

Minutes of the Heath MLB Meeting  
November 12, 2024 at 11  
Virtual meeting

DRAFT

Present: Art Schwenger (Chair), Anne Emmet, David Gordon, Bill Fontes (arrived at 11:17), Ned Wolf, MLP Manager, Sheila Litchfield, and new resident Ralph Maselli  
Town Coordinator Hilma Sumner joined the meeting at 12.

Art called the meeting to order at 11:09.

During the public comment period, a new resident expressed “sticker shock” at the cost of a broadband installation at a house where there is no drop at this time. Members explained that the subsidies for broadband installations have long since expired. MLP policy currently requires the home owner to pay for the full cost of a new installation.

MLP Manager Job Description

Members discussed the job description edited with David’s help and sent by Sheila to members on November 11. There was a consensus to change the bullet ‘Hold weekly office hours at the MLP office’ to ‘Hold office hours at the MLP office by appointment.’

All email and electronic information should be on Google Drive. The MLP Manager needs to know how to access records on Google Drive. It was agreed to add the bullet ‘Maintains MLP records on MLP Google Drive.’

The MLP Manager does not need to handle any money from subscribers. Members agreed to leave out ‘bonding’ as a requirement pending a check with Hilma.

**Action Taken** *David moved that we accept the new MLP Manager job description with edits. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

When Town Coordinator Hilma Sumner joined the meeting, she confirmed that ‘being bonded’ is not required in the job description.

Sheila will send the job description with changes to the Selectboard. She will draft an ad for the position.

NEIT Proposal

Members discussed the proposal from NEIT that is included in an exchange of emails between Hilma and Connor O'Toole, Client Success Manager, Northeast IT. Members received the forwarded emails on November 11 and November 12. The proposal is in response to Heath's municipal network losing communication with the internet several times recently. The proposal is that there be quarterly reboots of the municipal network firewall.

If the reboot fails, someone may need to restart the town firewall at the hut. We need to ask NEIT whether a 'preventative' reboot can be done remotely by NEIT. What do they mean by 'reboot'? Is the town paying for a maintenance plan on the firewall?

Does the firewall come with a warranty, and when does that expire?

David noted that WCF provides a drop for NEIT. Unless there's a problem with the drop, which is very unlikely, WCF has no role in this.

Bill asked whether our setup is different from that of other towns?

Concerns were expressed that the muni buildings do not have access to the internet during downtimes. Sheila suggested that in Heath's communications with NEIT we use the word 'unreliable' to describe the current setup.

#### Leveling the Current Emergency Operations Center

Hilma said that the Selectboard is aiming to have the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) building on Branch Hill Road down before the new year. The plan is to coordinate with NEIT so that the Highway Department doesn't go without internet for an extended period of time. Hilma has requested a quote from WCF for the cost of moving the drop.

David noted that the work will be a town expense.

#### Minutes

Members read the minutes of the October 1<sup>st</sup> MLB meeting. Anne moved that the minutes be approved with edits. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Sheila will send Ned the version of the minutes that includes the approved edits.

#### Replacement of Both UPS

Sheila sent members a copy of the Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> DocuSign from WCF for the replacement of 2 UPS systems at the Heath Hut for a total cost of \$8,324. In response to her asking why both UPS systems failed, there was no answer. They did say that both needed to be replaced. Sheila signed the DocuSign.

### National Grid Pole Replacement

Sheila said that Heath has communicated with Senator Paul Mark our unhappiness with the town having to pay the cost of transferring the broadband cable to new utility poles.

WCF informed Sheila that WCF was recently given instructions by the Police Department to make sure they schedule Police Detail on all poles in Heath. Sheila said that it's the call of the police Chief. Members encouraged Anne to ask Police Chief John McDonough whether police detail is needed on every road in Heath for the transfer of a wire from one pole to another. Please ask him to copy us on anything related to broadband; we got it from WCF that the Chief requested Police Detail on every transfer of cable to a new pole.

### Damaged Broadband Cable

Art said that in the week of Nov. 4 a storm brought down a tree on an electric wire just south of his house on Burrington Road. A fire started, and before the fire was put out. Two WCF trucks worked on the cable. There will be a bill to WiredWest.

### Insurance

Sheila said that the WiredWest town representatives have been asked for more detail about the number of miles and number of poles in their respective towns in order for WiredWest to get a quote for insurance from PURMA. Most towns feel that drops should be covered.

### Service Protection Plan

WCF is working on a proposal for a \$2 to \$3 per month customer fee to cover the cost of repairs at customer locations.

The WiredWest Board has yet to vote on a service protection plan that might include a fee. Sheila said she would suggest a fee increase only to offset the debt.

Sheila noted that the \$100K that the MLB most recently sent to the town does appear on the Accountant's report.

### CAF II Catchment Area

Sheila said that she has informed John Leary and WCF of new homes in order that they can be added to the CAF II catchment area.

**Dates of Next MLB Meetings: Tuesday, November 19 at 6 pm, 18 Jacobs Road**

**Tuesday, December 10 at 11 am, virtual meeting**

Anne moved that the meeting be adjourned at 1:14. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf