

**MINUTES OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 20, 2005**

Present:           Chairman       Mayor John P. Prall  
  Deputy Mayor Michael E. Trinacty  
  Councillor Gary W. Whittier  
  Councillor J. Richard Horsburgh  
  Councillor Beth Easson  
  Councillor Anna Ashford-Morton  
  Councillor Donald E. Clarke  
  Mr. Bob Ashley, Chief Administrative Officer  
  Mr. Mike MacLean, Accountant (arrived at 6:00 p.m.)  
  Mr. Stan Fage, Valley Fibre Network  
  Mr. Lance Hale, Valley Fibre Network  
  Mr. Keith Robichaud, CAO, County of Annapolis

1. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:35p.m
2. **Approval of the Agenda**  
The Agenda comprised of the single issue of the Community Fibre Network was approved.
3. **New Business**
  - (a) **Community Fibre Network**

Mr. Ashley welcomed Council and guests to the special meeting of council. He outlined that the objective of the meeting was to provide information that would allow Council to make a decision whether to participate or not in the Valley Community Fibre Network Authority.

Mr. Ashley affirmed the five-part purpose of inviting expert guests, Stan Fage, Lance Hale, and Keith Robichaud. First, Mr. Fage and Mr. Hale, as key designers and strategists for the present VCFNA project would re-clarify the projects main aims, and its anticipated benefits to the participants. Second, they would broadly out the structure of the Governance Documents to be signed should the Town decide in favour of participation. Third, they would address the Town's previously expressed concerns with respect to discovered, deferred, or otherwise unexpected contingent liabilities. Fourth, they would provide an update on which of the other Councils had executed the Governance Documents and the status of those who had not. Finally, Mr. Robichaud, CAO for the County of Annapolis would provide a retrospective view of his experience with the FundyWeb, a parallel fibre optic project which now operates between Middleton and Metegan in the western end of the Annapolis Valley.

Mr. Fage reviewed the mission and vision for the VCFNA project and its overarching purpose to drive high speed connectivity and business growth in the

region. He enumerated typical types of users, such as educational and health institutions, community organizations, and businesses, as well as residential users. Mr. Fage drew a schema of the Governance Documents describing the interrelationship of municipal players and educational players.

Mr. Fage described many benefits to education and health which would attend the ability to deliver large packets of information without clogging up the cyber pipeline. He cited the advantage of consolidated server environments as a resource municipalities might accrue. He further described the sorts of economic stimulants for growth with the ability to accommodate hi-tech firms, to reach global markets, and to facilitate local competition for the supply of hi-speed web connectivity.

Mr. Fage cautioned Council about the 'Funding Window Risk', explaining that ACORN, CANARIE, and NSOED had stipulations that their part or all of their grant contributions be disbursed before the end of the calendar year 2005.

Mr. Hale illustrated his deep 25-year experience as a director of planning and as a policy advisor. He affirmed the tremendous economic and social opportunities afforded by a successful completion of the fibre optic run from Halifax to Middleton. He cited the need of larger firms for ultra hi-speed connectivity, for example, Canadian Tire and Sobeys and the Bank of America. He suggested the NSBI would leverage the fibre optic resource as a way to attract new businesses to the Valley region.

Mr. Robichaud recounted some of experience in organizing and operating the FundyWeb fibre optic line which extends from Middleton to Metegan. He recalled that his working relationship with Mr. Fage had been highly productive and the outcome of the collaboration successful. Mr. Robichaud noted they originally looked at the fibre network from a business case approach, but that ultimately it was the focus on the public sector, health and education applications, that became the focus.

Deputy Mayor Trinacty questioned how close we are to a totally wireless network, and if this would make a fibre network outdated. Mr. Hale responded that a fibre network would ultimately form the backbone of any wireless network. Deputy Mayor Trinacty also inquired why the governance documents were structured as they were. Mr. Robichaud indicated they had done research in this area for the FundyWeb and that in order to conform to the MGA you first needed an inter-municipal agreement and that the resulting Authority could then enter into an agreement with non-municipal parties to form a Board that would oversee the operation of the fibre network.

Councillor Clarke wondered if anyone knew officially why Kentville opted out and whether they could still connect to the system once it was constructed. It was

noted that Kentville could still connect after the system is place, however they would be required to pay the going rate at that time as well as the capital cost to bring the fibre to the Town Hall.

**IT WAS MOVED and seconded** that the Town of Berwick approves entering into the attached inter-municipal services agreement to form the Valley Community Fibre Network Authority.

**Motion Carried**

**IT WAS MOVED and seconded** that the Town of Berwick appoints Councilor Don Clarke to serve as its representative on the Valley Community Fibre Network Authority and the Valley Community Fibre Operating Board.

**Motion Carried**

**IT WAS MOVED and seconded** that the Town of Berwick approves the initial capital budget of the Valley Community Fibre Network Authority totaling \$3,048,718 and that the Town of Berwick's contribution will be \$10,907.

**Motion Carried**

4. Hearing of no further business the Chairman adjourned the Council meeting at 6:40 p.m.

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John P. Prall  
Chairman

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Michelle Millett  
Chief Administrative Officer