



**Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2015**

**Legislative Office Building, 300 Capital Ave., Hartford, Connecticut
Hearing Room 1C 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.**

Commission Members in Attendance:

Bailie, Colleen
Caruso, Nicholas
Dillon, Thomas
Elsesser, John
Kitching, Jeffrey
Mindek, James
Mundrane, Michael
Pellegrini, Lisa
Raymond, Mark
Shanley, Scott
Stanco, Bart
Vallee, William
Vittner, John
Watson, Jim
Widness, Jennifer
Wiggin, Kendall

Commission Members Not in Attendance:

Feinmark, Russell
Hughes, Kristy
Mavrogeanes, Rich
Smith, Catherine
Zak, Scott

Others in Attendance:

Casey, Doug
Deprey, Brynn
Taylor, Scott

- **Welcome**

Commission Chair Mark Raymond called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and reviewed the exiting and safety requirements of the Legislative Office Building. Mark Raymond then introduced himself as the Chair of this Commission.

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes, September 14, 2015**

A motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Bill Vallee, and seconded by John Elsesser. Colleen Bailie requested that the spelling of her name be corrected. A motion to accept the minutes as written, with one change noted, was passed with one abstention by Lisa Pellegrini.

- **Executive Director**

- As a preface to the introduction of the new CET Executive Director, Mark Raymond recognized the contributions of the Ken Wiggin, Nick Caruso and Bill Vallee for volunteering to assist him with the selection committee. They all took a large amount of time out of their schedules to make sure each candidate was carefully considered to bring this important position to reality. Mark then introduced Doug Casey as the new CET Executive Director who will officially be on board effective this Friday, December 11, 2015. Mark explained that Doug will be familiar to almost anyone that has worked with education and technology within the State of Connecticut. For the past 9 1/2 years, Doug has led been the Director of Technology and the Information Security Officer for CREC. He has led numerous technology improvement programs that have positively impacted over 100 school districts in the state. He brings experience in Education, Technology, Strategic Planning, Marketing, and most importantly, a passion about how we approach technology in education to improve the outcomes for our citizens.

Mark then opened the floor for Doug to share some introductory remarks as he prepares to join us in this critical role:

Doug Casey addressed the Commission by reflecting on his background and his vision for the role of Executive Director for CET. Doug explained that he sees this role as having a number of different components and capacities including: leader; collaborator, communicator, solution designer, listener and advocate for educational technology in the State. Those descriptors tie to the experience he has amassed with CREC where he served as a practitioner for 25 schools, 40 locations, 10,000 students and 3,000 staff. These experiences have provided him with hands on knowledge of what technology looks like in Connecticut school systems. He has had the opportunity to work with technology directors who have assisted him with building solutions to save money and increase efficiency including volume purchasing and staffing solutions that put more money back in the classroom where it belongs. He has teamed up with non-K-12 groups such as libraries and workforce agencies at assist with citizenship attainment and opportunities for adult learners to gain skills to improve their livelihoods. Doug is excited and passionate about technology in the state and looks forward to learning of the Commission's experiences and challenges. Technology statewide is a big initiative. He looks forward to developing a strategic plan with attainable goals that support innovations and efficiencies to which advancement opportunities and career and college readiness are imperative.

Mark closed by again thanking Doug for joining us and noted that policy review and creation of a strategic plan are just two of the items that will top Doug's agenda when he officially begins this role on December 11, 2015.

- **Report of Commission Chair**

The hiring the CET Executive Director was the highlight of the quarter, but several other activities during this period will be discussed further in the agenda.

- **CEN Status Report, Scott Taylor**

Scott Taylor reviewed the information contained in the CEN Update handout and invited questions regarding the content.

- Lisa Pellegrini expressed her frustration that the Town of Somers would like to connect but they continue to experience problems with their carrier, Frontier, who is delaying the process. As a result, she has had to reach out to OPM and request an extension to the grant that expired on November 30. OPM confirmed that there are other towns experiencing the same concerns. She is reaching out to the Commission for their assistance in rectifying this matter. Mark Raymond offered to escalate the discussion with Frontier as it applies to her and others.

John Elsesser stated that in accordance with PURA regulations, municipalities should have space reserved for municipal gain; however, Frontier is not acknowledging those requirements. Frontier wants to pass "make-ready charges" on to the towns to move things out of the way to accommodate their requests. He believes that it is imperative to the growth of the network that we have discussions with PURA to ensure that the vendors are abiding by the regulations set in place by the regulatory commission.

Lisa Pellegrini added that she has been unable to receive definitive information regarding the amount of the charges.

Bill Vallee thanked them for bringing these issues to their attention and offered background information on the single-pole administrator and municipal gain issues. He explained that the statute was changed in 2013 to make the use of the municipal gain "for any purpose." He explained that the municipalities should have the right to do whatever they want in the municipal gain space. At present, the Connecticut State Broadband Office is working with municipal and state officials to determine what can be accomplished through statute changes or PURA to make the "make ready" charge into a reservation of space on the pole, which it is not now. Of the 900,000 poles in the state, 800,000 are jointly owned by the electric and telephone companies. The custodial responsibilities for each pole changes from one area to another to facilitate maintenance responsibilities. This creates problems with the pole owners regarding their

attention to and devotion to maintenance of the poles. If there is no space reserved on a pole and a municipality comes in with a contractor looking to use their reserved space on municipal gain and they say the pole is blocked, then the municipality has to pay for it. The rate that municipalities and other third-party pole attachers are charged by the pole owners (electric and telephone companies) is set by PURA through the electric company rates set by the FCC. Vallee recommended that the Commission get involved in the modification of this CGS 16-233 legislation to address these current concerns. He clarified that CGS 16-233 prohibits attachment lease charges for municipalities, does not dictate the rates, but it does allow for "make ready" charges.

John Elsesser reminded the Commission that these efforts include schools and libraries in addition to municipal offices. He recommended that we work fast because the demands on the available space are quickly increasing. He shared discussions that he has had regarding telephone repeaters being added to the poles which will further limit availability. The vendors are not acknowledging the need for municipal attachments and that it is important that we exercise the rights that we have under these laws. Unlike other states, the pole owners do not pay the towns to rent the land (public rights of way) on which the poles are planted. In other states, there are franchise fees, rental fees, leases, insurance agreements, etc., paid for or provided to the municipalities. Since the CT municipalities do not receive a quid pro quo in exchange for the easement to plant poles in favor of the utilities, the state statutes (16-233) provides that the state's municipalities are granted a reserved space for municipal gain on those poles. But, Frontier is not allowing for that, but the electric companies (the state's Single Pole Administrators) do. We should engage in dialogue and discussion.

John Elsesser made a motion to support resolving the municipal gain issue on behalf of the CET future deployments. The motion was seconded by Lisa Pellegrini. In discussion, Lisa Pellegrini noted that this committee is the best mechanism to effect this change. Municipalities generally do not have IT Directors and need assistance with this challenge. Colleen Bailie referenced that association libraries are technically not owned by the town but they need to be included in the discussion as well. Bill Vallee clarified that not only do towns not enjoy the revenue from these poles, they do not have authority over rights of way. This is State-controlled at the PURA level. Bill asked the Commission to consider becoming active in the development of a unified action toward this legislation. He explained that he expects action on this legislation within the next several weeks. Nick Caruso asked for clarification of the requirements of this Commission as it relates to this motion. Bill explained that 2015 legislative action created a CT State Broadband Office. The State Broadband Office has hired consultants to explore this issue. Regarding fiber networking on a State level, if there is not an inexpensive access to the public rights of way, a fiber

network build project will not go forward. He referenced installation of small cell antennas and other projects being installed to facilitate broadband near schools that may affect municipal gain. Scott Shanley recommended that, after the Executive Director is on board, that we create a letter to PURA and Frontier that states that critical public policy initiatives are not being accomplished in a timely fashion due to these municipal gain concerns and charges, and we require speed in addressing this issue.

Michael Mundrane stated that the letter should distinguish make-ready work that is valid vs. charges for others who have encroached on the municipalities' space. Bill Vallee volunteered to file materials with the Commission and Executive Director to initiate this discussion.

Mark clarified that the motion that has been made and seconded and clarified for Commission involvement in helping to gain recognition of municipal gain and access issues associated therewith. Clarification will be presented in the form of a letter from the Commission drafted by Bill Vallee. Having no further discussion, a motion to approve was made and unanimously approved with no abstentions.

- In conclusion of the CEN Report review, Scott Shanley thanked Scott Taylor for pursuing the V4, V6 issue and providing explanation of the rental.

- **Review of Annual Report Filing**

Mark Raymond reviewed the information contained in the 2012-15 Annual Report of the Commission on Educational Technology that was forwarded to all Commission members in advance of this meeting for review. Mark Raymond invited discussion, comments and recommendations. Bill Vallee complimented the quality of the report and the contents therein. Receiving no other input, Mark stated that the Annual Report will be filed by the end of the year as required.

- **Review of Pricing Analysis Report**

Mark Raymond reviewed a final report submitted by Blum Shapiro Consulting about the pricing structure used by the Network. The CEN is a unique construct. There are no direct comparisons across the country that have the breadth of coverage and mix of members that we have here in this state. That uniqueness made this assessment a very difficult project. Mark paraphrased the policy that we had for charging in a manner that best captured the value of the network. It was recognized that we were not accruing long-term equipment replacement costs.

John Elsesser noted the recommendation that the funding accruals would be held by UCONN rather than the special revenue funds in the State Comptroller's office, and asked if that would make it more or less secure in the long-term budgeting process.

Mark Raymond explained that there was no substantive discussion regarding that recommendation, and he will endeavor to explore the specifics of that recommendation. Michael Mundrane stated that historically, UCONN does not have a history of sweeping fund balances from one area to another; however, going forward he is not certain if the future will be as stable. Michael met with Blum Shapiro regarding the tiered pricing model which was not as attractive; however, the blanket model does not scale with the actual costs.

John Vittner offered history regarding a similar issue that this Commission dealt with approximately nine years ago with \$1.2 million in funds that spurred the original three-year investment in Springfield disaster recovery services for higher education. He recommended that the Commission consider the importance of where these funds go and the potential for lapsing.

Ken Wiggin shares those concerns also and recommended speaking with OPM to consider Capital Equipment Funds because they are generally very stable. Most agencies are not allowed to build a huge reserve; however, the funds remain there. It would establish a more realistic way of handling those ongoing funds.

Mark Raymond shared the concerns mentioned and does not feel that we should inclusively accept all the recommendations contained in this report. He supports investigating areas of this report as they pertain to our evolving needs. The original construct of the network had large players using large bandwidth, now we are on much more of a spectrum. Large broadband users that the network can serve well should be focused on. Mark is looking forward to revisiting the pricing recommendations and stated that the report gives them a good basis on which to move forward.

Scott Shanley stated that the Strategic Planning process is critical to determining the best way to move forward.

- **Other Business:**
 - Nick Caruso and Scott Shanley thanked Mark for his contributions and commitment to this Commission. Mark Raymond is looking forward to the benefit of a full-time resource for this Commission's efforts.
- **Public Comment:** No public comments
- **Future 2016 Meeting Dates, location to be announced:**
 - March 7, 2016
 - June 6, 2016
 - September 12, 2016
 - December 5, 2016

- **Adjournment:** At 2:22 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Mark Raymond and seconded by Michael Mundrane; it was unanimously accepted by the Commission with no further comment.

Respectfully submitted,

Aleshia M. Hall

Executive Secretary to Chief Information Officer Mark Raymond