

Shutesbury Broadband Committee		
I_18_2023	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 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Martin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graeme Sephton	
Other		
Approved minutes December 21, 2022		

Hut Report – Graeme is concerned about how well one of the air handling units is sealed against insects and possibly moisture. He will reseal this unit in much the same way the other one was taken care of a while ago when moisture was getting into the hut. On his last visit to the hut, Graeme noticed that the hut phone wasn't working, and so he called NetIntegrity (SHELD) for support in the same manner that any ShutesburyNET subscriber would be obliged to do in order to see how well the SHELD service network was working. NetIntegrity responded by recycling the ONT remotely which didn't fix the problem, and so the service call was escalated up the service chain. Two hours later Lee Masters from SHELD sent Graeme an email saying that the problem was fixed. This provided Graeme and the MLP with an example of how well the SHELD service support experience was working. Gayle was also properly notified of this service incident as she should be. The problem turned out to be a missing SIP profile/password, which is not a common occurrence but one that has turned up a few times during the transition process from Crocker to SHELD.

Graeme's service call led to a discussion of the recent string of service complaints that recently turned up on NextDoor Shutesbury which involved 11 different people. Unfortunately, not everyone in this group of 11 called in their complaint to SHELD which is why Gayle had no detailed record of these complaints. And so it was difficult to understand what was going on. Gayle has a form on our website that invites our subscribers to critique their service call experience with SHELD, but only 3 subscribers so far have filled out that form, two of which were complaints and the other praise for the Crocker to SHELD transition.

In addition to providing emergency service, the new cell tower on Wendell Road is also providing ATT cell service to local residents. Unfortunately, this new local cell phone service, the first of its kind in Shutesbury proper, is also causing some problems with WiFi calling because some of our subscriber's cell phones, being unaccustomed to this new local ATT cell provider, have been disrupted by an unexpected SOS feature they have never seen before on their phones. Updating the subscriber's cell phone software, however, might fix the problem in some cases.

Graeme is also concerned about the advice being given or passed around that the best fix for many of the complaints he has heard about is to replace the Linksys router. If some of our subscribers feel that they should replace their Linksys router for whatever reason, they should replace it with a WiFi 6 one which are now becoming more available. The Linksys AC1750 we provided is a WiFi 4 router which lacks some of the technology and performance that, for example, the new Calix Gigaspire WiFi 6 router could deliver.

There was some debate as to whether the newer WiFi 6 routers, like the Calix Gigaspire, will help solve some of the dropped call problems when our subscribers use the WiFi calling option to make calls through their existing routers. Some improvement is likely with a WiFi 6 router like the Gigaspire but not guaranteed. Gayle will continue to monitor the situation. WiFi calling might also be aggravated by the ATT cell tower signal should a subscriber's WiFi call suddenly switch from the local router to the new ATT cell tower. Regardless, all of our subscribers should be advised to upgrade the iOS software in their cell phones which might help to fix many of these WiFi calling problems.

Financial report – we have about \$269K in our MLP Enterprise account thanks to the recent addition of our retained earnings from FY 2022. Gayle presented a draft of the budget that will be presented to the Shutesbury Finance Committee on March 21st. There are very few changes from the FY22 budget. The debt service amount is slightly lower. Number of current subscribers is approximately 765. Steve described how the retained earnings and emergency fund revenue could be managed in 2024. \$100,955 is currently the amount of the retained earnings that MassDOR certified last month. \$73,459 is in the emergency budget account. WG&E sent Gayle a bill for 2020-2022 CAF funding, which we should have received before the close of FY2022 last summer. Paying this bill without a town meeting vote could be a problem. Steve will look into this matter. The electronics depreciation budget has been increased somewhat due to inflationary concerns. Currently there is approx. \$113K in broadband stabilization fund.

Router discussion: should we upgrade our subscriber's routers sooner than we planned to in 7 years? If so, should we replace the Linksys routers with Calix WiFi 6 Gigaspire? Doing so would be very expensive, especially if installing the new routers in our subscriber's homes would require a SHELD service call. One of the advantages of using the Gigaspire router would be that, for an additional \$2 a month, a subscriber could have a "supervised" router that would allow a tech to examine remotely all of the router connections made in a 24 hour period (including WiFi calls) to see how well the WiFi network in a subscriber's home is functioning. The MLP decided not to go with this supervised function 3 years ago, but Graeme feels that many improvements have been made to this service since that time. Maybe the best thing to do would be to offer our subscribers the new Gigaspire router plus the optional remote supervision possibility for a nominal installation fee for those who would like this additional support. This debate and concern will continue, no doubt, for some time to come. Gayle will watch this router issue closely to see whether problems with the Linksys router surface in a discernible way that the MLP can address. However, most of our subscribers do not have any WiFi 6 devices in their homes that would respond to the more updated technology in the newer routers, like the

Gigaspire, but that situation will slowly change as time goes on. Conferring with SHELD about this concern should also be useful and helpful.

If we decide to replace all the ONTs and routers after 7 years or so, that could be done with one service call which would be somewhat more cost efficient.

Gayle has been working on the new Keyman planning document for the Shutesbury MLP. Edits to this document have come from all 3 MLP members. Steve and Graeme have a few additional edits that will be added by the end of this week. Gayle will send critical passwords and information to the three MLP members via snail mail once the document is finalized.

Any suggested changes to the proposed FY24 budget need to be submitted to Gayle by our next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25pm.