



April 15, 2021

Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER– Chair, Carl Blowers, called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM via teleconference, due to NYS public meeting restrictions put in place because of COVID-19.

ATTENDANCE

Chemung County – Tom Tranter; Aaron Dowd; Vinnie Azzarelli; Ernie Hartman

Schuylar County – Kristin VanHorn; Tim O’Hearn; Chad Hendrickson; Carl Blowers; Judy McKinney Cherry; Phil Barnes; James Ryan

Steuben County – Heather Reynolds; Bob Nichols; Jenn Miller; Jamie Johnson; Matt Sousa; Scott VanEtten; Jamie Johnson

STC Staff – Chelsea Robertson; Victoria Ehlen; Brittany McKerlie; Yvonne Terwilliger; Janet Thigpen; Courtney Cornell

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – On a motion duly made (VanHorn/VanEtten) and carried, the minutes of the March 18, 2021 meeting were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUDGET AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- a) **Approving the Audit** – Richard McNeilly presented the 2020 audit to both the Budget and Personnel and the Audit Committee. The audit was good and there were no issues. Chelsea mentioned that due to Covid-19 funding was delayed in many areas, but the EDA Cares Act helped out and filled the gaps. The board thanked Brittany McKerlie for her excellent work. On a motion duly made (Tranter/VanEtten) and carried, the 2020 audit was accepted as presented.
- b) **Board Meetings** – Chelsea talked with the board about how they feel about virtual meetings as opposed to in-person, or taking a hybrid approach. She brought up the possibility of meeting in person for about 4 of the monthly meetings, and having the rest virtual. After suggestions from different board members it looks like the majority feel that it would be beneficial to meet in person, with a virtual option, a few times a year, and then have the rest of the meetings virtually. It was noted that virtual meetings are more convenient, efficient and have better attendance. Chelsea will present a plan to the board in the next couple months that contains both in-person and virtual board meetings.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

- a) **Abstract of Claims** – The audit committee reviewed abstracts totaling \$17,949.78. On a motion duly made (Tranter/O’Hearn) and carried, the abstracts were approved.

REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- 1) Southern Tier Network, Grants and the State of Broadband – Steve Manning/Chelsea Robertson**
Steve told the board that this process started in 2018 when the counties were looking at how to address the unserved/underserved households in their counties. The leadership from the five counties that have formed the Southern Tier Broadband Coalition (Schuyler, Steuben, Chemung, Tioga and Yates) recognized that they wanted to address the issue and the lack of ultra-high speed internet services to all households, and that it is an expensive and complex initiative that requires resources. The five counties talked with the STN Board and they created an intermunicipal agreement charging STN to coordinate and contract with a professional firm to do a study. STN and the Five County Coalition worked with Corning Inc. and had two or three workshops in 2019. Nokia and Fujitsu came in and did an overview of what it would take to put a study together. By February 2020 they signed an agreement with Fujitsu to do a comprehensive five county study. The objectives were:
- a) To plan for delivering high speed broadband to primarily the rural areas, the unserved/underserved areas in the five counties.
 - b) To create a high-level network architecture that could be used to buildout and to provide this infrastructure and these services.
 - c) To present business and operational strategies that could be utilized for the next 30-40 years in operating the business.
 - d) To generate pro-form of financials, identify operational costs, identify and estimate revenue streams, and define construction and maintenance costs for the infrastructure as it was constructed.

The study was wrapped up and completed in November 2020. STN and the Five County Coalition are involved in discussions on how and where to go from here with this information.

After Steve's presentation, Chelsea said that STC has utilized the results of this study to guide what we are doing in the form of grant applications and obtaining funding for broadband.

2) Intergovernmental Review – Janet Thigpen

2107 State and Tribal Response Program Grants

Project Applicant: NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Description: Funding for Brownfield programs and activities

Federal Agency: Environmental Protection Agency

Cost: Federal: \$948,095.00 Applicant: 0 State: 0 Total: \$948,095.00

On a motion duly made (VanEtten/Johnson) and carried, the intergovernmental review was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

- 1) 2021 Regional Leadership Conference –** Reminder that the Conference will be virtual this year and the sessions will be on June 8,10,15 and 17th.
- 2) Next Board Meeting –** The next meeting will be on May 20, 2021.

ADJOURN - On a motion duly made, (Barnes/McKinney Cherry) and carried, the meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

Respectively submitted,
Yvonne Terwilliger
Executive Assistant

