



MINUTES

QLife Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, May 27, 2021
Via Google Hangouts

Call to Order President Hege calls the meeting to order at 12:02 PM.

Roll Call Scott Hege, Scott Franell, Dale Lepper, Lee Weinstein, John Amery, Tom McGowan, Keith Mobley, Carrie Pipinich, Joseph Franell, Dan McNeely, Kristen Campbell, Tyler Stone, Stephanie Krell, Matthew Klebes, and Mike Middleton.

Changes to the Agenda

Ms. Krell requests to add the budget appropriation detail document, Resolution 21-001 adopting the FY22 budget, as well as the motion language document to the board packet. Mr. Klebes also notes that if time does not allow, we will bump some administrative staff items to the June meeting.

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

Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

Finance

Budget Hearing

Mr. Middleton opens the budget hearing at 12:06 PM and presents the budget book to the Board. He notes that at the budget committee meeting there was a consensus to increase the budget by \$5M for potential grants that may be available to tap into which brings the total appropriation to \$8,987,151. Mr. Middleton believes that the budget is sustainable, resilient and flexible if the grants come to fruition.

Mr. Weinstein wonders if we need assistance in managing the grants if there is money in the budget for that and Mr. Middleton confirms that there are funds available under contracted services.

President Hege opens the hearing to public comment but there is none.

[[Mr. Weinstein moves to adopt Resolution 21-001 adopting the QLife budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 in the total of \$8,987,151. Mr. Lepper seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]]

President Hege closes the budget hearing at 12:13 PM.

Financial Report, Analysis and Reconciliation

Mr. Middleton presents the April financial report to the Board included in the packet and notes that there was not a lot of financial changes in April. In May, we received the revenue for the Maupin fund which covered the LS Networks franchise fees for 2019-2021 and puts us in a positive direction to assure that we can move forward with transfers back to the Capital fund.

Action Items

QLife OPC – The Grove

Mr. Klebes refers to The Grove OPC in the packet and remarks that there are two segments to this path. He wanted to bring this to the Board for approval so that staff may move forward as opportunities arise. He informs the Board that there is a new high density development on the east side of The Dalles. Mr. Klebes would also like to drop conduit into those open trenches which would be an additional cost to the OPC presented.

QLife OPC – Dry Hollow CAB Extension

Mr. Klebes refers to the Dry Hollow OPC in the packet which extends from The Grove and ties in to the Dry Hollow area. The segment that goes down Brewery Grade would serve the east side of The Dalles and aligns with the QLife CIP and the east end bisector project.

Mr. Stone explains that it is in our best interest to do both The Grove and Dry Hollow as one project because of the cost savings. Mr. Amery adds that there is considerable value in doing both projects because it adds capacity and will connect to the future colocation so the reality is that it would serve more than just The Grove development.

President Hege asks if we have completed an ROI and Mr. Klebes responds that we have not but that it creates redundancy and strengthens QLife's network overall. He also adds that the project has potential to also serve commercial customers at 12th Street and Dry Hollow that have expressed interest previously.

President Hege asks Mr. Franell for his opinion on moving forward with the project and if this will help Gorge Network secure more customers. Mr. Franell agrees that he is in support of these projects and that middle mile extensions are always valuable. It would allow for FTTH projects to be done more easily and quickly.

President Hege asks if we could add more FTTH connections along the main line connecting the two projects if our local ISP partners express interest. Mr. Klebes responds that the driver is the new high density development but if there are opportunities, that could guide the path.

[[Mr. Weinstein moves to approve staff to proceed with The Grove and Dry Hollow CAB Extension projects. Mr. Lepper seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]]

Parts and Materials Update

Mr. Klebes explains to the Board that supply chains have been disrupted in the last year due to issues such as the Suez Canal blockage, Covid-19, semiconductor shortages etc. In addition, large amounts of broadband infrastructure money pouring in from the state and federal levels will result in a rise in demand for equipment. Staff would like to increase our inventory of fiber and other equipment that is or may be needed to complete our current and upcoming projects.

Mr. Stone remarks that supply houses are already limiting the amount of fiber they sell per month and believes that it will only get worse. Mr. Lepper concurs that he is having difficulty acquiring materials and supplies as well. Mr. Amery adds that the items requested have long lifespans and will inevitably be used. Mr. Franell states that electronics that he has ordered are already providing shipping dates into 2022. It is a hot topic at the state level and they are trying to set expectations for the public and legislators as money is allocated.

Mr. Klebes asks the Board for authorization to spend up to \$185,000 to purchase parts and materials. Mr. Weinstein asks if we have space to store the equipment and Mr. Klebes confirms that we do.

[[Mr. Weinstein moves to approve staff to purchase parts and materials up to \$185,000. Mr. Lepper seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]]

Discussion Items

QLife Vision Task Force Update

Mr. Weinstein informs the Board that a task force of Board and community members have been updating QLife's vision and mission and a template has been created and reviewed with the task force. The template is not ready for approval yet but Mr. Weinstein wanted to get first impressions from the rest of the Board before bringing it back for approval in June. He requests that the Board email him or Matthew any comments before then.

President Hege remarks that it looks well put together and is a helpful vision for us. Mr. Lepper says that it has the right focus and is heading in the right direction. Mr. Klebes adds that the hope is to refresh the document annually.

Aristo Management Report

Mr. Amery asks the Board to contact him for any questions regarding his technical report included in the packet.

Wasco County Broadband OPCs

Mr. Klebes remarks that there has been a request for information on projects that may be eligible for congressional spending as well as other funding sources. Staff had several OPCs developed for various routes throughout Wasco County which is included in the board packet. This gives us a snapshot of the minimum resources we would need to complete all middle mile projects which total over \$11M. In addition to these OPCs, there is also a potential project with Avangrid to extend from the BPA substation to the new solar development east of Maupin.

Mr. Stone hopes that the funding will funnel down to us so that we can start building to these rural areas of Wasco County. President Hege comments that Dufur already has FTTH so why would we overbuilding and Mr. Mobley remarks that it would create competition and the Mayor has expressed interest in additional fiber. Mr. Stone wonders if the Mayor expresses interest to the state if that will increase the likelihood of funding.

Oregon Telecommunications Connections Conference

Ms. Krell informs the Board that the Oregon Telecommunications conference is scheduled for October in Ashland. In previous years we have attended and also been a sponsor. She asks if any of the Board members have interest in attending and/or feelings around sponsoring again.

Mr. Stone notes that attending these types of events is in line with our strategic plan on the education piece and support sponsoring the conference. We also receive free? attendance. Mr. Mobley adds that we have sponsored at the \$500 level in the past. President Hege thinks that staff should decide which sponsorship level to move forward with and have the Board review their calendars.

PUD Pole Attachment Rates 2021

Mr. Klebes received the new pole attachment rates for 2021 which is a decrease from 2020. Mr. McGowan adds that rates are getting a minor reduction and the letter is the inform attachers to give them time to ask any questions they may have.

The meeting is adjourned at 1:14 PM

The next regularly scheduled board meeting is set for June 24, 2021.

These minutes were approved by the QLife Board on June 27, 2021.



Lee Weinstein, Secretary