



MINUTES

QLife Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, April 4, 2019
200 E 4th St, Harding House Conference Room

Call to Order President Hege calls the meeting to order at 12:08 PM

Roll Call Tyler Stone, Stephanie Krell, Mike Middleton, Mayor Lynn Ewing, John Amery, Lee Weinstein, Keith Mobley, Scott Hege, Rod Runyon, Carrie Pipinich, Dale Lepper and Erik Orton (via Skype)

Approval of the Agenda

There are no changes needed to the agenda.

[Mr. Weinstein moves to approve the agenda. Mr. Runyon seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]

Approval of the Consent Agenda

There are no changes or comments regarding the consent agenda.

[Mr. Weinstein moves to approve the agenda. Mr. Runyon seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]

Financial Reports

Mr. Middleton presents the financial report to the board. He notes that we are in the process of reviewing some expenses from the Operations fund which may need to be moved to the Capital fund. Specifically, Network Systems Management and Engineering lines are over budget and it appears that some of those expenses belong in the Capital fund. All adjustments that need to be made should be completed by April. All in all, the Operations fund looks good and reconciliations are up to date. The Maupin fund should be wrapping up by April and the fund will not look so inflated because those scheduled transfers most likely will not be utilized. Mr. Middleton mentions that the budget committee will need to meet so we should discuss potential dates.

Mr. Runyon asks for clarification of Mr. Middleton's note that the concerns expressed last month around transfers out have decreased. Mr. Middleton explains that he was concerned with a trend he was seeing that would affect the transfers out. The trend has since ceased and the concern no longer exists so the transfers out can go on as scheduled.

Mr. Runyon asks Mr. Middleton what he means by "real" income in his report. Mr. Middleton explains that we want to make note that the original transfers in to the Maupin fund from the Capital fund were used to get the project started. This "real" income then refers to revenues that will eventually start coming in to the fund that are neither grant related or transferred in. Mr. Runyon also wonders how Maupin receives revenue. Mayor Ewing and Mr. Stone explain that revenue will come from franchise fees paid by LS Networks directly to the city of Maupin and a percentage of the gross profit from Gorge Net will be paid directly to QLife. Mayor Ewing adds that the city of Maupin will then transfer those franchise fees to QLife on a monthly or quarterly basis. It has not yet been decided. President Hege wants to know what the franchise fees are and Mayor Ewing states that LS Networks pays a 7% franchise fee, monthly rent and a minimum threshold that must be met. President Hege stresses that we need to get a sense of the amount of revenue we estimate to take in for Maupin so it can be used for budget planning.

Mr. Runyon requests context relating to revenues within budget authority and asks if that is a percentage. Mr. Middleton explains that “budget authority” refers to the amount approved at the adopted budget and how much can be spent in each classification.

Mr. Weinstein mentions that he visited Klindt’s bookstore and discussed QLife with them. Klindt’s expressed interest in needing broadband so Mr. Weinstein wanted to know how they or any potential customer would go about getting service through QLife. Mr. Amery explains that they would contact Gorge Net or LS Networks to get started. President Hege is curious if Klindt’s is a location that could be served. Mr. Stone confirms that they could receive service and notes that Gorge Net would be the natural choice because of their use of a looping whereas LS Networks mostly focuses on large commercial customers.

Mr. Runyon refers the classification of “Dues and Subscriptions” in the Operations fund and wants more information on the kinds of purchases that are made for that line. Mr. Stone explains that our dues to the organization that run the annual conference we attend would be an example of purchases that go toward that line. Mr. Runyon also mentions the classification of “Outside Plant Maintenance.” Mr. Stone explains that this is more of a technical term and we consider our fiber our “plant.”

President Hege suggests that we propose a date for a QLife budget meeting and it is decided that April 30, from 9 to 11 AM will tentatively be the date for the budget meeting. He also stresses to the board to think about any hopes for the budget or projects they would like QLife to consider prior to the budget meeting. Mr. Stone informs the board that if they have anything specific that they would like the committee to consider for a draft budget, to send him an email. Mr. Middleton adds that the Capital fund has roughly \$600K for unspecified projects to appropriate. Mr. Stone asks Mr. Runyon to reach out to the city for a representative to serve on the budget committee. Ms. Krell will send Mr. Runyon FY 2018/2019 minutes in order to assist in giving him some context on what has been discussed in the past.

Action Items

CGCC Scholarship

Ms. Krell informs the board the Columbia Gorge Community College has asked QLife to donate scholarship funds for the 2019-2020 academic year. Mr. Stone adds that in the past, recipients have been from the wind technician program. Mr. Runyon mentions that he attended the luncheon last month and that the students expressed that the scholarship was very much appreciated. Mr. Weinstein wonders if we have ever had scholarship recipients attend a QLife Board meeting and Mr. Stone thinks they may have come once but that most interaction occurs at the annual luncheon. Mr. Weinstein thinks that it would be beneficial for CGCC scholarship recipients to attend a regular board session to learn more about QLife and the importance of the agency. Ms. Krell will reach out to the CGCC representative and extend an invitation. The board expresses a consensus to continue the scholarship donation for the 2019-20 academic year.

Discussion Items

Aristo report

Mr. Amery informs the board that the damaged fiber around E. 15th Street and Jefferson has not been resolved due to workload but he has been directed to make it a priority. The failing fiber surrounding the St. Mary’s Project has been held up for months because of challenge of crossing the railroad and has recently been settled and expects work to start moving forward again.

Mr. Runyon asks Mr. Amery for clarification on the damaged QLife fiber. Mr. Amery explains that either the installers pulled the fiber too tight during installation or it was damaged by squirrels and/or vegetation. The St. Mary’s Project would replace about four miles of this damaged fiber. Mr. Stone asks Mr. Amery to bring in a sample cross section of fiber to show to the board.

Mr. Amery notes that he and Commstructure have been putting a lot of effort into getting our OSPInsight (GIS software) working properly again. He is confident that they are approaching a solution with its failing issues. Mr. Stone asks for more details on the challenges we are facing using OSPInsight and notes that as we go into budget planning, we should consider if this the best program for our needs. Mr. Amery admits that he has had the same thoughts but still believes

that OSPInsight is program we need. The issue that they continue to run into occurs with something new is added to the program and the layers and routes that have been created become corrupted. He mentions that there is a similar system to OSPInsight that we could try, but even with the frustrations, he still believes that is in our best interest to continue using OSPInsight. Mr. Stone expresses that if our data is being corrupted every time we make a change, we should move on to another program so we do not have to continue to pay Commstructure for system clean up. Mr. Amery informs the board that there is a tool that Commstructure has been using during a free trial period which can help detect those errors before we discover a problem. The cost for this tool is about \$2,000. If Mr. Amery and Commstructure find that it works as it should, Mr. Amery will recommend that it be added to our current OSPInsight system.

NACo Test It App

President Hege informs the board that the federal government is responsible for identifying areas that have broadband, but it is the belief by most people that their maps are highly inaccurate. We have seen evidence of this in parts of south county where maps show these areas as fully served when in fact, they are not. NACo has developed the Test It app to gather additional data to bring to the federal government and show them where the holes in broadband exist. When using the app, it will test the area you are in and send the data directly to NACo.

Mayor Ewing asks if the app functions in areas without service and President Hege clarifies that you will need some level of service but that it can distinguish between WiFi and cellular coverage. President Hege asks the board to download the app, test speeds around the community and spread the word to friends and neighbors to do the same. Ms. Pipinich adds that eligibility maps are utilized by MCEDD when considering funding and project planning and stresses how essential it is to provide the federal government with accurate mapping.

Maupin Update

Mr. Orton calls in via Skype at 12:50 PM and updates the board on Maupin and St. Mary's projects. Mr. Orton reports that Mr. McNeely and Mayor Ewing met and scheduled the Grant Alley conduit work to be completed this week or next week. Then, Mr. McNeely will be tasked to reach out to Van Dorn to schedule the completion of their scope. Mr. Orton informs the board that he has spoken to LS Networks and they will be taking care of any further issues that arise with drops.

Mayor Ewing knows of a couple dozen customers that have asked to be connected that have not been connected yet. He also mentioned that Wasco Electric reported over 100 problems with the work that had been done so decided it best to set a meeting and go around town with both Gorge Net and LS Networks to go over the issues. President Hege asks the mayor for an example of the problems Wasco Electric found and Mayor Ewing mentioned too large of a loop in the fiber and fiber hanging off carrier cable. Mayor Ewing believes that Gorge Networks and LS Networks will be able work out who is responsible for remedying these issues. LS Networks found that they had about 30 to 40 connections that do not connect to anyone so they have offered incentives for those not already signed up to connect.

Mayor Ewing also notes that they were digging a ditch this morning to put the conduit in at Grant Alley so he expects that to be complete tomorrow or by the middle of next week. He reports that all of the customers who have been connected are excited but those that have not been connected yet are getting antsy. Mr. Orton saw a message for a request for a customer initially with LS Networks to convert to the home system and LS Networks reported that it was in progress. Mayor Ewing was told that a part-time resident reached out to Gorge Net to get connected but was informed that there was no fiber in the area on Gray Eagle Road, a private road.

President Hege asks Mr. Orton where things stand in regards to the construction contract with Van Dorn. Mr. Orton reiterates that once they complete a final scope, Commstructure will do a final closeout. President Hege asks when Mr. Orton expects that to occur. Mr. Orton explains at once Grant Alley is finished, the project will be considered complete. Mr. Stone asks that all billing be complete before April 30, so QLife can start with a fresh budget for the new fiscal year. Mayor Ewing also adds that according to the Maupin recorder, there is some money remaining that was not utilized because Van Dorn's bid came in under budget. They city hopes to use it for the security system but needs to finalize

some things in accounting to have a more accurate idea of how much funds are left. Mr. Stone informs the board that Mr. Middleton will provide a total project cost at the next meeting.

Mr. Stone asks Mr. Orton for a status update on Gorge Net's wireless service sponsored by the Google grant. Mr. Stone has reached out to Mr. McNeely but has not been able to connect for an update. Mr. Orton is unaware of any update but Mayor Ewing believes that Gorge Net installed it already and is just waiting for the fiber connection for added speed. President Hege is curious as to where free WiFi is currently available in Maupin. Mayor Ewing confirms that it is only available in City Park. Mr. Stone wants to be sure that we do not compete with ourselves. Mayor Ewing adds that it is not generally accessible to residents or businesses and would need to connect for service. President Hege wonders if we should look at the agreement with Google to review what they defined as their expectations. Mr. Stone believes it was just City Park and the Library but will confirm.

St. Mary's BB Update

Mr. Orton updates the board on St. Mary's Project and informs them that Northsky is scheduled to cross the railroad tracks next Tuesday and is also working on remaining cable placement over the next few weeks.

OSPInsight

Mr. Stone asks Mr. Orton about the money we have been spending fixing issues with OSPInsight. Mr. Orton agrees that it might be beneficial to take a serious look at the system and shift to a different and new robust system. He believes it is within our best interest to have an honest conversation with OSPInsight directly before making any changes. Mr. Orton's take on the issues is that ESRI is continually upgrading and changing and OSPInsight is having to adapt to keep up. Mr. Amery asks Mr. Orton if he has used the Map Info system. Mr. Orton informs him that he has not used it himself but Allie at Commstructure has experience with system so she could be a resource if we need more information. Mr. Orton also adds that LS Networks recently moved to using OSPinsight with Map Info.

Executive Session

The Board enters into Executive Session at 1:12 PM

The board exits Executive Session at 2:03 PM

Mr. Stone asks the board for approval to move forward with the Port/Chenoweth build in order to serve a new customer on River Trail Way with a probable project cost of \$128K plus Aristo Networks' cost to help manage the project. He believes the project will come in under \$200K.

[Mr. Runyon moves to approve Commstructure to put out a bid for the Port/Chenoweth project and the QLife Administrator to move forward if bids come in under a \$150K. Mr. Weinstein seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]

The meeting is adjourned at 2:07

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 18, 2019.

These minutes were approved by the QLife Board on _____.

Lee Weinstein, Secretary