Syracuse MetroNet
Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, June 15, 2018
8 AM, Syracuse Technology Garden
235 Harrison Street

<u>MetroNet Board Members, Visitors and Staff Attendance:</u>

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

( ) - 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

<u>Meeting Notes:</u>

1.) Welcome and Introductions

Bill Murray called the meeting to order at 8:07 AM.

2). Motions

Bill Murray asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 20th Board meeting as presented.

Motion: Matt Mahoney made a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes as presented for the April 20th Board meeting, and Brian Barboline seconded the motion.

The motion was carried.

Dave Prowak reviewed the MetroNet Revenue Less Expenses and the MetroNet Balance Sheet as of May 31, 2018 and reported total revenue for the year to date of $11,813.68 versus a budget of $32,366.00. 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. Total expenses to date are $23,874.54 versus a budget of $35,291.00. This is primarily due to lower employee fees than budgeted which is due to hours not yet billed.

Mr. Prowak further reported that cash on hand at the end of the month was $110,350.07. Accounts Receivable stand at $23.270.54. These include three months of past due Internet service charges from the Marriott Syracuse Downtown. Ron Walter stated that we did receive another check from the Marriott Syracuse Downtown since the end of May. Additionally, he reported that he has confirmed that the hotel is using the connection.

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

Motion: Nader Maroun made a motion to approve MetroNet financials for May 2018 as presented, and Brian Barboline seconded the motion.

The motion was carried.

3.) MetroNet Technology Report

Larry Page reported that last week we had received call a from John Vormwald of Laboratory Alliance stating that they were experiencing slowdowns in their Internet service similar to those they were experiencing six months ago. The problem then was with the Syracuse City School District as they significantly increased their Internet bandwidth. They had made some changes and our problem went away. However, this time we were not able to investigate the issue since our monitoring device at the State Tower Building had stopped working. Mike O'Neill stated that the District has had outages recently and they are they are expected to continue as they are in the process of updating their equipment. Ron Walter reported that he had followed up with Andrew Cramer who stated that the District had not made any changes in their Internet service configuration.

Bill Murray stated that Ron Walter has ordered a new PC and we will be loading a Linux platform on it with monitoring software that will replace the old monitoring device that has quit working.

Ron Walter reported that we are investigating the opportunity to acquire a second connection from DANC from our equipment on the 7th floor of the State Tower Building to the Meet-Me Room on the 9th floor. Additionally, we are exploring our options to replace the relatively expensive Internet connection that MetroNet purchases from Level 3 with a lower cost Internet service.

4.) MetroNet Project Development

Tech Alley Project – Dave Prowak stated that we agreed in a previous meeting that we need to get together with CenterState CEO to figure out our next steps with the Tech Alley project. A meeting has now been scheduled for July 9, 2018 at City Hall with representative of CenterState CEO, the City's economic development people and Syracuse MetroNet. We need to determine if there is money available now or do we have to apply for New York State CFA funding. The deadline for this year's CFA funding application is July 27, 2018.

Ron Walter stated that Merike Treier of the Downtown Syracuse Committee will be attending along with Mike Novakowski of CenterState CEO, both of whom we have worked with before. Also attending will be Chris Kimpland, IT Director of QPK Design which owns the building at 450 South Salina Street. Mr. Walter stated that he had met with Mr. Kimpland and his boss, Vince Nicotra, several months ago and they offered to help us with the Tech Alley project in any way they could.

Dave Prowak reported on behalf of Kevin Sexton that he has met with the County Executive and she is fully in support of this project. The Deputy County Executive was trying to set up a meeting with CenterState to talk about this idea but that has not yet happened. Mr. Walter also mentioned that Mr. Sexton had said that if anyone has recommendations on candidates for additional MetroNet board membership, that may be helpful as we continue to push our ideas for further economic development.

Nader Maroun stated that we have identified possible sources of funding for the Tech Alley project. What do we have to do now to access these funds?

City of Syracuse Fiber Build – Dave Prowak reported that 144 strands of fiber is scheduled to be pulled in July in 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. His understanding of the agreement with Verizon is that the use of the conduit is free for municipal purposes. For non-municipal use, there appears to be a roughly $8,000 per year per mile charge but that pricing has to be reviewed with legal to determine what constitutes non-municipal use and what are the requirements to be able to access that rate. Mr. Prowak added that he is applying for CFA funding to expand this network. Anyone who connects to this network will have access to the State Tower and Atrium sites.

Mr. Prowak also reported that the City plans to purchase 17,000 light poles. 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.

4.) MetroNet Strategic Planning

Ron Walter reviewed a possible visions statement for Syracuse MetroNet and asked the Board members to comment:

> Support economic growth, educational opportunities and quality of life for residents and businesses of Central New York by being the primary resource for consultation and recommendation in providing solutions for broadband Internet services.

Bill Murray stated that he believes that MetroNet should not own anything. He sees MetroNet as a brain trust that anyone who is going through the process of trying to build something related to broadband technology could come to us and get the expertise of the group. He sees it as a consulting organization.

Ron Walter stated that he sees two components, a passive component which is what Mr. Murray is describing and an active component in which MetroNet seek out needs in the community and acts as a project manager to make sure that initiatives are completed such as with the Tech Alley project.

Dave Prowak sees MetroNet's key role as an organization that helps CenterState CEO achieve their technology related goals. CenterState would identify the needs, prioritize the projects and MetroNet would assist in developing solutions to meet those needs.

Brian Barboline stated that he doesn't know what the pitch is. We need to pick a specific project/area and focus on it at least in the short term. Ron Walter stated that we are currently focusing on a fiber project and a free Wi-Fi project, both of which fall within the stated vision.

Mr. Barboline further stated that he likes Goal #5: Establish long-term technical strategies for equipment and solutions supporting high speed Internet and a wide range of services for data communication.

Nader Maroun stated that he belies that goals 2, 3 and 4 could all be combined into one goal. He asked how, under the scenario that Mr. Murray is suggesting, does MetroNet as an entity exist financially? Mr. Murray stated that if all the top technology people from local companies all joined in, you would have a brain trust of people who do this for a living and who have significant expertise. If MetroNet were to make available this expertise to organizations that need assistance with technology projects and who are willing to pay for that assistance, you would have a source on income for the organization. Mr. Maroun stated that while this is a good idea, we don't have a history of that type of cooperation in this community, so he is not sure that we can pull that off.

Dave Prowak stated that Mr. Murray's idea is a good one but not right now. We should focus on assisting with a project that have been identified as a priority by CenterState CEO and build our reputation in the community. After we have built our reputation on being able to pull off these projects, then we can begin to build the expertise to act a technology consultant in the community. Mr. Maroun stated that this would result in MetroNet jumping from project to project as we have been doing in the past. We really should sit down with CenterState CEO and other leaders in the community and figure out how we can grow the area economically through technology as has been done in other communities.

Mike O'Neill stated that he does not see Goal #1, procure significant funding and greatly increase income, as a specific goal for the organization. Any organization needs money to exist. MetroNet needs money to accomplish whatever the goal(s) of the organization is. He further stated that he agrees that the Syracuse Community Health Center and other organizations around the table benefitted from the initial work of Syracuse MetroNet, but he has

trouble identifying the benefit for the Syracuse Community Health Center going forward. Brian Barboline stated that even though St. Joseph's Hospital does not now benefit directly from Syracuse MetroNet, he comes here based more on the mission. Nader Maroun agreed that he is here for the broader commitment to the community. He stated that the success of Syracuse MetroNet in the past is history. Now we need to focus on the bigger picture today. He has always seen this organization as a conduit to help companies grow technology wise. Mr. O'Neill stated that if he understood the bigger picture, maybe he could find a role in which he could contribute to the bigger picture. He stated that MetroNet got to the Moon with their original efforts but now we need to figure out how to get to Mars.

Bill Murray stated that the people who are coming to the meeting on July 9th are trying to bring reasonably priced high-speed broadband to downtown Syracuse and provide low cost wireless access to the area but none of them have the expertise to bring it together. They are looking for advice and counsel. If you are hoping to attract young people and small businesses to downtown, this is what you need to offer. Nader Maroun suggested that we could use the success of other communities in this area to demonstrate what can be achieved in Syracuse.if funding was made available.

Ron Walter commented that if you look at other communities that have developed innovation districts or technology corridors, one common characteristic is tremendous cooperation between local governments and local businesses. A broad range of individuals and entities have come together to build these technology assets. With current cooperation between the City, the County and CenterState CEO, we now can be more like successful communities like Chattanooga. However, this is not going to happen unless Syracuse MetroNet is there to push it.

Bill Murray stated that we should invite MetroNet members to give us their idea for what this community should do to reach Mars so that we can present these ideas to the group meeting on the 9th. Brian Barboline stated that we should have talking points going into the meeting.

Nader Maroun referenced the effort to build the Research Triangle in North Carolina in the 1950s and stated that the three communities in North Carolina might as well have been going to Mars. However, those communities figured out how to pull it off. He further stated that he feels that trying to help those in government and CenterState CEO have a vision of how technology can help build the community is difficult. We as an organization may have to tell them what Mars looks like and then show them how we can get there. That is something that we as a community should be looking at. With the colleges and universities in this area, we have a bit of a triangle here. With CenterState's multi-county reach, it seems that we could create a vision statement that is appealing to a broad cross section of the region and talks about not only improving the quality of life for people but economically benefits us as a region. A piece of that would be the downtown Tech Alley initiative. We must have a larger vision that appeals to people like Mike O'Neill that they can get excited about.

Mr. O'Neill added that there are many components to such a vision in which MetroNet can a role. Mr. Maroun stated that the people around the table at the July 9th meeting may not be the people who can facilitate getting this done. Ron Walter stated that he agrees that we need to have a meeting with Rob Simpson to talk about the larger vision, but he sees July 9th meeting as an opportunity to lead up to that larger meeting and to jump start the Tech Alley project.

5.) Next Meeting Dates

The next MetroNet Executive/Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 20, 2018 at 8:00AM.

The next MetroNet Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 17, 2018 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.