

Shutesbury Broadband Committee		
12_21_2022	5:00 PM EST	On Line Zoom Meeting
Facilitator	Gayle Huntress	
Minutes keeper	Jim Hemingway	
Committee Attendees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gayle Huntress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Hemingway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Schmidt Craig Martin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graeme Sephton	
Other		
Approved minutes November 16, 2022		

Hut Report: HG&E is now monitoring the hut – codes (entrance and security) have been updated and changed by Gayle. However, the security service has not been calling the hut once someone enters the hut for identification purposes. Gayle will remedy.

Few service calls this month. However, the battery backup units for about a half dozen of our subscribers have begun to fail. The temporary solution is to provide substitute power supply cords which bypass the battery backup unit - we have a few dozen in stock. Gayle has posted instructions online for how to fix this problem which entails our subscribers purchase a UPS to replace the ailing battery backup unit which could also power their routers as well. Together replacing the current battery backup unit with a UPS available from local retailers (like Staples) and an AC adapter to power the ONT directly would be a particularly good solution. We decided that we would only offer the backups via direct sale during initial installation.

Cell Tower update – the new cell tower on Wendell Road is still offline. That might change sometime within the next three months. There is no confirmation yet that conventional cell phone service from AT&T will also be active in addition to the emergency FirstNet service.

Financial – we have 45 customers who have not set up their SHELD account yet and have not paid SHELD for ShutesburyNet service beginning September 1st. They have until January 15th to pay up, at which time their service will be shut off. There are also about 100 customers who are past due, which according to SHELD is somewhat normal. They have 90 days to pay up. If their service is cut, they will be able to phone SHELD and make 911 emergency calls – but nothing more than that. A reconnection fee of \$50 will apply to reactivate service if service has been terminated for non-payment.

We have been getting checks from SHELD very promptly. It has been difficult for Gayle to get updates about our account balances from Ryan, our Town Treasurer. Steve will check into this once he is able to take a look at the expense reports that Gail Weiss, the Town accountant, issue periodically. Jim will send Steve these reports until he begins to get them directly from Gail.

New installations are going well, but we still don't have a good system of keeping track of repairs, truck rolls and the prices we are billed for parts. SHELd is working on a new system to keep Gayle better informed. Backhaul billing has not been completely worked out yet due to some of the complications that took place during the transition.

"The Keyman plan" – Gayle has written up a detailed article on how to manage the MLP should there be any sort of a management transition in the future. Steve has taken a look at it and has some suggestions about what to add to this document which Gayle will add to the plan along with some other changes that we will be discussing during our next meeting.

Gayle has been looking into the possibility of creating a Solar MLP, so to speak, to provide solar power that could be used for a variety of possibilities. She has spoken to HG&E about this possibility and has some preliminary ideas. There are some advantages for running such an operation as a MLP, but such a possibility is quite a distant prospect at this time.

Gayle suggested mailing a postcard thanking our subscribers for their support during the transition with our ISP change-over from Crocker to SHELd. Steve thought that we might be able to write an article in the upcoming Our Town newsletter that would not only report on this achievement but also celebrate the tremendous success of the Broadband initiative over the last 10 years in Western Massachusetts, thanks in large part to the direction that our retiring governor has given to this challenging project. This success was celebrated recently when MLP members from most of the 53 underserved towns in Western Massachusetts met with the Governor and the MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Institute) in the Ashfield Town Hall a few weeks ago.

MLP meeting concluded at 6:05 PM. Next meeting is Wednesday, January 18 at 5pm.