

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting
January 23, 2024 at 11
Virtual meeting

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

Art called the meeting to order at 11.

Members read the minutes of the December 19th MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be accepted with edits. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Members read the minutes of the January 9th MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be accepted with corrections. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 abstention from Bill.

MLP Manager's Report

Sheila reported that Heath's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) subscribers are to receive soon an email from Whip City Fiber, as required by the FCC, saying the following: Due to uncertain funding from the federal government it is possible that the Affordable Connectivity Program will end in April/May 2024. This program is currently providing up to \$30 monthly credit to reduce the cost of your internet access.

There is political activity to extend the program. This includes a petition on the Free Press website.

Some of Heath's customers may contact us after being notified that their ACP is ending. Anne recommended that we remove from our new Drop Policy the paragraph about the ACP and reinsert it if ACP is refunded.

Action Taken *Anne moved that we remove mention of the Affordable Care Program (ACP) from our new Drop Policy and if ACP is refunded, replace it. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Sheila has reviewed the current operating agreement with Wired West and made some changes including those pointed out by David Gordon and the Becket team. The revised agreement will be discussed at the February 21st WiredWest board meeting.

Members acknowledged that that we will be in WiredWest with a revised contract on July 1st. We agreed that changing the language of the contract would give us more notice next time. By focusing now on the contract terms, we will be prepared for possible revisions next time the contract is up for renewal.

Jim Drawe has sent emails to the MLP Managers asking what MLP costs aren't covered by Wired West. For Heath they include the MLP Manager's salary, MLB stipends, the costs of using KP Law to review documents, and the PO Box address.

The invoices for Kinsley's doing preventive maintenance on Town equipment first come to us. We check them for accuracy and forward to WiredWest to pay. We can decide the extent of work we want WiredWest to do. The MLP could still manage transfers to the Town, and transfers to Depreciation Reserves. There could be advantages to reducing the work of the Town Accountant.

Work of the Wired West Board

Wired West pays expenses for towns through a warrant which gets voted on at Wired West Board meetings. This is how each town MLP has control over what Wired West does.

If switches in the hut have to be upgraded, Heath has to pay as this is a capital cost. If maintenance work is needed at the hut, then WiredWest pays as a shared cost.

There is a proposed change in the contract with Wired West. Discretionary Maintenance Spending is defined to be any maintenance expense that is incurred by a Member that is not a repair and/or replacement expense for network related equipment. Any Discretionary Maintenance Spending desired by the MLP in excess of \$10K per fiscal year must be approved by a unanimous vote of all members for the discretionary spending to be considered as a shared maintenance to be paid for by Wired West.

Bill has reached out to electrician Clint Dodge to check whether it's possible to install a motion activated device into the socket of the exterior light for the Heath hub. The motion detector would have a timer.

RRR

David reported that WCF has not completed user acceptance testing.

Website

Anne said that she will be meeting with Pat about the website. Members encouraged making the needed changes to Heath's website.

MLB Agenda

David said that RRR can be removed from the MLB Agenda.

Bill suggested that there be a time for public comments at the beginning of the meeting. That would allow addressing any comments in the course of the meeting. Discussion might then be scheduled for a future meeting.

Tree Trimming

Sheila has asked Heath's Tree warden for the map that shows exactly where National Grid is planning to trim. The MLP will need to identify where tree trimming may be needed on roads not included in the Ngrid tree trimming project.

Date of Next Meeting: virtual meeting, February 13, at 11

Bill made a motion that the meeting be adjourned at 12:17. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Wolf