

DRAFT

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting

November 29, 2022 at 11

Virtual meeting

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

Absent: Bill Fontes

Art called the meeting to order at 11.

Members read the minutes of the November 15th MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. David seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Members read the minutes of the November 15th, 1:30 WG&E installs meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. David seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

MLP Manager's Report

Sheila said that an email from Betsy Loiko reported no scheduled terminations.

She said that at the November 16th Wired West Board meeting the wholesale WCF rate for internet service was said to be \$29.47 per subscriber per month for the next 2 years through the Whip City Fiber/Wired West contract.

Also, Wired West plans to have an RFP for ISP services by November 30th, 2024.

Jim Drawe said that he is working with Brian Sullivan to determine why Asplundh did not appear in Heath or Rowe to do tree trimming. In March of this year Heath made a list of sites needing tree trimming with input from WCF and Jeff Johnston of the Highway Department.

Sheila said that along with the final invoice from ITG there came a certificate of completion and a warranty statement. The date of completion is given to be January 1, 2022 even though repair work on MSTs in Mohawk Estates was not completed until some time in March of 2022. Sheila has not yet signed the certificate of completion. We would like a corrected date for the warranty. Sheila agreed to contact Joe Parda.

Sheila said that the date of the ITG invoice HEATH 0016A has been corrected from 3/4/22 to 11/17/22.

Jim Drawe has sent out letters to 48 HVAC companies in western Mass seeking proposals for HVAC maintenance at the hut. The letter includes the information that the Mass prevailing wage law does not apply. So far there has been just 1 reply. Sheila asked Jamrog to review their proposal to Heath.

Jim Drawe has sent an RFP for an auditor. There has been no response yet.

Sheila said that the time for the November 30th Monthly Partnership meeting was shifted from 12 to 2.

Backhaul

David said that the evening of November 29th the representatives of the Northern Tier towns would meet to talk about backhaul providers with a view towards finalizing their selections. He said they will need to think about the relative importance of cost versus redundancy.

All 5 towns have agreed to share a 10 gigabit/second (g/s) connection with Crown Castle.

We are presently paying MBI \$2400/mo for 2 g/s and \$600/mo for backup. Any other choice of providers would be cheaper. MBI has given via Local Linx a soft estimate for 10 g/s. MBI has said that they would release us (as well as Colrain and Leyden) from our current MBI contract. If we were to go with the 3 providers Crown Castle having Rowe as Point of Presence, Verizon having Charlemont as Point of Presence, and MBI having Leyden as Point of Presence, the cost would be about \$1500/mo for 6 g/s or about half of our present cost.

Having just Crown Castle and Verizon would be good for Heath because of the Rowe and Charlemont connections but not good for Leyden which is more distant from those connections.

Having just Crown Castle and MBI would save Heath an additional \$3K/yr and would be the cheapest option, but for Rowe or Charlemont there could be greater risk.

Our current cash flow assumes \$3K/mo.

Sheila, Art, Anne, and Ned expressed a preference to David for Heath having the 3 providers Crown Castle, Verizon, and MBI with the added resiliency over the less costly Crown Castle and Verizon or Crown Castle and MBI.

David noted that we signed up for 5 years with Crown Castle. The other quotes from possible providers are for 3 or 5 years. The programming and maintaining of switches would be easier if

the 5 towns were to go with Crown Castle, Verizon, and MBI. One spare switch could suffice for all 5 towns.

Financial Report

Sheila said that the only changes have been the submitting of 3 bills: \$35,267.77 for ITG retainage, \$30,838.86 for final ITG construction, and \$3,457.36 for installations.

Finance Committee Meeting November 17th

Ned reported to the Finance Committee that the \$100K which the MLP recommended in a September 21st letter to the Select Board be transferred to the town and put into Stabilization is still in an MLB account because the Accountant has received no word from the Select Board on moving those funds. The Finance Committee agreed that the \$100K should be moved into a town account. Alice said she will contact Robyn as well as the Accountant about whether there is a way to transfer the \$100K into a town account without there being a Town Meeting vote as is needed to transfer into Stabilization.,

Website

Anne said that she talked with Hilma about the disappearance from the website of broadband files related to such things as installation diagrams, and streaming. Hilma said that the person who backs up the website should be able to retrieve any files that were there before. She suggested that Anne email Pat McGahan about this matter.

Members discussed how many web pages should be assigned to broadband. There was a consensus that there should be 2 pages. One page called Broadband should have 'Click here today to sign up for Broadband.' Once you get to WCF you can find the links to streaming, install diagram, etc. A second page should be called MLB. That's where Anne said there should be the listing of MLB members, their terms of office, and the minutes. Anne will look for an appropriate place for the minutes of the MLPAC, the broadband committee which preceded the MLB.

There was a consensus to get rid of 'Broadband Information' which goes nowhere and also get rid of 'drop installation credit' which is no longer relevant.

There was a consensus that an installs meeting with WG&E at 1:30 would not be needed. We will look forward to an installs meeting on December 6th.

Sheila and the MLB settled on this schedule of December meetings:

Dec. 6th MLB and installs

- “ 13th MLB, no installs
- “ 20th MLB and installs
- “ 27th no MLB, no installs

Sheila, Art, and Ned accepted David's welcome offer of a ride to the December 1st MBI Governor's celebration in Ashfield of the completion of the broadband project in western Massachusetts.

Anne moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:07. David seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Wolf