

Shutesbury Select Board Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2019 Shutesbury Town Hall

Select Board members present: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair, Elaine Puleo, and April Stein
Staff present: Becky Torres/Town Administrator; Linda Avis Scott/Administrative Secretary

Guests: Don Wakoluk, Mark Olszewski, Emily Boss/Franklin Land Trust; Ryan Kress, Patrick Smith and Robert Richter/National Grid; Diane Jacoby, Susan Reyes and Steve Schmidt/Board of Assessors; Leslie Bracebridge/Assessors Clerk; Phylliss Cote, Bill Clark, and Scott LaBonte

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

Agenda Review: No changes.

Public Comment: None offered.

Unanticipated Topic:

Lot D18 Locks Pond Road Conservation Restriction/Olszewski: Emily Boss/Franklin Land Trust: Mark Olszewski worked with the Conservation Commission and Planning Board and is conserving 11 acres in his Conservation Restriction; the document, previously approved by the Select Board on 12.5.18, has minor changes relative to names and no substantive changes. Puleo moves the Select Board sign the amended Grant of Conservation Restriction, grantor Mark T. Olszewski and grantee The Franklin Land Trust, Inc.; Stein seconds the motion the passes unanimously.

Discussion Topics:

1. Habitat for Humanity CPC Document Revision: Torres: the "Local Unit" document is in revisions with Town Counsel Donna MacNicol and remains pending. Torres reviews MacNicol's revised version of the "Community Preservation Act Grant Agreement for Pioneer Habitat for Humanity" making clear the document's language is relative to the purchase of a parcel of land. Stein moves the Select Board sign the "Town of Shutesbury Community Preservation Act Grant Agreement for Pioneer Habitat for Humanity"; Puleo seconds the motion that passes unanimously.

Unanticipated Topic:

Administrative Assessor Recommendation: Steve Schmidt/Board of Assessors Chair: the Board of Assessors unanimously recommends Kevin Rudden be hired as an employee for the Administrative Assessor position. Torres clarifies that the Board of Assessors is recommending to the Select Board; Rudden is a retired from a high-tech business and has worked in town government for many years. Diane Jacoby/Assessor: Rudden has great energy and is easy to get along with. Susan Reyes/Assessor notes Rudden's volunteerism and that he is willing to make the commute to Shutesbury. Schmidt: as member of Board of Assessors in his town, Rudden took the necessary courses and became certified and is willing to learn the software used in Shutesbury's Assessors office. Schmidt: the Board interviewed a private contractor however their proposal was not responsive to the Town's needs and they were actually promoting a telepresence. Leslie Bracebridge/Assessors Clerk: Rudden is well trained. Torres: Rudden did his background research on Shutesbury. Reyes states her hope that Rudden will be offered the

position soon. Puleo moves the Select Board proceed with the hiring of Kevin Rudden for the position of Administrative Assessor; Stein seconds the motion that passes unanimously. Torres will offer the position to Rudden 6.12.19.

Discussion Topics:

2. Tree Hearing/National Grid: Makepeace-O'Neil calls the tree hearing to order at 7:00pm. Torres: the Select Board is acting as the Tree Warden; on 5.31.19, Stein and Puleo went on a tree walk with Ryan Kress/National Grid and Don Wakoluk. Puleo: the tree walk began at the elementary school, went down Leverett Road to Pratt Corner Road; the primary focus was Pratt Corner Road which is quite overgrown; the walk included a helpful discussion with Don Wakoluk. Puleo: at the school, the plan is to take out a bank of trees on the left-hand side up to the storage shed. Ryan Kress/National Grid: at the school, the front row of trees is overhanging the line; cutting these is especially important as the school functions as an emergency shelter for the town; some of the underbrush will be removed as well. Stein: on Pratt Corner and Leverett Roads, there are trees that have been repeatedly trimmed however because they are growing back into the wires, they need to be cut down. Puleo: the repeated trimming affects the health of these trees. Phyllis Cote/338 Leverett Road states that she is upset by and objects to the number of trees that are coming down; twelve are along the frontage of her property. Cote notes that she has spoken with Kress. Kress reviews the trees that need to come down and why. Cote states that she does not understand why so many little trees are marked; she is okay with the pines coming down. Don Wakoluk/215 Leverett acting as an advisor to the current tree wardens/Select Board: town trees are taken down for emergency services, to improve road conditions and protect the wires; the utility negotiates with property owners on trees needing to be cut that are located on private property; National Grid has the right to take down trees within a certain distance from the wires; the 8' distance used is an accessible compromise; trimming can be an option for private property trees; topping should not be an option for town trees, they need to be removed. Wakoluk to Diane Jacoby's question: per former Tree Warden Tom Houston and Highway Superintendent Hunting, town trees are located within 25' from the center of road. Stein: on a dirt road, it is 25' from the crown of the road. Kress: most of the trees on Pratt Corner Road are Chapter 87 trees (Public Shade Tree Law); there are one or two private properties where trees are to be topped; explains how shaving up the side of a tree causes sun scald and significantly decreases the life span of the tree. Bill Clark/35 Pratt Corner Road: there are a lot of pines to be cut between the three Clark properties; what will happen once they are cut down? Kress: we will have a log loader for the pine and are looking for a source for this wood that will not be left in front of houses; we will be chipping as well; the Town of Amherst and Cows are fine with the logs being left on their properties. Discussion about specific trees continues. Robert Richter/National Grid confirms that the pine logs will be taken away. Kress: there are rules for what can be cut safely. Richter to Clark's question: the trees will be cut to ground level, however, due to the presence of metal, some may be left higher; cut wood left on the edge of Cows' property can be picked up by "wood scavengers". Jacoby observes the town will look different when the cutting is finished. Puleo, citing the ice storm, notes the need to protect the wires. Wakoluk regarding Stein's concern that Cote's needs are met: Mrs. Cote has a contract with Kress however she can talk with him about the trees located on her private property; any of the

trees behind the stonewall are on private property; Hunting suggested using the stonewalls as a guide. Kress to Clark's question about a tree on his parent's property: it is a multi-stem pine that can snap in a storm; Mrs. Clark, Sr. gave approval to cut the tree. Richter: because we also look at hazard trees, some trees are outside of "spec" – a distance from the right of way. Scott LaBonte/115 Pratt Corner Road states that he is in complete support of the tree cutting project and recommends the Select Board move forward and expedite the process. Stein moves the Select Board approve the "Brush Removal and Work Permit" and the "Public Shade Tree Removal Permit"; Puleo seconds the motion that passes unanimously. Kress asks about the two homeowners who want the town trees fronting their properties topped rather than cut down. Select Board members state that there is to be no topping of town trees, they are to be cut. At 7:36pm, Makepeace-O'Neil closes the tree hearing. Puleo moves the Select Board appoint Don Wakoluk as Tree Warden effective 7.1.19; Stein seconds the motion the passes unanimously. Kress: the tree cutting work will start 6.13.19; we will coordinate timing with the school and he will confer with Wakoluk on the large oak.

3. Historical Commission Resignation and Candidates: Torres: the resignation of Miriam DeFant leaves two openings on the Historical Commission. It is noted that there is one year left to DeFant's term. Filling the vacancies will be considered 6.25.19 when the Select Board will make annual appointments. Stein moves and Puleo seconds a motion for the Select Board to accept Miriam DeFant's resignation from the Historical Commission; motion passes unanimously.
4. Broadband Celebration Planning: Puleo: Melissa Sullivan/Michaels Party Rentals is working up a quote for staked tents with a mix of seating/standing and possibly a dance floor. After discussion, it is decided that Puleo will obtain a quote for one large tent.
5. ZBA Resignation and Appointment: Stein moves and Puleo seconds a motion that the Select Board regretfully accept the resignation of Tom Williams from the Zoning Board of Appeals; motion passes unanimously. Stein moves and Puleo seconds the appointment of Andy Berg, current alternate, to be a full member of the Zoning Board of Appeals; motion passes unanimously.
6. Town Administrator Updates: Instead of purchasing new air conditioners, Torres is working on estimates for the installation of mini-splits for the police department, assessors office and library; funds for the installation could come from the energy line. Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stein seconds a motion to use the energy expense line to cover the cost of mini-split installations in the police department, assessors office and library; motion passes unanimously.
7. Committee Updates: Carried over to the 6.25.19 meeting.

Administrative Actions:

1. Select Board members sign vendor warrants totaling \$139,985.78.
2. Select Board members sign payroll warrants totaling \$110,511.62.
3. Select Board members sign broadband warrants totaling \$89,906.24.

4. Consideration of the 5.28.19 and 5.31.19 meeting minutes is carried over to the 6.25.19 meeting.

At 8:03pm, Puleo moves and Stein seconds a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion passes unanimously.

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. "Town of Shutesbury Community Preservation Act Grant Agreement for Pioneer Habitat for Humanity"
2. "Brush Removal and Work Permit" and "Public Shade Tree Removal Permit"
3. 6.5.19 email from Miriam DeFant "Resignation Letter"
4. 6.4.19 letter of resignation from Tom Williams

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Avis Scott
Administrative Secretary