

Shutesbury Broadband Committee			
5_19_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"/> 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 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kent Whitney
Other			
Approved minutes for 4/21/2021			

Crocker's estimate for the backup/redundant connection for our hut will cost us \$2,000 to install if we connect to the North Leverett Hut. Other possibilities for redundant backup(New Salem and Wendell) were more expensive. Ongoing cost for this backup bandwidth will be an additional \$600 a month. This will move the current MBI backup/redundant connection from a path running through Pelham up West Pelham Road and Leverett Road to one that feeds the hut from the North Leverett POP on North Leverett Road. Much debate about the many backup possibilities, including the possibility of using a satellite connection for VOIP(phone service). Gayle looked into alternate backup possibilities with Verizon but it wasn't workable. Pathway diversity is what is important. Could we upgrade quickly to more MBI bandwidth if necessary in some sort of an extreme emergency should CrownCastle fail for an extended period of time for example? Could we switch backup between North Leverett and our West Pelham road connection to gain additional diversity without having to pay for both connections? All good issues to be explored.

In any case Crocker suggested increasing our MBI backup bandwidth to 1 gig from 250mb, for 250mb would only be enough to keep VOIP/telephone service running in the case of a CrownCastle backhaul failure. Upgrading the MBI connection to 1 gig from 250mb was agreed to by everyone as this will provide immediate, full internet connectivity in case of a CrownCastle outage.

Steve needs to update our 2022 budget to include the additional \$7,200(12 x \$600) in our budget for this increase in redundant backup capability. He will send the revised budget to our Town Manager to be included in the warrant article at our upcoming Annual Town Meeting in June. This will not be the only change to our 2022 budget for our next fiscal year.

Customer Report: nothing out of the ordinary – 5 drop repairs, one of which was due to a contractor accidentally severing a subscriber's fiber connection. We are up to an almost 90% take rate, a new high for the Shutesbury MLP.

Juniper Switch DHCP server upgrade has been postponed for a week. Tim Otto from Crocker visited the hut a short time ago late at night to try and get the two DHCP switches to work together properly, but was unsuccessful. And so that firmware upgrade is still not completed as of today. Customers were served by our backup switch and never lost internet during this repair attempt.

Our spare ONTs have arrived along with backup drop cables, and so we are well stocked for repair parts for at least the next 18 months. The 10 Linksys routers have been backordered. We are trying to stay with the original Linksys router for as long as we can because such uniformity makes phone support from Crocker a lot easier.

Massachusetts DPU(Department of Public Utilities) has weighed in on our request to eliminate the Surety Bond. They argued for requiring the surety bond, as future electric rate payers would ultimately pick up fiber decommissioning costs (however unlikely). But the final decision is up to the DTC(Department of Telecommunications and Cable) and it will be a while, this coming fall perhaps, when we will get a response from them.

EBBP and Lifeline status is temporarily on hold. We are waiting for the approval for both. Crocker is approved for both possibilities. We will publish information for our customers as soon as either plan is available. Steve suggested adding Jim McGovern to Gayle's list of politicians to call about these matters. It's a work in progress, and it is a high priority issue for us right now.

Financial report from Steve: \$141,329 in our account. \$3600 has been paid to the town for our electricity. The manager's current position is undervalued and will be reviewed in the future. The COLA has finally been applied properly to the manager's stipend, and so there has been some adjustment to the budget as a result. These changes to the budget have decreased our Emergency Reserve Fund from \$20,835 to \$10,325. The manager's

stipend for the upcoming ISP contract negotiations should be increased considering all of the additional time it will take to prepare and review RFPs during this upcoming contract renewal time. Accordingly, we decided to add a new line (NO/ISP Contract Preparation for \$3,000) to the budget for next year. Steve made these revisions to the budget during the meeting, and once completed the revised budget was unanimously approved and will be sent to our Town Administrator to be included in the warrant articles to be voted on at our Annual Town Meeting June 12th. Steve will present the budget at that time.

Gayle feels that the Town lacks any sort of a useful, formal review process for all of its employees which leaves them with little idea of how they are doing and what they could do to improve their performance. Although such performance review processes are commonplace in most business environments, such is not the case with all of the municipal employees in Shutesbury. And so she has sent a letter to the Select Board making this suggestion which she and others feel the Town should initiate by creating an annual review for all employees. She will create such a document for the Shutesbury MLP to implement, hoping that her initiative will inspire the Town and the Select Board to do the same.

We will be supplying wireless coverage to the June 12th Annual Town Meeting which will be held once again outside behind Town Hall. Graeme and Jim will be doing the installation.

Ayres announced that he will be leaving us and moving closer to Boston at the end of next month. He has been a member of the Shutesbury Broadband Committee for many years and will be greatly missed by all of us.

Meeting ended at 6:58pm.

Set Next Meeting	
	Wednesday, June, 2021, 5:30pm