

NEWBURY TELECOMMUNICATIONS
RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE DISTRICT.

Monday, October 8, 2018 4:30 PM, Tenney Library,
Newbury Village

Newbury REDInet Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by Claude at 4:35 PM.

Board members Present: Ed Childs, Claude Phipps, Nate Dudenhoeffer, Chip Conquest, Brad Vietje, Lenice Cicchini

Community members present: Richard Pollack (joined meeting about 5 PM).

- 1. Updates to Agenda:** Nate would like to present a visualized summary of what Newbury Redinet wants and ways to get there. See No. 11.
- 2. Note taker:** KEN 10/8 (Lenice 10/22, Nate 11/12, Ed 11/26, Chip 12/10)
- 3. Approval of Minutes:** August 27 and September 10 minutes approved.
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer not present. No report.
- 5. Clerk's Report:** Brad urged everyone to comment and help edit the Statement of Intent draft document shared via Google Drive. This document is needed to get to Brett Long, who wishes to help Newbury REDInet.
- 6. Sub-Committee Reports:** Claude thinks (given funds) we might have gone forward with an engineering study to learn the practical side of this enterprise. Nate explains again why we need to agree on a vision before negotiating with a partner. Brad agrees volubly. Vision, now called a Document of Intent, should include non-negotiable items and our goals. This document, under discussion for two or three meetings now, is supposed to emerge from individual contributions by committee members to a common Google document, followed by a live meeting to evaluate and organize the resulting material, followed by editing, approval and eventually dissemination to possible supporters or partners of Newbury REDInet.

a. **Consolidated Design Contract, Partnership with Consolidated Communications (CCI), draft contract.** All suspended.

CCI and Dover Merger. Chip reports on discussion with Laura Sabilia of Dover. No partnership set up and no clarification of who owns which assets. Service agreement vs. ownership question remains open.

b. **Technology.**

c. **Finance**

e. **Publicity**

f. **Proposed Amendment Statute**

7. **Brett Long follow-up:**

a. **Tom Porter VEDA Forgivable Loan.** As explained two meetings ago when Mr. Long, Deputy Commissioner of Vermont's Department of Economic Development, visited Newbury, this term means a loan written to become a grant if the borrower defaults. Lenice cites this funding possibility as yet another reason we must rapidly prepare a Document of Intent and convey it to Mr. Long.

b. **Linda Rossi, Ross Hart VT SBDC:** Brad has called Ross Hart of the Vermont Small Business Development Center, who may come to the next meeting. (Linda Rossi is the state director) If not, a group could go to his office during regular business hours.

c. **Document of Interest.** Now redefined as Document of Intent.

d. **Subscriber Commitment Funds.** Claude continues to support proceeding without subscriber commitments at this stage. We haven't the possible business contributions that EC Fiber in Norwich was able to gather, but of course good to have *some* money in hand when approaching a lending institution. Chip thinks a group of committed subscribers, say at \$50 each, would help a lot – not to be used for an engineering study.

di.

Are we still interested in distributing surveys? To anticipate costs, we don't need a technical survey, and other purposes of a survey are not well served without a financial component. Money collected as a deposit toward a customer account may have to be held in escrow, so they could be returned, if necessary. Donations to help us build the project would not.

8. Green Mountain Power. Possible partner? Nate does not think there's much possibility here, but Chip will contact Robert Dostis (GMP Stakeholder Relations and New Product), also perhaps Kristen Carlson (Strategic and Regulatory Affairs).

9. ECFiber and Valley Net. ECF is not going to expand but VN is glad to work with Newbury REDInet and is active in Lyme. Not a source of capital but could get the job done (they did for ECF). They could hang on CCI poles and operate lines that Newbury REDInet would own. They cannot imagine Newbury REDInet owning lines overlashing CCI lines.

10. Subscriber Surveys. See 7d.

11. Operating Business Models. Nate showed a sequence of verbal outlines listing all that might be needed to build the Newbury REDInet enterprise and also graphically displayed a range of possible business structures that might work, to the enthusiastic general approval of the meeting. (This presentation in fact took place at the end of the meeting. The slide show is posted at the URL following.)

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1BGYajSpcc8_L4a4TFO8G7UInbK2qSfxy7X_elSgriLO/edit?invite=CNefgMcJ&ts=5bbbd925#slide=id.p

12. Matte Dunne. Chip reports that Matte Dunne, former software company marketer, Vermont legislator and Google community affairs director, and now the executive director of the Center on Rural Innovation in Hartland, is willing to join one of our meetings. What would Matt be able to tell Newbury REDInet? He's very familiar with the Internet world and rural development (see his article in *Wired*). Ed Childs wonders if our purposes might be obviated by the possibility of federal or state action. Unlikely, is the collective response of the rest of the group. But then how to focus our political energies? Perhaps another question for Matt. Scheduling discussion for a Matt Dunne visit: best before or after the November 6 Vermont gubernatorial election, one of whose candidates promises to realize Newbury REDInet's dreams without further effort on our part? Some time in November, then; Chip will sort it out with Matt.

Ed proposes here that we must all commit immediately to contribute to the production of the Document of Intent and to discuss it at the next warned meeting.

Without objection.

13. Board Members. No changes.

14. Remote Access by nonmembers to Newbury REDInet's Google account? Request received via Claude from seasonal resident Chris Magnus, another via Richard Pollack on behalf of Monique Priestly. Discussion; soothing of instinctive anxieties; reminder that Newbury REDInet meetings are of public record (meeting minutes are posted on the website) and by implication so is all of its work; decision to invite access.

15. Other Business. None.

16. Next Meeting. October 22, 2018, Tenney Library, 4:30 – 6:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM.