

**Syracuse MetroNet  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Friday, August 17, 2018  
8 AM, Syracuse Technology Garden  
235 Harrison Street**

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

Brian Barboline - Vice-President - <b>E</b>	Kevin Sexton - Secretary - ✓
Dave Prowak - Treasurer - ✓	Murali Venkatesh - ✓
Dane Dell - <b>A</b>	Matt Mahoney - <b>E</b>
Bill Murray – President - ✓	Mike O’Neill - ✓
Shaun Black - <b>A</b>	Ron Walter - ✓
Joe Ziemba - <b>A</b>	Larry Page - ✓
Andrew Cramer - <b>A</b>	
Nader Maroun - <b>E</b>	

( ) - 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**

Bill Murray called the meeting to order at 8:23 AM.

**2.) Motions**

Bill Murray asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 15thth Board meeting as presented.

**Motion: Dave Prowak made a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes as presented for the June 15th Board meeting, and Bill Murray seconded the motion.**

**The motion was carried.**

Dave Prowak reviewed the MetroNet Revenue Less Expenses and the MetroNet Balance Sheet as of July 31, 2018 and reported total revenue for the year to date of \$24,733.25 versus a budget of \$51,352.00. The primary reasons for this revenue shortfall are outstanding accounts receivable and the fact that we have not had to use any funds from reserves as yet. However, we anticipate having to take about \$2,500.00 from reserves in August. The July revenue includes three checks received from Marriott Syracuse Downtown. Total expenses to date are \$35,355.58 versus a budget of \$50,127.00.

Mr. Prowak further reported that cash on hand at the end of the month was \$114,095.05. Accounts Receivable stand at \$29,690.18.

Bill Murray asked for a motion to approve the MetroNet financials for July 2018 as presented.

**Motion: Murali Venkatesh made a motion to approve MetroNet financials for July 2018 as presented, and Bill Murray seconded the motion.**

**The motion was carried.**

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

Bill Murray reported that he talked with both DANC and Crown Castle about the potential issue with the bandwidth of the connection between our equipment on the 7<sup>th</sup> Floor of the State Tower Building and the Meet-Me Room on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor. MetroNet currently provides the Gigabit connection between Level 3 and the Syracuse City School District via DANC and Crown Castle fiber. This connection is also used by Crouse Hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital and Laboratory Alliance. Although the School District load balances between their Level 3 service and that from another Internet provider (Crown Castle), there is the potential for a problem if the District loses their Crown Castle connection temporarily and their total bandwidth switches to Level 3. Mr. Murray indicated that DANC is willing to provide us with a second Gigabit connection to the Meet-Me Room free of charge, Crown Castle wants \$900 per month for a second fiber connection. They do not charge us for the first connection. Ron Walter agreed to discuss this issue with the School District.

### **4.) MetroNet Project Development**

City of Syracuse Fiber Build – Dave Prowak reported that 144 strands of fiber are now being pulled as of August 13<sup>th</sup> for the fiber ring project that the City is developing between City Hall, the State Tower Building and the Atrium Building using Verizon conduit. This fiber will be used to provide Internet to the City from Cogent for \$350 per month for a Gigabit of service. The County will also be piggybacking on this service.

Mr. Prowak also reported that the City plans to purchase 17,000 light poles from National Grid. If they can run fiber to these poles, this opens a world of opportunities such as free Wi-Fi access in the City. The City plans to switch the lights to LEDs. While this work is being accomplished, wireless Wi-Fi devices could be installed on the poles. They are currently looking at a number of Smart Cities applications. The first step is to complete building the small ring between City Hall, the Atrium Building and the State Tower Building.

Additionally, he reported that the Municipal Broadband Working Group met for the second time on August 8<sup>th</sup>. This group, consisting of representatives from the City, Syracuse MetroNet, CenterState CEO, NYSERNet and QPK Design, was formed to try to identify funding for the Tech Alley Project. At this latest meeting, it was agreed that the next step would be to determine if Verizon conduit could be used to install fiber along the South Warren Street/South Salina Street loop. Mr. Prowak's understanding is that the use of Verizon conduit is free for municipal purposes. For non-municipal use, there appears to be a roughly \$8,000 per year per mile charge. Mr. Prowak will be meeting with the City's legal department to review the agreement between to the City and Verizon to try to determine what constitutes non-municipal use and what are the requirements to be able to access the lower rate and to get authorization to share the agreement with Syracuse MetroNet. There may be City-related entities with which MetroNet could partner that would enable us to use the Verizon conduit at a reduced rate. He stated that Syracuse MetroNet may have to hire an outside telecommunications attorney to review the City/Verizon agreement to determine how we could access a relatively low rate for use of the Verizon conduit for the Tech Alley project.

Mr. Prowak added that one of the new City administration's goals is to find ways of addressing the digital divide. As part of the transfer of ownership of light poles, the City plans to install devices that would allow them to offer wireless Internet access in downtown Syracuse. They would also like to provide access down South Salina Street by the Syracuse Community Health Center as well as along South Avenue to the Southwest Community Center.

### **5.) MetroNet Strategic Planning**

Ron Walter distributed a revised strategic planning document which incorporated some of the discussion from the last MetroNet Board meeting. Specifically, he added a section on short term and long-term tactics.

### Short Term

Work with CenterState CEO to identify their needs, prioritize those needs, and develop and manage technology solutions to meet those needs. This allows Syracuse MetroNet to build expertise and establish credibility within the community.

### Long Term

Increase membership to build organizational expertise and act as a technology consultant organization for the community.

Additionally, he changed Goal #1 after researching strategic goals of other non-profits, from “Procure significant funding and greatly increase income” to “Maintain organizational financial stability and grow the organization.”

Mr. Walter stated that he would like to get the Board’s reaction to these revised goals and to discuss how the organization could start to implement these objectives.

Kevin Sexton stated that outreach is very important. We need to recruit new members which would allow us to reduce the membership fee charged to each member. We get out of Syracuse MetroNet what we put into it and we need to put more into it. We are gaining momentum and the City’s new technology direction provides us with an opportunity to leverage this momentum to attract new members to the organization. He suggested asking people that we know to attend a meeting and see if they are interested in becoming a member and helping the community to grow. We need new ideas and strong voices. We’re all here because we want to help the community. The cost of can’t be a deterrent to membership. The core value has to be to build our community. Bill Murray agreed and said that we need to make a concerted effort to get more people/organizations involved.

Dave Prowak stated that he really likes the third objective under Goal #1: Seek partnerships and agreements with ISP and network companies in offering low cost (less than market costs) for equipment, installations, build-outs, Internet and WAN services. We have been talking about this as a role that we can play. That can be a key to our future viability.

Mr. Prowak added that if the proposal to purchase the light poles is approved, we may have a window of opportunity if the 4G/5G poles are going to get down to the section of Salina Street near the Syracuse Community Health Center and over to the Southwest Community Center. We may be able to play a role in demonstrating how that technology can be used to benefit the community. The City is going to deliver the technology but it’s not their role to demonstrate how it can be used. With the technology in place, there is a real opportunity to partner with these non-profit organizations to demonstrate how the technology can be used. Ron Walter stated that MetroNet spent a great deal of time in the early days demonstrating to the community the benefits of the Gigabit technology. Mike O’Neil added that the Syracuse Community Health Center will soon be renovating and upgrading their facility on South Salina Street. This will require a lot of reworking of their internal wiring. Having access to the 4G/5G network via a light pole would present new opportunities for the Center and fit in nicely with what they will be doing.

Murali Venkatesh asked that with the lack of active participation by the Syracuse City School District, Syracuse University and Le Moyne college recently, how realistic is Goal #3: Support educational opportunities for learning institutions and residents of Central New York? Ron Walter stated that we need to work on actively re-engaging the School District and the local colleges. We should especially work on getting the Syracuse School District and Le Moyne College actively involved once again in Syracuse MetroNet meetings. He asked for assistance in re-engaging these institutions in Syracuse MetroNet.

Dave Prowak stated that making an effort to increase MetroNet membership is a very good idea but timing is important. You do a membership drive when you have the projects that we have been working on lined up. That allows you to point to some concrete examples of what is being done. Then we can make an effort to get new members as well as reinvigorate members who have dropped out. Ron Walter added that focusing on the core value

of building community is key. Being able to point to projects and demonstrate how they are helping build the community enables us to generate interest in the organization. Bill Murray stated that being able to demonstrate how our work is directed toward helping the underserved and bridging the digital divide is important. Mr. Walter asked the members to forward to him the names of any individuals that we can approach about being members of the MetroNet organization. He also stated that NYSERNet would be an excellent candidate for membership.

Dave Prowak asked if there were any limitations in MetroNet's By-Laws regarding for-profit organizations being members of MetroNet. Ron Walter stated that they have carefully reviewed this issue in the past and it may require forming a for-profit sub-corporation to protect MetroNet's current non-profit status but that would require further research depending on exactly what we wanted to do. For instance, we could establish another category of membership where for-profit organizations could be members of the organization but not voting members on the Board.

Larry Page stated that all the work that the City is currently doing in the area of technology is very positive because things are actually happening. Kevin Sexton added that all the cities that have been successful in using technology have been willing to take some risks and it looks like Syracuse is starting to do that which is very positive.

Murali Venkatesh announced that he has resigned from the Board effective immediately because of added responsibilities at Syracuse University. Mr. Venkatesh has been involved in the organization for the past 20 years and the Board members thanked him for his contribution and hoped that he would continue to be involved as his time permits.

#### **6.) Next Meeting Dates**

The next MetroNet Executive/Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 21, 2018 at 8:00AM.

The next MetroNet Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 19, 2018 at 8:00AM.

#### **7.) Motion to Adjourn**

Bill Murray asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion: Dave Prowak made a motion to adjourn the meeting.**