

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting
February 7, 2023 at 11
Virtual meeting

Present: Art Schwenger (Chair) by phone at 11:11 until connected by zoom at 11:20
Anne Emmet, David Gordon, Bill Fontes, Ned Wolf, and MLP Manager Sheila Litchfield

Members read the minutes of the January 31st MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

MLP Manager's Report

Sheila reported that the humidity sensor in the hub cleared at 7 am on February 7th. There's just an alarm with no indication as to whether the reading is high or low. David suggested asking WCF what the settings should be. Sheila said she will contact WCF.

Sheila said that the invoice for the level 2 preventive maintenance on January 30th by Kinsley has come. The \$464. amount is as expected. She will forward the invoice to Wired West.

Sheila has submitted the SERV – 16 invoice for \$264.36 to the Town Accountant.

Sheila said that Brian and Chris have yet to get back to her regarding the draft she sent them of the protocol for managing problems with the muni-network. The location network ID has yet to be added. We are waiting for feedback from WCF.

Sheila said she has yet to receive the list of Heath houses in the CAF II area where cable goes by the house but it is not yet installed. Brian and Chris said that Rich Carnall is preparing the list.

Sheila said we are still waiting for a cost estimate from Chris for adding additional ports to the hub. Chris told us on his visit to Heath in the last week of January that he was waiting for a cost estimate from Lightspeed.

Sheila is awaiting feedback from Dave Loiko on how much extra work Asplundh did towards finishing the needed tree work Dave identified on Taylor Brook Road. This extra work was done the same day that Asplundh responded to an emergency resulting from 4 large leaning trees on Taylor Brook Road.

Bill asked whether we need additional tree trimming proposals. Sheila said that she hasn't received any more proposals but that she thinks it's good to continue to receive proposals. We are still waiting for WCF's tree trimming proposal.

Members discussed the updating of the drop policy. There was a consensus that it should soon be updated to June 30, 2023, the date after which there will no longer be a subsidy. Members also agreed that another update will be needed when the broadband project is fully operational.

RRR Project

David reported that Colrain and the 4 other towns will seek coverage from the CCC grant for December and January payments for the Crown Castle connection because we are still in the testing phase of the project. The Heath MLP has received no invoice for the Crown Castle connection.

David said there has been some disagreement as to whether municipalities should be exempt from a universal surcharge fee of 30%. There is a question as to whether MBI should trigger a surcharge fee. The Wired West lawyer is looking into it.

David said that he has written a revised letter to Carolyn Kirk, Executive Director of the Mass Tech Collaborative. He sent it as an attachment to Sheila and the MLB on February 7. In the revision he removes mention of the CCC grant and the names of the Northern Tier towns other than Heath.

MLB members expressed their support for the revised letter. Anne asked about an update on MBI and the awarding of the contract. David said that although the impression he got from talking with Carolyn Kirk was that the contract would be awarded by January 1, 2023, Mike Slowinski said that MBI had 90 days to award the contract, or until March 1st.

Art said that he would like to keep Paul Mark, who has spent time following the RRR Project, informed. Sheila and the MLB agreed that the revised letter should not Cc our legislators but that we should be prepared to reach out by letter in the week prior to March 2 to Paul Mark and Natalie Blais. The revised letter should Cc Linda Dunlavy of the FRCoG and Tom Flaherty and John Leary of WG&E.

Action Taken *Anne moved that the MLB Chair send the revised letter discussed above to Carolyn Kirk at MBI with Linda Dunlavy, John Leary, and Tom Flaherty Cc'd. Ann seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

David said that he would inform the other 4 towns. Sheila said she will insert Art's signature per Art's request and send the letter to the above mentioned people.

David sent to Sheila and the MLB as an attachment on February 6 John Leary's RRR Project progress report. He said that the process of ordering Verizon will begin with a target of 4/24

for testing along with Crown Castle. Also, the Low Level Design is to be delivered by 2/24 for approval.

February 21st Joint Meeting with Finance Committee and Select Board

David recommended that we send a cash flow projection sheet to the Finance Committee and Select Board in time for them to see it before the meeting.

The document on the protocol of managing problems with the muni-network will be on the agenda for the Select Board's suggestions.

David said we need to inform the Select Board that very soon an IGA for the 5 Northern Tier towns will be signed for the Verizon circuit.

There was some discussion of the timing of WCF's changing of the billing from DocuSigns.

Ned asked about sources we can cite if people have questions about how the CAF II funds can be used. Sheila said she would contact Rich Carnall.

MLP Office Space

Sheila said that early in the afternoon of February 7 she would visit 18 Jacobs Road to start making a list of those things we need to purchase. She said that she now has a key. We have another 2 drawer file cabinet.

Bill offered to extend internet connections to a meeting table. Sheila said she would like not having to rely on WiFi.

Sheila said she saw no need at this time for a phone. The MLB said that meetings can be arranged by email.

Action Taken *Bill moved that the MLP does not set up a phone in its office space at 18 Jacobs Rd. There will be no extension for the MLP at this time. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Bill reported that he reached out to Joe O, the project manager at Bellor Road, but has not heard anything from either Joe or the Select Board.

Anne moved that the meeting adjourn at 12:30. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Wolf