

Decorah Telecommunications Utility Board Meeting  
Monday, February 12, 2018 – 5:30pm  
Decorah Clerk's Conference Room

Minutes

Members attending:

Paul Mattson  
Jarrad Walter  
Bruce Butters  
Anna Norris (arrived at 6:15pm)

Others in attendance:

Chopper Albert  
Chad Bird

Absent:

Lydia Andersen

Workshop discussion regarding fiber / telecommunications utility

*Albert presented information and financial analysis regarding business modeling for a business plan. Butters asked about a start-up, year-one amount and Albert noted it would be in the \$1.2 or \$1.3 million. Hadley asked about the MetroNet backbone and if that could be used. There was discussion about MetroNet dark fiber being available. Albert noted that he has considered using or leasing fiber from the MetroNet in his business modeling.*

*There was discussion regarding the legal authority of the utility commission. Bird noted the commission has full authority but has no funding, that must come from the city council. Butters asked if the council would confirm that in writing or via a motion from the council.*

*The commission also asked about obtaining funding from the council for "bootstrap" support of their efforts. It was discussed the commission sought to secure funding for legal fees for FCC compliance, pledge card marketing, and other daily or ongoing expenses.*

*Bird suggested the commission send the prepared business plan and the feasibility study to the city's financial planner for a review and seek advice on marketability of funding.*

Update from Decorah Fast Fiber

*Representatives from Decorah Fast Fiber provided an update on their recent trip to Jaguar Communications. They noted they had visited with Jaguar regarding public and private partnerships. They shared several points they wanted to ask the utility committee regarding the telecommunications utility.*

- 1. Can the city acquire MetroNet (at best) or at least use its portion of the dark fiber (at worst)? The city owns 1/5 of MetroNet, yes? So it owns 1/5 of the dark fiber? The city should be leveraging the unused potential of MetroNet*
- 2. Given #1, the city could start connecting customers who are closest to MetroNet, e.g., downtown businesses. How soon can that get started?*
- 3. What are the opportunities for local funding to get started? Individuals or organizations who have the means and desire to contribute and/or loan funds?*
- 4. Per Jaguar, it's typical to get 40-50% uptake to start. Should then see an increase from that level.*
- 5. One reason Muni's fail is from too much debt load*
- 6. What about the idea of a Coop, with shares sold to owner/customers?*
- 7. What can be done to approach the MetroNet decision-makers (not necessarily the MetroNet board(?), who are more operational/technical)?*

Approval of minutes

a. January 16, 2018

**Motion by Norris and second by Butters to approve the November 21, 2017 minutes.**

**No further discussion.**

**Roll call vote; motion carried unanimously.**

Adjourn

In other business, the board desired to set up a meeting with the council utility committee to discuss the business plan in more detail. It was discussed to look at Monday, March 5, 2018 as a possible date.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42pm with motion and second by Norris and Walter respectively.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. A. King", is written below the text "Respectfully submitted".