

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath MLPAC

August 4, 2020

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

Art called the meeting to order at 11 am. Sheila reminded members of the Docusign received from WG&E on July 27. It indicated that \$405,000 would be needed to finish the project although Rich Carnall has said that figure is inaccurate because some of those costs have been paid. The Docusign indicates \$135,000 in change order costs that Heath owes. The costs include \$2,458 for WiFi at the school which we have requested not be included. We have requested that a separate \$2,458 invoice be submitted for coverage by the town's Covid-19 relief fund. The Docusign is asking Heath to pay \$45,556.12.

Sheila made a motion seconded by Ned to approve the \$45,556.12 that Heath is said to owe WG&E in the Docusign: HEATH HE-CNST-10001-6 Preliminary Billing-Out-of-Scope Work sent to Art on July 27. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheila said that earlier that day she sent Rich what she understood has yet to be paid.

She said that Laura Blascak of WG&E says the \$880 Verizon check is not the final pole application invoice we had hoped for.

Rich says that there is an active hut component yet to be built that will cost \$92,137.77.

Art said we will inform Bill of the shift in the proposed date of the beginning of construction from July 6 to mid-September. We will communicate this with a letter on the Town website and the WiredWest website.

There was discussion of a request from Hilma about a broadband insert for a Town flyer that will be going out soon. . Margo suggested we put a poster near Charlene's window with half page flyers on a nearby shelf.

The discussion turned to the relationship between the MLB and the Select Board. Art said that in some towns, i.e. Rowe and Washington, the Select Board and the MLB are the same. The MLB Manager is given freedom in signing things. In other towns the two committees are separate.

Mary Ellen Kennedy of New Salem has sent an email describing roles of the MLB and the Select Board in her town. The members of the MLB, who are elected, came from the Broadband Committee who have been actively involved in overseeing the construction project, the construction drop policy, and overall planning. The Select Board has been involved in all legal approvals, grant applications, construction, contracts, etc. Operations are usually managed by WiredWest whose Executive Director Jim Drawe reports to the Board of Directors. The MLB is

responsible for anything not managed by WiredWest. The MLP Manager reports to the MLB. Sheila said that the arrangement in New Salem is similar to how it will be in Heath.

David Dvore has noted that since tax dollars are going into the construction, there is no way the Select Board can be removed from broadband matters. Since the MLP Manger is initially a town expense, the Select Board has authority over the MLP Manager. It is possible that when revenues start coming in they will pay for the MLP Manager.

Sheila said that using responses from people like Kent, Mary Ellen, and David she will take a stab at composing a document describing lines of authority in Heath.

The committee turned to other ways of communicating broadband information to the public. Sheila noted that by going to the Town webpage and clicking on 'Latest News' on the left side one gets FSA information. To get street listings within each FSA one can go to the Broadband MLP page. There was a discussion of the content of Jan's next mass email. We need to acknowledge that the construction schedule is a moving target. At this time the kick-off with contractors is August 28th. We do have an itemized list with an estimated cost for each property, but until the installation is complete the final cost will. Not be known.

Sheila made a motion seconded by Jan to recess at 12:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf