

Minutes of the Heath MLPAC Meeting
March 16, 2021 at 11 am

Present: MLPAC: Art Schwenger, Jan Carr, Anne Emmet, Paul Dabrody, and Ned Wolf
MLP Manager, Sheila Litchfield
WG&E: Chris La Vertu and Caitrin Ferriter

WG&E, as requested by the Heath MLPAC, provided an employee, Chris La Vertu, Utility Supervisor, to help us better understand the AIA (American Institute of Architects) forms that WG&E uses to send Heath bills. Chris said that there are 3 AIA forms that they bill off of: engineering, construction, and service. Direct billing is used for **expenses** stuff outside of managerial scope. The number of the application is part of the heading. Chris took as an example, a recent DocuSign in application 12. WG&E keeps a running order of applications 1 - 12. Chris' name appears at the top as Project Manager, and Robyn Provost-Carlson is the Owners Representative. Chris went down a list of items that included Active and Passive for Heath's hub. He said that our hub was fully outfitted. Active and Passive are 100% paid.

The MLPAC asked Chris about the cost of Project Management. He said that Heath has yet to be billed for that. The billing will be done incrementally.

Chris said that the AIA form for service has the same cover page as the one for construction but it has more options. There is a schedule of values.

Sheila asked about the charge for relocation of the PODS. Had someone requested that the PODS be shifted on the property of 18 Jacobs Rd.? Chris said that the relocation cost applied only to the move from Westfield to 18 Jacobs Rd.

Sheila said that the total number of drops has gone down since the beginning of the construction. In looking over initial cost estimates Chris said that they were for the number of drops early in the project. He offered to make adjustments.

Sheila said that we have wanted to know whether the finite amount of money that Heath has set aside to complete the project will be sufficient. Chris offered to help in determining that.

There was some discussion of what happens when the network is damaged as has recently occurred in other towns following strong winds. Chris said that WG&E recently rolled their trucks the same day for windstorm damage in Wendell and New Salem because in that

particular storm Westfield received minor damage. Chris confirmed Art's saying that the cost for repairs in the cases of Wired West towns such as Heath goes first through Wired West.

Caitrin said that she would be unable to make the 2 o'clock meeting. She thanked Sheila for her positive feedback on the March 10th marketing meeting. She said she can get a list to us of the attendees. She said we can ask her for help in sending a message to subscribers.

Sheila and the MLPAC thanked Caitrin and Chris for their help.

The Microsoft Team session ended at 12 pm.

At 12:04 Sheila, Ned, Jan, Art, Paul, and Anne reconnected by Zoom. MLPAC members read the minutes of the 11 am meeting on March 9. Paul made a motion to accept the minutes with emendations. Jan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Members read the minutes of the 2 pm meeting on March 9. Anne made a motion to accept the minutes with emendations. Paul seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheila reported on the construction status. TriWire has indicated that there is one site remaining in FSA 2 on Rowe Road where they cannot gain access for testing due to snow and a locked gate. The committee identified the site as 73 Rowe Road. We will try to reach the owner.

Anne mentioned the possibility of talking with WG&E about the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB). Sheila said that the people at WG&E with whom to talk about the EBB are John Leary and Rich Carnall.

Members discussed Mohawk Estates where Jan says there are now 48 seasonal customers signed up. Sheila said they might not be around after October 12 when they would be receiving the router. Jan said that even if FSA 3 and FSA 4 were switched, there would still be the problem of people signing up and paying for 6 months of service close to when they're leaving. We need to discuss this with WG&E.

Art said that tomorrow night at 6:30 there will be a Wired West Board meeting at which one topic is likely to be how towns are dealing with the payments for drops when the drop cost exceeds the drop credit.

Sheila recalled 2 DocuSigns she had mentioned at the March 9 meeting.

3/4/2021 \$5,762.99 application no. 012, Project: HE – CNST – 10001
Bill of materials, hut components, Home Depot credit

3/4/2021 359. Application no. 003, Project HE – SERV – 10001
for delivery of PODS

Ned made a motion to approve these DocuSigns. Paul seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheila reported another DocuSign:

 \$10. Final cost for all engineering fees

Paul made a motion to approve this DocuSign. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheila said that she has received from Hilma the following invoice:

Feb 4 – March 5 \$314.91 National Grid, hub power

Jan made a motion to approve this invoice. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sheila spoke of receiving a \$27,974 bill of retainer from TriWire. When she discussed this on the phone with Joe Parda, he agreed with her that the appropriate time for this bill is at the end of the project. She also mentioned a \$2,775. pole attachment fee from Verizon. She has sent word to Verizon that we are not yet operational.

Anne asked about the Annual Wired West Membership dues of \$1000. appearing in an email Sheila forwarded on March 13. Art said that the \$1000. membership dues did appear as a line item in Article 3 of the FY21 ATM Warrant. He doesn't think the amount automatically comes out of the Town's accounts. We don't want to make 2 payments in one year. Another question is whether the cost of the \$6000 for a Cabot insurance surety bond will be assumed by Wired West in FY22. Art will call Jim Drawe to ask about these matters. He said that the MLP expense line for travel has been more than adequate in past years.

The salary line for the MLP Manager will need to be included again in Article 3 for FY 22. Sheila noted that she has been doing way more than 20 hours/week.

Art suggested that after March 19 a person wanting to subscribe for broadband be required to apply to the MLB to see what funds are left. Sheila said that a benefit of our doing that would be that we don't have to keep hounding people to sign up. If we learn later that we have to push for more subscribers, we would need to set a new deadline.

Jan said she has sent out 9 letters by US mail to potential subscribers whom she has been unable to reach by phone. The committee had positive comments about the March 10 marketing session. Sheila said that by going to the Broadband page of the Town's website one can access a flyer whose second page tells exactly what the fees are associated with phone service.

Art and Jan reported on their using Jim Drawe's interactive spreadsheet to estimate the income for the Heath Broadband Network in various scenarios. . It assumed that there will be 528 subscribers, including 100 seasonal customers, who take 3 months of service. A worst case scenario was based on the actual number signed up as of today. The estimated income is \$57,800. In the best case scenario the income is \$79,000.

Jan made a motion to adjourn at 12:45. Anne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf

