

Greenfield Community Energy and Technology (GCET) – June Meeting Minutes

Minutes Date: June 9, 2026 Time: 6:00 PM

Attendance: Commissioners Farrell, Stromsten, Goodwin, Russell

Also in attendance. J. Lunt, W. St. Denis

Location: Hybrid (GCET Offices and Virtual)

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM.

The Chair noted that the meeting was being recorded by Greenfield Community Energy and Technology, and asked that anyone else recording identify themselves. No one indicated they were doing so.

1. Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Commissioner Stromsten to approve the minutes of the previous meeting and seconded by Commissioner Russell.
 - During discussion, Commissioner Goodwin noted general approval of the minutes but raised a question as to whether certain items belonged on the agenda; it was agreed to proceed with approval and revisit the topic later in the meeting if time allowed.
 - **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.
 - It was clarified that approved minutes are posted to the website once approved by the board.
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2. New Business

A. Greenfield Housing Association (GHA) Digital Equity Grant Update

- GCET does not hold the digital equity grant directly — the Greenfield Housing Association holds it, and GCET is performing the installation work.
- Equipment has now been installed at all sites.
- **Elm Terrace:** Connection was completed, but a ladder truck subsequently damaged/removed the wire; the issue was discovered that day and is being addressed. GCET will work with its outside plant contractor to ensure connections are more securely fastened going forward. Elm Terrace will be operational once this repair is complete.
- **Oak Court and Morgan Allen:** Expected to be operational once final fiber splicing is completed, anticipated by the next day.
- **Winslow:** Remaining open issue — the conduit believed to run directly from the exterior to the telco room does not do so; its actual routing is unclear and not reflected in existing

plans. It is believed to run under the first floor, back up, and back down to a small room containing wiring/amps for other tenants. Further exploratory work is needed to confirm the routing. GCET remains in contact with GHA regarding the delay.

- The project has taken approximately one week longer than hoped, due to difficulty identifying the correct fibers, but GHA has been patient and the project remains a priority.
- GCET has a two-year contract to serve as ISP for GHA properties. GCET provides service to the buildings (not within units); GHA provides free Wi-Fi service to residents within the buildings, funded by the grant for two years. GHA's on-site staff are paid through the grant. After the two-year period, GCET may offer direct paid service to residents.
- Once complete, the project will cover approximately 300 apartments/units (including Winslow), providing free internet access for two years under the grant. Occupancy in these units is described as consistently high.

B. Weldon Project Update

- The project experienced an approximate eight-week delay awaiting fiber ordered on 3/13; the vendor notified GCET the week before the expected ship date of a delay, and the fiber was received this week.
- GCET has contacted its work team to resume installation; remaining work includes installing some additional equipment.
- The delay is expected to push the project timeline back by approximately one month to five weeks.
- Upon completion, this phase will bring 105 additional low/moderate-income senior housing units online, bringing the combined total (with the GHA project) to approximately 400 low/moderate-income units served.

C. GAP Grant Update (added to agenda by member request)

- GCET continues regular (roughly biweekly) meetings with the Executive Office of Economic Development (which oversees statewide digital equity programs), the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, MBI, the Department of Telecommunications, and the Department of Public Utilities, along with utility pole owners, regarding the "make-ready" process.
- Final make-ready cost estimates have now been submitted and paid by MBI; associated work is beginning.
- Given how long the make-ready process has taken, it is considered likely that the grant period will need to be extended — potentially from December 31 to June 30 of the following year — to allow adequate time for installation work before the grant's expiration. This is a concern shared broadly, including among larger grant recipients.
- Budget estimates for make-ready costs, though doubled from initial projections, are still expected to be exceeded.
- Whether an extension is granted depends on federal approval, which remains uncertain.

- Build of materials and scope of work are largely finalized; the IFB (Invitation for Bid) is nearly complete and will be issued, with a contractor expected to be in place by August — ahead of make-ready completion.
- This grant funding is intended for very rural areas of town that would otherwise never be built out by private providers; it also passes through and benefits some additional areas GCET needs to reach.

D. City Council / Ways and Means Committee

- The Chair attended the Ways and Means Committee meeting
- Councilors were reported to be generally supportive of GCET, citing a strong year of performance and positive outlook for the coming year. No issues are anticipated at the formal budget vote in June.

E. Year-End Financial Update

- GCET anticipates a sales increase for the eighth consecutive year, in the range of 3–4%.
- Earnings growth is trending toward the previously stated goal of approximately 50%, potentially higher, which would help build retained earnings/reserves.
- GCET expects to finish the year in the black, continuing a multi-year trend. GCET is fully self-sufficient — covering all operating, personnel and capital bond costs.

F. Clarification – GAP Grant Scope vs. Fiber-to-the-Premises Build

- A member requested clarification, for the record and for public viewers of the recording, distinguishing between:
 - The GAP grant / make-ready work (covering outlying areas such as Wisdom Way, Lover's Lane, and Log Lane Road East), and
 - The separate fiber-optic build-out work, which is not part of the make-ready scope.
- It was confirmed that GAP grant routes to remote areas also incidentally pass by and can serve additional homes along the way, per standard grant provisions.
- It was noted that reliance on grant funding (rather than capital) introduces timeline and sequencing constraints and requirements that affect how projects are ordered and executed.
- As with the Weldon project, outside contractors are being used on GAP-related work to free up in-house technicians (e.g., Bill and other staff) to continue core network work, including ongoing work on the north build on Bernardston Road, and final large splicing/hardware placement in certain areas.

3. Motion to Enter Executive Session

- A motion was made to enter executive session under **Exemption 10**, to discuss trade secrets and confidential/proprietary information regarding GCET's activities as an energy

supply municipal aggregator and energy cooperative, where open discussion would adversely affect the conduct of business relative to other entities engaged in making, selling, or distributing energy.

- Motion was seconded.
- **Roll Call Vote:** All members present voted "yes." Motion carried.
- No further votes were required following executive session; the meeting was to adjourn directly from executive session.

Public recording stopped following the vote to enter executive session.