

Shutesbury Broadband Committee			
10.21.2020		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"/> Frank Citino <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graeme Sephton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Hemingway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Schmidt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Stocker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Martin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ayers Hall Kent Whitney
Other	Becky Torres, Town Administrator		
Approved minutes for 9/16/2020			

Hut Report: HVACs were flipped once again, as a part of routine monthly maintenance. A new storage box was installed next to the hut for spare repair parts, and the combination lock to the box was custom fitted by Graeme.

Tim Otto hasn't responded to Graeme's query about our new subscribers. Tim replaced Iomay as Operations Manager at Crocker a short time ago and is coming up to speed.

Fair amount of damage during a recent October storm, mostly on January Hills Road. Jim and Graeme cleared the pine debris on the road in order to get the fiber up off the ground, prior to Tri-Wire's repair. Eversource's tree people damaged the drop fiber to a home on January Hills Road several days after the storm when they were called to remove a tree that was leaning against the power lines. Gayle to submit insurance claim to them to pay for repairs.

Tim Hunting is willing to trim/take down some of the problem trees along some of the roads in Shutesbury that we are concerned about provided they are on our Town roads. List of remediation areas has been provided to him, and we'll keep a running record of problem tree areas.

Steve's report: \$92,607 is our current account balance, which will continue to accrue prior to our payments of \$37,895 to our capital stabilization fund and \$105,000 towards our \$900,000 10 year construction loan due next April. 756 current subscribers, or about 87% take rate. There is a significant lag between the revenue that Crocker collects and the payments that are sent to us. For example, August revenue generated by our subscribers paid to Crocker gets paid at the end of October.

We have roughly \$10,000 in maintenance expenses, mostly repair work, that might go back as far as last April that will need to be addressed sometime soon once the documentation about these repairs is more complete.

Gayle is meeting with Tim Otto at Crocker once a week for the present to discuss ongoing issues. Gayle wants more transparency on all dispatches so we have better visibility about what is going on when it comes to storm damage and customer repairs. Becky was asked whether our Town police or Walter Tibbets could contact us (via [broadband@shutesbury.org](mailto:broadband@shutesbury.org)) when our fiber is impacted by storm damage or any other disturbance.

Montague Road fiber repair is going to take place tonight, October 21, at 8pm, which will disable service to roughly 60 customers for a short period of time. There have been problems in the way Crocker has announced planned outages to ShutesburyNet subscribers, especially when it comes to how these messages are worded. In the future Crocker will notify Gayle about any planned outage directly so that we can prepare ShutesburyNet customers properly. Gayle will also check with Becky about any planned outages to see if they might occur at critical times.

Our inventory of spare parts is much lower than we would like it to be. Calix is late on sending us more ONTs. 30 more have been ordered with delivery that might take place as late as next January. Hopefully we can get 10 soon to tide us over. Covid is responsible for these lengthy delays due to reduced manufacturing, supply chain problems and increased demand as fiber networks around the country are upgrading/expanding. Pre-connectorized drop cable, especially the ones made by Corning, are in very short supply. One customer has been waiting 6 months to be connected to ShutesburyNet due to the lack of appropriate hardware. We might have to splice up some of our spare loose cable left over from the work that Tri-Wire did some time ago. The more challenging part of doing this has to do with the connector that is used to connect the fiber to the MST which is more difficult and challenging to field-splice. Graeme will look into this issue. Crocker has been uneven about keeping an accurate track of the inventory of our spare parts in Greenfield.

A customer survey is in the works, one that might go out within a month or two. Comments made on NextDoor Shutesbury suggest that some customers are unhappy with Crocker. A survey will provide a more complete and accurate assessment, which we can then use for guidance to improve the service that Crocker is providing. Gayle requested possible questions from us to be submitted so that we can put a survey together.

Progress has been made on the Surety Bond issue. Natalie Blais, our State Representative, is supportive, and the Select Board has signed and will send a letter to the Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable asking them to take up this issue in early November.

Set Next Meeting	
	Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 5:30pm