

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting
September 27, 2022 at 11
Virtual meeting

Present: MLB: David Gordon (Chair Pro Tem), Bill Fontes, and Ned Wolf
with MLP Manager Sheila Litchfield

Absent: Art Schwenger, Anne Emmet

David called the meeting to order at 11:00 am. Members read the minutes of the September 20th MLB meeting with edits from Sheila and Ned. Bill moved that the minutes with edits be approved. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Members read the minutes of the September 20th WG&E 1:30 installs meeting. Bill moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. Ned seconded the motion.

Sheila continues to track the broadband accounts as they appear in the Accountant's expense reports.

Wired West Board Meeting Sept. 21st

Sheila said that there was continued discussion of WCF billing.

She asked about HVAC maintenance proposals. Kent Lew of Washington agreed that Wired West had offered help in this matter. Sheila said she has written to a Colrain business which may give us a proposal. Sheila was told that no heat is needed in the hut, and hence there is no need to service a heating unit. She wonders why the Jamrog quote is so high. Sheila said she will get back to Jim Drawe on HVAC maintenance proposals.

Sheila reported that WCF and Wired West negotiations continue. Wired West feels a need to explore options for customers. There may be a request at the next Board meeting to vote on a new contract which would be for just 2 years. Kent Lew of Washington and Doug McNally of Windsor have been helpful in the negotiations.

WCF's ability to look into the router remotely and diagnose problems has been valuable. If Wired West goes with a new provider, everyone will have to get a new router or buy existing routers.

Sheila said that Wired West is still planning an RFP. If a new contract is approved, negotiations for the next contract would have to begin within 2 years, say in 18 months. There may be other companies that could do the job.

Sheila said that following a discussion of investment policy the Wired West Board gave the treasurer their approval to seek CD's.

MLP Managers' Meeting Sept. 21st

Sheila said that there are 19 Heath customers enrolled in the ACP program and 1 in the Lifeline program. WCF has helped people with their applications to these programs.

Rich Carnall said that release of the CAF II money is not contingent on Becket finishing the FSA where work is ongoing. He says he'll know in another month if they can begin testing. He predicts we'll see CAF II money in early January of 2023.

Heath Non-installed List

Members discussed the 'Heath Non-installed Updated 9-26-2022' spreadsheet attached to Betsy Loiko's email of Sept. 26th. There are 11 cold drops scheduled, and about 11 others are pending. We need to focus on those who signed up early enough for a subsidy. Are they due a subsidy or not? Do they want service or not? We need to pick a date and tell the customer, if you don't get installed by this date, you don't get a subsidy. We will keep enough money to pay for subsidies by the chosen date.

David suggested that Betsy's non-installed table have another column, 'Those due for subsidy', to the right of the column headed 'Why not installed'. It would be helpful also to retrieve from the CRM such information as the 'date they applied' and the 'amount of the subsidy' to be included in the table.

Sheila will send us the draft of a letter to those due a subsidy.

A decision on whether the date by which a customer must be installed should be Oct. 30th, 2022 or June 30th, 2023 will be left until the MLB meeting on Oct. 4th.

Redundancy Project

David said that representatives from Rowe and Charlemont met with him the week of Sept. 12 on how to respond to WCF's letter to Local Lynx. Their response is that they've settled on Crown Castle and Verizon. They would like to see Local Lynx's reply.

David said that WCF would like the 5 Northern Cluster towns to meet.

David said that John Leary, Information Technology Manager for WG&E, said there was a timeline coming for the redundancy project, but it hasn't come.

Bill reported that the Select Board has made decisions about the use of space. All financial offices are to be consolidated in one room. The MLB and the Board of Health are to share a classroom at 18 Jacobs Road.

Items for the Installs Meeting at 1:30

-Billing for the cannabis farm and those people whose cost of installation exceeded the subsidy.

-After a customer has been billed how long does it take payment to get to Wired West?

Bill moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:34. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf