

Newbury REDI Board minutes -- 1-22-2018

Tenney Library, Newbury, VT

Meeting called to order by Board Chair Claude Phipps at 4:40PM.

Board Members present: Dan Burwinkel, Ed Childs, Lenice Cicchini, Nate Dudenhoffer, Jim Henderson, Claude Phipps, Susan Underwood, Brad Vietje

Guests present: Laurie Williams, Rick Hausman joined the meeting at 4:50

Note taker: Brad Vietje

Approval of minutes:

Minutes of 2018 Annual Meeting will not be approved until next year's meeting. Minutes of 1-8-2018 regular meeting to include the following corrections:

- Regular Meeting time incorrectly listed on Town site as 4 - 6PM; needs to be changed to 4:30 - 6:30
- Item #5: change "REDI Statutes" to read "By-Laws"
- Item #3: (date change) typo -- add an "f" to "rom" so it reads "from"

Approved, with these corrections.

Treasurer's Report: Dan Burwinkel reports that he needs approved minutes from Newbury Select Board documenting our establishment. He also needs approved minutes of a regular meeting that document that we have acted to establish a bank account at Wells River Savings Bank, and listing the designated signers. This document must also be signed by the Clerk (Brad)

Brad moved that we establish a checking account at Wells River Savings Bank using the name "Newbury REDInet", with Claude Phipps, Dan Burwinkel, and Brad Vietje as the signers on the account. Seconded by Lenice, and approved.

Brad to send a signed copy to Erin Fredieu at the bank as soon as it can be approved.

Name Issues:

Need to approve the exact informal name -- spelling, font, etc... Space? No. Dot? No. Capital "N"? No. Capital "I" can look like an "L" in sans serif fonts, so we need a serif font that distinguishes between the two.

Nate moved that we adopt our d.b.a. Name as "Newbury REDInet" with an open-source, serif font (Merriweather is used here as an example). Brad seconded -- approved.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Grants: Laurie and Rick have been working hard on a \$30,000 grant application to USDA Rural Development.

- Much discussion about the USDA scoring method used, and how many points we would get for letters of support and letters of commitment. Basically, creating jobs, or saving jobs that would be lost, counts for more points.
- We need strong commitment letters as part of the application, and we identified a few good candidates.
- We also need a number of letters of support for those not creating or saving jobs
- Would the Fairpoint engineering study itself be counted as one part-time job?
- Claude reported that there's a good chunk of money (roughly 1.3 million) for the Northeast Kingdom, and the rest of the state's allocation will be divided up among applicants from the rest of VT
- We discussed extracting data from our surveys to identify good candidates for letters of support and commitment -- Dan to pull addresses, and report those to Susan, so she can match the address to names on the voter checklist or tax rolls.

Coordination with Fairpoint:

- Claude has draft of letter from Chip to Jeff Austin (Fairpoint) looking for support and number of jobs created
- Claude sent to CJ Stumpf the latest note from Jeff Austin; we will need her expertise in defining deliverables and helping us negotiate with Fairpoint

Finance Committee: Laurie has drafted language that is needed for the grant. She read the following statement:

Resolution to apply for grant: **“The Newbury REDInet board hereby authorizes a subcommittee of Board and community members to apply for Rural Business Development Grant funding during the 2018 funding round and officially recognizes Claude Phipps, Board Chair, as the authorized grant signer.**

Brad moved the resolution as read, Susan seconded; approved.

Donation receipt letter: Claude proposed we solicit donations to demonstrate commitment and help with ongoing expenses, and proposed donation receipt letter be adopted for this purpose. He proposes that donations could be partially refundable after we were operational and had reached 200+ paying customers. He has gotten the thumbs up on the wording from a lawyer.

- Much discussion ensued about the wording, about non-refundable donations, or donations that might be used as a down payment on a future installation or active account.
- We discussed donations we would be able to spend, versus those that would be held in escrow and applied to an account, and the feasibility of editing the letter to cover both types of donation.

- Consensus was reached that this letter could be done right away, and that we could solicit different forms of donations later.

Dan moved that we adopt Claude's letter as-is, Lenice seconded; approved.

Executive Committee/By-Laws: Claude reposts that our By-Laws have been approved by the selectboard.

- Executive Board made a report to Chip seeking changes and clarifications by the Legislature; Chip to introduce these amendments to the enabling statute.
- Paul Giuliani (legal advisor to legislature) had no issues except questions about section 10.1 Dissolution, clarifying that in his view, any money left on hand would have to be returned to the participating municipalities, and not returned to the REDI District members. This helps avoid other potential problems, and all agreed it was good news.
- If Legislature makes any changes to the statute, we can refine our By-Laws accordingly at a future meeting.

Technology: Ed Childs brought up a laser technology that could be useful; many of the available technologies are mine-of-sight, and could be adversely affected by leaves

Web Site: Dan to purchase the Newbury REDI.net URL, and Jim Henderson to set up our new site.

Last Mile Policy: Rick Hausman reports that it will take quite a few phone calls to work out the costs in some cases. The Fairpoint engineering study should answer most of the questions about difficult installations, so we need to make sure this is a "deliverable" that we get back from their study.

Next Steps/Contract with Fairpoint: In addition to the cost of the engineering study, we will need money to hire someone with telecom expertise to help us negotiate a good contract with Fairpoint.

- All agreed that the extensive experience and expertise of CJ Stumpf would be especially valuable in working out a detailed contract with Fairpoint.
- Looking at our USDA grant application, we discussed how much we could commit toward paying CJ for her help in these matters if the grant was funded.
- We will need a contract with CJ spelling out the scope of work and deliverables, based on her feedback.
- There will also be legal matters on which we will also need advice. Given the entire grant limit of \$30,000, we expect the categories to be: \$20K to Fairpoint, \$5K for CJ, and \$5K for legal assistance

Lenice moved that we allocate \$5,000 toward engaging CJ for this work as far as the funding would go. Nate seconded; approved. Claude to contact CJ about this, and work out the details.

Upcoming Dates:

Executive Committee to meet on 1-29-2018 at Lenice's house at 3PM

Next REDI Board Meeting 2-12-2018 at Tenney Library, 4:30 - 6:30