

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen March 13, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Members present: Chairwoman Elaine Puleo and members Al Springer and April Stein.

Also Present: Town Administrator Rebecca Torres, Administrative Secretary Leslie Bracebridge recording.

Meeting opened at 6:30 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall

Appointments

Police Chief Harding and Sergeant Wall:

- **Shutesbury Athletic Club:**
 - Following a report that 10 to 15 people were still present at the Club more than an hour after closing time recently, Selectmen offered to send an advisory letter to the Club concerning adherence to the closing hours authorized on the Memorandum of Understanding which is signed each year at the time of the Club license renewal.
 - The letter will state that there will be a “last call” 20 minutes before the closing time and that all members and guests will be out of the facility by the hour of closing.
 - This coming weekend a special 1 AM Club closing has been pre-arranged for a special function.
 - According to a recent newspaper article, the Shutesbury Athletic Club will soon have a series of well known performers providing entertainment at the Club which may draw guests from outside the area.
 - The functions are designed to comply with the standards imposed to avoid the need for a sprinkler system.
 - In response to Leslie’s question concerning if such a series falls within the criteria to qualify for a “Club” license, Chief Harding offered to follow-up on any impact such a series of performances would have on the qualifications for a Club license as opposed to other classes of licenses available from the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission.
 - Club President Danielovich is providing punctual reports of up-coming events to the Police Department as required by the Memorandum of Understanding.
- **Recruitment of officers:**
 - The Police Department has received a number of resumes recently.
 - One candidate for a full time position has the potential to become a sergeant.
 - There are 2 or 3 promising part time applications also.
 - Chief Harding would like to introduce the candidates to the Select Board at their next meeting. Selectmen agreed to Town Administrator Torres’ suggestion that in addition to posting the Select Board meeting in keeping with the Open Meeting Law, a few citizens be specifically invited to attend the meeting to ensure at least some citizen awareness and feedback: Al Plaza, Sarah Shields, Al Beswick, and Kristen Mattocks will receive specific invitations.

Susie Mosher/Discussion of How to Improve our Government/Library Timeline:

- Susie told the Board that she continues to think about how to improve the path of project passage. Discussion included:
 - Should the Select Board have voted yes or no early on to support the Library to avoid a leadership vacuum? (The warrant article stated ‘recommended’ by both the Select Board and the Finance Committee.)
 - Review of the timeline from the May 2010 annual town meeting vote through the January 2011 grant application due date.

- Would it have helped if the Select Board had been clear publicly as a Board? Was there enough information at that time to be clear?
- Should the grant proposal have gone in without a “straw vote” of the town?
 - May 2010 to January 2011 was not much time to prepare the huge document and get town review and feedback.
- Could the topic of funding have been brought up earlier? The money was not “set in stone” before the grant was submitted.
- Spring 2010: When forums and meetings were held: Not everyone was on board. (*Actual May 1, 2010 Annual Town Meeting vote: yes - 163, no – 20 was added for reference with the production of these minutes*)
 - Could the Library Committee have gotten those who were not “on-board” on the committee to get the dissenting voice to say why?
 - There were public meetings and presentations: This is what you’re going to get.
 - There were also a lot of meetings that were “transformational.” The Ice Cream Social: That’s when we talked about the site being behind Town Hall or at Lot O-32. The location was really discussed and that was done well. When it came to the building there was less discussion and more presentation.
- Input was wanted: At Town Meeting Eric (Stocker) said (to someone who was not “on-board”) “You should be on this committee.”
- This has been an emotional process for everybody.
- Many past volunteer projects have been “sorted through,” but none of this scope and interfaced with the bureaucracy of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC); their timeline had an impact on this.
- The MBLC recommended that ball park figures not be put in front of people before a certain time. This project was co-sponsored by state and local funding.
- It’s a shift (from other town projects) to say the town and state will work together. In this kind of experience, how will the town prepare for this? The MBLC should have feedback on this.
- In any process the town undertakes we should offer a public comment period, including how the project will be funded.
- Some towns start fund-raising ahead of time, a lot don’t.
- The perception of the process is important. The library planning committee got only one view – and that was from the state. But the Committee forced the cost discussion anyway.
- The Select Board did provide guidance. There was a fund-raising Committee made up of a mix of people so they could start to move forward on funding.
- The state (MBLC) could guide towns to know that if there is not a “deep-pocket benefactor,” then these are the fund-raising words: “Our town will need a new library at some point,” and start fund-raising.
 - They tried and got \$2500/year in the capital budget when they asked for \$10,000/year. Money went into the library account for 6 years
 - The economic pressures play a part when you don’t have a design. People don’t want to give funds to a “maybe”.
- This town has learned that when we are going to unroll something, start talking to the citizenry 10 years in advance in these terms.
- The capital fundraising was already in the budget lines. There are ways that people see it.
- In 2010 there was a lot of, “How do we get fund-raising for something not yet set?” within the fund-raising committee.
- You begin by saying to the town’s people, “we will build a library and get the state to kick in 60%.”
- The Master Plan showed the problem: Half the people want a library but not to be paid for with taxes. The state grant is a part.

- The Library Facility Needs Assessment Committee did not have charge of the economy.
- Now we are working on school regionalization. We don't want to go through the whole process and a whole year of meetings and have Shutesbury shoot it down.
 - Somehow we need to get community engagement at an earlier stage, so people don't come to town meeting needing to make statements for or against.
 - People need to be made aware ahead of time, not just at town meeting so it's not voted up or down based only on cost.
 - You get people in two different camps. If the two camps had talked very early on there would not have been the extent of opposition that we have now.
 - Think of people who will say "no," no matter what, and get them to the room early on.
 - The people at the extremes are not the ones to focus on; there are more people in the middle.
- That some people were surprised is not the Library Facility Needs Assessment Committee's (LFNAC's) fault:
 - When you see the words "public comment period" and you don't deal with it then, then you've lost your chance.
 - Generous invitations were made to join the committee.
 - At some point before the money was known we had the rough square footage and the goal for a "community hub," not some little "hush, hush library." If the square footage had been publicized, maybe people would have looked up.
 - Identify neighborhoods around the town, running groups, garden groups - to get discussions out there.
 - People don't come to meetings.
 - The "yes's" have a website and the "no's" have a way of communicating.
 - Elaine reports attending one neighborhood pot luck lunch in Old Orchard in January 2010 with a glass bowl on the floor.
 - We were expected to put a check in the bowl.
 - You didn't go without expecting to donate. That was the start.
 - Elaine thought that was the way it was going to grow.
 - Elaine also went to a luncheon to promote a donation.
- So then a year later the Select Board assisted in forming a fund-raising group. There had been a rule not to talk about money early on. In the fall of 2009 and winter of 2010 we were pushing the architects to start putting dollars to their designs.
 - The majority wanted to start talking dollars to start bringing people to the scope of the work.
 - It was too much work to plan and fund-raise.
- A shift occurred that the town would do a part of this. Everyone was staggered when the first round of numbers came through.
- "Just let your mind dream" is not a fair description of what happened. There was constant questioning as to what the options were.
- People will question credibility (of a proposed project.) There needs to be a record of the work done.
 - Martha Field's minutes were "fabulous."
 - People did not read them.
 - If people are against something they don't want information.
 - Accusations that the work isn't done makes it very hard for volunteers to get the work done.
- We should be very concerned with what works so that people will move back toward hard facts rather than angry feelings.
 - We learned that a whole book of notes is not that helpful.
- Lots of grants are needed to run the town. The value of grants needs to be appreciated.

- When we get into a grant process we need to see the time frame.
 - We need to see where we start “to be in cement.”
- Susie reported a conversation she had with the MLBC’s Library Building Consultant Rosemary Waltos concerning the May 2010 warrant article wording:
 - Waltos sees it differently than we felt it. Waltos feels that’s when the scope gets set.
 - “Get the flag up beforehand;” before the May 2010 vote.
 - We could have done it off the square footage.
- Some of the dynamics still present are: “How come you just don’t add on over there?” There are people who still want to work in that kind of confined structure rather than this very different new concept.
 - This group went to a ½ dozen libraries to see what really works.
 - If the perception is a bunch of people daydreaming; that just isn’t what happened.
 - The dollar /square footage would have brought the town to this.
 - The town meeting just thought of the vote as a preliminary.
 - Once we put the grant proposal in we have little “wobble room” – only 5% of space can be changed.
 - Susie wishes people had gone to the Wendell library long before 2010.
 - The thing that convinced LFNAC was going to the other libraries.
 - Some people think of libraries as a place for “shh;” some people see Pelham’s as a monstrosity.
 - Wendell is a different experience. The people who experienced it thought and talked about it. We could have done a video of Wendell and had the videos in living room gatherings.
 - The original town meeting presentations were attempts to explain the change of scope. The “ears” weren’t there.
- Elaine: “How do I get people to hear it for regionalization?” I don’t know how to reach people. Elaine doesn’t want people in opposition coming to her at the end. She wants to re-invent the process. Susie thinks it has to be “living room” discussions.
 - There will be financial implications with regionalization. It’s going to cost more.
 - If there is a money issue to be attached to it, put the word out.
 - Elaine will present it at town meeting and tell people to “pass it on.”
 - Susie encourages small discussions.
- Moderator Penny Kim will draft a guide to town meeting.
- Susie reports that in her Monday night meetings, they always read the League of Women Voters information, but they never before thought to read the local town warrant.
- Susie will write down the things she still sees as necessary for good process.
- Mediation would cost money.
- The court thing has to settle first. I’m not sure where that fits into process.
- The U-Tube video has lightened the situation away from neighbor versus neighbor.
 - Elaine believes that if someone walked into the room with a million dollars, no one would object to building the library.
 - It’s not about a library, it’s about money. If this had happened in 2006, when the economy was different... it’s bad timing all the way around.
- The process includes a lot of votes. We’re up to 5 votes now.
- With schools you have kids and you have to have a school.
- People are saying: “I can’t do X and you want me to do Y? ‘No’.”
- Fund-raising is a way to get together.
- Numbers that were not accurate were part of how the process spun out of control.

- Al describes Williamsburg, which voted multiple times on a library. At a recent school vote 325 people voted yes and 25 voted no. Al feels, people just gave up; they'll just keep having votes until it happens.
- The fact that the library was needed happened long before 1995, the population went up.
 - Places where people show up is where you're going to see "rubs."
 - People don't want things to be different, but it happened a while ago.
- Luckily our town is growing rather than Detroit.
 - The economy is moving in the right direction.
- The town didn't pay (for the library) the first time, so this is a new town commitment; it was a new thing for the state to commit to also.
 - The state and town are working together on many partnerships that haven't happened before.
 - We never would have gotten the road done or other roads paved, or the state help with the dig many years ago. Give the state credit where credit is due.
- The information given to the Chairman of LFNAC not to talk about money was a huge mistake.
 - The state doesn't have to do the political process.
- Susie bets 100 years ago they fought the library maintenance.
 - Would like help in the process of identifying a benefactor.
- Becky: Regionalization: We're paying higher per pupil costs because the student numbers are declining, increased costs, partly, and other things. There's a lot more social responsibility schools are taking on. We are reviewing new regionalization models to find a way to control cost and still support quality education.
- April: Special Ed pays off because it creates a lot more tax payers who without the education society would have to support.

Topics

1. Selectmen received **first drafts of the May 5 Annual Town Meeting Warrant** for review.
2. **Flood bylaw proposed for Annual Town Meeting/Planning Board hearing coming up after an informational meeting:**
 - There will be a Planning Board discussion at 7 PM tomorrow night.
 - The flood plain district bylaw hearing needs to be set quickly.
 - Becky has requested that someone from the Planning Board go to the Saturday morning Lake Wyola Advisory Committee (LWAC) meeting to review it.
 - The draft Open Space Plan is also of concern for Lake residents:
 - It refers to hearings and public comments in the past tense, so people thought they missed the public input.
 - The plan lists the Lake Wyola Association and not the LWAC as the party which received the document which caused confusion.
 - The plan on CD has been at Town Hall sitting waiting because of missed meetings.
 - People are upset about restricting use of motorboats. There's a recommendation to reduce hours of motor boats.
 - Becky will do an email announcement for the Open Space Plan Public Hearing.
3. **Fire Station Remediation:**
 - Becky has had a few conversations with Licensed Site Professional (LSP) Jim Okun of O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun Associates, Inc. (OTO)
 - OTO's Engineer John Henry is getting quotes.
 - The subcontract is \$13,000.
 - The prices are: \$18,000 and \$20,000 the less expensive is the preferred vendor

- \$165/hour is expensive. Becky wants to measure the water level to save some costs, but last time the OTO came to re-check the figures anyway. Becky doesn't know if he can officially take the data for his certified report.
- They're working on scheduling for the observation.

Select Board Action Items

1. **Appoint Darci Connor to the Conservation Commission:**

- Selectmen received a resume for new to Shutesbury, Montague Rd. resident Darci Connor who would like to serve on the Conservation Commission. **Selectmen unanimously voted to appoint Darci Connor to the Conservation Commission.**

2. **Selectmen signed vendor warrants totaling \$83,275.06.**

3. **Selectmen signed payroll warrants totaling \$51,375.24.**

4. **Selectmen reviewed and approved their February 28, 2012 meeting minutes as written.**

Topics the Chairman Could Not Reasonably Have Anticipated

1. As Liaison for the U.S. Census, Leslie will follow-up on **a letter from the U.S. Census which was sent to Select Board Chairman Puleo.** Chairman Puleo recommended that Leslie change the contact address. Historically the U.S. Census Bureau uses the municipality's chief elected official's name and address for all of its correspondence regardless of who the Liaison is, but Leslie will try.
2. **Fire Chief Tibbetts' letter:** Selectmen were copied on a letter from the Fire Chief to the Finance Committee and wondered if there was a need for the Select Board to become involved.
 - The Finance Committee has not met since the letter was distributed.
 - Selectmen will meet with the Finance Committee to review the recommended FY 13 budget as a whole, once it is completed.
3. From now on, the four-town **Regional School District Planning Committee meetings will also be posted as Shutesbury Select Board meetings.** Becky offered to write brief minutes for any Select Board deliberations or actions that will then be attached to the four-town Committee's minutes.

The Select Board **adjourned at 8:01 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary