

Shutesbury Broadband Committee		
7_21_2021	5:30 PM DST	On Line Zoom Meeting
Facilitator	Gayle Huntress	
Minutes	Jim Hemingway	
Committee Attendees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gayle Huntress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Schmidt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graeme Sephton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Hemingway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Martin Kent Whitney
Other		
Approved minutes for 6/16/2021		

Board Chair Person – do we need one? Is such a person required to run our meetings? Craig suggested that one of the three MLP members rotate through being the board chair person, and then designate Gayle to run our meetings. Graeme was nominated and voted in unanimously as our chair for the upcoming 2022 fiscal year.

Hut Report: 5 repairs this month, mostly due to fallen tree limbs and one mouse chew. A pretty average month for problems. There was a pretty severe power outage a week ago in southern Shutesbury.

Gayle has asked Crocker to come up with more detail about alternative backhaul coverage in order to make our network less vulnerable to outages. Since both Crocker and the Shutesbury MLP use Crown Castle for backhaul, there needs to be other backhaul possibilities for both of us in order for us to be able to deliver reliable service so that we can avoid having the 8 hour outage we had a month or so ago.

Steve: Financial Report – our retained earnings for 2021 are looking to be about \$210K, unusually high because we had 13 months of revenue from Crocker due to the changeover from Crocker writing checks to using direct deposit. We will have a balance of \$127K on our BAN(Bond Anticipation Note) once we make a payment this August. We should easily be able to pay off this BAN in August of 2022 and then have only the debt from the 10 year note to contend with in the years to come.

We had 16 applicants for the EBBP (Emergency Broadband Benefit program), 14 of which have been approved. Those approved will see the \$50 discount applied to their upcoming bills. Gayle anticipates maybe a total of 25 subscribers will pursue this option. Although there are expenses we have to pay for our CAFII funding which provides some additional financial support, they will be offset by annual income from the CAFII program of roughly \$14K for the next 10 years.

Brief discussion for how we might thank our departing members. Gayle hopes that we might be able to host a party to honor their contribution sometime this fall.

The on-line manager review last month went well. There was one very enthusiastic comment about Crocker's service. Gayle will send the results of the survey to the Select Board in hopes that they will adapt it as a model for reviewing the performance of town employees.

\$250 reactivation fee issue: Cathy from Crocker says it has been difficult to get some apartment dwellers to pay the \$250 fee and wants us to revise our approach. It is thought that at least 80 homes have used the 3 month shutoff option during this last fiscal year. Given this difficulty that Cathy at Crocker is experiencing, should we change our shutdown policy? Steve was puzzled by the numbers and thinks the 80 figure is inaccurate. Steve will look into this topic and the numbers with Crocker. We could reduce the \$250 fee to a lesser amount perhaps. This issue is an ongoing one and will be discussed at our next meeting once Steve looks into it more closely.

How should we word our new subscriber fiber installation policy? Gayle asked Chuck DiMare to provide us with some sound legal wording that will make our policy much clearer when it comes to situations that involve anything more extensive than providing service to a new single family home. Developers or owners of larger projects will have to pay for all of the costs of providing fiber optic service, whereas the MLP will cover the cost of whatever changes to our fiber network currently on the poles that needs to be made to provide service to a new, single family home. However, the owner of that new single family home will still have to cover the cost of the fiber from the pole to the home. The MLP voted 3-0 to adapt this wording.

Craig has been following the progress of Wired West installations in other towns in Western Massachusetts. Becket's take rate is up to 58%. Sharing redundant backhaul connection possibilities may be an important upcoming topic for discussion with Wired West and other towns. There may be some ways that Crocker could

share backhaul or we could share our backhaul connection and its cost with neighboring towns. Will MBI/Axia rise to the challenge of making more redundant backhaul connections available to some of the other towns in Western Massachusetts that now have only a single connection to the World Wide Web should their primary backhaul connection fail?

Gayle has weekly meetings with Tim Otto at Crocker. MLP members will be able to join this meeting if they send Gayle a request.

A discussion about hiring someone to do a security audit was initiated which included the concerns some MLP members have for ransomware attacks. But our meeting ended abruptly when our Zoom connection was taken over by another user(Board of Health).

Set Next Meeting	
	Wednesday, August 18, 2021, 5:00pm