

DRAFT

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting

April 9, 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 11:02.

Members read the minutes of the March 12th meeting with edits. Bill moved that the minutes be accepted as amended. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Contract with WiredWest and the Member Towns

The copy of the contract that Sheila sent us on April 9th has the original comments of the lawyer Matthew Feher of KP Law and Deirdre Lawrence from WiredWest's law firm. This version has not been approved by the WiredWest Board. They will look at it at their meeting on April 17th.

Art asked whether anyone sees a red flag in this draft of the contract. No one had a major reservation to be communicated to WiredWest.

Cash Flow Review

Sheila emailed on April 8th both the Accountant's Report and the Cash Flow Projection. The Accountant's Report shows both '39' accounts inactive and total assets of \$200,159.

The \$40,153.90 in 'Other Funding Sources' equals the total amount in the '39' accounts before they were made 'inactive'.

David, who has worked on the Cash Flow Projection, said that the total projected revenue for FY25 is the sum of \$100,000 estimated revenue from WiredWest plus \$223,000 of estimated CAF II funding, or \$323,000. The only projected expenses are \$62. for a US P.O. Box, \$16,800 for the MLP Manager's salary, and \$35,743 for Depreciation Reserve funding. Most of the major expenses such as insurance and electricity are already covered by WiredWest. The estimated excess funds in FY25 are \$270,395.

Bill recalled our having talked about maintaining \$50,000 for unanticipated expenses. David said that he eliminated that because WiredWest now has a reserve fund built up from income and from the \$99. Installation fee.

Bill said that the only expense he foresees is for the installation of a new line card for more connections. David said that he has included \$20,000 for FY26 for costs of that kind.

Sheila said that the WiredWest agreement will delineate shared expenses and the town specific maintenance expenses which will reduce the cost of the MLP Manager.

The cash flow projection is based on what we know now. The P.O. Box will go. The KP Law expense of \$1000 for FY24 will be shared and will be eliminated in FY25.

David noted that the WiredWest warrant is available to anyone seeking more details.

Anne asked why the MLP Manager's salary remains the same in the coming years, why isn't it lower in FY25?

Sheila said that we and the other member towns are learning how we can use WiredWest more and reduce the cost of the MLP Manager.

Bill recommended keeping \$16,800 in the flow projection as the MLP Manager's salary until we've been through FY25.

On February 24 of this year \$10,000 was transferred following the MLB's vote for the MLP Manager's salary, but the \$16,800 doesn't reflect that. Most of the \$10,000 we sent was to reimburse the '39' account which had been mistakenly used to fund the MLP Manager's salary.

David said that the MLP Manager's salary will drop to \$6,800 once the Accountant's report shows the transfer.

The MLB noted the need to vote to fund the Depreciation Reserve.

Action Taken *David moved that the MLB fund the Depreciation Reserve account for FY24 at \$35,743 to be transferred from an account at Sheila's discretion. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Heath Rideout

The proposal from Whip City Fiber (WCF) as described by Brian Sullivan is that over the course of 2 days 2 WCF employees in a vehicle will do a ground level inspection of the fiber line looking for damaged MSTs and any trees or branches threatening the fiber. They will provide us with a report of their work. The cost to Heath will be \$1876.

Bill said that the money would be well spent. David said that if tree issues are found the report will say whether there's power on the nearby poles.

Bill said he would like to go on the rideout as long as we know the logistics of it all. He would go along in a separate vehicle.

Action Taken *Bill moved that we contract with Whip City Fiber to do a spring rideout for \$1876 to identify issues that need attention and furnish a report. David seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

There was a consensus to ask WCF to do this work as soon as possible and to inform Brian that we want Bill to accompany them.

Training for One Drive

Sheila noted that all MLB members are interested in the training. She will try to schedule a visit from a trainer during a scheduled MLB meeting.

WiredWest Board Meeting

There will possibly be a vote to allow WiredWest's treasurer to sign a line of credit with Greenfield Savings Bank.

WCF is still exploring how to handle a possible per customer fee to cover the cost of repairs.

Pole Transfers

Members have seen National Grid transferring lines that include broadband fiber to a new pole. National Grid is also planning pole replacements on Burrington Road. We have not been asked about pole transfers. The Town hasn't been notified of a pole hearing. Sheila will contact National Grid about whether the MLP will need to pay for the transfer of fiber to a new pole.

The poles include ones in Charlemont. David suggested we might inform Bob Hansdsaker because of his interest in Charlemont's broadband.

Art said that somewhere we need a comprehensive picture of the whole network in terms of the total assets.

Art expressed appreciation on behalf of the MLB for the work done by David and Sheila in getting the Cash Flow Projection.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 23rd at 11

Bill moved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:50. David seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted, Ned Wolf