

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the MINET Board of Directors, September 23, 2021, 4:30 PM

In attendance:

Board Members, present: David Ritchey, Marty Wine, Tom Takacs, Chris Lopez, Michael Hicks

Not present: Tom Pessemier

Staff Present: Don Patten, PJ Armstrong, John Cooper, Jason Saunders

Guests Present: Attorney Chad Stokes, Anne Scheck

Chair David Ritchey opened the meeting at 4:30 PM.

There was no **public comment**.

Consent Agenda

Minutes of the July 29, August 19, and September 15 meetings. **Marty Wine moved to approve the 3 sets of minutes, Michael Hicks 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Report

John Cooper presented the financial package. He reviewed the net operating income for August and other budget related information.

The debt service forecast was given. A question was asked if the financial report reflected a trend or a blip. John said it was neither, just the normal flow for this time of the year, an expected fluctuation. Appreciation was expressed by the BOD for the history and transparency with the debt service payments.

Chris Lopez moved to approve the debt service payment as presented, Marty Wine 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

Report on RFP re new GM

Chad Stokes said the RFP he had sent out received 2 responses. One was from Doug Dawson, who has helped MINET out in the past, and the second was from a national search firm for large telecoms. Dawson presented an hourly rate; the large firm quoted a \$25K flat fee plus 20%.

The BOD received this information last Friday, Sept. 17.

Comments made:

- David Ritchey: Dawson has prior experience
- It appeared the goal of the large firm was to fill the spot and get paid
- Dawson's earlier search brought Don Patten to the GM position. That's a positive.
- Marty Wine: concurred with all comments. The question from the last meeting, "What are we looking for" is one the BOD needs to cycle back to. Whichever company does the search should interview the BOD on this subject. Chad Stokes confirmed that was the case.
- Chris Lopez: Doug Dawson would bring institutional knowledge, a big plus.
- Michael Hicks: Agreed.

Marty Wine moved to enter into a contract with Doug Dawson (CCC Consulting) and to authorize attorney Stokes to send out an intent to award and to prepare a contract. Tom Takacs 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

At 4:50 PM, Chair David Ritchey took the meeting into executive session, citing:

"The MINET Board will now meet in executive session. The executive session is held pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(h), to consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed. Representatives of the news media and designated staff shall be allowed to attend the executive session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the room. Representatives of the news media are specifically directed not to report on any of the deliberations during the executive session, except to state the general subject of the session as previously announced. No decision may be made in executive session. At the end of the executive session, we will return to open session and welcome the audience back into the room."

At 5:08 PM the Chair ended the executive session and return to open session.

Cable Services, General Discussion

Comments:

- This BOD needs to make a decision on video services.
- There's no good way to provide video service. We need advance information for our customers on accessing streaming services.
- Jason Saunders already has an approach: posting the information on Facebook, website, and getting CSS group trained to present it to customers. We're just waiting for the BOD decision.
- BOD is glad to hear this approach is in place. We all knew this day would come. We need to move forward.
- It would be of value in future meetings to invite 1 or 2 CSS members to speak to their experience with video services as customers transition to streaming.
- It appears there's a consensus to wind down video service. We must have a strong plan for conversion.
- PJ Armstrong: We are good to go on that.
- Do we have a good video alternative?
- No new cable customers have been coming on board.

Chris Lopez moved to discontinue TV service as of January 31, 2022, and to educate customers on streaming services. Michael Hicks 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

(Chris Lopez left the meeting.)

Sales/Marketing/CSS Report

Jason Saunders presented service numbers. Plume Pods have been a hit but there is a chip shortage and MINET is currently sold out. The next shipment is delayed – on hold – so "out of stock" signs have been put up on office signage and on the website.

PJ: There will be no more until November. In the interim MINET is using managed wi-fi instead.

WOU terminated phone service with MINET. A letter was received from them citing MINET's service to WOU, saying that "our community is enriched by MINET". WOU is currently using a short-term Zoom contract, so may be back to MINET in the near future.

Operations Report/GM Report

PJ Armstrong will give the Operations/GM report during the search process.

The voice environment is updated, and nearly all legal work is done. Updates in the PON environment are happening next week.

Wireless project: MINET has 24 geo locations and 34 sites. The network is active. Pacific Power has been a significant challenge to work with. Monmouth Power and Light provided lots of help. All wireless points are active, and ready in anticipation of a possible school shutdown.

Outside plant/Inventory:

Plume Pods: there are purchase orders in place for all known market developments through the end of the fiscal year.

GM Report:

MINET has a good relationship with WOU; partnership with voice service has been all positive.

An industry article re 8K video was posted. PJ recalled that 7 years ago the industry was looking at 4K video. In 2014, MINET was struggling with hardware. The MINET network is now gig-speed and future-proof. The overall point of the article was to build a network ready for the future. That's what we have and will continue to have.

Ongoing Board Business

Expired Franchise – Marty Wine reported no progress

Updated IGA – no information available

Marty Wine offered 3 points of appreciation:

- Jason, convey our thanks to the staff for MINET's quality customer service for WOU.
- Wireless Service: MINET has paid dividends in more community availability.
- This is Don Patten's last BOD meeting. We are grateful to you and for the work you have done for this company.

Don Patten, final words to the BOD

Well, it's certainly been a 'interesting' run ...

AND:

when I consider what we inherited ...

when I weigh what we have had to endure along the way ...

when I value what MINET has truly become ...

it's been a rather 'successful' run as well!

Please, please take apolitical and great care of this genuine and positive resource of the Cities of Monmouth and Independence!

Next Meeting

Chair: Next meeting is October 28, 4:30 PM. Chad Stokes will advise if any interim meeting is required.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:31 PM.