

Minutes of WEVD Post Box Committee August 26, 2020

Prepared by Maureen Patti

Meeting called to order at 6:36 at 42 Taylor Drive, Campton, NH

Present: Sean Tole, Susan McDermott, Maureen Patti

Discussion begins concerning who pays for the purchase and installation of post boxes with corresponding package boxes. Does it qualify under CIF? WEA has a new definition for approved CIF funded projects. Maureen Patti will look for the new definition and share with other committee members. Given that the Community Center is owned by WEVD, would the municipality be responsible for the cost? Is it a cost that can/should/shall be shared by WEVD & WEA? All agree to continue discussion at next meeting after gathering additional information.

All agree that pre-meeting communications are incorporated into minutes of this meeting

What the Cluster Boxes look like and their dimensions are dictated by the USPS. Licensed Cluster Box Units are sold by designated USPS vendors. All looked online at images and agreed Mr. Sean Tole would call the licensed vendor(s) identified in USPS website to get dimensions and other information about the CBUs.

Reviewed the USPS publication, "National Delivery Planning Standards, A Guide for Builders and Developers, July 2020. It appears there MAY be a requirement the CBUs are mounted on a 15 foot wide raised concrete pad. Confirmation with local postmaster is needed – all agree.

Possible locations were discussed. Given that there needs to be, per USPS regulations, over 500 CBUs, all agree an important consideration is aesthetics. All agree to explore with local Postmaster whether it is possible to have delivery at some of the larger condominium developments – to be paid for by WEVD and/or WEA. That way, the footprint of the CBUs at the Community Center might be reduced. All agree the condo associations must approve but first step is whether USPS would agree to deliver to more than one set of CBUs.

Discussion ensued regarding possible locations. The overflow parking lot (across from Community Center) might be a possibility in terms of size and there is lighting/electric already. Placing the CBUs under a canopy (if required) or in a structure at the end of the parking lot (by driveway to handicapped parking behind Community Center and pickleball/tennis courts) or even alongside the parking lot in that general area were discussed. More information needed from USPS before suggestion can be made to Commissioners as a whole.

Susan McDermott and Maureen Patti agree to meet with the Campton Postmaster next week.

Given there are a number of questions about what type of CBUs are required as well as the specifications for a structure (if feasible), all agree to send an email to the USPS Manager of Consumer & Industry Contact of Northern New England. Maureen Patti volunteers to draft the letter and have other committee members review before sending.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

From Mr. Sean Tole:

1. Who will pay for the CBU's and their installation? (District, WEA, special assessment, etc)
2. Should (can) there be CBU's at the Rec Center and condo developments?
3. Where should the boxes be installed?
4. What size boxes? One size for all or different sizes?
5. If different, how are assignments determined?
6. Where do we buy the boxes? Do we need "3 bids"?
7. Will the existing CBU structure remain in place? Is it razed? Will those boxes be used in the future? Maybe the structure could be used for parcel boxes?
8. How many boxes do we need for current demand? How many boxes are allocated for future growth?
9. Should parcel boxes be included? Do they need to be?
10. Confirmation that USPS will manage the CBU's re locks, lost keys, new assignment, etc.
11. Should the CBU installation have security lights? Security camera(s)?

From Ms. Maureen Patti:

Thoughts regarding Mailboxes for WE owners

According to USPS, each address in WE is entitled to mail delivery – including seasonal homes. The USPS has determined that delivery to WE shall be CENTRALIZED DELIVERY via Cluster Box Units (CBUs). USPS has determined there will be no curbside delivery to WE.

In addition, USPS requires enough CBUs for each residence. They also require the CBUs be permanently labelled for each address. If there is a sale of property, the new owners would receive mail in the box dedicated to their residence.

[Whether this means no separate delivery to CBUs at different condo developments within WE is, to me, not expressly stated in the letter from Manager of Consumer & Industry Contact of the Northern New England District (Manager Blethen). But see #2 for further discussion of this issue.]

Manager Blethen identifies the HOA as being responsible for installing enough CBUs for each residence. The letter also recounts that "when residents pay fees and taxes to an association, as in Waterville Estates, provisions for mail delivery are normally included along with residential services such as lawn mowing, plowing, and upkeep of common buildings." Obviously, since WE has both a HOA (WEA) and a Village District (municipality), and, the municipality owns the Community Center (where CBUs – some or all – will be located), this raises issues. See #1 below.

Manager Blethen noted in her letter to Corey Smith that she is unaware of any other HOA or developer within the 3 states of the Northern New England District which has not provided enough CBUs for all addresses as one of the essential services which all residents receive.

1. WHO WILL PAY

The WEA bylaws (Article III, Section 6(d)) provide the Board of Directors has the power to maintain, alter, repair, and otherwise care for the Common Property (which would include the Community Center). WEA is responsible for providing the day-to-day operations of the Community Center as well as recreational services & entertainment to the owners, residents, and guests of WE. Is the construction of mail receptacles part of maintaining or caring for the Community Center?

WE Village District (WEVD) owns the Community Center. USPS has determined property owners are responsible for installing, ongoing maintenance, repairs, and replacement of mailbox equipment. One of the stated (and statutorily authorized) purposes of the WEVD is "maintenance and care of the parks & commons." I imagine the construction of a set of permanent mail receptacles would fall under the auspices of the WEVD as property owner and municipal government subdivision.

Would the construction of sufficient CBUs be a qualifying Capital Improvement?

I am not in a position to answer these questions.

2. My reading of the letter from Manager Blethen and the relevant sections of the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) leads me to conclude the only location that will satisfy USPS is the Community Center. However, there is no **express** statement that WE Condo Associations could not be serviced by CBUs on their common property. We could definitely ask Manager Blethen. However, if money is used (whether WEA or WEVD) for CBUs at the Community Center for one group of WE owners and not all, there is likely a problem.
3. In terms of where the CBUs should be installed, there are several considerations. First, USPS must approve the location. Second, the structure must have access from the rear for USPS employee as well as maneuvering space for customers – so it will be 15 feet wide. Third, it looks like the CBUs cannot be installed directly on the street (perhaps eliminating one thought about putting it on asphalt of parking lot for Community Center past the pool and near the tennis courts). Fourth, the CBUs must have a canopy for protection from the weather as well as adequate nighttime lighting. WHEW!
4. USPS approves standard boxes and licenses manufacturers. It appears the boxes are of uniform size with parcel boxes for larger items.
6. We buy the CBUs from licensed vendors. It got a little bit unclear to me when I went to the USPS newsletter which is referenced in the Guide for Builders & Developers. While there were a number of vendors in the newsletter, there may only be one licensed vendor of CBUs for postal use.

7. Great question. Andy suggested to me to convert it into another location for posting WEVD notices. It doesn't meet the new CBU centralized delivery standards to keep those boxes or the structure for mail delivery. We would have to widen the area behind it for Postal employee access, create a wide radius for access in the front, and maybe even pour a raised concrete base underneath it. It may be cheaper to rehab it than to include another 100 or so boxes in whatever structure gets constructed. I guess we could get bids.
8. According to Manager Blethen, we had over 500 residences when she sent the letter to Corey in the fall of 2019. I imagine WEA or WEVD has the number of residences at this time. How would we contemplate future growth? Is there any estimate on the total number of buildable lots at WE?
9. Parcel boxes MUST be included. USPS dictates how many are required for the number of mailboxes.
10. Looks like USPS handles all the keys and fixes the locks once we install and assign a CBU receptacle for each address, per Manager Blethen.

From what I reviewed, USPS doesn't require security cameras. But lighting is required. See #3 above. We may want to consider getting bids which include security cameras. I think it is a good idea to protect our (expensive) mail receptacles, residents, and employee