V	Michael Corey	P	James Salerno	
Sunderland	Mark Hyde	V	Andrew McKeever	A		
Winhall	Fred Scwacke	V				
Woodford	Michael Charette	A				

Also present: Bill Fisk, Treasurer; Tom Collard: Pawlet / Otter Valley CUD; Callie Fishburn: BCRC; Logan Wuerslin: Sandgate

1. Call to Order

Jeff Such called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm..

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

None

3. Roll Call

Jeff Such conducted roll call; a quorum of the Board was present.

4. Conflict of Interest

None

5. Review and Approval of Minutes

Jeff Such moved to approve the [02/03/2021 meeting minutes](#) as revised, seconded by Mark Hyde. Motion passed unanimously.

Jeff Such moved to approve the [04/14/2021 meeting minutes](#) as written, seconded by Karlan Eberhardt. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Public Comments

None

7. Announcements

a) New Website

Jeff Such announced the new website is live and encouraged members to direct people to the site. All the public documents for agendas and meetings will be posted and can be accessed from the website (<https://sovtcud.net/>) rather than only being through the shared Google drive.

b) Annual Meeting

Jeff Such reminded the Board the Annual Meeting will be held on May 11th and the appointment of officers will occur. The nomination for Treasurer will be taken from the floor. Jeff asked the Board members to remind Select Boards when they are ready to send in their appointments.

8. Finance Update

a) Decision to Allocate Funds for SAM Registration

Jeff Such moved to ask the Southern Vermont Governing Board to allocate \$600 for SAM Registration and authorize the treasurer to disperse the funds, seconded by Mark Hyde. Jeff Such updated the Board that SAM Registration is a national database by which entities much register to receive Federal grants. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Pending Treasurer Vacancy

Jeff Such announced that Bill Fisk prefers not to run for Treasurer reappointment, he will continue a short-term basis until the Board finds a replacement. Tim Scoggins suggested contacting Town treasurer's that only work part-time. Jeff Such suggested Jim Salsgiver to consider the appointment. Jim Salsgiver said he does not have the capacity to take it on but would be willing to help out in some way.

9. Chair's Report

a) Legislative Update

Jeff Such updated the Board that H.360 is still pending in the Senate Finance Committee. Jeff Such by the next scheduled meeting there should be an outline and more information around what is being put out in the bill.

b) H.315 Grant Application

Jeff Such reported this grant has also been delayed. The DPS is waiting for guidance, however they are going to put out an RFI (request for information) to start ramping up the grant request. Jeff added the high-level design and cost analysis will still move forward. Jeff answered questions from the Board around firms that were considered for high-level designs.

c) PPP Discussions with Potential Executive Session [1 V.S.A. § 313}

Jeff Such would like to continue discussions around public private partnerships and reminded Board members Southern Vermont CUD is covered under multiple NDAs as well as confidentiality requirements so there is potentially a need for Executive Session. Jeff added the Board has continued to engage with existing carrier in the region to entice them to build out existing or planned infrastructure towards the last mile to ensure all residents of the district are covered and have access to connectivity.

Discussion

Fred Swacke has serious concerns around the direction Southern VT CUD is moving forward and that it is not committed to finding a prompt, cost effective solution for connectivity to every child, family, and small business in his area as they are focused on fiber. Fred Swacke talked about wireless and other options for connectivity and suggested fully exploring a hybrid solution. Eric Hatch stated the Board has spent a lot of time, effort, and good will to provide universal coverage. Karlan Eberhardt talked about wireless and explained if you have clear line of sight it works, but any obstructions, corners or poor weather makes wireless ineffective, and he doesn't see it working. Mark Hyde would like to Board to focus on doing one thing well that can be achieved in a reasonable amount of time. Logan Wuerslin added wireless is not sustainable for Vermont and can not deliver what fiber can. Jeff Such agreed the Board should continue to focus on universal coverage and a long-term solution. Jeff added there are short term solutions out there and the CUD has directed people to those resources. The Board discussed the Business Plan. Fred Swacke confirmed he would be willing to put in legwork for a hybrid solution if the Board would consider that option. The Board agreed to table any further discussion around hybrid solutions until further information from legislation comes in as they may not even be funding for an option

like this.

10. Other Business

None

11. Adjournment

Bill Meyer moved to adjourn, seconded by Tim Scoggins. Motion passed, unanimously. Meeting adjourned.