

TA Report 12.7.12

WIREDWEST Update

If you haven't yet or you are new in town please show your interest and support for affordable, state of the art, fiber optic cable to the home to bring you **internet, telephone and television service** by going to <https://hugo.jf-olm.com/~wiretnet/card.php>. If you have questions please call, 259-1214.

"MADE IN SHUTESBURY" HOLIDAY SHOP. Friday 12/14 from 6–9pm; Saturday 12/15 from 12–6pm; Sunday 12/16 from 1–6 pm. Shutesbury Athletic Club Function Room, 282 Wendell Rd. 259–1474. Handmade Gifts for all ages from Shutesbury artisans – Jewelry, painting and photography, stuffed animals, crocheted blankets, hats, tote bags, candles, herbal body products, natural therapy pillows, purses, scarves, Christmas spiders, CDs, finger puppets, painted glassware, wallets, holiday cards and crafts, calendars, from Artisans including...

David Dann *Colleen Chudzik * Tanya Shersnow * Edith Hunsberger * Maili Page * Jade Alicandro * Melinda LeLacheur * Kaya LeLacheur * Jen Dolan * Joie Ciepala * Nina Compagnon * Leslie Cerier * Cathy Lawlor * Jody Powell * Liz Armstrong * Sue Essig * Kristen Lee * John Walter * Debra Pichanick * Tani Anaya * Colleen Campbell * Karen Ducey *Anna Sobel * Susanne Personnette * More to come! Books from Shutesbury authors including Paul Jacobs & Jennifer Swender, Robert Clark, Shutesbury Community Church...Plus...

Commemorative items from Shutesbury's 250th celebration, Shutesbury merchandise (sweatshirts, mugs, hats, etc) to benefit the Shutesbury Elementary 5th and 6th grade. Cash, check and charge accepted. For more information email Melinda LeLacheur at dragonflyconsult@yahoo.com or call 259–1525.

SENIOR POT LUCK LUNCHEON On Tuesday, December 4, the Seniors hosted a wonderful pot luck luncheon downstairs at town hall. They invited staff and community members. Marilyn Tibbetts decorated the room with festive holiday decorations. The new trash haulers donated 2 turkeys. Everyone brought all the fixings for a delicious turkey dinner plus wonderful desserts. If you haven't been to a Senior Pot Luck, call Marilyn Tibbetts for information. The next pot luck lunch is scheduled for March 5, 2013, noon at town hall.

COMPOSTERS AVAILABLE AT TOWN HALL

The Town Recycling Committee provides composters to town residents at a subsidized price of \$20. They are black magic! Watch your compost grow.

REPORT on Dec 4, 2012 U28 Forum on page 2....

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Becky Torres, Shutesbury Town Administrator, townadmin@shutesbury.org 259-1214
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SCHOOL FORUM

Tuesday night, Dec 4, the School Committee hosted an informational session on Union 28. Shutesbury school committee chair, Clifton Reid outlined the roles and responsibilities of the school committee. The U28 Joint Supervisory Committee hires the Superintendent. Three Shutesbury school committee members represent Shutesbury at Union 28, one represents Shutesbury at the Amherst Pelham regional schools and one member represents Shutesbury at the Collaborative.

Union 28 Superintendent, Joan Wickman, outlined her role and responsibilities as superintendent. Superintendents are responsible for hiring the principle and the staff. Shutesbury engages local interview committees to make recommendations to the Superintendent. School budget preparation begins with the Superintendent although the School Committee controls the budget at the local level.

The Superintendent spoke of the local decision making process. She described how Union 28 schools are each high quality but very different reflecting the values of the community through their programs, and staffing patterns. Shutesbury has a math coach, a certified librarian, full time nurse, technology coordinator, fully equipped computer labs, music programming, instrumental music program and an aggressive recycling program. Union 28 has a Special Education Coordinator that assists each school. Shutesbury has its own comprehensive & individualized special education program, vast majority of services done here in Shutesbury. Report cards are designed in house. Shutesbury selects your own vendors, manage revolving accounts (Preschool, lunch, after school), not out sourced.

The forum opened to the public for questions and comments. Not all questions have been answered at this time.

Questions about Union 28

1. What is the process for hiring?
 - a. Local hiring committee makes recommendations.
2. What happens if the Superintendent does not agree with a committee recommendation? Who has more weight?
 - a. Since 1994 Ed Reform law the Superintendent has the authority

i. Questions about regionalization

3. Each school in U28 handled security policy differently. Would we be able to do that if we are part of a region?
4. What will the composition of the regional school committee be?
 - a. We do not have an answer to that governance issue.
 - b. The Regional School District Planning Committee has not yet recommended regionalization. We are still gathering information. A decision to recommend or not recommend will not happen until after reports are received from the Educational and Financial Consultants.
5. How do you move forward to decide if you want to look at further?
 - a. Ultimate vote is town by town at town meeting
6. What if we are in neither? Is it legal to stand alone?
 - a. School needs a superintendent and finance director

7. What is a Central Office?
 - a. Staff that support the work of the Superintendent and Finance Director
8. Can school committee solely vote to attach itself to a region? Can a school committee vote to join a district?
 - a. Regions require regional agreements that are legal documents. All member towns need to vote to approve the regional agreement with approval by DESE.
9. There is no way to get out- all 4 towns must vote to get out, right?
 - a. It is dependent on what is written in the regional agreement.
10. The presentation showed how much autonomy we have now. What will we lose if we regionalize? What is contract based and what is not?
11. What are the other towns in Union 28 doing?
 - a. Erving's school committee chair provided an answer. Erving is talking with Swift River. Erving is sitting down with Wendell folks, and sitting down with Pioneer Chair, but they have not started meeting with other towns. We are planning. We are happy with what we have. The question is how do we do it better. We are not looking at it as a financial matter. But how can we improve it.
 - b. Swift River was part of a lengthy process that resulted last year in a vote of 2 towns in favor 2 towns against. Orange, Petersham and Wendell/New Salem were the towns involved in a design to create a region.
12. Why are we looking at regionalization?
 - a. We are in search of long term sustainability to provide high quality education. We know the 7-12 region works. We have never had a professional review of K-6 or K-12 regionalization. So we need to explore it in terms of the future in a changing world with new financial challenges.
 - b. Don't just look to regionalization for a solution. The growing competition for education dollars with charter and choice schools could be addressed through our politicians.
13. What makes Shutesbury education special?
14. How do we make sure it continues amidst all the pressures, to wash it a way?
15. How to preserve what we value?
16. If you regionalize do the other towns have to agree?

DESE has to approve new regions and dissolution of unions. A process has to be followed. We can only regionalize with other towns that want to regionalize with us, they have to agree.
17. Where are you in the process? I don't want it thrown at us all at once. Website should have where you are on each issue, school closings. Give us snapshots of where you are.

Information can be found at, <http://www.RegionalSchoolPlanning.info>

