

			
<b>Florida, MA</b>	<b>Hawley, MA</b>	<b>Monroe, MA</b>	<b>Savoy, MA</b>

## Four Towns Broadband Committee Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the FHMS Four Towns Broadband Committee took place on Zoom on Thursday, November 30, 2023.

### In Attendance:

Hawley: \*Lark Thwing  
 Florida: Not present  
 Monroe: \*Richard Olney-Jones  
 Savoy: \*Melanie Glynn, Sarah Satherthwaite  
 WiValley: Brian Foucher  
 Others: Tinky Weisblat; Hawley—\*Voting Members

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### ➤ Quorum, Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 4:34 pm with a quorum.

- Report from Brian on meetings with the four towns and progress on BIGN application due in Dec.
  - Brian anticipates submitting the grant application on Friday, December 8, 2023.
  - The grant application will be available via public records.
  - Savoy met Tuesday evening and voted to sign both letters of resolution, Charter/Spectrum and RingSquared/Access Plus.
  - Monroe signed the letter of resolution after Brian met with them.
  - Meeting with Florida on the 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - Meeting with Hawley on 5<sup>th</sup>. Tinky reported Hawley is looking for more information to potentially submit their own application. They are unsure about Charter, but will likely sign the resolution of RingSquared/Access Plus.
  - There will be an updated Network Services Agreement document for the towns to sign to change from Otelco/GoNetSpeed to AccessPlus for billing and service. Needed prior to closing the acquisition. Will occur after grant submission.
- A vote authorizing Lark as FHMS Chair to sign the letter of resolution on behalf of the committee.
  - A vote was taken, unanimously approved. Motioned by MG, seconded by RO-J.

### ➤ Next meeting date remains:

January 11, 2024 at 4:30 pm online.

### ➤ Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 4:49pm.

Respectfully Submitted, *Melanie Glynn* **FHMS Four Town Broadband Network, a consortium of four municipalities organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that represents the TOWNS OF FLORIDA, HAWLEY, MONROE and SAVOY, MA**

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT RINGSQUARED APC, LLC BROADBAND NETWORK EXPANSION PROJECT AND APPLICATION TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE (MBI) 2023 BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE GAP NETWORKS (BIGN) GRANT PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, the FHMS Four Town Broadband Network recognizes that the public benefits and economic activity likely to occur as a result of the development, expansion and deployment of a more accessible, affordable, high-speed broadband network throughout the western region of Massachusetts constitutes a valid public purpose; and,

**WHEREAS**, the FHMS Four Town Broadband Network seeks to promote the development of high-speed broadband services to unserved and underserved areas within its boundaries and believes that cooperation with private-sector providers is necessary for the development of an expanded broadband network that meets the needs of the FHMS Four Town Broadband Network, its residents, and its businesses in the towns of Florida, Hawley, Monroe and Savoy; and,

**WHEREAS**, the FHMS Four Town Broadband Network is preparing to support RingSquared APC, LLC to facilitate the deployment of affordable, reliable, high-speed internet service in certain areas of western Massachusetts via later broadband expansion plan agreements; and,

**WHEREAS**, federal and state grant competitiveness necessitates that local stakeholders make a commitment of support for proposed broadband projects; and,

**WHEREAS**, RingSquared APC, LLC has stated its preliminary intention, with the FHMS Four Town Broadband Network and the towns of FLORIDA, HAWLEY, MONROE and SAVOY as supporting local stakeholders, to prepare a grant application to submit by December 11, 2023, to the MBI Broadband Infrastructure Gap Networks (BIGN) Grant Program for provision of high speed fiberoptic cable broadband service to unserved and underserved areas of western Massachusetts; and,

**WHEREAS**, if awarded the BIGN grant, RingSquared APC, LLC has committed to wholly financing the remaining funding for each project not covered by the grant; and

**WHEREAS**, RingSquared APC, LLC has committed to participating in the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) until at least December 31, 2034, resulting in added cost benefit incentives to low-income or otherwise disadvantaged service subscribers.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Members of the FHMS Four Town Broadband Network Board that we hereby confirm its support for the broadband infrastructure expansion project proposed by service provider RingSquared APC, LLC; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the FHMS Four Town Broadband Network supports RingSquared APC, LLC’s application to the MBI BIGN Grant Program for funding assistance of up to \$20 million for activities associated with aforementioned proposed project in order to close gaps in the existing fiber network and provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet service to unserved and underserved areas of Western Massachusetts.

On a motion by Melanie Glynn\_\_\_ seconded by Richard Olney-Jones\_\_\_, the foregoing Resolution was adopted on a vote of \_3\_ Ayes, \_0\_ Nays and \_1\_ Absents. The FHMS Four Town Broadband Network Chair declared the Resolution adopted and recorded in our minutes.

**DATED:** November 30, 2023

Kirby Thwing

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Kirby Thwing, Chairman  
FHMS Broadband Network Committee