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**Northwest Communications Union District
Executive Committee Special Meeting
March 22, 2022, at 12:00pm
Virtual Meeting**

Attendance

Sean Kio (ED), Everett McGinley (Montgomery, Chair), Elisabeth Nance (Swanton Town and Swanton Village, Clerk), Brenda Churchill (Bakersfield, Vice Chair), Chasidy Benjamin (Admin)

Call to Order, Roll Call, Adjustments to Agenda

Chair E. McGinley called the meeting to order at 12:02pm, roll call was conducted and there were no adjustments to agenda.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public present, therefore no public comment.

Approval of Minutes 2/7/22, 2/14/22 and 2/16/22

B. Churchill motioned to approve all the minutes stated. E. Nance seconded. Motion carried.

Vendor Selection USDA Grant

S. Kio stated that we had a vendor picked out for the USDA Rural Business Development Grant, but that vendor is no longer available and now we have two quality vendor options to choose between. This is open for discussion and the vendors are ONUG Communications and RISI.

S. Kio announced that he sent out the communications to each considered party for the committee to review. He is waiting on communication from USDA about replacing our vendor. S. Kio reviewed the task items that we included and the questions we asked the vendors to be able to compare them and see which is the best choice. S. Kio recommended to the committee that he would suggest ONUG as they have a more robust knowledge of open fiber but that both parties are qualified. ONUG is in Colorado, but they do have some tie ins with other companies we work with and experience working with our preferred retail ISP.

E. Nance motioned that we select ONUG Communications as the vendor to provide organizational assistance and third-party assessment. B. Churchill seconded. Motion carried.

RFQ for Audit and Taxes

S. Kio stated that Brad Lewis, our accountant, reviewed the attached RFQ and provided Sean with a list of possible firms to contact to provide this service. We do need to get this out quickly so we can meet the deadline. We need to get 2020 and 2021 taxes done as we were reliant upon a third party to manage our books before and we did not get past taxes done. This should not affect anything we are doing, although we may have a penalty for late filing but no other surprises from what our accountant has stated. E. McGinley agreed this should not be a problem.

B. Churchill motioned to approve the RFQ as written. E. Nance seconded upon amending one punctuation change which was made. Motion carried.

There was a brief discussion on the timeline and us meeting the timeline.

49 **Other Business**

50 S. Kio noted he was asked to testify before the House Energy and Tech Committee on Friday on the topic
51 of what is now being referred to as “Orphan Communities”. Communities that are not part of a CUD
52 that are seeking a solution have asked him to testify primarily regarding the discussions between
53 NWCUD and Colchester. Colchester would be a significant cost to build out for this project and would
54 turn our model success upside down if we were to take them on. The larger communities that do not
55 have a lot of underserved or grant dollars. These should be taken on a case-by-case basis if they choose
56 to be part of a CUD. This single community could negatively affect our other 21 communities if we took
57 them on. S. Kio noted he does however want to assist within our capacity to find an alternative solution
58 for these communities.

59

60 **Adjourn**

61 *B. Churchill motioned to adjourn. E. Nance seconded. Motion carried.*

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63 Meeting adjourned at 12:28pm.

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DRAFT