

Southern Vermont Communications Union District

Draft Meeting Minutes

November 8, 2023

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	Jamie Paustian	A		
Bennington	Eric Hatch	V	Ron Dubreuil	A	Beth Hardesty	A
Dorset	Mike Chase	A	Jim Salsgiver	A	Bob Meszaros	V
Landgrove	Jim Swartzentruber	A	Susan Lenox	A		
Londonderry	John Hankin	V	James Wilbur	A		
Manchester	Terrence Dorsey	V	Kathleen James	A		
Peru	Ben Foltz	A	Peter Bradford	A		
Pownal	Caitlin Randall	A	Karlan Eberhardt	A		
Rupert	Bill Meyer	V	Jed Rubin	P	Arlene Bentley	P
Sandgate	Sheila Kearns	V	Betsy Rathbun-Gunn	A	Logan Weurslin	A
Shaftsbury	Tim Scoggins	V	Michael Corey	A		
Sunderland	Andrew McKeever	A				
Winhall	Fred Schwacke	A				
Woodford						

Also present: Jonathan Cooper (BCRC), Lissa Stark (Winhall Town Administrator)

1. Call to order
The chair called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM.
2. Roll call
Sheila Kearns called roll. A quorum of the board was not present.
3. Conflict of interest
None
4. Additions to or deletions from the agenda [1 V.S.A. § 312]
Tim Scoggins asked to discuss the press release under "Other Business"
5. Review and approval of draft minutes from October 18, 2023
Postponed due to lack of quorum

6. Public comments

Lissa Stark stated that she is here listening in on behalf of the Town of Winhall to get updated on CUD activities.

7. Announcements

None

8. FY23 Annual Report Hearing

No comments on the annual report. Approval of the annual report will be postponed due to lack of quorum.

9. Appointment of New Treasurer

Postponed due to lack of quorum. Jessica Grimm-Lyon has agreed to become the new treasurer, pending formal appointment by the board.

10. Appointment of VCUDA Representative

Postponed due to lack of quorum. Terry Dorsey would be the SoVT CUD representative, with Jonathan Cooper as the alternate. Current topics being discussed at VCUDA meetings include procuring shared financial services, and policy and legislative changes pertaining to CUDs and the VCBB.

11. Creation and Distribution of an Info Card

Questions have come up about where to direct people who have questions about broadband deployment. Terry would like to develop an info card with contact information for the SoVT CUD, Fidium and links to resources like the Affordable Connectivity program. Cards would be printed and given to board members to distribute in the community. Tim suggested a business card with the name and contact information for specific board members. Terry will research price options for business cards and discuss at a future meeting.

12. Construction and Phase 3 Updates

BCRC is continuing outreach to Phase 3 addresses and has received a handful of responses from property owners in Arlington and Pownal. Phase 2 is nearing completion; meetings with CCI have switched to biweekly, and they are preparing closeout materials to submit to VCBB. Upon completion of Phase 2, the CUD will own the fiber paid for with Act 71 funds and will be subject to a single audit in 2024. Terry has begun looking into resources for getting a single audit.

Bill Meyer asked for an update on service eligibility for residences on Mt. Antone Rd in Rupert. Terry has discussed this with Brian Lim of CCI and they are looking into it. The

addresses should be eligible for service; CCI needs to coordinate with its engineering team to identify the obstacles to installation.

13. Other Business

Tim has been advocating for a press release announcing 95% fiber coverage in Bennington County. CCI has developed a press release for the CUD to distribute but it does not mention the 95% coverage, and instead describes universal coverage. Terry reviewed the latest draft of the press release with the board. He believes it is important for SoVT CUD to frame its work in the context of the statewide effort to expand broadband access. Once the press release has been finalized, the CUD is free to distribute it as it sees fit.

Sheila is planning a presentation at the library in Arlington to discuss the basics of broadband and the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Motion to adjourn by Tim Scoggins, seconded by Bill Meyer. Passed unanimously.