

Excerpts from the Sept. 25, 2012 Shutesbury Select Board meeting:

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen Tuesday September 25, 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. Chairman Puleo opened the meeting at 6:32 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall

At 7:00 PM: Brian McHugh from Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FRHRA) and Donna Liebl from Franklin County Homecare opened a public meeting:

- Notice was put in the Sept 12 Greenfield Recorder inviting the public to this informational meeting.
- In addition to the 2 guest speakers, those present included members of the Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator and the Administrative Secretary. Interested parties were notified, but no one else attended.

Chairman Puleo: Read the following notice: “The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss and solicit public response to the Town of Shutesbury FY 2013 Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant application. Local citizens are requested to attend and propose activities which the Town should apply for in this application.”

Brian (Was previously involved in the Shutesbury Town Hall elevator /structural barrier removal project.):

- This is an informational meeting for the town to collect input from the public.
- Encouraged Shutesbury to join Bernardston (lead town), Conway and Sunderland, in a 4-town regional application for the FY 2013 Community Development Block Grant because scoring gives bonus points for being a regional application, and for multiple activities.
 - All 4 towns need the 2 services: housing rehab and “meals on wheels.”
 - Each town has a community-wide needs score which is compiled from 5 economic indicators.
 - There is efficiency in regional applications for FRHRA for such things as 1/4ly reports.
- Towns can only apply every other year: The current application round is due on December 14.
 - Money comes down from the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the state Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).
 - DHCD scores applications and awards grants. Usually 1/3 of the applications get funded.
 - This year’s awards will be announced in the middle of the summer.
- There are 6 different categories to apply for:
 - 1. Housing Assistance, 2. Economic development/commercial rehabilitation, 3. Public facilities, 4. Infrastructure, 5. Public Social Services, and 6. Planning Projects.
- The national objective is to benefit low to moderate income populations:
 - Some projects require HUD defined low to moderate income eligibility of 51% of those to benefit from the program.
 - Programs benefiting seniors, such as a senior center, elderly nutrition, or Meals on Wheels are automatically eligible as that population is presumed to be below the 51% income limit.
 - Based on general population income, Shutesbury would not qualify for infrastructure projects.
- Social services are community wide. People, including seniors benefitting from the services are asked to self-declare income levels.
- Planning Grant funds could be for pre-development planning: Might be to hire an architect to develop plans and schematic designs for an estimate for a future year application.
 - If a planning grant is awarded there is an expectation to build within 5 years.
- Town Administrator Rebecca “Becky” Torres:

- Has updated the 2009 Community Development Strategy Project Priority List for 2012 as required. The Planning Board will be asked to adopt it at their October 23 meeting.
- Priority projects come from the Master Plan (which is now 8 years old and which needs to be reviewed by 2014.)
- The way the grant works is that the town only gets credit for projects completed in the preceding year – 2012. Other things on the list get eliminated in the final draft.
- The non-CDGB money projects are sorted to show not just one source of funding.
- Becky will use feedback from the public and the Planning Board at their informational hearing.
- Acting Director of Community Development Bruce Hunter has reviewed the Community Development Strategy Project Priority List with Becky.
- Highlights of the rehab program:
 - Has run for 30 years, and it has run for a number of years in Shutesbury.
 - Some of the pay-backs from when houses were sold have been “recycled” back into the loan program which are then re-used for such projects as emergency septic system repairs.
 - People on the waiting list will be contacted.
 - People need income verification.
 - Inspect the property and bring everything up to code from the roof to the ground.
 - Lead paint remediation included since 2002.
 - Have a non-mandatory licensed and insured contractor list to select from.
 - The program replaces what’s there – no additions, no going outside the footprint.
 - Loan terms: Was 100% deferred payment.
 - Starting in 2009, 50% will always be paid back and
 - There is a 15 year gradual decline of pay-back for the other 50%.
 - Review of bids for work, if approved, the loan goes to closing.
 - The contractor bills CDBG directly and the home-owner authorizes the payment.
 - Sign-offs are required from all inspectors before the final sign-off and payment.
- Donna Liebl reviewed the Meals on Wheels program:
 - Delivers 1/3 of daily nutrition to the homebound person 5 days/week, simultaneously providing a noontime check-in, which is often the difference that allows the person/elder to live at home.
 - If the person has no support on the weekend the program can provide:
 - 2 frozen meals and can even provide a microwave oven, if needed, to heat the meal.
 - Can provide someone to come and shop for breakfast and night time sandwiches.
 - Currently 6 Shutesbury residents participate in the program.
 - Over 1805 meals have been provided during the contact duration.
 - Can also provide a therapeutic meal:
 - Regular meals are already lower in salt and fat.
 - Offer special diabetic meals and ground diets.
 - People are self-referred, referred by someone who knows the person or by relatives.
 - Some people straight out of the hospital may need the Meals on Wheels services coupled with short-term home-maker and home health aides only for the recovery period.
 - Some people accept more and more help over time to keep them at home as long as possible.
 - There are 55 drivers for the 30 served towns. Volunteers get mileage and \$3.50/day.
 - The local Meals on Wheels program is part of a consortium, to drive costs down.
 - An elder is defined as 60 years and older. According to older Americans act of 1990’s.
 - A meal can also be provided to the spouse of anyone 60 and older and another meal is provided by the local program if an intellectually impaired child is living with the elder.
 - Long-term participants are assessed for eligibility every 6 months and annually in person.
 - Short-term participants are re-assessed every 3 months.

- When people are ready and able, they are encouraged to get out to the congregate meal sites whenever possible to promote socialization.
- Responding to a question concerning fresh fruits and vegetables:
 - The caterer uses about 10% local products in the Clinton area.
 - The program has federal government commodities.
 - The state nutritionist gets providers to have bidding wars to get the best prices; it's a very complex project of bargaining for the best nutritional value.
 - Got an "A" last time there was a consumer survey so they will stick with this caterer.
- The local Meals on Wheels program has been running for 27 years. There was plenty of money to start. Now the program is getting less and less funding.
 - CDGB provides "gap" funding when federal government funds aren't enough.
 - We struggle. Without the CDGB funds the grant, we would try to cover the gap with the meals-on-wheels walk-a-thon.
 - We're hitting a breaking point where a waiting list will have to be instituted.
 - Some communities are already putting in local support and would not be affected with waiting lists.

- The public hearing was closed at 8:02 PM.

The Select Board will review the public meeting and Brian will continue with his work assuming the Select Board will want to join the other three towns in the grant application.

The Select Board **adjourned at 8:45 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary