

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting  
June 7, 2022 at 11  
Virtual meeting

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

Art called the meeting to order at 11.

Members read the minutes of the May 31<sup>st</sup> MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Sheila said that the June 7<sup>th</sup> generator test went OK.

She said that Wired West is discussing changing its ISP. There will be a special meeting about this on Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. Some people with Wired West say that customers won't care so long as the service is good. Both David and Bill said that they would attend the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Art said that if there is a change in the ISP, it could mean going from a municipal coop to the private sector. Wired West is a coop, and WG&E is a municipal coop. How might things change if our ISP were in the private sector? Sheila said that one change would be in procurement.

David said he thinks that it's good that there be competition for being our ISP. He said that Jim Drawe as an experienced negotiator would use the competition as a tool in negotiations.

Members discussed the DocuSign that David sent to Sheila and to MLB members attached to his email of June 6<sup>th</sup>. The DocuSign contains WG&E's proposal for a resilient, reliable, redundant project for the Northern Cluster made up of the towns Rowe, Charlemont, Colrain, Leyden, and Heath.

**Action Taken**     *David moved to recommend that that the MLP Manager and the Select Board Sign the DocuSign containing WG&E's proposal for the Northern Cluster's redundant, reliable, and resilient mesh backhaul connection. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

The \$400,000 that the 5 towns will receive, \$80,000 each, as part of the Community Compact Fiber Grant program has been deposited into an account of the Town of Colrain. WG&E will invoice everything for the redundant, reliable, and resilient project to the Town of Colrain.

Bill asked what happens if we do not spend all of our \$80,000 within one year. David said that the unspent money goes back to the state.

David said that there is a matching part of 5 – 10 % which Colrain and Rowe will be putting in. Colrain and Rowe have underground digging expenditures that they will use for their 5 – 10 % as told by Colrain. In a worst case for Heath someone could ask questions that would lead to a match from Heath. Art suggested that we have expenditures that could be used for a match.

The cost sharing agreement with Crown Castle calls for Rowe to bill the towns for their use of the Crown Castle connection.

The cannabis growing project at Bellor Road is related to a question for the 1:30 meeting: “When can plant work at 11 Bellor Road begin?” Bill said that Joe Ostachnowicz has signed off on plant work estimates.

Other questions to ask at the 1:30 meeting concern MST repairs in Mohawk Estates and the ITG punch list.

Sheila was informed at the Post Office that a one inch thick stack of flyers for the Affordable Connectivity Program have been labeled “undeliverable” because they lack mailing addresses. She has called Whip City Fiber to say that the mailing addresses are needed for delivery. Whip City Fiber paid for the printing and bulk mailing. The agreement is that we cover 50% of the mailing. We want to know that the flyers have been delivered.

Art said that his information indicates that there were 3 installations last week. Sheila said that in FSA 4 there are 56 activated and 44 to be installed. David said that in the CRM he could see 10 installations scheduled in FSA 4, 34 to be installed but not yet scheduled.

Bill said that if the number who have yet be scheduled for installations is down to 12 or 17, he thinks that Whip City Fiber will have done all it can do to get those folks on an installation schedule.

Members discussed the kinds of reports that appear in the drop box from Wired West. One report, which is important for budgeting, tells how many customers to expect, i.e. how many at

25 mps and how many at 1 gps. A second report is needed for our financial overviews. It presents a running record of expenses and revenue. Art said that there will be a number of things charged just to Heath in the Wired West calculation to determine how much Heath gets back in July.

Sheila said that she would send an email to Brian Sullivan saying that if all our questions can be answered without a meeting at 1:30 on June 7<sup>th</sup>, then we're OK without that meeting.

Bill asked about MLB stipends. The amount appropriated for MLB stipends was as follows: \$0.0 in FY21; \$2,750 in FY22; and \$2,750 in FY23. No checks have been sent out yet for FY22. Ned contacted Hilma in the week of May 9<sup>th</sup> saying he wanted his check for FY22 to go into Free Cash. Hilma advised him to send an email to the Accountant with that request and to include Hilma. Ned said he has done that.

Art said that he still needs to get his access card for the fiber hut.

Art asked about the contact and emergency protocol. Sheila said that she would send Art what she has sent David. When backhaul activity quiets down, there will be time to go over the protocol.

Members acknowledged that we may be a couple of weeks away from having in-person meetings. There will be a date after which MLB meetings must be in-person to be official. Two MLB members could continue to attend by zoom, but an MLB meeting will not be official unless at least 3 members (a quorum) are physically present.

Bill moved that the MLB meeting be adjourned at 12:09. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf