

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath MLB
March 22, 2022 at 11
virtual meeting

Present: MLB: Art Schwenger(Chair), Anne Emmet, David Gordon, Bill Fontes, and Ned Wolf
with MLP Manager Sheila Litchfield

Art called the meeting to order at 11:02.

Members read the minutes of the March 15th MLB meeting. Bill moved that the minutes be approved. David seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 abstain due to absence. Members read the minutes of the March 15th WG&E Installs meeting. Bill moved that the minutes be approved. David seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 abstain due to absence.

Sheila reported that an invoice for \$13,316.34 from Cebula has been sent to the Accountant. It does not include \$100 for an extra switch.

Sheila said that the \$27.35 Verizon invoice for a pole licensing fee did arrive and the check has been sent. At first it was thought an additional pole licensing fee of \$334.06 would have to be paid to National Grid. Laura Blascak of WG&E has said that no pole license is needed, and Hilma has pulled that check. Laura can see when Verizon has approved.

Sheila has looked over the list of stamper boxes sent by WG&E and has determined that none of them will be in Heath.

Sheila reported on interactions with several customers.

Sheila said that WG&E is asking us whether the account of the Heath Union Church should continue as a residential account or be switched to a business account. Members discussed residential versus business for the church.

Action Taken *Anne moved that we establish the Heath Union Church's broadband account as residential on the basis of the church being a nonprofit.
The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Members discussed a request by the customer at 1 Bray Road to be switched from a business account to a residential account.

Action Taken *Bill moved that the broadband account of 1 Bray Road be switched from business to residential on the basis that it's operated out of the home. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 nay.*

WG&E charges us the same for a business account as for a residential account. We will continue to study these different accounts.

Sheila has prepared a list of broadband invoices since March 3, 2021. Certain expenditures since March 3, 2021 could be eligible for ARPA funds. Ned said he has been studying the email message about ARPA funds from KP Law forwarded by Hilma on March 9th. He reported that the deadline for obligating ARPA funds is December 31, 2024.

Sheila said that on March 18th there was key card training provided by Cebula at the Heath hub. This training showed how one can use the key card to access a camera inside or outside the hub. The training didn't get into the full use of the alarm channel.

Sheila planned to get a key card to the Police Chief. She will meet with Tim and Nick individually at the hub to give them their cards.

Sheila said that John Leary is telling us that we are bumping up against the 1 gigabit per sec limit. He advises we get more band width at the rate of \$1250 /mo for an extra gigabit per sec.

Action Taken *David moved that Sheila proceed in a way that assures we have adequate bandwidth for customers. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Redundancy

David said that we will soon be receiving a DocuSign from WG&E. It will cover equipment costs so WG&E can order routers for which there is a big lead time.

When the 5 Northern Tier towns met on March 17th, there was a discussion of a clause that could have allowed a town to get out of a 20 year contract with 90 day notice. The towns decided to eliminate that clause.

The 'ability to pay clause' says that if a town doesn't vote funds, they don't have to pay. In Colrain and Leyden the town manages broadband funds whereas in Rowe and Heath the MLP manages broadband funds. Who signs a contract, the Selectboard or the MLP Manager? David said that the Northern Tier towns will be discussing this question and seeking legal advice.

David asked what happens to Ooma in a town where the contract is for 1 gigabit per sec, but the level of usage exceeds that ? He questioned whether Ooma would be given priority. We will ask whether Ooma would be adversely affected?

Website

Anne has been updating the broadband presence on the town website. Sheila said that the Homepage is perfect. But on another page drop/install credit still has 'up to \$3K' with no mention of any date. By the next meeting everyone will report on recommended changes.

Bill moved that we adjourn at 1:15. David seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf