

**Shutesbury Web Committee**  
**Minutes of August 13, 2013 meeting**

Present: Chairman Fred Steinberg, Paul Vlach and Leslie Bracebridge. Absent: Willa Jarnagin  
Meeting opened at 7:08 PM at the Town Hall.

1. Discussion concerning recurring problems with the town email accounts.

Email from numerous town officials (notably Fire Chief, Town Clerk, Town Administrator, and the Treasurer) have been blocked from delivery to numerous recipients because our ISP, Web Intellects, has been the source of spam emails sent out by other clients. [www.Shutesbury.org](http://www.Shutesbury.org) email addresses have not been the source of spam, to our knowledge, but the servers they run through have been. This has resulted in repeated and ongoing blacklisting of our emails to government agencies, vendors, and residents on the Town Announce email list. It has created problems for town volunteers and officials trying to communicate with others. Fred has needed to intervene by requesting a blacklist removal by those other ISPs, in order to restore two-way communication with our shutesbury.org addresses.

To address the issue, Fred proposed changing town accounts over to Gmail servers, which have very good spam filtering, and are very effective at blocking the use of their servers by those who generate spam email. The service is free for up to 50 users. We are about half that, on shutesbury.org accounts.

The current email 'addresses' would be able to remain the same (ie: [Townclerk@shutesbury.org](mailto:Townclerk@shutesbury.org) ) but they would never route through Web Intellects servers, only through Gmail servers, both incoming and outgoing. Users would simply need to set up their accounts within Outlook, Thunderbird, or other chosen email software program to route through the different ISP. As a supplement, or even for primary access, they could also go through the web-based Gmail interface and log into their accounts there, from anywhere.

Leslie (as Select Board clerk) has kept the Town Admin and Board members apprised of the steps being taken to address the issue thus far, and that a changeover such as this might occur. They were supportive of any necessary steps to resolve this problem.

Fred moved, Leslie seconded, and it was voted unanimously that we move town email traffic over from Web Intellect servers to Gmail servers.

Fred would need to make setting changes at our ISP (Web Intellects) and our domain host, GoDaddy.com, for the change to take place. He will also need to set up each active email account within Gmail, with an initial password. Paul will assist in getting the info out to the users, explaining the process and requesting that they reset their password after they gain access. They will be advised that existing mail will remain on the Web Intellects servers, unless they have downloaded it into a software program on their own computers. New incoming mail will only be available through the new Gmail server accounts.

The town website will remain on the Web Intellect servers, as that has been functioning well.

Fred proposes a changeover date of Thursday August 29<sup>th</sup>, pending further research on his part.

2 - Issues with the Town Announce email list were discussed.

Some of the 564 subscribers to the Town Announce email list are not receiving messages. Mary Anne Antonellis, who posts library news to the list, has had this occur several times, and others, receiving at different email domain extensions, have reported problems as well. This stems back to the same spam generation issues as described in the previous agenda item. The difference is that because the Town

announce is mostly a 'one-way' process, recipients don't even know they are not receiving messages through their own ISPs, because the ISPs have blocked Web Intellects as a spam source.

Fred suggest that MailChimp is a viable alternative routing for the Town Announce mailing. MailChimp is free for up to 12,000 messages per month, which would allow us to send out 23 messages in any given month to the 564 subscribers. If a number of people unknowingly not receiving those messages now, decide they no longer want to subscribe, that user number may drop. There is a small tasteful MailChimp logo attached to each message; and an unsubscribe link is provided as well.

Fred moved, Leslie seconded, and it was voted unanimously that we move the Town Announce email traffic over from Web Intellect servers to MailChimp servers. Fred will do it this week. Paul will assist with any necessary list adjustments after the change. We will need to adjust the website signup instructions; and the user interface for those who are authorized to post to the list.

3 – Town Announce policy changes were proposed and discussed. The current policy reads as follows:

**Town of Shutesbury Subscribed Email Announcement List Policy**

These guidelines will govern the preferred process of using the subscribed email notification system available to all resident and non-resident interested parties, through an option on the town web site, [www.shutesbury.org](http://www.shutesbury.org)

Subscribed email announcements will comply with the web site policy. The intent of this policy is to maintain full and open disclosure of such announcements and responses to those announcements, and provide reasonable access to those without access to the Internet or email services.

Emails sent out through this system will go to all current subscribers on the list. That list is subject to public record laws and is available to anyone who requests it. The Selectboard designee(s) shall review the mailing before it is distributed. If approved and sent out, a copy will be provided to the Town Clerk, who will post written copies at the Town Hall and the Spear Library. Copies will also be made available on the town web site.

Leslie, in her capacity as Town Clerk, noted that the last two sentences have lost their relevance, and do not reflect current practice. Printed postings at other locations have not been occurring, nor have any requests been received by individuals without email access. Under open government and Freedom of Information Act guidelines, copies would still be provided upon request, anyway, so the policy statement is redundant in that regard.

Leslie moved, Paul seconded, and it was voted unanimously to delete the last two sentences: *If approved and sent out, a copy will be provided to the Town Clerk, who will post written copies at the Town Hall and the Spear Library. Copies will also be made available on the town web site.* The remainder would remain unchanged.

These minutes were reviewed in draft form and approved unanimously at the end of the meeting.

Adjourned at 8:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Vlach