

## Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting

August 9, 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 August 2<sup>nd</sup> MLB meeting. The following edits were recommended: On page 1 in paragraph 1 replace in the first and the fourth sentences 'Kohler' by 'Kinsley'; in the first paragraph under 'Backhaul' replace the last sentence with "David said that the language of the agreement would allow Leyden to join later, if they do not join initially, provided all participants agree"; under 'Emergency Protocol' replace the first sentence with "Maintenance of the hub's HVAC is being investigated as we expect a proposal from Jamrog."; and under 'Finances' replace the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph with

"Jessica Drawe, Wired West's Accountant, has received Heath's list of costs to be paid by the customer that would need to be reimbursed. The MLB asked Sheila to ask if we can be informed when paid. This is a matter that continues to be followed by the MLB."

Bill moved that the minutes of the August 2<sup>nd</sup> MLB meeting be approved with the recommended edits. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Members read the minutes of the WG&E installs meeting on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Anne moved that the minutes be approved with the recommended edit that neither Betsy nor Sheila attended the meeting. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Bill has reached out to Shawn of Northeast IT regarding the Community Hall internet connection. Shawn says that one of the 2 ONTs in the hub, ONT A, is the source of the problem. It needs to be fixed.

David said he was disappointed with the response time to a bad ONT. Even with ONT B taking the place of ONT A, the upload and download times have not been what we should expect. Bill said that testing at the ONT should have happened immediately. The ONTs have to be switched manually, but some testing can be done remotely.

Sheila said that she has emailed the Wired West Accountant to ask how we can see reimbursements coming to Heath.

She said that Hilma has found the Kinsley invoice for July 5<sup>th</sup>.

The generator test for August 2 was OK. The generator is back on standby.

Sheila asked what is the best way to proceed with Betsy Loiko's customer termination list? David recalled our having expressed satisfaction with WG&E's system for dealing with customers who have not paid. He suggested that we let WG&E do their process. Sheila said that she sent us by email on August 9<sup>th</sup> the termination list thinking that a member might know additional information. No member offered additional information.

We will ask at the 1:30 meeting whether we receive notifications of terminations, suspensions, or disconnects.

Sheila has talked with a Jamrog representative who says that they are familiar with our hut's HVAC. Jamrog offers 24 hour emergency response service. Most of their response can be done from outside the building.

David asked about Jamrog's response prior to there being a contract. Sheila said she thinks Jamrog would respond even though we have no contract yet.

The Jamrog representative said that network hubs more recent than ours have HVACs that use mini-splits. That kind of system has a backup. He recommended we get that kind of system when it is time to replace ours.

MLB members did not recognize the invoice of 7/31/2022 from the 'Greenfield Recorder' that Sheila sent as an attachment to an August 9<sup>th</sup> email. Listed on the invoice is 'Municipal Light and Treasurer \$326.40.'

### Broadband Financial Reports

Sheila sent to members financial reports in 2 different formats as attachments to an email of August 8. The report titled 'Heath Broadband Finance Summary Report through 8/4/2022' is in the format we have been accustomed to seeing throughout construction. It reports a projected surplus of \$353,386.25.

The second report is titled 'MLB Cash Flow Projections 8/8/2022'. Its format was developed by David and gives us the information we need for operations as well as for the various decisions we will need to make regarding revenue. It lists assets, revenue, liabilities, and projected expenses (excluding those paid by Wired West). David said that on August 3<sup>rd</sup> he showed the new format to Ned who made some comments. David explained the spreadsheet line by line. Although we are hopeful we see CAF II funds this fiscal year, the amount of CAF II funds for FY 23 is left blank. Those funds are recorded instead in FY24. Sheila will check with Rich Carnall of WG&E about when the CAF II funds are expected. David said that he is not comfortable with the current projection from Jim Drawe of \$131.820 yearly revenue from Wired West beginning in FY24. He thinks that estimate is too high and will be looking into it in the coming week.

The expenses include the SERV-13 invoice for \$20,085.50 as well as \$30,859.80 for ITG retainage. Using estimates for future installations, David has estimated \$50K for drop subsidies and has added \$10K as a contingency fund.

His conservative estimate for the start-up cost of backhaul is \$10K. Bill asked when there will be more certainty about that amount. David said in a month or two.

There is a 'Reserve/Operating Account' amount to be determined each year by the MLB. The tentative amount for FY23 is \$50K.

Members said they favored the new format over the old format for financial reports going forward. It can serve as both a communication tool and a planning tool. Members expressed the need to communicate to the Select Board and the FinCom when decisions will be made about the funds available to the Town. We don't want to promise money that we don't know is available. We do not determine how funds that are transferred to the Town are to be used, but we can make recommendations based on our priorities as determined by annual vote. Members suggested that David add the following lines under the line for the projected amount to be transferred to the Town: MLP Manager's Salary, Stabilization, and Broadband Loan.

David said that if we get \$100K+ in CAF II funds by the end of FY23, we can cover the \$200K for Stabilization.

Art said that 8 or 9 months from now we will have more information at which point we will decide how much is prudent to transfer to the Town. We will have MLB meetings on August 16<sup>th</sup> and August 23<sup>rd</sup> before the joint Select Board/MLB/FinCom meeting on August 30<sup>th</sup>. At each of those meetings we can prepare for the August 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Sheila asked David about the expected costs for the services of KP Law in the redundancy project. He said that the cost per town is expected to be around \$2,500. We should know the amount soon.

David said that the representatives of the Northern Cluster MLPs are still working on the details of backhaul with Leyden and Colrain.

Sheila said that there will be a Wired West Board meeting on August 17<sup>th</sup>.

Items to ask about at the 1:30 meeting include the ITG invoice for the retainage, the hub's faulty ONT A as it relates to the Community Hall internet, and determining the list of seasonal customers.

Anne said that she cannot attend the 1:30 meeting.

Anne moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:35. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf

Appendix 1