

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes Tuesday August 5, 2014

Members present: Chairwoman Elaine Puleo and member April Stein.

Members Absent: Mike Vinskey.

Remote participation: None.

Staff present: Town Administrator Rebecca Torres, Administrative Secretary Leslie Bracebridge.

Press present: None.

Chairman Puleo opened the meeting at 6:30 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall.

Appointments

Water Resources Committee members Paul Lyons and Al Werner met with the Select Board:

1. A motion was made and seconded to sign a contract with Larry G. Cushing & Sons, Inc. for the Water Resources Committee's Monitoring Well Project:

A. Selectmen reviewed the 4 questions which member Mike Vinskey requested answers to:

- i.** Would the Select board need to sign-off on the well drilling contract? Yes.
- ii.** What permits are needed, and would the Selectmen sign-off on any permits?
 - The Select Board would not be signing off on any permits.
 - Conservation Commission member Penny Jaques has toured the sites and the Conservation Commission has signed off on the monitoring well project with the 4 wells on the 3 town-owned properties: Pelham Hill Road Lot O-68, Lot O-32, and the Town Common and a well on the private property of the Shutesbury Athletic Club.
 - No permit is required from the Planning Board. Planning Board member Jeff Lacy advised the Water Resources Committee to stay at least 20 feet away from any property line to meet set-back requirements of the Zoning Bylaws.
 - Board of Health member Catherine Hilton informed the Water Resources Committee that she is not aware of any Board of Health sign-off because these wells will not be used for drinking water.
 - The Water Resources Committee will check in with the Building Inspector, but they do not anticipate any permit will be required from the Building Inspector.
 - Al Werner just walked the Town Common site with Town Center Committee Chairman Julie Taylor, and Al will meet with the Historical Commission on Wednesday, August 13 at noon. Both groups are advisory to the Board of Selectmen, without permitting authority.
- iii.** Should Town Counsel be consulted with respect to liability?
 - Elaine consulted with Town Counsel and Town Counsel turned the question back asking, "Liability with respect to what?"
 - a.** A well worker being hurt is within the contract.
 - b.** Town Counsel's thought is there is no danger.
 - c.** Al Werner pointed out that it is an access point to our town's water supply and if someone uncapped a well and poured something in, it could migrate to nearby wells, but this could happen to any well within the town already and the monitoring wells will be capped and locked.
 - d.** We will not be drawing water aside from taking water samples. In a worst case scenario, the town could sell the lots for building lots; then there would be a residential well. Conversion is unlikely though possible in the future, and that would be the question then, not now.

- e. Al: Most often only small volumes of water would be removed for tests. Occasionally “pump tests” will occur which will draw of hundreds of gallons.
 - f. The Shutesbury Athletic Club (SAC) Board of Directors took a vote to host a town well. The SAC will send the town a letter confirming that vote and a copy will be added to these minutes as a permanent record along with a copy of the Conservation Commission sign-off.
 - g. Should the town’s insurance provider be notified of a town well on private property and be asked about liability if someone gets hurt due a well on any of the town properties? Becky:
 - i. We have municipal liability insurance.
 - ii. The SAC would have their own liability insurance. If there is an injury on the SAC site that would be the SAC’s liability. The well will be 20 feet off of the snowmobile trail.
 - iii. The contractor has its own liability insurance.
 - h. Could the SAC look to the town, saying it’s not our well? Becky: Not unless the well causes the accident.
 - i. Elaine concludes: Town Counsel really couldn’t think of a realistic liability issue.
- B. April: Town Meeting overwhelmingly voted for this project. Refers to recent publicity about ground water supplies diminishing in the western part of the country. People may be afraid of learning if they have a water supply problem. April references the email exchange between Select Board member Mike Vinsky and Water Resources Committee member Paul Lyons and states:
- i. The project is not comparable to the library. This is a research project. The professionals in the area are very interested in the results.
 - ii. We have the use of Al Werner’s time for a year as a gift.
 - iii. Mike’s questions are very good and the answers are very good.
- C. Al: We will be getting letters out ahead of time to the abutters.
- Are there any other questions that Selectmen should be asking?**
- D. Al and Becky describe other costs and equipment associated with the research that comes after the well-drilling. Becky confirmed with Town Accountant Gail Weiss that the town meeting warrant article is written broadly enough to include these additional related costs:
- i. Monitoring equipment: Level loggers – For this year we have access to Mount Holyoke level-loggers, but we will need to will secure them for future years. \$500 X 8 wells = \$4,000.
 - ii. Testing and equipment: Take one well and get it thoroughly analyzed. We will probably be able to go out and get 3 vendors, if 3 are available. Not many vendors do down-hole visualizations.
 - iii. Using blackboard diagrams, Al diagrams a well and describes down-hole visualizations: We want to figure out where we have fractures, at what depth, how many fractures and in which direction the water is flowing. We want to learn as much about these wells as we can.
 - Diagram of well: Casing is placed through surface soils and then the casing extends 20 feet into bedrock and is sealed to the bedrock. Bedrock water enters all of these wells.
 - Characterizing the water is important. To find the fractures you can lower a caliper device: a spring loaded arm goes down the bore hole. Where there is a fracture the hole collapses a little bit and the caliper notices this. This acoustical mapping is contracted out. Al doesn’t have cost figures in his head, approximately \$5,000.
 - Another device has a heating element in it with 2 sensors on either side. Energize the heating element and depending on which of the 2 sensors heats up, one can tell which way the water is flowing. We will pump the wells to see the rate at which we can take out the water per minute, and how far down the water level goes between fractures and determine

- how quickly the water recharges. We probably can't afford flow levels. People come in, isolate the wells, and test hydraulic properties – it's thousands of dollars.
- iv. We are also drilling 2 inch wells (basically a PVC pipe with holes in it and a screen) just down to the bedrock. These wells will monitor the surface ground water at any given time. It takes time for ground water to flow through the glacial till. These 2-inch wells will help determine how much of rainfall is used up by vegetation, how much goes to run-off, and what amount of rain goes to re-charge the aquifer. Results will differ from well to well, due to glacial deposits and slopes.
 - v. Budget summary: \$18,500 for the wells; \$4,000 for level-loggers; that leaves roughly \$7000.
 - vi. Al concludes we'll do some tests on all wells and more tests on one well.
 - vii. Al got \$3,000 from Mt Holyoke for equipment and support expenses.
 - viii. Al might be able to get more funding in the spring if he proposes an interesting research project.
 - ix. Paul: We would like to avoid asking for more money.
 - E. When will the wells be drilled? The contract, with some flexible wording states that it terminates September 1. If we could get it all done in August that would be great.
 - F. Al has a student working this summer: They're monitoring Roaring and Dean Brooks. They have done a pump test on Al's well and they are trying to reach the weather station on West Pelham Rd.
 - G. Select Board follow-up on member Mike Vinsky's question of communication with Cinda Jones:
 - i. When the Water Resources Committee originally started looking at locations for the wells they wanted to spread them across north, central and south locations along the ridge.
 - ii. Not knowing the town owned land on the southern end of the ridge, and with state land sitting too low in that area to consider its use, the Committee decided to turn to Cinda Jones to inquire if Cowls might allow the town to place a well on their land in order to have a well at the south end.
 - iii. Becky was to ask then Selectman Al Springer to approach Cinda Jones about this possibility.
 - iv. Meanwhile, Al Werner and Paul looked at 2 Cowls properties on Pelham Hill RD.
 - v. Paul started to prepare maps for Al Springer to bring to Cinda, when to his surprise he learned that Shutesbury owns Assessors' Lot O-68, a lot abutting the Cowls property.
 - vi. They walked the town-owned lot and found that with minimal work a road large enough to accommodate a well drilling truck could be opened; keeping the well on town-owned property and so, in the end there was no need to speak with Cinda.
 - vii. Becky asked Highway Superintendent Tim Hunting to look at the site with respect to opening it up for a road wide-enough for a well drilling truck to get less than 100 feet in. Al Werner walked the site with Tim Hunting
 - Tim felt he could accomplish the task in just a couple of hours.
 - Becky noted that the Highway Department will also be needed for a couple of hours, at Lot O-32 and the SAC property.
 - Volunteers would help clear brush.
 - a. Officially appointed town volunteers are covered with the town's insurance if they help clear brush.
 - b. Other volunteers would not be covered and would need to sign a form confirming their understanding of not being covered by the town's insurance.
 - viii. Becky talked with Tim Hunting yesterday for an update on his availability:
 - Tim originally indicated to her, he had the time to do the work.
 - More recently the question had been posed to him "Would it be OK with you if you didn't have to do the project?" to which Tim responded that he has plenty of other work to do.
 - Tim is still happy to work on the project; he will always have more projects.
 - Tim has previously responded to the fire station and the hearse house projects.

- Tim sees part of his job to accommodate and allow the town to make full use of highway department equipment, in order to save the town money.
 - The Highway Department has had unusual staffing for a long time.
 - It is important to be sensitive to department workloads.
2. With their understanding that the statement of the Conservation Commission and the letter from the SAC confirming their vote are in, and that the May 3, 2014 Annual Town Meeting Water Resources Committee Power Point presentation is included with these minutes, **Selectmen unanimously voted to sign the contract with Larry G. Cushing & Sons to drill the wells for the total amount of \$18,480.**

Selectmen would like to see some positive publicity for the town come out of this. Arrangements will be made to tell the local newspaper reporter about this project.

Select Board Action Items

1. **Selectmen unanimously voted to sign a contract with Larry G. Cushing & Sons, Inc. of 631 Rt. 12 N, New Hampshire in the amount of \$18,480.00 for the monitoring well project** as noted above.

List of Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting:

1. Standard Contract for Monitoring Well Project.
2. July 31, 2014 Bid Opening Results
3. Saturday Aug 2 email exchange between Water Resources Committee member Paul Lyons and Select Board member Mike Vinskey discussing Mike’s questions regarding the well monitoring project.

The Select Board **adjourned at 7:35 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary