

# DRAFT

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath MLB

March 29, 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.

Members read the minutes of the March 22<sup>nd</sup> MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. David seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Members read the minutes of the March 22<sup>nd</sup> WG&E Installs meeting. Bill moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. David seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheila reported that Chris LaVertu has said that there will be no more engineering costs. There is some remaining construction cost, and SERV invoices will still come in. The total of the SERV invoices will likely be less than \$500K which is significantly less than the \$695K which WG&E initially projected.

Sheila said that the Accountant has yet to show in his monthly reports the \$214,682 that Heath recently received in state aid for the installation of drops.

Sheila said that there is only \$171 remaining in the MLP Manager Salary Account. Hilma has said there's no need to worry.

Sheila has discussed with Bill Ennen the Last Mile Infrastructure Grant Project Closeout. We worked out that they would send us \$214,682 and then reconcile with us for a minimum of  $4 \times \$500 = \$2000$  because WG&E is confident we'll get a minimum of 4 more drops. Bill is now saying he would like to closeout sooner. He asks that we approve this earlier closeout.

In this closeout we would receive

$\$2000$  (total subsidies for 4 more drops) +  $\$22,000$  (retainer) =  $\$24,000$ .

The letter signed by Heath's Select Board stated that there were 612 sites with 415 builds. WG&E is confident we'll get 4 more drops.

David said he would like to have a clear statement from Bill that he's OK with the fact that although 415 have signed up, only 306 are active. Other MLB members said that having that

statement from Bill is important. We are confident that the remaining signups will become active.

Sheila will reply to Bill seeking some statement that he is aware of how many signups have not yet been installed.

Sheila said that as of April 1<sup>st</sup> we'll be at 2 gigabits per sec. and will be paying approximately \$1200 more per month.

Members discussed a case where a customer has been wanting to switch from business to residential. Should the customer be credited going back to the time of the first request? Bill moved that once the date is known when the customer wanted to switch, the customer be credited going back to that date. Anne seconded the motion.

David said he wanted to delay a vote on Bill's motion to the next meeting. Bill said he was willing to delay the motion.

**Action Taken**     *David moved that we postpone the discussion and vote on Bill's motion until the next meeting. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Sheila said that the most recent generator test was successful.

Sheila asked Bill to report on his visit to the hut on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Bill said he received a phone call from the person at ITG who took over from Dave Libbey. This person was at the hut and wanting to get in. Bill unlocked the door remotely and decided to follow up with a live visit to the hut. When he arrived, the alarm was sounding. Bill entered the hut and turned off the alarm wondering why the person from ITG hadn't known that deactivating the alarm is the first thing one does after entering.

Sheila said that she has given the passcode 'to cancel' to the police. Tim Lively's role is to be determined.

David said it would be worthwhile contacting other WiredWest towns to gather a list of questions about our security systems.

Sheila said that she has contacted Rich Carnall at WG&E. Rich is looking into whether CAF II funds can be used for debt relief.

Sheila has asked Dave Gott about the timeline that he and Ted Watt have for a network extension to Flagg Hill Road. Installing the needed poles will be the responsibility of National Grid.

Sheila said that no DocuSign for redundancy has arrived yet.

David said that nothing much has happened in the redundancy project. He has sent an email to Mike Slowinski asking whether they're on track for the grant application.

Ned said that he had exchanged emails with Kent Lew of Washington, MA about the possible use of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to cover broadband construction invoices since March 3, 2021. He said that April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 is the deadline for filing the first of 6 annual Project and Expenditure Reports.

Bill reported that we have not received a written estimate from Whip City Fiber on the Bellor Road work. We will follow up at the 1:30 meeting with Whip City Fiber.

Anne thanked David and Ned for comments on proposed changes to the website. She is considering installing in the upper right of the signup page a place to 'Click for more information on broadband'.

Anne confirmed with Sheila and the MLB that in each of the following 2 cases the customer would be eligible for the credit up to \$3000:

- Signed up before September 15<sup>th</sup>
- Signed up in August of 2021, not installed, no installation scheduled, calls for an installation.

Art said that if there are 2 sites such as Municipal Light Board and Broadband/Heath MLP, then their names as they appear in a menu should be adjacent.

Sheila said that after June when the construction is done we will need a total revamp of the website.

Looking ahead to Tuesdays, Sheila said that she will be covering for the town nurse on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Anne said that on that same day she will be available by phone. Bill said he will not be available on April 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

Anne moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:57. David seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf