

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting
December 20, 2022 at 11
Virtual meeting

Present: 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.

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MLP Manager's Report

Sheila said that the email message she received on December 13th about the generator that concerned her was 'low engine coolant'. When she reached Kinsley by phone and asked whether they saw the alarms that she was seeing, the answer was 'no'. A technician at Kinsley, who looked at the available data, said he had to come out. A person at Kinsley with whom Sheila talked was not aware that the technician had come out. A report on the technician's visit was sent to John Leary. We need to do what is required so that the invoice comes to Heath. Sheila said she would forward to the MLB members the technician's report. Since it's an operations matter, the report and invoice would also go to Wired West.

She said that since the technician's visit, the generator has been working. It came on as needed during the power outages associated with the storm of December 16 and 17.

Sheila asked what was the sign-up date for 160 Colrain Stage Road? Bill will ask at the 1:30 meeting.

She said she needs MLB approval for signing the ITG/BTR closeout contract.

The MLP Manager and the MLB will need to talk among themselves about a budget to submit to the Select Board by January 18th. The Select Board requests that on either February 7th or February 21st we meet jointly, maybe with Jim Drawe

Sheila will meet with the Accountant on December 22nd. David will join them.

Sheila left the meeting at 11:20 allowing the MLB to continue using her zoom account.

Members read the minutes of the December 13th MLB meeting. Bill moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Closeout Contract with ITG/BTR

Members discussed the minutes regarding the repair of cable along Taylor Brook Road and the repair of MSTs in Mohawk Estates. There was a consensus that the closeout contract with ITG/BTR be signed with the January 1, 2022 date of the certificate of completion as given.

Action Taken *Ned moved that the MLB approves signing the closeout contract from ITG/BTR. David seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Redundancy Project

David said that representatives from the 5 Northern Tier towns met on December 16th to go over the High Level Design (HDL). While all 5 towns tend to support the HDL, there is nothing at this time to sign. There was a consensus to continue with the Low Level Design. Nokia assumes that the towns will have a 10 g/s circuit connected in Leyden. David and possibly others are concerned about signing a contract without the MBI contract being in place. Suppose it turns out that there's an additional cost with the new MBI contract? Or, if the provider were Verizon instead of MBI, the connection would still be in Leyden, but Nokia's routing configuration might have to be changed. David will send a letter to the other towns seeking their input about this matter.

Emergency Maintenance

Members compared 2 emergency maintenance situations. If a fiber is down, WCF fixes the fiber and Wired West receives a bill.

If instead it is the HVAC that requires quick attention, a technician may have to come from a distance incurring a travel cost of several hundred dollars to be added to the repair cost which could be thousands.

Action Taken *David moved that the MLB authorizes the MLP Manager to respond to emergency situations with spending up to \$10,000 after attempting to consult with the Chair of the MLB and with other MLB members. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

We will check with Sheila as to whether or not she can attend the Wired West Board meeting on December 21st.

Ned said he will look into what effect the paying off of the broadband loan has on the tax rate in Colrain as well as in Leyden.

Website

Anne said that with help from Lisa Stowe of WCF files related such as 'How I stream video' have been incorporated into FAQ on the WCF website.

She has talked with Pat about the possible confusion of the names Wired West and Whip City Fiber both appearing when a customer uses the website. On the Heath Broadband page where a customer clicks to sign up, the Wired West name appears. If the customer still has questions, clicking 'here for more info' sends the customer to FAQ and the name Whip City Fiber. MLB members acknowledged the 2 names and agreed that people asking where they get their broadband should be told "It's from the Heath MLP."

There is no longer a 'click for more info' statement on the website that leads to a dead end. Members expressed their appreciation for the improvement.

Anne said she plans to call Berkshire Bank to inquire about their possible help for Heath Broadband customers seeking loans. Such help could be available in other towns with varying particulars for each town.

Members discussed the organization of posted minutes and how uniformity among town committees is a plus. Ned will consult with Anne and Pat.

Scheduling for January

The MLB considered Sheila's availability for January meetings and agreed on 11 o'clock zoom MLB meetings for every Tuesday (January 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31) as well as one virtual WG&E installs meeting at 1:30 on January 24.

Questions for the 1:30 Meeting December 20

David said that he would send the following questions to WCF before the 1:30 meetin

1. Can you verify the application date for the property at 160 Colrain Stage Rd?
2. Have you had any communications with the Bellor Rd Cannabis farm applicants regarding installation?
3. There is confusion about primary contact for Heath generator issues. Kinsley has John Leary as the contact. We had an issue last week that required a site visit by Kinsley, but communication was complicated by the fact that apparently John Leary was notified, but Sheila wasn't. Sheila is trying to get Kinsley to change the contact. Is there any reason that WCF needs to be notified of generator issues?
4. We propose scheduling one Installation meeting in January for January 24, 2023. Does this work for you?

Anne moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:22. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf