

Minutes of the Heath MLPAC Conference Call

June 2, 2020

Present: Art Schwenger, Sheila Litchfield, Jan Carr, Margo Newton, Ned Wolf, and Bob Bourke

Art called the meeting to order at 9:34 am. Members read the minutes of May 26. Jan made a motion seconded by Margo to accept the minutes with emendations. The motion passed by unanimously.

Jan noted that if construction charges included paying for drops, there would be no charge to customers. The committee will continue working on a drop policy to help customers pay for their drops. The committee agreed to defer on deciding to recommend if the Town should be considered a customer. That will be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

In discussing operating costs the committee discussed whether subscriber amounts should appear on Article 3 just as other utility costs to town buildings are itemized. Having the subscriber amounts on Article 3 makes that transparent. Art indicated that if subscriber costs are not paid by the Town, then Wired West would pay those costs, and at the end of the fiscal year would cover the costs by deducting them from any revenue surplus generated by Heath's Broadband Network. If there was no revenue surplus, there would be no source from which to take the subscriber amounts, and the other Wired West towns, not Heath, would pay the bill.

Sheila made a motion seconded by Margo to include on the ATM warrant an article to raise and appropriate the total cost of \$5,906.91 for payment of the drop costs for each of the Town buildings Sawyer Hall, Community Hall, Highway/Fire Garage, and 18 Jacobs Road as in the table below.

<u>Town Building</u>	<u>Estimated Cost of Drop</u>
Sawyer Hall	\$657.91
Community Hall	657.91
Highway/Fire Garage	657.91
18 Jacobs Road	<u>3,933.18</u>
	5,906.91

The motion passed by unanimously. The Committee recommends that the drop costs be itemized by cost to each building to ensure transparency.

Sheila made a motion seconded by Ned that the MLPAC recommends that Article 3 include the annual subscription cost for the standard 1 gigabit per second internet service for each of the buildings Sawyer Hall, the Community Hall, Highway/Fire Garage, representing a shared drop to these facilities, and 18 Jacobs Road have a new line of its own. The recommended changes to Article 3 include replacing the line 'Sawyer/Community Hall Internet' with these 2 lines: 'Sawyer Hall Internet' and 'Community Hall Internet'; keeping the line 'Highway/Fire Internet'; and adding the line '18 Jacobs Road Internet' as listed below.

Sawyer Hall Internet \$1,020 (assumes Crocker at \$110/month continues for 6 months into FY21 and then switches to WiredWest at \$115 which includes phone

Community Hall Internet \$1,020 (same as above)

Highway/Fire Internet \$1,020 (same as above)

18 Jacobs Road Internet \$1,330 includes \$110 to Crocker for 10 months into FY21 for total of \$1100; switch to WiredWest \$115 (90 for 1 Gig plus \$20 phone plus \$5 fees) for 2 months remaining in FY21.

A benefit of switching to WiredWest is the level of service and that phone is include eliminating Verizon costs. The committee noted that in the 11 months year to date internet fees at Jacobs Road total \$1,142 plus \$1,319 to Crocker. It is expected that costs for internet and phone through WiredWest will be lower than current.  $2 \times 115 = 1380$  in contrast to 1142 and 1319 plus one additional month.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The committee discussed additional information that could be provided to the MLB on June 9. The FY20 monthly amount for Sawyer/Community Hall Internet has been \$110. The FY20 monthly amount for Highway/Fire Internet has been \$54.17. The FY21 monthly subscription cost to Wired West for 1 gigabit per second would be \$90. The monthly cost of phone would be an additional \$19.99 plus federal and state fees of about \$5/mo for each location.

The estimated dates by which the 4 drops will have been installed are as follows:

Sawyer Hall, Nov. 30 to Dec. 31, 2020

Community Hall, Nov. 30 to Dec. 31, 2020

Highway/Fire, Nov. 30 to Dec. 31, 2020

18 Jacobs Road, Mar. 5 to April 9, 2021.

There remains a question about the internet wiring inside the former school building. Northeast IT has proposed that it be upgraded. If the building had a drop and a subscription to Wired West for 1 gigabit service, would the present wiring allow computers inside the building to take advantage of the 1 gigabit service?

Art clarified Wired West's seasonal policy following his talks with Jim Drawe and Kent Lew. Everyone pays the initial installation fee of \$99. A subscriber can disconnect service for a period of up to 4 months without being charged. If one reconnects within 4 months, there is no charge. If not, there is a \$99. fee to reconnect. A subscriber who also gets telephone has to keep paying the monthly bill; otherwise that person will lose the phone number. Continuing to pay each month permits a subscriber to use the same phone number in any location such as Florida and know that he or she will have the same phone number.

Sheila provided the details of 2 invoices.

4/9 Verizon \$11,427.54

Sheila made a motion seconded by Ned to approve the invoice. The motion passed by unanimously.

Bob Bourke \$1,155.00 for 33 hours (broken down) , February – April 26

Sheila made a motion seconded by Ned to approve the invoice. The motion passed unanimously.

Art and Ned will prepare an annotated construction schedule for Tuesday, June 9.

The committee discussed a draft of the MLP Manager job description that Art and Ned had prepared. Sheila made a motion seconded by Ned to approve the MLP Manager job description as amended. The motion passed unanimously. Art will send the MLB an email with this job description attached and the grade level left blank. The message will say that if they want to do their own evaluation and assigning of a grade level, that's fine; otherwise, we will use our grade 11 analysis.

The committee turned to the drop policy. We will continue assessing how much money is available for drops. Sheila met yesterday with David Fierro who gave her all individual Verizon invoices. She and Laura Blascak of WG&E are working on reconciling numbers. The costs associated with the pole near the hut are still being determined.

Jan says that Gloria will gladly help with the Heath page on the Wired West website. Jan, Art, and Gloria will work on that.

Art said that the hut inspection went well. He said that in Rowe Joe Parda told them that they needed paved parking space for 2 vehicles near the hut. He also recommended a 4' apron of gravel around the hut to discourage the growth of plants. Finally, he recommended an approach to the door of the hut that would reduce the chances of people tracking mud into the hut. Bob said he would contact the Highway Department about gravel and possibly other items.

Art said that the Select Board has asked for a bid for an external antenna at 18 Jacobs Road to help the Hot Spot site provide the intended 250 megabits per second of internet service to people parked nearby. The estimated cost is about \$2,000.

The committee discussed ways to communicate the importance of the Town's being able to use funds from stabilization to assist with drops and encourage more subscribers. Jan suggested using Jim Drawe's data on how the revenue increases when the take rate increases from say 50% to 60%.

Sheila suggested that we ask the MLB if we can use the Town distribution list for Heath Broadband information emails.

Sheila made a motion seconded by Ned to adjourn at 12:31 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf