

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting  
May 16, 2023 at 11  
Virtual meeting

Present: MLB: Art Schwenger (Chair), David Gordon, Bill Fontes, Ned Wolf, and  
MLP Manager Sheila Litchfield

Absent: Anne Emmet

Art called the meeting to order at 11.

Members read the minutes of the May 2<sup>nd</sup> MLB meeting. Bill moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. David seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 0 nays.

MLP Manager's Report

Sheila reported that a customer at 2 Moduc signed up for a cold drop on September 15, 2021. The MLB agreed that in answer to the question from WCF as to whether the customer is eligible for a subsidy, the customer is eligible for a \$500 subsidy for a cold drop. The estimated cost in the CRM for the active drop is \$657.91.

The customer is asking for 25 mps. The subscription will be a source of revenue for the MLP.

Sheila said that when WCF went to 15 Apache to install, they could not install because the needed electrical work had not been done. The electrical inspector said that there was no request for electrical work. The customer scheduled installation for June 5<sup>th</sup>. Sheila will ask WCF to inform the customer that the trip charge will be the customer's responsibility to pay if WCF discovers the electrical work is incomplete.

Sheila said that the customer at 15 Apache wants the installation to be on a pole. She will seek more clarity by talking with Jaimie Cincotta of WCF. Bill requested that Sheila remind Jaimie that he and Chris said they were uncomfortable penetrating a trailer for the installation. Our drop policy says that there must be a structure but not that the ONT has to be on the structure.

Sheila said that WCF is asking whether the customer at 31 Moduc is eligible for a cold drop subsidy. The customer requests bringing the cable only to a short pole that the customer owns.

The MLP questions whether the termination to the NID must be on a dwelling.

There was agreement that since the customer applied on September 7, 2021, the customer is eligible for a cold drop subsidy. Moreover, there was agreement that since the subscriber owns the pole, it's OK to bring the cable only to the pole. Bill said there's no need to worry about protecting the ONT from the weather because for a cold drop only an NID is needed.

Sheila said that one consultation is scheduled for May 16<sup>th</sup>. Betsy Loiko says that 3 notices have been sent alerting customers that their subscription payment is overdue and their subscription may have to be terminated. As of May 16<sup>th</sup> one of the 3 customers has paid.

Brian has responded to Sheila's request for an estimate for an additional line card in the hub. The estimate is \$17,762.91. David noted that on the Cash Flow Projection Sheet we have a \$20K place holder that will cover this cost for FY24.

#### Tree Trimming

After Asplundh has done tree trimming it sends a bill to WCF who sends it to Wired West. It is difficult to verify that the desired work has been done. Brian Sullivan has said that Asplundh has offered to drive around with a Heath representative to make a future list.

To determine whether Asplundh's recent work included all that was needed, Brian suggested that a Heath representative drive the roads where trimming was needed and let him know if there are discrepancies with what was billed.

Sheila and the MLB agreed that a protocol is needed for confirming that tree trimming work requested has been done. Sheila expects it will come up again at a Wired West Board meeting.

#### Increases in Installation Costs

Sheila reported that Brian has said that there has been an increase of 6% for materials and an increase of 10% for labor. David noted how slow WCF has been in providing an explanation for this cost increase even though we have a signed contract with WCF.

#### Email to Accountant and Assessors

Sheila said that on May 9<sup>th</sup> she sent to the Assessors and to the Accountant an email about scheduling a meeting to discuss steps needed and the timing of when the steps must be completed in order to transfer broadband revenue to the Town as an "anticipated revenue source" on the tax recap sheet.

MLB members spoke of how our deciding how much money to send to the Town and our informing the Select Board of these decisions could help the Town's budget forming process. We also spoke of the MLB's need to know that a process is in place for the transferred funds to appear on the recap sheet before the MLB decides how much and when to send the funds.

Sheila said that there have been just 2 newsletters to customers so far. She encouraged members to check their spam folders and let Lisa Stowe know if they still see no sign of the newsletters.

#### Cash Flow Projection

Members discussed the 'FY23 Cash Flow projection update' that Sheila sent to us on 05/09/23. There was agreement with the bottom line (line 28) that \$62,583 is the amount of 'Estimated funds available to apply to MLP priorities.' Members recommended zeroing out line 17 'Depreciation Reserve Funding FY23 \$35,743'.

David said it's confusing having line 11 'Revenue from Wired West \$87,059.' This money, which we've already received, should be part of our Assets. The information is useful more as a budget planning tool than a line in a balance sheet.

Sheila and David expect to attend the Wired West Board meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### R, R, R Project

David said that there is a consensus to go ahead with the current low level design.

There is some uncertainty as to whether there will be a Verizon line from Charlemont to North Adams. Still, Charlemont and Rowe want to move quickly because they're paying monthly for MBI and would rather move quickly to the new, less costly MBI contract.

WCF has signed an agreement with MBI. We want WCF to recognize the need for each town to review the IGA. When asked how much notice there will be for customers using static IP addresses, WCF has said 2 weeks. We need to inform Northeast IT.

Sheila said that Heath has 2 static IP addresses, those of the Town and of a local business.

David said that John Leary has talked of moving the new switches into the field in the first week of June and of switching over to the new switches in mid-June.

#### Printer for MLP Office Space

Members discussed the information Anne sent in her email of May 11<sup>th</sup> about an HP Inkjet 4155E, AIO available at Staples for possibly \$70.

**Action Taken**     *David moved that the MLP Manager spend up to \$150 for a printer.  
Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 0 nays.*

Bill said that the new phone system at the Jacobs Road municipal building is close to being a done deal.

Bill moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:30. David seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 0 nays.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf