

DRAFT ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY
PLAINFIELD LIGHT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS
MLP STAFF
Drafted 3/13/2017
Revised 3/27/2017

This is an outline of the anticipated “job description” for the Plainfield Light and Telecommunications MLP Manager (referred to in MGL c. 164 s. 56 as the “Manager of Municipal Lighting”) and other MLP staff members. It is prepared for review and consideration by the Plainfield Board of Selectmen.

OVERVIEW/CONTEXT

Plainfield established a Municipal Light Plant in 2011 in order to participate in a regional effort to bring high-speed internet service to all residents and businesses in Plainfield. The Board of Selectmen named the MLP the “Plainfield Light and Telecommunications Department” at their initial meeting after establishment of the MLP.

The MLP’s primary goal is to enable broadband access to all Plainfield residences and businesses while maintaining as much fealty as possible to the core values of local control, affordability, ubiquity, and financial sustainability.

The MLP will build, own, and operate a telecommunications system consisting of a fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) network estimated to cost \$1.76M.

This project will be financed by \$1.13M of town funds authorized in 2015 and at least \$650,000 from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts broadband incentive funds expected to be made available in 2017.

The project is now in a critical phase requiring sustained time and attention from the MLP Manager. Successful implementation of the project will require coordination between several existing internal entities including, but not limited to, the Board of Selectmen, Broadband Committee, Finance Committee, Town Secretary, and Town Treasurer. The project will also require support and professional services from several external entities including, but not limited to, town legal and bond counsel, the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, Massachusetts Technology Institute, Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, an “owner’s project manager” (OPM), pole survey firm(s), design/engineering firm(s), network construction firm(s), and network operator/ internet service providers.

The MLP Manager is appointed by the Plainfield Board of Selectmen and is a direct report to the board. Although the MLP Manager position is currently uncompensated and is considered a volunteer to the Town, the Board of Selectmen may consider establishing a nominal stipend for this crucial role.

The Plainfield Board of Selectmen retains contract-approval authority at this time. The MLP Manager has authority to negotiate contracts in the best interests of the town and of the subscribers of the MLP, subject to final approval by the Board of Selectmen.

Under the control and direction of the selectmen, and under the authority of MGL c. 164 s. 56, the MLP manager employs volunteer and paid staff. The Board of Selectmen retains final approval of all hiring and firing for MLP staff. The Board of Selectmen anticipates that the staff will work together in a collaborative fashion to achieve the goals set for the MLP.

The MLP Manager, with the Board of Selectmen's approval, will initially fill at a minimum the following volunteer staff roles for the network planning phase of the broadband network, with the understanding that certain roles lend themselves to being shared by more than one individual (e.g. outreach/marketing), and one individual could hold multiple roles (e.g. Inter-municipal Liaison and WiredWest delegate or alternate delegate). We think it is in the best interests of the Town and the project that all MLP staff members will work together with the MLP Manager in a collaborative fashion.

- a. Assistant Manager (backup for the MLP Manager)
- b. Public Outreach Lead (town education and engagement)
- c. Marketing Lead (communication with potential subscribers)
- d. Inter-municipal Liaison (outreach to neighboring towns and their MLPs)
- e. WiredWest delegate (could be the same person who serves as Intermunicipal Liaison)
- f. WiredWest alternate delegate (backup to primary delegate, likely fills or supports other roles as well).
- g. Operations & Finance Lead (formulates operational policy and procedure recommendations, sets up systems with town staff, interacts with finance committee, this scope is large enough to require two or more individuals serving as Co-leads).
- h. Record Keeping Lead (ensures that the MLP records are kept in good order, that discussions, decisions, and recommendations are accessible and distributed to all staff)

PHASE ONE – NETWORK PLANNING

Estimated Duration 6-12 months (April 2017-December 2017)

Goal:

Position Plainfield to begin construction of a FTTP network.

Responsibilities (all parallel tracks):

- Secure OPM design and engineering phase services:
 - research, negotiate and execute agreement for owner's project management services from Westfield Gas and Electric/Whip City Fiber. OPM is expected to

- represent the town on pole survey, pole licensing, design and engineering, and construction bid process. (see WGE private provider RFP response)
 - Serve as primary point of contact for OPM and oversee OPM's compliance with agreement terms and conditions.
- Secure funding from Commonwealth of Massachusetts:
 - liaise with state administrative agencies (MBI, MTC, EOHED) to ensure timely release of at least \$650,000 for the FTTP project.
 - Monitor developments and changes to MBI's "last mile" program and make strategic recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.
 - Respond to agency requests for information from Plainfield (e.g. grant applications).
 - Liaise with state legislative and regulatory entities to advocate for Plainfield's interests as needed.
- Establish project management systems:
 - Work with Town Treasurer and Finance Committee chair to develop project cost tracking system and support maintenance of that system.
 - Work with Town Secretary to develop project record keeping system and support maintenance of that system.
 - Provide weekly project status reports via email to chairs of the Broadband Committee, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen.
 - Convene meetings of relevant parties as needed and requested.
 - Attend meetings of relevant parties as needed and requested.

PHASE TWO – NETWORK CONSTRUCTION AND “LIGHT UP”

Estimated Duration 6-12 months (October 2017 – September 2018)

Goal:

Complete construction of Plainfield's FTTP network

Responsibilities (all parallel tracks):

- Secure OPM construction phase services:
 - research, negotiate and execute agreement for owner's project management services from Westfield Gas and Electric/Whip City Fiber. OPM is expected to represent the town throughout construction execution process. (see WGE private provider RFP response)
 - Serve as primary point of contact for OPM and oversee OPM's compliance with agreement terms and conditions.
- Secure Network Operation and ISP Services:
 - Research, negotiate and execute agreement(s) for network operator and internet service provider.

- Work with relevant parties to compare available options, evaluate pros/cons, and make recommendations for final selection prior to construction completion.
- Serve as primary point of contact with selected service providers to align service start up services to ensure successful “light-up” of FTTP network and service delivery to Plainfield residents and businesses.
- Ensure Network Sustainability:
 - Work with Select Board, Finance Committee, and Broadband Committee to ensure long-term sustainability and viability of Plainfield’s broadband network, for example:
 - Develop policies and procedures to incentivize residents and businesses to connect to Plainfield’s broadband network *during network construction*.
 - Develop policies and procedures to manage process for residents and business to connect to Plainfield’s broadband network *after construction is complete*.
 - Develop and implement outreach and marketing plan to encourage high “take rates” for ISP services through Plainfield’s FTTP network – with a goal of at least 50% of potential customers taking service prior to completion of network build, and 75% within the first 3 years of network operation.
- Administer Funding Agreements and Regional Agreements:
 - Respond to requests for information from Plainfield (e.g. grant reports to EOHED).
 - Liaise with state legislative and regulatory entities to advocate for Plainfield’s interests as needed.
 - Represent Plainfield in relevant regional forums (e.g WiredWest).
- Maintain/Coordinate within Plainfield:
 - Work within systems established during Phase One and revise systems as needed.
 - Provide weekly project status reports via email to chairs of the Broadband Committee, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen.
 - Convene and attend meetings of relevant parties as needed and requested.

PHASE THREE – ONGOING NETWORK OPERATIONS

Goal:

Ensure successful ongoing operations of Plainfield’s FTTP network

NOTE:

Once Plainfield’s FTTP network is built, lit and is well on its way to early stage of operations the MLP Manager role changes substantially and shifts from startup to monitoring and evaluation of network sustainability.

Prior to the network being lit, a new scope of work should be crafted to clarify the role and responsibility of the MLP Manager and all necessary structures, processes and procedures to ensure the success of this position.