

Town of Heath

Meeting minutes

Heath Municipal Light Plant Advisory Board

Date/time: March 12, 2019 at 10:00 am

Location: Sawyer Hall

Members present: Bob Bourke (Construction Liaison) , Jan Carr, Art Schwenger, Ned Wolf, Sheila Litchfield

- Called to order at 10:09 am
- Approval of minutes from previous meeting – none
- Committee organization: Art- chair; Sheila- Secretary; Ned and Jan- finances; Art- WiredWest rep; Sheila & Ned- IGA's
- Bob provided the Construction Liaison update
 - Continues to meet with WG&E and Bill Ennen monthly. Art and Bob met with Joe Parda and Tom Callak last week; WGE reported that of 1615 total poles, 64 were contested and negotiations are being finalized by WGE; might receive pole invoices in another week; treasurer and Accountant are prepared to process invoices.
 - MBE service plan discussed with WGE; total of 449 meters in MBE alone (382 in balance of Town); reduced by combined lots; most cost effective way to service this area will be a main line strung to clubhouse with small (2'x3') pole mounted junction cabinets clustered around permanent residences and extra fiber allotted for multiple lots. Rather than drops to each, there will be opportunity for hard wire to permanent residences and run new fiber to seasonal lots. Will always have possibility for field splits in event additional capacity is needed.
 - Concerns: how to manage Wi-Fi sharing; residents requests for seasonal disconnect/reconnect.
 - Bob reported WGE is using all Nokia equipment and expects ease of repair due to consistency of equipment used.
 - Hut update – 9x16 hut; contract signed by BOS, includes diesel gen. ; customizing (door placement and siting to permit plowing and ease of access) for Heath is next step; site prep in spring. Discussed possibility of using some space in Hut for town record storage; idea has merit; just need to ensure 360^o access to fiber cabinet for technicians; location of diesel tk and generator TBD.
 - Update from recent Bill Ennen meeting:
 - Edge case agreements status – Colrain will take on one Heath home as their own and Rowe the same; these should be simple agreements. Charlemont agreement will be a bit more complicated; Heath will service Warner Hill and end of Bassett Rd. Bill reported that the costs of building to service a neighboring town will be taken off of

the award amount of the receiving town and given to the town providing the service. Bill requests to be involved when we get to the point of doing IGA's. Bob reported that Bill Edelstein has three homes in VT desiring service from Heath; WGE mapped this out; Bob B. is following.

- Carolyn Kirk has left EOHED for MTC (Mass Tech Collaborative) overseeing broadband.
 - CAF II going through FCC approval process; WGE is carrier. Clarity is sought for what funds can be used for and whether they need to be placed in a reserve fund specific for BB use. Don't anticipate CAF II funds until 2021.
 - Once pole negotiation is done, PPR can be done then we'll have knowledge of costs; then we discuss drop policy options and residents will be able to view their specific costs.
- Project finances – team plans to meet with Financial Advisor, Clark Rowell and his successor Brianne Susel on April 2 with the BOS. Apparently Clark favors a debt exclusion to relieve tax burden (2/3 vote on ATM warrant plus simple majority at ballot box is required; borrowing authorization is already approved by voters; Ned and Kris have been in touch on this; borrowing will be needed shortly. DLS is available for support and is aware of what other towns have done. Ned and Jan following. Discuss with BOS on April 2.
 - Project Management options – briefly discussed that may need MLP department manager, accounting interface, auditor, and retainer for repair service. To explore more fully as we go forward and understand what WW will do for town and what we may need to do ourselves.
 - WiredWest update – Art unable to attend WW meeting tomorrow; appears no one from Heath is available to attend.
 - Note: at this time Heath does not have a WW alternate rep. Sheila will follow-up
 - Other topics not anticipated
 - Anticipate need to meet with Conservation Commission regarding sting of Hut
 - Next meeting: April 2 at 10 am; Sawyer Hall w/WGE and April 2 6 pm w/ BOS and Clark Rowell.
 - Adjourned the meeting at 12 pm