

Minutes of the Heath MLPAC Meeting  
April 27, 2021 at 11 am

Present: MLPAC: Art Schwenger, Jan Carr, Anne Emmet, Paul Dabrody, and Ned Wolf  
with Bill Fontes visiting  
MLP Manager, Sheila Litchfield

Art called the meeting to order at 11:02.

Sheila reported having taken back Heath's radios from TriWire so that they can be used in a vaccination clinic in Greenfield. TriWire was supposed to get back to her if they needed them again. She has not yet heard from them.

Sheila said that the construction meeting usually held at 2:00 on Tuesday afternoon will instead be on Wednesday morning at 9:00.

Sheila read an email from Jim Drawe saying that as MLP Manager she will be contacted by an auditor for Heath's MLP books. The cost for the auditor will be covered by Wired West. The auditor will be from Burke & Associates, Rockland, MA.

Sheila went over with the MLPAC the Broadband Finance report she emailed to the committee on April 25. She and the Accountant agree that the State Grant Account has as of 4/11/21 a balance of \$3,066.43. In the Town Broadband Account Sheila noted that the Accountant's amount for the TriWire invoice for weeks 14-18 is one hundred dollars more than her amount of \$123,276.63. She has requested a correction. In that same account she has highlighted an Axia/Local Link invoice for \$1,100.33 that is for make ready work and is reimbursable. We need to tell Bill Ennen.

In the summary overview Sheila said that the total amount available now is \$700,524.69. The total amount available for the network build is \$960,624.69. This includes \$22K from the state which they have retained. We will ask Bill Ennen about when we will receive this. In estimating the cost of drops Sheila took the estimated number of drops to be 363 and the corresponding construction cost to be \$500,000. We expect that the state will reimburse us for 70% of  $363 \times \$500 = \$127,000$ .

Paul has assisted in making a cash flow projection spreadsheet. The funds are not expected to be too low until early December when we can inform the state that enough drops have been installed and homes lit up to start receiving state funds. Profitability is expected from the point of receiving \$127,000 in state funds on. We can then start reimbursing the Town for the

\$200,000 transferred from stabilization, and we can start repaying the \$1.45 million broadband loan. Art reminded us that we will also need to start a depreciation fund.

Sheila recommended that there be an MLB meeting with Jim Drawe soon after it's elected. Art said we might take at least an hour with Jim working with his income estimator spreadsheets. We will try for May 18<sup>th</sup>. Sheila recommended that Jan be involved in the first meeting.

### Mohawk Estates Walkthrough

Sheila has learned through Jenny that a lawyer for Mohawk Estates was inquiring about whether Heath Broadband has an easement to use Mohawk Estate poles. Joe Parda has said that he's not aware of any challenges coming up in other towns.

On April 29 Bill, Jan, and possibly Art will meet Jaime Cincotta of WG&E in Heath Center from which they will head to Mohawk Estates. Sheila said that every time WG&E meets with Jenny it's good to have at least 2 from our group there. Art recommended that there be agreement on the process before the walkthrough begins. We need to know how many hardened ONT's there should be and how many installations are not feasible. Is it a place appropriate for a cold drop? Art asked whether we are paying Jaime's salary for the walkthrough. What maps will WG&E bring with them? Sheila said we should have assessor maps 101-106.

### Marketing

Anne, David, and Sheila joined 12 others for the Chesterfield Technology Presentation. They thought it was quite good. Whip City Fiber is proposing a trouble shooting guide which would have information on the UPS system.

Art said we need to rework materials such as banners, postcards, and door hangers to make them appropriate to Heath. Then we will get back to Whip City. Members discussed sending postcards to the 44 people in FSA's 1, 2, and 3 who haven't yet signed up. Jan will send Anne a list of 10 of those people who live on Number Nine Road. Jan cited percentages of people signed up in each of the 4 FSA's: 81% in 1, 91% in 2, 88% in 3, and 36% in 4.

Art said that Dave has suggested having a phone number dedicated to the Heath MLP. This might be possible with an Ooma account or with Google Voice which is free.

## Proposed 180' Monopole

Bill Fontes spoke of being on a call with Bill Ennen and a representative of AT&T. At some point AT&T will sell the pole and become a co-locator on the pole along with Verizon. The purpose of the pole is cell service, not high speed internet. Still, the Town might be able to put parameters on cell service yielding some financial help with broadband. Members agreed that holding the pole owner to not allowing WISP's (Wireless Internet Service Providers) on the pole would be best for Heath Broadband. Bill Ennen couldn't be certain as to whether co-locators that come later would have to go through the Town.

Bill Fontes said that although 5G could go on the pole, the coverage would be scanty. Art asked how well it would solve cell communication problems. Bill said it will solve emergency issues for people in vehicles on 8A.

Sheila said that Heath's emergency personnel depend on radio communication which is separate from cellular communication. It has been a longtime project of Paul Mark to improve radio communication for emergency personnel in western Massachusetts.

Bill Fontes talked with Shaun Weaver of Northeast IT at 3:00 on Tuesday, April 20. Shaun said that firewalls are already paid for by Heath's Community Compact grant. He said that the backup system capable of switching from a failed ONT to one that works is part of the Community Compact grant budget. The switch has to go in the hub, but the firewall could be in a town building which has a backup system.

Jan asked what the bill will look like if we switch to a municipal network. Sheila said we can check with Jim Drawe about the frequency of the bills. Will there be one bill?

Art, who is working on a report for the ATM, will consult Sheila's piece for the Annual Report. Sheila told Art she has not yet received from Jenny a copy of the Mohawk Estates Newsletter. Sheila recently contributed to that.

Jan made a motion to adjourn at 1:38. Ned seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Wolf