

Shutesbury Broadband Committee		
7_29_2026	5:00pm EDT	On Line Zoom Meeting
Facilitator	Gayle Huntress	
Minutes keeper	Jim Hemingway	
Committee Attendees	☒ Gayle Huntress	☒ Jim Hemingway
	☒ Steve Schmidt	Craig Martin
	☒ Andy Reagan	
Other		
Approved minutes July 1, 2026		

The MLP has been asked to comment about the new Hybrid meeting policy by the Shutesbury Select Board that was recently sent to Gayle. All members are very concerned about the possibility of returning to the in-person attendance requirement during which the meetings would be held at the Town Hall instead of on-line. Steve also mentioned the difficulty of small towns to get volunteers to join and attend meetings which would not be helped by requiring that all meetings be held in the Town Hall like they were years ago before broadband came to Shutesbury. Gayle also felt that references to documents that are brought up in the course of a meeting could be more properly notated in the minutes.

19 service tickets so far this month, none of which were notable. Gayle finally got a pole license from Verizon for the splitter box that the MLP would like to install on W. Pelham Road, needed there because we have run out of available fiber lines in that part of Shutesbury. It took over 9 months to obtain this license from Verizon. The cost estimate for the splitter box and its installation is estimated to be \$15,000. Steve thought that the funds for this expense could come out of our depreciation fund. Gayle will ask Gail Weiss, the Town's accountant, about whether this would be appropriate.

Financial: we don't yet have all the figures for FY2026 from Gail, but it looks like we will have approximately \$27,000 for retained earnings as of July 1st.

We received DigSafe requests for new pole placements on Sand Hill Road, but no work has been done there. We don't have any mainline underground lines. Steve does not understand why all of this pole activity is currently taking place on Sand Hill Road since the existing poles seem to be in good condition. No pole hearings have been scheduled, no work has been done. Will continue to monitor, no action needed for now.

The proposed fiber installation at 30 Macedonia Road will not happen due to the cost estimate which would run somewhere north of \$30,000.

Gayle will be traveling this summer and out of the country from Aug 12 – 22. Steve offered to cover the DigSafe requests during this period and Andy and Jim, along with Steve, will be on hand to respond to any specific queries from SHELD, should they occur.

Additional SHELD Network maintenance is scheduled for tonight, July 29th in addition to what took place early yesterday morning.

Andy reports that the new mini-split was installed in the hut to replace the ailing Daikin unit by Pioneer Valley Environmental. It is a Mitsubishi mini-split, and it will become the new “north” unit or the one that is closest to the Town Hall building. It is now the primary mini-split. The remaining Dakin, the “south” one, is likely to be replaced with a Mitsubishi should it fail once again. The mini-split installers from PVE also came with an ample supply of steel wool to block the mice from getting inside the mini split and inside the hut. Andy also put up a graph of the power consumption usage for June for the MLP to view which appears to be normal. In addition, the Town is going to install a new security system in the Town Hall that will include the hut as well to monitor fire only. We will, however, still keep the SimpliSafe system currently installed in the hut and use it as a backup.

A lengthy discussion ensued about the Netgear RS200 routers, four of which Gayle purchased recently for the MLP to evaluate. The fundamental conclusion that Gayle, Jim, Graeme and Andy all reached was that the RS200, once successfully installed, outperformed the Linksys EA7300 and several other routers that we have tried since late last year, but that the installation instructions would not be easy for our subscribers to follow. It took about 25 minutes for Gayle to install hers by making use of her smart phone. Other methods that were intended to avoid creating an account with Netgear and thus bypassing numerous offers to purchase various services could be done if the one doing the install has a direct ethernet connection from a desktop or laptop to the router instead of using a smart phone. Netgear provides lots of invitations to pay for services our subscribers might not need, particularly when it comes to web security and parental controls. The MLP will do more research about all of the features that come with the Netgear router, some of which have to be paid for. Gayle will also confer with SHELD about how to purchase and distribute the first batch of 100 or so routers to those subscribers who will try them out and respond to a survey about their experience Gayle has created for trying out and using the RS200. It is very likely that the Netgear RS200 router will be the one that we will choose to replace the Linksys EA7300s currently installed in our subscriber’s households since it is one of the few consumer routers available that is FCC approved. We will discuss the distribution process at our next meeting.

Next MLP meeting: Sept 23rd.

