

Shutesbury Select Board Meeting Minutes  
July 26, 2016 Shutesbury Town Hall

Select Board members present: Mike Vinskey/Chair, Michael DeChiara, and Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil

Staff present: Linda Avis Scott/Administrative Secretary

Staff absent: Becky Torres/Town Administrator

Guests: Sally Fairfield/281 Leverett Road, Leslie Bracebridge/530 Wendell Road – Historical Commission, Asha Strazzero-Wild/412 Montague Road – Broadband Committee, Zenya Wild/412 Montague Road, Mari Vlach/325 Montague Road, Mary Glavin/92 January Hills Road – Nextdoor Shutesbury, Paul Vlach/325 Montague Road – Nextdoor Shutesbury and Mary Anne Antonellis/339 Pelham Hill Road

Vinskey/Chair calls the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

Agenda Review: Vinskey explains Mosher's "Positive Presence" project to DeChiara; Fairfield is present as part of this project.

Vinskey: the purpose of the expanded agenda format is to provide additional information about topics; intends to list Town Administrator update items on the agenda, however, Torres is concerned that a listed item may not have an update and residents may attend for an item not addressed; for now, the plan is to keep a list of items with updates pending.

DeChiara appreciates the expanded agenda format.

DeChiara asks Bracebridge if she has any input regarding recent requests for meeting minutes.

Bracebridge states that she has responded to the record request for Historical Commission meeting minutes. DeChiara: given the Select Board goal for transparency, there is a need to respond to record/information requests in a timely way; draft minutes are acceptable to send – approval of meeting minutes is not required. DeChiara asks Bracebridge, as a process question, whether the Town Administrator or Town Clerk is responsible for record requests. Bracebridge: the Town Clerk is the keeper of public records, however, each committee is keeper of their own records therefore it is best to go directly to the committee with a record request.

Public Comment Period: Asha Strazzero-Wild states that she is curious about the Montague Road situation. Vinskey: the Select Board has scheduled a meeting with Hunting and concerned citizens for the 9.20.16 Select Board meeting; the focus of this meeting will be on communication rather than specifically about Montague Road, i.e. what do residents need to know in advance of road projects. DeChiara: the goal is to have a discussion about what kind of and when communication is needed as well as who is responsible for the communication; also, how can residents have input into proposed projects. P. Vlach: Hunting's Montague Road report was received the evening of the 5.31.16 Select Board meeting; requests the Select Board review the report submitted by the concerned citizens on 5.31.16 as there were some discrepancies about how long the project took and how the project was documented; good documentation serves several functions. The Select Board accepts Strazzero-Wild's offer to create a sample "project information" template; the Board will provide Strazzero-Wild with examples of what is to be included in the template.

**Discussion Topics:**

1. Official Town Use of NextDoor Shutesbury: Vinskey: the focus of this discussion is how to get information out to town residents, i.e. what do folks want to know and how best to get this information out; current modes are: Blackboard Connect, Town Announce, the Town website, and the *Our Town* newsletter. Vinskey: NextDoor Shutesbury (NDS) is an

unofficial method of communication; the question is how to proceed with using or not using NDS. Vinskey opens the discussion by asking Select Board members for their input. DeChiara: as it is used by many residents, NDS is an opportunity to be utilized; has yet to see much improvement in regard to last fall's Select Board commitment to transparency; the official methods would remain the official methods; NDS would be supplemental; the concern about NDS is two-way communication and how to manage questions; appreciates the comprehensiveness of P. Vlach's 7.26.16 document; suggests there be a procedure for committee postings to NDS to avoid conflicts with Open Meeting Law. Vinskey: what sorts of items would be posted on NDS and what would be required of committees? Strazzero-Wild: could the person responsible for posting on the town website also post on NDS? DeChiara: a weekly Town Announce post could provide a link to the Town website calendar; confirms with P. Vlach that such a link is possible. P. Vlach: posting is the responsibility of the Town Clerk and the Select Board cannot dictate the work of the Town Clerk who already has an involved posting process; suggests the Town Administrator could do such a post, however, you will be adding a task; there are some committee users who regularly use NDS; we (NDS moderators) recommend referral to town webpages and not increasing the burden on Town employees. Bracebridge notes that if only some announcements are sent out via NDS, there could be bias. Antonellis: Town Announce should be first; NDS is not a town resource and there are no policies and procedures in place; she gets pushback about sending out too many announcements. Antonellis: have NDS users been asked if they want more town information - do they want something from every committee or to keep NDS as a neighbor-to-neighbor forum? Antonellis is only able to sign up on NDS as an individual even though she uses it primarily for the library; as an example of what needs to be considered, she notes an example of how her recommendation for a professional was posted on that professional's business recommendation page. P. Vlach is working on building a professional recommendations page for NDS. Strazzero-Wild has received requests for Broadband Committee updates via NDS. M. Vlach: there is a "block" feature allowing one to control messages received. Glavin notes that she received about fifteen positive responses to her NDS inquiry about the use of NDS as a tool for town information. DeChiara: one question is whether NDS users want more than a neighbor-to-neighbor forum; the other question is whether the town wants/can develop a policy. P. Vlach: Antonellis, on behalf of the library, is the most frequent Town user; Council on Aging, Emergency Management Team, and Board of Health are also users; refers to page 2, #5 "Possible posting topics"; it is the two way communication on NDS that is attractive to users; it is basic common sense on what can be said; privacy needs to be maintained; posts can be deleted upon request; posts can be flagged for the moderator to delete; the moderator can intervene in inappropriate conversations, however, generally, users moderate. Glavin: 573 neighbors have signed up for NDS. P. Vlach: 510-515 of the 573 users are town residents; NDS is not searchable by search engines. Bracebridge states she feels it is a blurring of appropriateness for a municipal entity to use NDS, however, has had second thoughts after reading Vlach's piece, though, continues to have concerns; asks if other towns use NextDoor and if the Attorney General's office been asked about such use. DeChiara asked an Attorney General's office staff member about online communication and did not receive a response. Bracebridge recommends calling the Attorney General's office. Antonellis: the "Attorney of the Day" could be called directly and asked this specific question; this is not about having online two-way communication – it is about providing information and links. Vlach: yes, there are other towns using NextDoor – none in MA; visit NextDoor/Agency for how to join as an agency, however, using NextDoor in this way would not allow viewing of NDS; using NDS provides insight into what is of concern to

residents; to use NDS, one signs in as an individual entity, however, can post as a town official; using NDS would develop interaction. Bracebridge: there is a mechanism by which agendas can be sent to individuals via the calendar function; why can we not use what we already have? Antonellis notes the amount of work already done by town employees and the extra work posting on NextDoor will require; the more work we add, the more staff we will need. DeChiara: we are not mandating use; several months ago, we agreed that those using NDS could continue doing so; regarding Bracebridge's observation, communication via the town domain, allows the communication record to be captured. Strazzero-Wild: the Broadband Committee has only been posting events on NDS rather than posting an updated "FAQ". Antonellis: people would love an updated Broadband "FAQ". Zenya Wild: could a dedicated volunteer send out weekly "What is Happening in Shutesbury" updates on i.e. "the Select Board is meeting and will be discussing... – the Board of Health is not meeting"? Bracebridge: this could not be a town appointed position, however, could be assigned by the NDS moderator. Vinskey suggests carrying the topic of NDS use over to an August meeting; there is a lot of information that could be provided via committees, however, NDS is not going to solve that problem; there is also a need for a poll of NDS users. Vinskey suggests the poll come from the Select Board. M. Vlach: it is important to stress that Town use of NDS is about information and announcements not discussion. Bracebridge: it is premature for the Select Board to send out a survey because legalities of NDS use are not known; appreciates Wild's idea for a reporter. P. Vlach: the most frequent changes on the town webpage are the meeting and agenda postings. Bracebridge recommends leaving the town webpage as is; Wild can report on town happenings in the way a newspaper reporter used to. Wild may volunteer for the role of non-municipal reporter. Vinskey: for 8.9.16, we will consider the poll question, other towns' use of NextDoor, Attorney General's recommendation, and how to get information from committees. DeChiara recommends the Select Board have a conversation about considering a stipend for updating the town website content. Antonellis notes the need to ask what other towns do to get the word out. P. Vlach: does not see the relevance of whether other MA towns use NDS. Bracebridge notes the need for feedback on why other towns do not use NDS; who is in charge of NDS? P. Vlach is a moderator. Bracebridge: there should be a clean break between a private entity and the municipality. P. Vlach: wants an opinion from the Select Board that those town committees currently using NDS can continue to do so. Vinskey: status quo - town committees currently using NDS can continue to do so; the goal is to find out if we can make NDS work for the town. P. Vlach recommends NDS as a supplement to official modes. DeChiara: the Select Board needs to continue to address use of NDS as a potential pathway for those committees that want to engage; those committees currently using NDS have been grandfathered in. Bracebridge: it is up to NDS to find a reporter. Vinskey confirms the plan to continue the discussion on 8.9.16.

2. Timing of Native American Recognition Meeting: Vinskey: Torres was putting together the list of those to be invited to the planning session and concern was raised about Miriam DeFant's opposition and fundraising activities relative to a project permitted by the Town Planning Board; the project has been conditioned and there is still adamant opposition – this may be a viable reason to postpone the discussion about Native American heritage. Vinskey recommends waiting until the project is completed before heading into the discussion. Makepeace-O'Neil: the Board will want to hold a discussion about Native American Heritage without it being affected by the solar project. DeChiara agrees with postponing the planning discussion for a few months and notes the need to include those who are interested. Bracebridge is concerned about the "racist label" used by a resident in reference to the Historical Commission - the Historical Commission is

interested in all of Shutesbury's history; the Commission would very much want to be included in the discussion. Vinskey: yes, the Historical Commission is included as well as representatives of the Nolumbeka Project, Eva Gibovic, Rolf Cachat-Schilling, and Miriam DeFant. Fairfield: what is the timing of the solar project? Vinskey: right now, the Select Board is the process of negotiating the PILOT - is not sure if these negotiations impact the start of the project; Lake Street Development is working on the special permit pre-construction conditions. DeChiara: the surface survey has been completed and submitted to the Planning Board; the next Planning Board meeting date is pending. Fairfield: there is currently a lot of energy around this matter; acknowledges the reconciliation work done in Turners Falls. DeChiara: Shutesbury is included in the twenty-mile radius for the Turners Falls site; the Nolumbeka Project representative would bring expertise relative to this fact. Vinskey: these issues are interconnected and there is a need to keep them as separate as possible; the Planning Board is working through the project related issues; cautions against overlapping the wider discussion with the solar project. Fairfield: Turners Falls is now, after many years, working on the airport. Makepeace: the goal is for one not to taint the other. DeChiara: Greenfield has made a resolution about the meaning of Native American Heritage; agrees to wait until September-October to consider the timing of the discussion. Bracebridge: in the past, scholars and others have said there is very little evidence of Native American residence in Shutesbury. All agree to check-in on this topic during the 9.20.16 meeting.

3. Digital Packets and Agenda Development Schedule: Vinskey: currently, Torres creates both a paper and digital packet for the Board, do we want to do either or both? Makepeace-O'Neil and DeChiara prefer a digital packet unless there is a specific necessary paper document; Vinskey prefers paper though determining the "latest version" can be confusing. Vinskey suggests the new scanner be obtained before the transition to digital packets occurs. DeChiara has model information on a scanner capable of doing double sided scans; Makepeace-O'Neil will provide technical assistance. Bracebridge: there is a limit to the size document that can be sent. DeChiara suggests pdfs be posted to Google Drive and a confidential Select Board meeting folder (by date) be set up. Makepeace-O'Neil will assist Torres in setting up Google Drive folders. Timing: receipt of documents by Friday, the due date for posting.
4. Agenda Development Schedule: Vinskey: he and Torres begin review of the agenda on Wednesday so it is complete and ready for posting on Friday; agenda requests need to be received before Wednesday. Vinskey: closing out the agenda on Wednesday does not allow the inclusion of last minute items. DeChiara: new items can be added on Friday; anything after 6:30pm on Friday will be categorized as "items not anticipated by the Chair".
5. Select Board Committee Reports:
  - a. DeChiara: a Web Committee working group met 7.20.16 to update the website. Bracebridge and Scott provide DeChiara with practical recommendations about use of the updated site.
  - b. DeChiara attend the FRCOG meeting in McKay's absence; of note was the approval of a FRCOG staff personnel policy, an update on the state ballot question about legalizing marijuana and whether the FRCOG should have a position was considered; the salt/sand bids will be coming out soon.
  - c. DeChiara notes the genial tenor of the Regional Assessment meetings; during the 7.25.16 meeting, Vinskey's list of ideas for considering "ability to pay" was shared; members are considering methods for evaluating "ability to pay" including public

- and private assets, property tax revenue; the “ability to pay” cannot be too complicated; we want to figure out the basis and percentage.
- d. Makepeace-O’Neil was unable to attend the 7.21.16 Personnel Board meeting. DeChiara, referring to the list of employees asks Makepeace-O’Neil to find out what employees have contracts, the time frame for the contracts and any trigger points for negotiation.
  - e. Vinskey missed the recent Lake Wyola Advisory Committee meeting though asked the Committee to consider the size of the Locks Pond culvert which may be too small; per Mark Rivers, research has been done about sizing and Fire Chief Walter Tibbetts/Emergency Management Team Director and Morris Root/Root Engineering have been consulted; a joint meeting is being planned and will include the Conservation Commission. Hunting mentioned that the culvert replacement will take awhile therefore paving could be done up to the culvert site.
  - f. Vinskey: the Master Plan Working Group is preparing to interview consultants 8.3.16; the goal is to be through the visioning process in order to present a report during the May 2017 town meeting. DeChiara suggests the Master Plan Working Group submit a draft report for Select Board review.
  - g. Vinskey/Emergency Management Team meeting: the Board of Health has divided up the town into forty neighborhoods for various emergency purposes, i.e. inoculation, ice storm, etc. The first neighborhood meeting was held without notifying the EMT Director; subsequently, Ken Rotondi/Board of Health Chair and Tibbetts/EMT Director will coordinate the next meeting.
6. Schedule Next Employee Review Session: Vinskey: the Board spoke with Torres/Town Administrator; department heads remaining to be interviewed: Fire Chief, Highway Superintendent, Police Chief, Assessor, Tax Collector, Treasurer, and Accountant. Vinskey suggests interviewing the Fire Chief on 8.24.16 (Wednesday meeting). DeChiara and Makepeace O’Neil agree with this plan.
  7. All Boards Meeting Format Planning: Vinskey, in the past, meetings have not been as productive as they might be; what might the goal for an All Boards meeting be? DeChiara suggests ideas for creating more leverage for attendance: holding the meeting before appointments and requiring chairs attend in order to request committee member appointments or coordinating the All Boards meeting with Finance Committee budget requests; the Select Board needs to make sure necessary information is known. DeChiara suggests an “All Boards” email list be compiled for the Select Board. Vinskey: the Select Board needs to determine our goals and objectives; suggests holding off on further All Boards discussion until the Select Board considers their goals/objectives. DeChiara: there is so much information within Committees that is not available to others. Vinskey: minutes are a means for information to be shared; the volunteer reporter could review minutes for “tidbits”. DeChiara: Town Administrator reports provided a means for distributing information. Vinskey notes the need for the Board to talk with Torres about the possibility of resuming these reports.
  8. FY16 Annual Report Author: Vinskey is willing to create a preliminary draft annual report for review by DeChiara and Makepeace-O’Neil.
  9. Town Administrator Updates: none in the absence of Torres.

**Administrative Actions:**

1. Contract with Renaissance Painting: DeChiara moves to approve the standard contract for painting services with Renaissance Painting dated 7.26.16. Makepeace-O'Neil seconds the motion. Vinskey: per Groves/Buildings Committee Chair, the Committee chose Renaissance with whom they have experience. The motion is passed unanimously. Vinskey signs the document on behalf of the Select Board.
2. Contract with Harald Scheid/Regional Resource Group: DeChiara moves to approve the 7.15.16 contract between PILOT consultant Harald Scheid and the Town of Shutesbury; Makepeace-O'Neil seconds the motion. DeChiara notes the completion date of 12.31.16 could be extended if needed. The motion is unanimously approved. Vinskey signs the contract on behalf of the Select Board
3. Acknowledgement Letter to Janet MacFadyen: The Board reviews a letter drafted by Vinskey in response to MacFadyen's letter requesting resolution of an employment matter. Vinskey: the Library Board of Trustees will handle the matter. DeChiara moves and Makepeace seconds the motion to approve and sign the letter to Janet MacFadyen. The motion passes unanimously.
4. Council on Aging Appointment: DeChiara moves the Select Board appoint Jean Footit to the Council on Aging to fill a vacancy; Makepeace-O'Neil seconds the motion. The appointment motion is unanimously approved.
5. FCCIP Representative: in Torres absence, this appointment is postponed to 8.9.16.
6. Select Board Meeting Minutes: DeChiara moves the Select Board accept the 5.31.16 meeting minutes; Makepeace-O'Neil seconds the motion. DeChiara suggests prior to June, the Select Board be made aware of how many years a committee/board member has served. The 5.31.16 minutes are unanimously approved as amended. DeChiara moves and Makepeace-O'Neil seconds the motion to approve the 7.12.16 minutes. Vinskey and Makepeace-O'Neil approve the motion to approve the 7.12.16 minutes as amended; DeChiara, absent from the 7.12.16 meeting, abstains. DeChiara: because there is no longer a quorum to approve, the 6.14.16 minutes can be reviewed, edited, and submitted; this will be done 8.9.16.
7. Thank You Notes: DeChiara moves and Makepeace-O'Neil seconds the motion to approve the end of FY16 thank you notes written to each person who has resigned, term ended, or committee dissolved. The motion passes unanimously.
8. The Select Board will sign Vendor Warrants totaling \$501,788.64.
9. The Select Board will sign Payroll Warrants totaling \$80,971.28.

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. 7.26.16 Select Board Issues/Concerns and Future Agenda Items
2. "NextDoor Shutesbury" by Paul Vlach, 7.26.16
3. FY17 Employee List
4. 7.26.16 Town of Shutesbury contract with Renaissance Painting
5. 7.15.16 Town of Shutesbury contract with Harald Scheid/Regional Resource Group
6. 7.26.16 letter to Janet MacFadyen

Executive session postponed to 8.9.16.

DeChiara moves and Makepeace-O'Neil seconds the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9.46pm; motion is passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Avis Scott  
Administrative Secretary