

Shutesbury Select Board Meeting Minutes
August 20, 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: Joyce Braunhut, Bill Wells, and Jessica Carlson-Belanger

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Agenda Review: Torres: Town Counsel Donna MacNicol postponed the scheduled executive session to 9.3.19; Mark Watkins' comments on the relevant document remain pending.

Public Comment:

1. Joyce Braunhut requests an update on the change of date for annual town meeting.
Torres: the majority of the respondents to the "Town Meeting Schedule Preference" survey are willing to make a change in the date of annual town meeting from the first Saturday in May to a different Saturday. Puleo: the Select Board is in favor of placing an article regarding the topic on the annual town meeting warrant. Braunhut states that she will initiate a citizen's warrant article if Select Board does not do so. Puleo affirms that the Select Board will place the topic on the warrant.
2. Bill Wells reports that over the last year he has had people ask him why Shutesbury Police Department cruisers have been seen outside of Shutesbury; last week, he saw Town cruisers in Sunderland and New Salem. Wells reports that while following a cruiser into New Salem, he observed another Town cruiser returning from New Salem; they are the only department to leave town for lunch and it is 5.8mi one way from the Sunderland Subway. Wells subsequently met and spoke with the Chief Fernandes who confirmed that officers do go out of town, at times, to buy lunch. Makepeace-O'Neil thanks Wells for bringing his concern to the Select Board's attention. After Wells leaves the meeting, Torres explains that there is no restriction on the Shutesbury police officers leaving town for lunch; unlike other employees, the officers are "on duty" even during lunch and stay within range because they could be called to respond at any time; Wells came in and discussed his concern with Torres who encouraged him to meet and talk with Chief Fernandes which he did. Torres: regarding Well's objection to "two cruisers hanging out together", the second cruiser was called in for backup related to a traffic stop. Puleo: wear and tear on the cruisers could be a concern. Torres: the officers are being responsible however the Select Board could talk to Fernandes about the matter. Select Board members agree for Makepeace-O'Neil to draft a letter to Bill Wells acknowledging that the Shutesbury Police Officers have a lunch break and it is necessary for them to do so in the cruiser so calls can be responded to. Torres: there is no evidence of abuse of the officers' time or of the cruisers.

Discussion Topics:

1. Appointments:

Puleo moves the Select Board appoint the list of “Appointed Election Workers for 2019-2020”, as per Town Clerk Susie Mosher’s 8.6.19 letter, for a term beginning August 15, 2019 and ending no later than August 14, 2020; Stein seconds the motion that passes unanimously.

Stein moves the Select Board appoint Tracy McNaughton to the Lake Wyola Advisory Committee; Puleo seconds the motion that passes unanimously.

Stein moves and Puleo seconds a motion to accept Jennifer Wallace’s resignation from the Conservation Commission effective 8.22.19 and note her intention to rejoin the Commission mid-January 2020; the motion passes unanimously.

2. Town Administrator Updates:

- a. 323 Locks Pond Road/Lori Saleem: Nancy Long/Dog Officer could not make the first appointment with Torres to take the dog for rehoming; on making plans for a subsequent visit, Saleem stated that if Torres and Long arrived, she would not let them in. Torres then emailed Saleem explaining that if she failed to respond to the Select Board’s order, Town Counsel Donna MacNicol will file a cease and desist order and the dog would be removed. Subsequently, Long has conferred with Saleem who is beginning to consider talking with her family about sharing custody of the dog. Makepeace-O’Neil: Saleem has chosen to move the situation out this far. Stein: in the past, when Saleem has pushed back, nothing has happened. Torres: Long has been and will continue to work hard to find a home for the dog. Select Board members agree that the dog needs to be removed as per their 5.30.19 order. Torres: MacNicol did note that within the last two years, there has been only one infraction. Per the Select Board, Torres will request MacNicol to write the cease and desist order to be issued by the Sheriff’s Department; when the order is delivered, Torres and Long will be present to take the dog.
- b. Broadband Update: The 8.7.19 policy change letter from Makepeace-O’Neil was received by Huntress and responded to. Board members agree that it would have been helpful to have met with Huntress regarding the policy. The next Broadband Committee meeting is scheduled for 8.22.19. Puleo notes the need for Huntress to send more frequent installation updates to the public. Torres notes that installation crews will be added over the ensuing weeks.
- c. The Building Committee has not held a meeting for several months.
- d. Antidiscrimination Training: KP Law will conduct a training for employees and another one for volunteers; training dates are pending.
- e. Annual Report: Scott requests support from the Select Board toward increasing the number of submissions to the annual report. Mass Municipal Association’s Annual Town Report Contest judging criteria are reviewed. Makepeace-O’Neil suggests including the criteria in the annual report submission letter and let board/committee chairs and department heads know that the Select Board is seeking to have the quality of our FY19 annual report acknowledged. Puleo suggests that if submissions are made by a certain date, the Select Board will serve dinner to those respondents at the Shutesbury Athletic Club. Stein and Makepeace-O’Neil agree. Torres suggests barn book statistics be included in the report.

Additional Public Comment:

Celebrate Shutesbury/Jessica Carlson-Belanger: Celebrate Shutesbury will be held on Saturday September 21st from 10am-2pm; a special event form will be submitted; the Select Board is asked to help spread the word; information will be in the upcoming issue of “Our Town” newsletter; Karen Traub is lining up the entertainment. The Select Board will hold their annual donut eating contest. Carlson-Belanger’s commitment to the event is appreciated.

- f. Division of Local Services/Ransomware Attack Protection: Torres to Puleo’s question about town hall computer backup plans: everyone has a local backup system; once Town Hall’s broadband is installed, a cloud backup system will be arranged.
- g. Puleo appreciates receipt of the Fire Chief’s June 2019 monthly report.
- h. Tree Warden hours have exceeded the annual budget due to the large utility tree cutting project on Pratt Corner Road; from June 1 to present, 56 hours have been used and the budget is only ~\$700. Because this is an exceptional year, Torres suggests a cap of 100 hours/year at \$20.38/hour. Select Board members agree to the 100 hours cap. Torres: the need for coordinated communication between the relevant tree cutting parties has been emphasized especially as school starts next week. A Leverett Road home owner with a row of topped Town trees, does not want them removed for fear the bank will collapse; the tree professionals feel that if the trees are cut down, the remaining roots will stabilize the bank; it has been suggested a letter be sent to the homeowner stating that if the trees are not removed now, they will become the property owner’s responsibility and liability. The Select Board supports Torres in writing a letter to the homeowner.
- i. Town Roads: Makepeace-O’Neil heard a complaint that Montague Road is not being maintained in the way it needs to be. Torres: Montague Road gets more attention than other dirt roads in town, however, the traffic is higher on Montague Road. Makepeace-O’Neil will let the individual know the road is receiving its necessary attention. Torres will be following up with Tim Hunting/Highway Superintendent on a project that another Montague Road resident wants done. The drainage project on Locks Pond and Wendell Road is in process. Puleo: there are two properties on Pelham Hill Road that have blocked the right of way with staked wires/string along the edge of the road; walkers/runners/bikers are unable to quickly get off the road in these areas. Torres will write a letter to the specific property owners.

3. Committee Updates:

- a. Personnel Board: Torres reports that the Board is doing ongoing work on pregnancy and anti-discrimination policies.
- b. Emergency Management Team: Per Makepeace-O’Neil, there was a CodeRed update during the 8.19.19 meeting and a CodeRed training will be held 8.21.19.

Administrative Actions:

1. Select Board members sign vendor warrants totaling \$128,897.95.
2. Select Board members sign payroll warrants totaling \$97,482.78.
3. Select Board members sign broadband warrants totaling \$109,465.36.
4. Puleo moves and Stein seconds a motion to approve the 8.6.19 meeting minutes. The 8.6.19 meeting minutes are unanimously approved as presented.

At 8:15pm, Stein moves and Puleo seconds a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion passes unanimously.

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. "Town Meeting Schedule Preference" survey results
2. 8.6.19 letter from Susie Mosher/Town Clerk
3. "Appointed Election Workers for 2019-2020"
4. 8.15.19 email from Mark Rivers/LWAC Chair "LWAC Membership Changes"
5. 8.18.19 email from Jennifer Wallace "Resignation"
6. 5.30.19 Select Board letter to Lori Saleem/323 Locks Pond Road
7. 8.7.19 "Underground Installation Policy" email from Makepeace-O'Neil to Gayle Huntress/MLP Manager
8. 7.29.19 MMA email "The MMA Wants to See Your 2018 Town Report!"
9. DLS guidance "Take Three Steps to Resilience Against Ransomware for State and Local Partners"

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Avis Scott
Administrative Secretary