

**Syracuse MetroNet  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Friday, October 20, 2017  
8 AM, Syracuse Technology Garden  
235 Harrison Street**

**MetroNet Board Members, Visitors and Staff Attendance:**

Brian Barboline - Vice-President - √	Kevin Sexton - Secretary - √
Dave Prowak - Treasurer - √	Murali Venkatesh - √
Meg Backus - E	Matt Mahoney - E
Brendan Fear - A	Mike O'Neill - √
Shaun Black - E	Ron Walter - √
Joe Ziemba - E	Larry Page - E
Sam Scozzafava - E	Bill Murray - President - √
Andrew Cramer - A	
Nader Maroun - E	

( ) - Individuals listed in parenthesis after Board members indicates a representative who attended in place of that board member

√ - Indicates Board members, visitors or MetroNet staff personal that were present

A - Indicates Board member that was absent

E - Indicates Board member that was excused

**Meeting Notes:**

**1.) Welcome and Introductions**

Brian Barboline called the meeting to order at 8:08 AM.

**2.) Election of Board President**

Ron Walter reported that at the last Board meeting, members elected Bill Murray to the Board as an at-large member. Mr. Murray had expressed interest in the position of Board President, an office that has been vacant for some time. Accordingly, at that meeting Nader Maroun nominated Mr. Murray to be President of the Board of Syracuse MetroNet and Joe Ziemba seconded the nomination.

Ron Walter asked for a vote to approve the election of Bill Murray to be President of the Board.

**Mr. Murray was elected President of the Board.**

**3.) Motions**

Bill Murray asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 18th Board meeting as presented.

**Motion: Brian Barboline made a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes as presented for the August 18th Board meeting, and Murali Venkatesh seconded the motion.**

**The motion was carried.**

Dave Prowak reviewed the MetroNet Revenue Less Expenses report as of September 30, 2017 and reported total revenue for the year to date of \$59,979.46 versus a budget of \$68,690.00. The primary reason for the revenue shortfall is the fact that we have not had to use as much money from reserves. However, that will change once we are caught up with employee expenses. Total expenses year to date are \$50,302.88 versus a budget of \$67,803.00.

This is due to lower than budgeted employee expenses and lower than budgeted MetroNet Internet fees. Ron Walter stated that he had budgeted for an increase in Internet fees for this year to accommodate additional bandwidth required if MetroNet were to provide connectivity to additional non-profit organizations. However, we have not had to provide connectivity to other organizations so far this year. Additionally, no one from Level 3 has returned his phone calls to talk about additional bandwidth.

Mr. Prowak further reported that cash on hand at the end of the month was \$124,452.92. Accounts Receivable stand at \$16,670.54. Mr. Walter stated that checks totaling \$3,890.18 have been received since the end of the month representing one Baseline Fee payment as well as payment for one month of service from the Marriott Syracuse Downtown.

Bill Murray asked for a motion to approve the MetroNet financials for September 2017 as presented.

**Motion: Dave Prowak made a motion to approve MetroNet financials for September 2017 as presented, and Murali Venkatesh seconded the motion.**

**The motion was carried.**

### **3.) MetroNet Technology Report**

Ron Walter stated that since Larry Page is out of town, there is no MetroNet Technology Report.

### **3.) MetroNet Project Development**

Wireless Connectivity for Non-Profits – Ron Walter reported that he still has not heard back from the Syracuse City School District regarding the question of whether or not using the District’s backbone to provide Internet service to the Somali-Bantu Center would jeopardize their E-Rate funding. Being able to use the District’s backbone to connect to non-profit organizations in Syracuse would be extremely helpful since the District has buildings throughout the City.

Bill Murray stated that there may be other options worth examining. The Library has locations throughout the City and there may even be some County-owned locations that could be used. Mr. Walter stated that he had developed a list of locations that were within line-of-sight of a Syracuse MetroNet location and he agreed to re-examine that list to see if there were other candidates who could be connected through another MetroNet member other than the School District. He stated that one possible candidate for connectivity is Huntington Family Centers. The Agency is about half a block from St. Joseph’s Hospital’s Westside Clinic on Gifford Street. MetroNet already owns equipment that we could use for this connection. However, we would need more Internet bandwidth if we were to add another agency. Brian Barboline asked Mr. Walter to give him a call to discuss connecting Huntington.

Free Wi-Fi Initiative – Bill Murray stated that he has done a partial survey to evaluate coverage of the Free Wi-Fi network and indicated that coverage is available around City Hall and City Hall Commons as well as around the County Office Building and in Hanover Square. Coverage is available in Columbus Circle from the County nodes. Ron Walter asked if the NYSERNet Wi-Fi connectivity in Clinton Square is on the MetroNet network using the MetroNet Free Wi-Fi SSID. Dave Prowak stated that he did not know but would check. Ron Walter stated that if we can get NYSERNet to join the network, that would greatly expand the coverage and we could start to promote the MetroNet Free Wi-Fi. He suggested that we contact the Downtown Committee to start to get the word out.

Kevin Sexton stated that he would be interested in having an outside antenna mounted on the building. Bill Murray stated that would be possible if there was already some type of access where a cable had already been installed outside the building. Mr. Sexton also stated that they are starting to turn on MetroNet Free Wi-Fi at most of their sites with the exception of the Lakeview Amphitheater.

Tech Alley Initiative – Ron Walter reported that Dave Prowak is working on having the City develop a map of the Tech Alley area that we can use to market the initiative.

Dave Prowak stated that he has been working with Verizon to contract for fiber installation in conduit along Water Street from the Atrium Building to City Hall. This would be free to use for municipal purposes and he expects to start using it for some projects as soon as the contracts are signed. This fiber can also be used for commercial purposes but there would be a charge based on current tariff rates. Mr. Prowak stated that he is trying to find the appropriate tariff to determine if it would be economically feasible for MetroNet to use this fiber as the north end of the Tech Alley loop. He added that this may be an opportunity to work with Verizon since they have access to all the buildings along the Tech Alley route.

Ron Walter reported that he, Dave Prowak and Nader Maroun met recently with Rick Clonan of the Syracuse Tech Garden and Bill Abrams of OmniMesh. OmniMesh is one of the winners of the Genius NY competition and has offices in the Tech Garden. The company has developed a high speed mesh wireless system that Mr. Clonan felt might help Syracuse MetroNet in implementing the Tech Alley initiative. OmniMesh has been developing a control system for the Drone corridor between Syracuse and Rome. Mr. Abrams indicated that this mesh network can be implemented using inexpensive equipment which has been modified to achieve speeds up to 40Gb. Mr. Walter added that Rick Clonan has offered to set up a “sandbox” at the Tech Garden which would allow us to deploy these units at select points around the Tech Garden to test the system. Mr. Clonan agreed to schedule a follow-up meeting in the near future so that we could see a demonstration of the system. Dave Prowak stated that it would be best to run fiber along the Tech Alley route but if this system works as indicated, this would offer a great opportunity to get something up and running in the near future at a relatively low cost.

Ron Walter stated that he, Dave Prowak and Bill Murray had met with Mike Klapheke who has been working with the Syracuse Police Department to install wireless cameras in the City. Mr. Klapheke stated that based on his experience, 750Mb is a reasonable expectation from a wireless network. He was looking forward to a demonstration to determine how a much higher bandwidth could be achieved through the OmniMesh solution.

Ron Walter stated that he is continuing to survey the buildings on the Tech Alley route to determine which buildings already have access from the street and which will require constructing new accesses. He is working on creating a summary document for the project, with the help of Bill Murray, which will allow everyone to provide input on the project. There are a number of different options that we need to flesh out as we go forward with the project. Mr. Walter added that he met recently with Mike Novakowski of CenterState CEO and he confirmed that although CenterState is focusing on other things, they are still interested in the Tech Alley project if we can come up with a viable solution.

Educational Opportunities – Ron Walter reported that at the last Board meeting, Nader Maroun referenced a recent article about coding classes. He stated that he has a great interest in giving young people in our community the opportunity to explore other avenues to learning besides the standard learning offered in the schools. There is a lot of talent in our schools and many young people do not have the opportunity to explore other learning avenues. From all that he has read, there is a great need today for people who can do coding. He asked if there was an opportunity for Syracuse MetroNet to explore offering this type of educational opportunity.

Meg Backus had stated that the Onondaga County Public Library was already offering that type of experience. They are using their new Maker space downtown to offer several classes for young people. Some of the branch libraries are also offering courses. Ron Walter stated that in his follow up with Ms. Backus, if MetroNet could put together a program that provided access to teachers and curriculum and a plan, we could use the libraries around the city and county to offer courses in coding and related subjects. Mr. Walter, Meg Backus and Nader Maroun will be meeting next week to brainstorm on how we might get this initiative off the ground.

Ron Walter further stated that it’s not just a question of offering the classes and piquing student’s interest, but we must also show them a path to a possible career. Mike O’Neill stated that SRC plans to hire 1,000 workers over the next year, many of whom may be those proficient with coding. So the demand is there and the challenge is to figure out how we might pique the interest of the youth in our area and show them a path.

Murali Venkatesh agreed that there is an opportunity here but he suggested that in addition to Java and Python and similar languages, something to do with gaming would be hugely impactful, especially among the youth. Also

development of mobile apps is huge. Coding is one thing but there is so much synergy between graphic and web design and other related disciplines. He suggested that there are some local technology companies who may be willing to provide direction and assistance in this area. Brian Barboline suggested that we could talk with SRC and find out what they are doing.

Ron Walter stated that filling the gap between a standard educational system as it exists in the Syracuse City School District and the demands for the future so that we can interest some of the youth to prepare for those jobs in demand is the challenge. There are partnership opportunities in the community but we need a driver, a role that MetroNet might fill. We could involve local companies who have the jobs to be part of the program.

Ron Walter agreed to report back on this subject at the next Board meeting.

During further discussion, Brian Barboline asked if there was any opportunity for Syracuse MetroNet to be involved with the Lakeview Amphitheater of the State Fairgrounds. Dave Prowak suggested that there may be an opportunity to offer very high speed bandwidth at the Amphitheater and charge a nominal fee for each user.

### **5.) Next Meeting Dates**

The next MetroNet Executive/Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 17, 2017 at 8:00AM.

The next MetroNet Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 15, 2017 at 8:00AM.

### **6.) Motion to Adjourn**

Bill Murray asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion: Mike O'Neill made a motion to adjourn the meeting.**