

Shutesbury Broadband Committee		
11_15_2023	5:00 PM EST	On Line Zoom Meeting
Facilitator	Gayle Huntress	
Minutes keeper	Gayle Huntress	
Committee Attendees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gayle Huntress Jim Hemingway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Schmidt Craig Martin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graeme Sephton	
Other		
Approved minutes September October 18, 2023		

Due to injury and illness, meeting was shortened and some agenda items saved until next meeting in January.

Graeme worked with National Grid project manager to make sure that DigSafe at the Pratt Corner Rd. Substation is taking our underground fiber into account. Important for any digging there to avoid our underground lines since that is the connection point to our main fiber backhaul (we do have backup via MBI Middle Mile as well). Although we don't own the conduit and technically it is the job of Crown Castle to perform proper DigSafe, it is worth ensuring that our fiber isn't damaged. Graeme met the DigSafe tech at the site and they could not determine the pathway since our fiber is non-conductive. But Graeme got assurance from the National Grid project manager that they would hand dig anywhere near underground conduits to avoid damage. Special thanks to Graeme for working to get in touch with the right people to help protect our fiber.

Update on National Grid Transfer/Upgrade to electrical lines in Shutesbury. Leverett Rd Section is done. Wendell Road section is completed this week. Waiting on notification in NJUNS for the Locks Pond and Lakeview sections. Total of about six miles of utility lines.

We received the first invoice and it was \$20,282 for the Leverett Rd. section of poles (about 45 of them over 1.5 miles of road). SHEL D estimates that the remaining 4.5 miles of pole transfers will run no more than \$75,000 but this is much more than expected. This next section is more complex (tension and fiber management) than the Leverett section. Total for pole moves is going to be about \$95,000 in unexpected expenses.

We will pay for this first invoice of \$20,282 out of our regular maintenance budget. Out of the \$60,000 we still have just under \$50,000 of this left for the year and this should be enough to

see us through the next seven months until the start of the next fiscal year. The next invoices will be paid out of our emergency funds of which we have the full amount budgeted still, \$94,758 In addition we can use the \$136,943 of retained audited and approved earnings from FY 2023 if necessary, but that will require vote at special town meeting. We will watch to see if there are any special town meetings between now and Annual Town Meeting and appropriate the funds if there is an opportunity.

Discussed routers, 6 in stock currently. Need to decide to continue to supply LinkSys EA7300 or upgrade to the EA7500. The EA7300 Linksys routers are being discontinued, and so they are very affordable right now at \$60 or less. Newer EA7500 model is about \$130. Will discuss at next meeting.

Gayle is interviewing consulting firms pre-approved by MBI for a Digital Equity Planning process. This planning process will make us eligible for further state BEAD money and will not cost anything since the planning process is done through MBI grants. Outcome of planning process will be an analysis of our digital equity gaps/needs for Shutesbury residents.

We will be skipping December meeting due to holidays and travel and events for MLP Manager and Board members. Will reconvene third Wednesday in January.

MLP meeting adjourned at 5:52pm.