

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath MLB
November 9, 2021 at 11

Present: MLB: Anne Emmet, David Gordon, and Ned Wolf
with Jan Carr visiting, and MLP Manager, Sheila Litchfield
Absent: Art Schwenger and Bill Fontes

Anne called the meeting to order at 11.

Members read the minutes of the November 2nd MLB meeting. David moved that the minutes be approved. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Members read the minutes of the November 2nd 1:30 WG&E installations meeting. David moved that the minutes be approved. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheila reported having talked on November 8th with Bill Ennen. They agreed that until Heath and WG&E have a more solid number of actual drops there is no reason to meet with him. We anticipate having a solid number by December 7th. Bill suggests that by the end of the week we get to him the number of drops we expect to be built even if they are not actually built. It is that number that Bill plans to take to his CFO with a request to release Heath's funds. He thinks that would be easier than for us to make a second application in 2022.

David said that we need 2 numbers. We need the total number of possible drops. We've been using 589 which comes from WG&E's cut sheet. Second, we need an estimated number of actual drops. We can get the number of activated drops or cold drops. We have over 400 signed up. Taking 589 as the maximum number of possible drops, we would be seeking reimbursement for up to 70% of 589 which is 412.

Jan said that we have 355 if we include 30 full time from Mohawk Estates. Having 20 more of the remaining 80 in Mohawk Estates seems likely.

Sheila In her letter to Bill Ennen will say, "This is the number of drops we anticipate to have billed in accord with our Drop Policy." We will ask WG&E for a name with whom we can link the numbers we give to Bill.

Sheila reported from the WiredWest board meeting that they favor continuing with the current 3 year term for the contract with WG&E rather than a longer term.

We will ask Jim Drawe whether he is receiving utilization reports.

Sheila said that Betsy Loiko says that 10 customers are scheduled to have their service discontinued on November 18th. It's possible that people are confused as they wait for an invoice unaware that an automatic payment has to be set up. David recommended that Sheila phone those 10 people.

Sheila said that the work at 612 8A is to be scheduled soon.

David reported that the small group meetings of representatives from each geo-cluster have been quite productive in defining the needed resiliency. He said that Vijay has come forward with a document about how to proceed. His optimistic guess as to when redundancy will be in place is by June of next year.

Sheila said that David Dvore sent a promising email about Crown Castle. David Gordon said that Crown Castle is to be part of the resiliency.

Members discussed David's new draft of a letter to customers about resiliency. He said he changed MLB to MLP so that the letter can come from the MLP manager as well as the board. Anne said she understood the change but thought that sticking with MLB throughout the letter would be better. David said that was OK but also said there is an entity called the MLP that was created by a vote at Town Meeting. Sheila said that the reason that's important is that the MLP doesn't have to follow the rules a municipality does.

Sheila said that we will send the final version of the letter to Lisa Stowe of WG&E. We want it to go not only to existing customers but to all who have signed up.

Members discussed the coming joint meeting of the Finance Committee and the MLB. Ned said that from the Finance Committee meetings he has attended there are 2 concerns: understanding operating revenue and determining whether it's worthwhile to stay with WiredWest.

We have signed a service agreement with WiredWest having end date June of 2024. WiredWest has a contract with WG&E that expires this June.

We will tell Art that we suggest asking Tom Lively whether the Finance Committee wants to hear about operating expenses. If the answer is yes, we should insist that Jim Drawe be present. Sheila will get in touch with Art about calling Tom.

The MLB minutes indicate MLB support in June, 2021 for striking from the Drop Policy the requirement that a subscriber maintain the subscription for at least 6 months. When we adopted the suspension policy, however, the 6 month requirement remained in an online version of the policy.

Members discussed Anne's summary of broadband drop policies in Heath, Colrain, and Charlemont. The information shows that in both Colrain and Charlemont there is a penalty if a subscriber fails to subscribe for an entire year. Sheila said that we are not set up to enforce such policies.

In Heath the subsidy is gone as of September 15th. A motion was made last week to have a \$250. subsidy. David moved to postpone that discussion until next week when the full board is present. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Sheila pointed out that our Drop Policy has a section 'New Construction'. There's nothing that guarantees a subsidy for new construction. Our policy lets the MLB look at it on a case by case basis.

Anne will talk with Laura at WG&E and ask that the 6 month requirement be removed from Heath's Drop Policy. David recommended being sure that 'paying for the first month' gets included.

Members discussed how customers might go to both the town website and to the FAQ on the Whip City. Can the Heath website be minimalist with encouragement to go to the Whip City Fiber website? We could focus on having the Whip City Fiber website up to date.

Jan and Chris have agreed to a list for FSA 4 which she will send to Chris.

David moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:30. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf

