

Shutesbury Broadband Committee		
12_17_2025	4:30pm EST	Town Hall 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Martin
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graeme Sephton	
Other		
Approved minutes November 19, 2025		

Hut Report: Backup generator is now working well – it had a small problem with the coolant level being too low, which prevented the generator from running. The south HVAC will be replaced in the spring. Graeme suggests installing a 500 watt space heater to keep the hut warm when temps fall to too low a level during the coldest parts of winter.

Graeme can now remotely manage the Library's new network successfully. Gayle did order another access point for the Library's network which Graeme will install.

31 service calls in November, a normal month.

2027 MLP budget review – there is not a lot to discuss because not much has changed. PURMA insurance costs are less than what we allocated last fiscal year before we knew the final premium costs so these are 16.6% less. All other costs are either flat or down slightly. No change in numbers of ShutesburyNet subscribers. Since there are no changes, it might not be necessary to meet with Fincom early this coming spring to discuss the MLP's FY27 budget. We are underspending our lifeline support by roughly \$2,000, the surplus of which we might use to increase the existing lifeline support rate a little, something we can adjust on a monthly basis with SHELd if needed. Will increase it by \$2 (total \$20 off) for January to help struggling families.

While we will be offering the chance to upgrade routers in the near future, speeds outside the home will still be limited by our current 1 GHz fiber electronics, a much larger upgrade, still farther into the future. That said, Shutesbury still offers some of the fastest connections in the area..

We continue to seek interested and qualified applicants for an upcoming open seat on the MLP (Municipal Light Plant) Board. Anyone with questions should EMail [broadband@shutesbury.org](mailto:broadband@shutesbury.org) for more information.

A pole licensing hearing is scheduled for the January 20 meeting of the Select Board. Should replacement of poles on Pratt Corner Road be approved and proceed, the MLP will incur costs to move our fiber from the old to the new poles (as we did for the recent pole upgrades along Wendell Rd and Locks Pond Road). Estimated cost for this will be \$60-\$80K. Gayle will write a letter to the Select Board letting them know that the utility upgrade will incur significant costs for the MLP. This is not to dissuade the project, but rather make sure the Select Board knows of this indirect expense and that we would like to be kept informed of the project details so we can budget appropriately.

Choosing our new replacement routers: an extended discussion. Gayle asked SHELD what their recommendations would be for a new router to replace the Linksys EA7300 routers currently in use in our subscriber's homes. Lee Masters offered two suggestions from our list of WiFi 6/WiFi 7 possibilities: the Asus RT-BE92U/BE9700 and the TP Link BE 550. Both are Tri-band routers. Evaluations of these and other routers will be an ongoing project. To distribute them, we might ask our subscribers to sign up for a replacement router which they would install themselves. We will need to spend the MBI grant money allocated for router replacements by July 1, 2026. The grant money will not cover the cost of all the routers needed to replace the Linksys EA7300s that we are currently using in Shutesbury. The rest of the funds would come from our capital stabilization account where we have been setting aside funds to upgrade aging fiber equipment in the hut and in our subscriber's homes. Steve pointed out that town voters would have to vote to allow us to spend such money on the new routers that we have been setting aside in the stabilization fund year after year ( $\frac{2}{3}$  vote required). The MLP also discussed how these new routers could be distributed to our subscribers this spring.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm