

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting
September 20, 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 September 13th MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes with corrections be approved. Bill seconded the motion. There were recommendations to edit the discussion on broadband accounts to indicate "The MLP Manager continues to work with the Accountant on the broadband accounts."

The motion to approve the minutes with corrections was passed by unanimous vote.

Sheila reported that the MLP accounts for Assets and Revenue are set up. They are as follows:

Broadband Chart of Accounts

Assets

50-1-030-000 Depreciation Cash
50-1-040-000 Broadband Cash
50-3-590-000 Broadband Fund Equity

Revenue

50-4-655-000 WiredWest Excess Revenue
50-4-656-000 CAF II
50-4-970- 000 Other Financing Source

Sheila is working with the Accountant to establish the following MLB expense accounts:

Expenses

50-5-650-000 Depreciation Reserves
50-5-651-000 Operating Reserves
50-5 652-000 Redundancy Project

50-5-653-000 Network Expansion
50-5-655-000 WiredWest Dues
50-5-656-000 Available for MLP Priorities
50-5-970-000 Other Expenses

Once the MLB determines the construction phase is complete, any balance of funds remaining in the current State Grant Account and the Broadband Borrowing Account can be transferred upon MLB vote into the Broadband Cash Account. From there the MLB can vote to transfer to other accounts. The construction accounts related to broadband will go away when capital projects are finished.

The MLB discussed that Bill Ennen has said that unused money from the state broadband grant does not need to be returned to the state.

The \$87K from Wired West goes into the 'Wired West Excess Revenue' account. CAF II money goes into the 'CAF II' account.

The check from the Town of Charlemont for service to homes on Center Heath Rd. goes to the 'Other Financing Source' account.

Members discussed the following letter:

September 20, 2022

Dear Heath Select Board and Finance Committee,

The Heath MLB is pleased to inform you that the MLP finances are such that we feel comfortable at this point, near the end of our construction process, to transfer \$100,000 back to the Town of Heath toward replacement of the funds voted from Stabilization. We very much appreciate the Stabilization funds approved by Heath voters. These funds allowed the MLP to offer customer installation subsidies which encouraged a nearly 70% subscription rate in the town. This resulted in significant additional state funding. The high subscription rate will also ensure the financial stability of Heath Broadband. The Heath MLB has requested the MLP Manager to work with the Town Accountant to affect the transfer as soon as possible. We will continue to assess MLP finances as we close out the construction phase this fiscal year. We are confident that we will be able to transfer additional funds toward replacing the remaining \$100,000 from the stabilization fund in the near future.

Sincerely,

Art Schwenger Heath MLB chair

Copy to: Heath Municipal Light Board members Heath MLP Manager

Action Taken *Anne moved that the MLB approves sending the above letter to the Select Board and the Finance Committee about our intention of replacing \$100K of the \$200K approved from Stabilization by ATM voters. The MLB directs the MLB Manager to instruct the Accountant to transfer \$100K from the State Broadband Account to an account available for town use. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Sheila said that the September 20th generator test went OK. The generator is back on standby.

She has sent Hilma updates about the removal of the POD and the storage of Town-owned fiber that is currently in the parking lot at 18 Jacobs Road.

Members expressed appreciation for David's email attachment 'RRR Project Status Update 9/19/2022' sent on September 12th. The attachment is as follows:

RRR Project Status Update – 9/19/2022

- WCF sent a report to Northern Cluster reps on their high level design meeting with Nokia
 - The objective of the meeting was to familiarize Nokia engineers with the current network architecture and project requirements. Also to familiarize WCF technicians with Nokia equipment capabilities
 - Nokia equipment for Northern Cluster is in.
 - Equipment will be racked, configured and burned in at WCF before deploying to huts
 - WCF asked for a meeting with Northern Cluster towns on Friday 9/16/22.
- Northern Cluster towns met last Wednesday (9/14/22)
 - Prep for a Friday meeting with WCF.
 - Discussed status of Verizon second backhaul cost sharing agreement. Agreed to send it to KP Law for review
 - Discussed points of contact with WCF.
 - Mike Slowinski will be POC re: financial
 - Cheryl Handsaker will be POC re: project management
 - Rowe will push Crown Castle on getting a target date for the circuit
 - Charlemont will push Verizon on getting order for Verizon circuit and a target date
 - Discussed GCET alternative backhaul for Leyden
 - Mike S. has asked State about whether legal expenses can be covered by the grant. Person to make that decision is on extended parental leave, so it will be awhile before we know.
- Northern Cluster reps met Friday (9/16/22) with WCF.

- Good meeting. Nokia engineer was on the call.
- WCF said High level design meeting did not identify any showstoppers with respect to NC deliverables.
- John Leary is confident that project can be completed before end of FY, and likely months earlier.
- Nokia indicated that the design will support Active-Active load balancing. This means that instead of having a 10 Gbps primary circuit and a 10 Gbps backup circuit, the five towns will share both circuits at the same time.
- Design will also support Quality of Service (QoS) to give priority to real-time applications such as phone call traffic.
- WCF is putting together a letter to Local Lynx (MBI contractor) asking for a proposal to roll-up the MBI 1 Gbps contracts of Colrain, Heath and Leyden into a shared 10 Gbps circuit with a Point of Presence (POP) in Leyden. John Leary sent a draft to five towns for review.
 - There are potential timing issues around finalizing the backhaul providers (and location) and designing the network.
- John Leary committed to biweekly reporting and to developing a timeline of high level milestones
- Nokia engineer indicated that this is an active project. Attention is being given nearly every day.

Items to be discussed at 1:30 meeting with WG&E

-Betsy's non-install report. Our most recent one is from September 7th.

-WCF said last week that they would get back to us about storing fiber.

-The billing for the service to the cannabis farm on Bellor Rd.

Art said that he will not be present for the MLB meeting on Sept. 27th. David said that he can chair the meeting. Art will return from Maine on Oct. 3. He will have posted the October meetings before he leaves.

Bill moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:22 pm. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf