

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting
January 10, 2023 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.

Members read the minutes of the December 20th MLB meeting. Anne moved to approve the minutes with corrections. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Members read the minutes of the December 20th WG&E installs meeting. Anne moved to approve the minutes. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

MLP Manager's Report

Sheila referred to her email of December 28th with a spreadsheet for the MLB FY24 Budget Request. For FY23, the approved budget had \$14,066 for the MLP Manager's salary and \$2,750 for the MLB stipends. There was a consensus that the salary of the MLP Manager and the stipends of MLB members should remain the same for the FY24 proposed budget.

Action Taken *Anne moved that the MLB FY24 Budget Request have \$14,066 for the MLP Manager's salary and \$2,750 for the MLB stipends. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

This year we should come in at or under budget. Bill recalled our being told that travel expenses for MLB members come out of stipends. David said he would like to think that travel expenses related to operations would come out of a \$50K operating account to be created and funded each year from Net Revenue. .

Sheila said that Hilma has requested whether we prefer Feb. 7th or Feb. 21st for a budget hearing. There was a consensus that we prefer Feb. 21st.

Sheila said that she received the Kinsley invoice for the December 13th work on the HVAC at the hut and has sent it to Wired West. John Leary's name has been removed from the list of those people being notified for scheduled maintenance. The amount on the Kinsley invoice is \$2,273.89.

David asked whether checking the coolant is part of our preventive maintenance agreement with Kohler. Kinsley, which is our Kohler representative, is scheduled to visit Heath the morning of January 16th. Bill said that he can be there and will appreciate a list of questions to be asked.

Members' questions include these:

- Do we have a check list of what they do when they come out for routine maintenance? Sheila Indicated there was. She will confirm that checking the coolant is on the list?
- Do we have 2 separate contracts: a stand alone one for maintenance and another contract for emergencies?

David said that he thinks there are no longer any phone numbers on the door of the hut. He will stick to the door phone numbers for visitors to contact.

Sheila said that there are two \$3K Hanover risk surety bonds. She has received just one of them and is following up on the other. She sent WiredWest the one bond invoice.

Sheila said that she has signed the ITG/BTR project closure document and sent it to Joe Parda.

On December 28th she attended the monthly meeting of the MLP managers. There is a plan to keep the CAF II project open until the 3rd quarter of 2023. This will allow the towns in the CAF II project to get connected. For each house that CAF II doesn't reach \$4K comes off. We need to know whether any house in Heath that doesn't yet have service is in the CAF II area. Sheila will verify.

There is a question as to whether the CAF II funds would have to go through Free Cash. WCF and WiredWest are following this question.

David recommended checking with Rich Carnall if the estimate of how much Heath will receive from CAF II considered the possibility of not all eligible homes being connected to service. Sheila will verify.

Sheila said that she received an email from Northeast IT inquiring if the swapped out ONTs have resolved the problem previously reported when the active ONT was dropping 30% of network traffic. Sheila and Bill are following up.

Sheila and David visited the Accountant the week of January 3. The chart of Accounts has been updated. For the Revenue and Expense accounts to appear in the Accountant's latest and greatest reports there has to have been a change in those accounts.

Sheila said that at the last Wired West meeting there was agreement that Wired West needs a tree service. She has been trying to reach Niles tree service in Colrain. We will add tree trimming to a list for the January 24th meeting.

Sheila spoke of a customer wanting an installation but not qualifying for a subsidy. Art told the customer that no subsidy is available but there might be a way to get a 0% interest loan. Anne said she would call the Berkshire Bank after the meeting to check on that.

Anne said that there's still a program to help low income customers with the monthly subscription bill. Customers should be referred to WCF.

Sheila referred to an attachment to her January 9th email which is the non-install list from Betsy. The estimated costs from that list have been used to get an estimate of \$20K on the MLP cash flow projection for the total cost of the remaining installations.

The customer at 118 Brunelle originally signed up for a cold drop and was eligible for a \$500 subsidy. The cold drop was not installed due to an electric fence. Now the customer wants a full installation. Sheila recommended applying the \$500 to the installation for active service.

Each of the 3 farms at Bellor Road is eligible for a \$250 subsidy.

MLP cash flow projection

David said that the Select Board on Feb. 21st mentioned wanting to hear an estimate of FY24 revenue sharing from Wired West. The MLP cash flow projection sheet that Sheila believes that the MLP cash flow projection should be able to provide all the information the Select Board and Finance Committee might want to know.

For the 1:30 meeting on January 24th

- tree trimming

Bill moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:15. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted, Ned Wolf

