



## MINUTES

QLife Regular Board Meeting  
Thursday, May 23, 2019  
511 Washington St, Deschutes Conference Room

**Call to Order** President Hege calls the meeting to order at 12:11 PM

**Roll Call** Tyler Stone, Stephanie Krell, Scott Hege, Dale Lepper, Darcy Long-Curtiss, Mayor Lynn Ewing, John Amery, Keith Mobley, Carrie Pipinich, Erik Orton (via Skype) and Dan McNeely (via Skype).

### **Changes to the Agenda**

- Change Order #1 and #2 for the Port Build/Chenoweth Expansion
- IRU Draft
- Underground utilities in the City of The Dalles

*[[Ms. Long-Curtiss moves to approve the amended agenda. Mr. Lepper seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]]*

### **Approval of the Consent Agenda**

President Hege wants confirmation that the remaining grant funds are clear to be used for Mayor Ewing's proposed security system. Mayor Ewing confirms that the grant guidelines allow the funds to be used in that way. Mr. Stone adds that grant monitoring has been difficult due to the transference between entities but staff are digging into the dollars spent. A full account will be coming to the Board shortly.

*[[Ms. Long-Curtiss moves to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Lepper seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]]*

### **Financial Report**

Mr. Mike Middleton is absent from the meeting and unable to present to the Board. President Hege asks the Board if they have any questions to pass along to Mr. Middleton but there are none.

### **Discussion Items**

#### **Aristo Technical Management Report**

Mr. Amery presents his report to the Board. The damaged fiber around E. 15<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson is still in a holding pattern. The failing fiber, known as the St. Mary's Project, is splicing in live customers in phases with the first switchovers scheduled for the following Tuesday and Wednesday. Mr. Amery believes that misconfigurations beyond QLife have been causing the difficulties experienced with the electronics but has been stable for 10 days. Mr. Stone adds that there is a short-term resolution to move those customers over to a dark fiber connection so that the customers are able to monitor drops on their side. Also, we have involved the Wasco County IT department to track down leads and resolve the problem.

### **Northern Wasco PUD Pole Attachment Letter**

Mr. Stone notifies the Board that in addition to the NWPUD audit letter that was previously received, they are also raising annual pole attachment fees. He mentions that during the audit, he believes that they will find non-compliance in all parties and informs the Board that there is a new person working in the pole attachment position. Mr. Stone had a meeting with him and the area manager to resolve the audit issues. The Board asked Mr. Mobley to prepare a letter to declare that per our contract, we are not required to pay pole attachment fees but warns that this may create waves.

Mayor Ewing believes that there is pressure coming down on all public utility companies and PUD's and they have been notified that any hazards must be remedied. Mr. Stone remarks that QLife has been a good partner and any hazard concerns from other attachers should not be made a QLife issue.

Mr. Mobley presents the drafted letter to the Board which he will mail to NWPUD and Wasco Electric and adds that he suspects broadband providers in other cities are likely experiencing these same issues. Ms. Long-Curtiss remarks that she supports the letter, that the message is firm and we have administrative rules backing us. She believes the letter will encourage them to come to the table for a discussion.

President Hege wonders about the original agreement between QLife and NWPUD. Mr. Stone informs him that it was an agreement signed at the inception of QLife and can email a copy to the Board for review. Mr. Mobley notes that Mr. Amery found that Oregon Administrative Laws do not require entities like QLife to follow the same attachment fee schedule which should encourage a conversation with NWPUD.

President Hege asks about Mr. Stone's expectations of this conversation, best case and worst case scenarios. Mr. Stone explains that the best case scenario is QLife and NWPUD can come to an agreement, worst case scenario is they respond by demanding QLife remove all attachments from their poles. Ms. Long-Curtiss adds that NWPUD has a new board member coming on which means there could be changes on the horizon and thinks former board member, Mr. Smith was adamant about collecting fees. It is possible that the new board member may feel differently. President Hege wonders if Roger Kline is aware that we are sending this letter and Mr. Stone mentions that he wanted approval from the Board before speaking to Mr. Kline personally.

President Hege gives authority to Mr. Stone to meet with Mr. Kline and report back to the Board.

### **Oregon Connections Conference**

Ms. Krell reminds the Board that QLife would like to send one or two representatives to the conference in October and mentions that they have released the names of the keynote speakers. No one is able to commit at this time and Ms. Long-Curtiss states that she is unavailable.

### **South County Fiber Proposal**

Mr. Stone announces that he is preparing for a funding ask in Salem to build out the main line into South County from Maupin to Tygh Valley, Wamic and Pine Hollow. He purposefully left QLife's name out and instead is asking on behalf of Wasco County. If funding is approved, which Mr. Stone is uncertain of, Wasco County will contract with QLife for the build. Mr. Mobley remarks that funding through Regional Solutions worked well in Maupin so he believes we may have success. Ms. Pipinich adds that she wanted assurance that both the Board and the County were interested in pursuing this project before beginning public outreach.

President Hege wonders how much the build will cost and Mr. Stone notes that an OPC will be requested from Commstructure with support from the Board. President Hege wants to know if the plan would mimic Maupin with fiber to the home and Mr. Stone clarifies that after we received an OPC, we can see what a build out to neighborhoods looks like but wants QLife to stay away from fiber to the home because the hope is other ISP's will lease to our fiber and connect to residences.



Mr. Stone asks the Board to approve exploration of the project and order an OPC from Commstructure. Ms. Long-Curtiss stresses the projects that we take on now, will set the stage for future projects and believes that South County will only continue to grow. She also adds that when opportunities arise, it benefits QLife to have infrastructure already in place. Mr. Lepper agrees that it is in QLife's best interest to keep building projects in pieces.

The Board approves Mr. Stone to order an OPC from Commstructure for a South County build from Maupin.

#### **City of The Dalles Underground Utilities**

Ms. Long-Curtiss notifies the Board that The Dalles City Council is pursuing grants to study the downtown corridor underground utilities. She suggested the city planning director work with Mr. Stone to see if any project timelines overlap. Mr. Stone adds that he has spoken to City Manager, Julie Krueger, about future planning as well.

#### **Port Build/Chenoweth Expansion Updates**

Mr. Orton and Mr. McNeely call in to the meeting via Skype and Mr. Stone updates the board on the Port Build project. He notes that the day before, the contractor ran 700 feet of fiber before it unexpectedly stopped. The contractor ceased work so that they did not damage any fiber and Mr. Stone went out on sight. Mr. Stone and the contractor decided that River Road would need to be torn up to complete running the fiber. Also, there is a 25 foot space between our vaults that runs along a culturally sensitive area which requires a full SHPO permit application, tribal oversight and archaeological monitoring.

The contractor has put together a change order which will add \$50K to the project budget and puts the project cost above the prevailing wage threshold. Mr. Stone reminds the board that we have \$128K to complete the project, a \$14K credit from Gorge Net and \$12K from the customer which will use up and go slightly over budget. Mr. McNeely adds that the contractor has been easy to work with and is ready to continue. Mr. Stone asks the Board to accept the change order to continue the project.

President Hege wonders why the contractor did not know that they would encounter these challenges and Mr. Stone explains that it is a very long run between vaults. Mr. Amery adds that at the time the vaults were put in, the Board did not want to overspend by adding an extra vault which is the primary reason for challenge. Mr. Orton informs the Board that even with this unexpected increase, the budget is still in line with the Commstructure OPC. All Board members accept the change order to continue the project.

#### **Lone Pine Expansion Updates**

Mr. Stone informs the Board that Crestline is moving a public utility easement as part of one of their projects which creates an opportunity to partner with them on the Lone Pine project. He adds that he is also working closely with Mr. Lepper on two possible paths and the CCO to help fund the build to the MCMC segment. Mr. Stone says that MCMC is also working with a consultant to apply for USAC funding specifically for new construction which will save \$75K on the project if approved. He adds that MCMC's service rate reimbursement may also be updated to current rates which will double the revenue QLife receives from them. Mr. Lepper says that the consultant feels confident that the funding request will be approved.

President Hege wonders about MCMC's timeline and Mr. Lepper informs him that the completion of the urgent care space has been pushed back until November. Ms. Long-Curtiss asks about Crestline's timeline and if that will impact the build and Mr. Stone says that their timeline will not impact the build.

#### **St. Mary's Backbone Updates**

Mr. Amery informs the Board that the project is in the final stages. He has submitted a schedule to ODOT for crossing but splicing has not been completed yet and will coordinate with Cody at Northsky.

**Maupin Updates**

Mr. McNeely discusses Work Order 15, Amendment 5 which has been presented in the board packet and mentioned in last month's meeting. The amendment details an extension on coordination for work around Grant Alley and the Civic Center which required unanticipated resources and trips to Maupin.

*[[Ms. Long-Curtiss moves to approve Work Order #15, Amendment 5. Mr. Lepper seconds the motion, which passes unanimously.]]*

**Executive Session**

The Board enters into Executive Session at 1:21 PM

The Board exits Executive Session at 1:55 PM

The meeting is adjourned at 1:55 PM

The next regularly scheduled board meeting is set for Thursday, June 27, 2019.

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These minutes were approved by the QLife Board on 6/27/19

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Lee Weinstein, Secretary

Scott Heje, President