

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen Tuesday October 2, 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 7:00 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall

All Boards Meeting:

Elaine opened the meeting at 7 PM and announced that she would take input on the space needs surveys on a department by department basis, and any other topics presented by the department representative:

Recycling and Solid Waste Coordinator Gary Bernhard:

- Contracted with a hauler for less than the previous hauler charged and much less than other bidders.
 - Working out the “bumps along the way.”
 - Allied is “really cooperative.”
- Bulky Waste Day:
 - Salvation Army takes electronics, clothes, shoes and leather goods for free.
 - The Committee has just applied for a \$1,000 grant for recycling bins, supplies for Bulky Waste Day including a laptop.
 - Income from the sale of the scrap metals goes to the general fund.
 - New this fall’s October 6 Bulky Waste Day, CFC’s and refrigerators will be decommissioned immediately after the collection and hauled away by Saturday night to avoid the problem of overnight dumping after Bulky Waste Days. Allied took care of a lot of the overnight dumping that occurred in June.
- Space: The Recycling and Solid Waste committee lost their storage space in the Town Hall senior lounge, and have been given space at the elementary school in the second storage shed.

Police Chief Harding:

- Trying to stay ahead of staffing by looking at an auxiliary force. Auxiliary officers provide their own uniforms and volunteer their services.
- Officer Soto is now a full time officer and will go to the Academy in February. Shutesbury will have 2 part time officers from Leverett to cover Officer Soto’s shifts.
- The Department mainly deals with traffic incidents - there was a roll-over today, and many “domestics”.

Community Preservation Committee Chairman Donald Fletcher:

- The Committee received 2 applications last year:
 1. The Committee recommended additional funds for the West Schoolhouse sills project.
 2. The application was for a privately owned property. The Committee committed to speak to how private projects would be evaluated in the proposed 2013 Community Preservation Plan.

April Stein is a member of the Water Resources Committee, the Lake Wyola Advisory Committee (LWAC) and Chairman of the Personnel Board:

Water Resources Committee:

- Is consolidating data concerning Lake Wyola water quality.
- Is working on a water flow schematic: Where does our water come from? Where is our water stored? Where does our water go to? What is our water’s quality? How much will be available over time?
- The Water Resources Committee is considering water quality monitoring wells for the future.

Personnel Board:

- Working on job descriptions, contracts with department heads and union members and looking at equitable salary scales for our professional staff compared to surrounding towns.

Lake Wyola Advisory Committee (LWAC):

- Looked at concern over the summer of safe distances from shore for boats and swimmers.
- Worked closely with the Open Space Committee regarding motorboat usage on the Lake.
- Does on-going water quality testing and installed a Lake depth monitor.

Lake Wyola Advisory Committee member Bill Elliott:

- Concerned with groups coming in from out of town to use the lake and not using Select Board large group activity forms – specifically a fishing derby held by a group from New Hampshire.
 - Users are not informed of town bylaws, such as swimming across the Lake unaccompanied.
 - LWAC will be sending a letter to the Board of Selectmen asking that a sign outlining use of Lake bylaws be given to the state park for posting.
- Following the public hearing regarding the Open Space Plan, LWAC suggested, supports and is willing to host a public dialogue regarding use of the Lake.

Town Buildings Committee member Dale Houle:

- The Town Building Committee works with many other town committees and departments.
- Researches, recommends and oversees town buildings projects:
 - This year focused on the West Schoolhouse sills replacement project.
 - The project started in June and is not done yet.
 - The main source of funding came through the Community Preservation Act.
 - Hopes to use the West Schoolhouse experience to use Community Preservation funds to do something for the Cemetery Hearse House in the coming year.
- Is working with Becky for:
 - Green Communities funded heating system replacements at the Fire Station and Town Hall.
 - Improved insulation deficiencies at the elementary school, which should have a positive effect on this year's heating expenses and future heating expenses at the Fire Station and Town Hall.
- In the future will be replacing the Highway Department salt shed roof trusses; this requires taking the old roof off and putting on a new roof.
- The Town Buildings Committee will oversee other smaller projects at the Highway Department.

School Committee Chairman Clif Read:

- 3 key staff retired at the end of last year, and others moved on, causing a great deal of hiring, upheaval and changes.
- School is one month into the new year, and overall, things are going well.
- New staffing changed the budget the School Committee moved expenses around.
- The Committee will address their space needs survey at the October School Committee meeting:
 - There is an extra large pre-school this year.
 - Those younger students will come up through the school.
 - It is good to see a bump-up in numbers.
- Dan Hayes reported that there was a request at the last School Committee meeting to put a discussion of, and vote on Shutesbury's withdrawal from Union 28 on the November School Committee agenda. Chairman Read stated, "A decision was made by the committee to just have a discussion without a vote at the November 18 School Committee meeting."
 - No one from the School Committee serving on the Union 28 committees was present to speak.

Room-wide comments of surprised sorrow, and then a natural moment of silence followed Dan Hayes' announcement that Town Buildings Committee member Alphonse Plaza passed away this morning.

One of Shutesbury's 3 representatives to the Regionalization Planning Committee Elaine Puleo:

- Shutesbury's representatives are: Becky Torres, Michael DeChiara and Elaine Puleo.
- The 3 have met with the representatives from Leverett, Pelham and Amherst for over a year and previous to that met with other members of the Shutesbury Study Committee for over 2 years.
- All work has been done by volunteers thus far:
 - The Regionalization Planning Committee has asked for funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for paid consultation.
 - The Committee has already received funding from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.
- The 4-town Regionalization Committee expects consultant information in the spring of 2013.
- The information will help the Regionalization Planning Committee decide whether or not to go forward with asking each town to vote in November of 2013 for a regional system to be in place by the September 2014 school year.
- The Regionalization Planning Committee's research and work is very preliminary right now.
 - The Committee would love to hear from anyone with questions or feedback.
 - The Select Board is not the body with the answers but will provide a public regionalization discussion time at their October 9 meeting: To garner questions which are specific to Shutesbury to bring to the full committee, and the questions then be given to the consultant.
 - Put out the word for everybody to come.
 - No formal presentations are required.
 - Wants questions out on the table early in the planning process.
 - Publicity for the Select Board discussion is on the website calendar. It will be in the Town Administrator's report.
- The 2 options under consideration by the Regionalization Committee are for a pre-K through 12 region or leave the current 7 through 12 region alone and create a separate pre-K through 6 region.
 - Both options include all 4 towns.
 - Since the 4 towns are all working together on this, there is no sense to include a plan that does not include all 4 towns.
- The September edition of the *Our Town* newsletter had a 2-page information sheet about the topic. The public is also invited to come to the October 9 Select Board discussion to learn more.
- History:
 - The Shutesbury Education Study Committee was created a few years back when the state was considering regionalizing everyone.
 - Shutesbury decided to get ahead of any state plan and design our own region.
 - Shutesbury has looked at 4-town regionalization a number of times over the years.
 - We have to look at economies of scale; we want to keep our taxes down.
 - We want a system that people can live with and with quality education: Let's revisit the question to see if there is a better or equivalent way that is sustainable.
- Pelham has 100 students: 50 from Pelham and 50 school-choiced in. Pelham can't maintain their school on their population and in the future Shutesbury may be in the same position.
- Come and listen to the discussion to become informed.
- Tomorrow night the Regionalization Planning Committee will meet in Pelham at 6 PM: There will be a quick tour of the school, the school culture and then there will be an open meeting.
- Go to WWW.regionalschoolplanning.com to read minutes and learn more.

- Becky: All the numbers of children in Western Mass towns are declining dramatically in the last decade. The Amherst-Pelham Regional High School student population is down 30 to 40% since her children attended.
- - The question is how do you create something sustainable under those conditions?
 - The DESE has committed to giving a good outside perspective.
 - An “Ed plan” is written first with input from the superintendents. The ed plan details the staffing requirements needed to support programs specific to our school system. Then the financial team will look at the Ed plan as the basis to build the financial analysis.
 - Then we will have substance to bring to a public discussion.
 - Whenever we talk about change, people are apprehensive. We want to research those concerns as best as possible.
 - Dan Hayes: Becky is right; populations are declining. In addition the state is adding charter schools; so more schools are competing for the same dollars.

Town Accountant Gail Weiss:

- With the help of Treasurer Gabriel Voelker and Tax Collector Ellen McKay a free cash has already been certified at over \$1 million dollars.
- This is the earliest free cash has ever been certified. It was a team effort.

Highway Superintendent “Tim” Hunting:

- In addition to the normal grading and mowing activities, the Highway Department:
 - Completed 3 days of tree work on Lakeview Road:
 - The Department has done tree work on almost every road in Shutesbury since Tim has worked in Shutesbury (1999).
 - After major wind or ice storms, it is easy to see the benefits of Shutesbury’s tree-trimming program compared to those in neighboring towns.
 - Guardrails were put in midway down Montague Rd. and on the pond outlets near the Leverett town line, and on West Pelham Rd.
 - Partially prepared Locks Pond and Wendell Roads for paving; but the paving will be pushed back to spring due to other projects, because Tim didn’t have time to properly prepare the roads. He still needs to replace a culvert on Wendell Rd. and one on Locks Pond Rd. Tim will try to do the preparations and pave in the spring before the costs of paving increase.
 - Replaced culverts on Cushman and Baker Roads.
- Other Projects:
 - Took out old veterans’ board and put in the new on the Town Common.
 - Generator installation at the school turned into a little more than was anticipated:
 - Dug and back-filled for the electric line to the school as anticipated; additionally dug a trench for two in-ground fuel storage tanks.
 - Dug and backfilled a 200 foot trench for a solar array at the Fire Station, and dug and backfilled the trenches between the poles for the electrical cables.
 - Found the Cooleyville Road bridge to be in bad repair:
 - New Salem has just replaced their Cooleyville bridge.
 - Shutesbury and New Salem share ownership of the second bridge.
 - Asked for and received 25 white oak logs from DCR from around Quabbin for the bridge and found a few more white oak logs along Shutesbury roads.
 - Hired Peter Diamond to come in with a portable saw mill to cut the logs for the bridge.
 - The new lumber is sawed out and ready to go and the bridge will be complete shortly.
 - New Salem is helping with an excavator.

Fire Chief Walter Tibbetts:

- Call volume started off slowly this summer; now the Department is doing 2 or 3 calls/day so the call volume is rising back up to the normal volume of the previous few years.
- Fire Department personnel were up to 14 and are now down to 12 people comprising a good team.
- Equipment:
 - The 15 year old “new” truck has been down for over a week, due to trouble finding parts for the alternator and regulator. The alternator was rebuilt and Walter just installed the regulator before coming up here. There are still some electrical issues to be resolved with the truck.
- Capital funds for doing projects: (Explanation added to the minutes by Town Administrator for clarification of Fire Chief’s report: 2012 town meeting voted \$25,000 for fire department equipment purchases, plus \$1,900 annually for SCBA air tanks.)
 - Hose testing had never officially or properly been tested before:
 - Most of the hose, even that purchased in 1975/76 passed.
 - Did lose a few 100-foot sections of 4 inch hose, the more expensive hose.
 - Replacement cost is \$5 per foot; the Department needs to replace 6 100-foot sections.
 - Will purchase reconditioned replacement air-packs, as new air-packs are not being sold until new specs come out.
 - Will purchase 8 sets of turn-out gear which is sized to the individual; he is dealing with 2 different distributors.
- Last Friday night’s power outage exposed some town emergency generator problems:
 - The generator at the fire station failed due to the air compressor motor drawing too much amperage on the generator and thus shutting down the generator. The air compressor is a 1963 military surplus unit which will likely need to be replaced.
- Fire Department has benefitted from the Fire Fighters Association purchases of equipment this year:
 - Surplus equipment purchased from another community included eight 4,500 psi breathing air storage bottles and other equipment total value of \$10,000 for \$800.
 - An additional purchase of a breathing air compressor valued at \$16,000 for \$3,000.
 - Funds raised from Association boot drives, pancake breakfasts, street number signs and other sources provides needed department equipment at a great value.
- Didn’t yet fill out a space survey due to other competing projects including the generator project:
 - Long-term space needs include: 2 bays added to the fire station either parallel or double length to house the emergency response trailer (which houses spill response, road closure, fire fighter rehabilitation equipment and other emergency response equipment) and an extra military surplus truck to move the emergency response trailer and/or the emergency response boat.
- Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG):
 - Finance Committee reserve funds supplemented budgeted Emergency Management funds to provide the matching funds for this year’s EMPG.
 - The grant was used to revamp and expand the town frequency and all radios for the town to be in compliance with the January 2013 federal narrow-banding mandate.
 - The repeater was replaced, and all highway, police, and fire vehicles were equipped with compliant radios.
 - The reimbursement funds will be applied to radios compatible with the town’s local frequency so that all other emergency response officials including the Board of Health and Select Board, and contractors will be able to communicate with each other in emergencies.
 - Tim Hunting reported that when he was working in Cooleyville today he was able to make a radio call to a member of his crew that came in well.
- Emergency Generator at the School:
 - There have been a few “bumps” in the project, which is not unusual in projects with multiple subcontractors, but overall, the project is going well,

- As of Thursday all the parties working on the project will come together to review the installation and after that meeting, the project should be done.
- Emergency generator problems revealed in Friday's power outage in addition to the Fire Station:
 - The Town Hall generator had been manually taken out of the auto start mode and did not run.
 - Taking the generator out of the auto start mode requires physically turning off an outside switch.
 - Because the new repeater's back-up battery had not yet been installed, the emergency management/Highway Department radios were not working until Walter resolved the problem with the Town Hall generator.
 - The generator housing may need to be locked.
 - On Saturday morning Walter received a notice call that the new school generator was running. He went to the school, trouble-shot and corrected that situation also.
 - In response to a citizen's question concerning the status of the chemical oxidation remediation process to treat the soil contamination at the Fire Station site:
 - Due to the dry summer, the ground water level has been too low for accurate measurement of the progress. Chemical reaction is still taking place.
 - As of last week there is no water in the wetlands.
 - In a couple of weeks the Consultant can come back to check the test wells.
 - Even though we are getting rain, it takes a long time for ground water to fully recharge. One can almost walk across the Quabbin impoundment area at Gate 16.

Library Director Mary Anne Antonellis:

- In May CWMARS (Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing) changed their catalogue system to an open-source software called Evergreen.
 - Evergreen has only been in existence for a couple of years.
 - The huge migration of data was not without glitches.
 - Recommends that patrons call the library if they are having trouble accessing accounts.
 - Compared to other member towns, things are working better at the Spear Library due to the newer scanners and computers in use there.
 - Mary Anne offered her thanks to Weezie Houle for selecting those computers.
- Personnel: Library Substitutes Wendy Pearson and Jessica Carlson-Belanger have moved on and Julie Stepanek is now working as an occasional Substitute.
- A full calendar of fall programming was printed in the September newsletter; it will be on the Library's website soon:
 - The Library will partner with the 250th Celebration Committee to bring native Americans speaker Doctor Margaret "Marge" Bruchac back this Thursday, Oct. 11, 2012 at 7 PM.
 - The Library is partnering with the Energy Committee to provide a 2-evening "Winsert Workshop" to teach an alternative to replacing drafty windows.
 - Part 1 will be a lecture. In part 2 participants will make "winserts" for windows.
 - The Friends of the Library and the Energy Committee will share the costs so it's free for participants.
 - A spring program will be based on the book called The Reading Promise: My Father and the Books We Shared - a memoir of a woman when at 9 years old made a promise with her father to read together for 100 nights. They then made a second promise to read together for 1000 nights and then every day for 9 years until she went to college. The program will encourage the elementary school children and homeschoolers to try to do the same.
- Circulation has increased again this year. Mary Anne is currently writing Cultural Council grant applications for programming for the coming spring and summer.
- Mary Anne will speak at a state library program about using social media to promote a library.

Bill Elliott Board of Health:

- The annual October 20 flu clinic will also be an emergency dispensing site exercise.
 - Following federal regulations, every community must be able to provide emergency medication to a high percentage of its population within a 40 to 60 hour window of time.
 - The clinic is also run as a mass vaccination exercise in keeping with guidelines of the federal Incident Command System (ICS). All volunteer staff are ICS trained.
 - Chief Tibbets therefore becomes Incident Commander for the flu clinic.
 - The Fire station is Shutesbury's Emergency Management Command Center.
 - The clinic will be at the elementary school on October 20, open to the public 10 am to 1 PM.
 - This year all 140 doses have been provided by the state Department of Public Health; last year the town bought 60 of the doses.
 - All but 20 nasal doses are to be injected. Nasal doses are primarily for people below 18 yrs.
 - The set-up is monitored for evaluation. Last year the set-up was done in 1 hour.
 - The flu clinic goal is to do one patient every minute.
 - There is no sign-up: First come, first served.
- Mosquito Borne Illnesses:
 - In addition to West Nile Virus (WNV), Shutesbury is also at risk for the mosquito-borne illness Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).
 - EEE also makes people sick and is much more serious than West Nile Virus.
 - The EEE mortality rate is approaching 50%.
 - Of those that survive, 50% will endure severe neurological problems for the rest of their lives.
 - That explains why the Board of Health sent out the reverse 911 calls.
 - Advice: Wear insect repellants with DEET 30%, and limit outside activities from dusk to dawn.
 - The Board of Health is actively working with elementary school Principal Robert Mahler who is allowing no outside activities at the school after 4:30 PM.
- Principal Mahler was also recognized for his role in making the school available for the flu clinic.
- The Board of Health has been more involved with housing issues this year than in the past, including condemning one location. Usually code things can be fixed, but this was exceptional.
- The Board continues to monitor the usual septic systems and wells.
- To a question concerning the whooping cough vaccine:
 - The whooping cough vaccine is a recommendation from private physicians;
 - The Board of Health only gets flu vaccine.
 - The Board of Health urges people to get a whooping cough vaccination.

Memorial Day Committee member Al Springer:

- The new Veterans Board on the town common will be completed before cold weather sets in.
- Al will attend the up-coming annual budget meeting for the next fiscal year for Central Franklin County Veterans' District.

Town Clerk and Historical Commission member Leslie Bracebridge:

- Forms are available for the annual mandatory Ethics Commission sign-off, Open Meeting Law sign-off and sexual harassment sign-off sheets.
- All people present and not previously sworn to the duties of their office were invited to assume being sworn in by virtue of this announcement and/or are invited to catch the Town Clerk for individual swearing in.
- Election polls will be open on November 6 from 7 AM to 8 PM; the last day to register to vote is October 17.

- Residents can input their own additional contact information such as cell phone numbers and email addresses for the few but important town emergency announcements into the “Black Board” system by going to the website homepage or directly to the Fire Department page. People who would like more information added can also contact the town clerk or the fire chief to add contact information. Most land line numbers are automatically put in, from Verizon. Especially those people relying on cell phones should update their contact information, as Black Board Connect does not have access to a cell phone directory.
- The Historical Commission is cancelling the annual West Schoolhouse open house, due to on-going repairs and will resume the tradition in 2013.
- The Friends of the Quabbin are encouraging and coordinating remembrance programs in historical societies and commissions in the towns surrounding the Reservoir in 2013 in remembrance, not celebration of the 75th anniversary of 1938, the year the 4 towns of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich and Prescott were discontinued. Shutesbury will participate. Shutesbury resident and Chief Interpreter of the Quabbin Visitor’s Center Clif Read continues to be a wonderful help in finding information for Shutesbury in preparation for 2013.
- The public is invited to attend a hike, sponsored by the Historical Commission, to the Town Farm on October 13, 2012 as listed in the September newsletter.

Town Administrator Rebecca “Becky” Torres:

- It’s been an intense summer with many projects. The insulation project at the school was very successful. The generator installation and now the solar panels are still on-going.
- Sign-up for the weekly (less than weekly over this past summer) Town Administrator reports for a heads-up on immediate things of interest or importance for our community.
 - One has to be pro-active to sign-up for these and other announcements by going to www.shutesbury.org.
 - The email announcement system is a valuable tool especially for information sharing.
- In response to a citizen’s question Becky confirmed that the town hall has had energy audit.
- Wired West: Please fill out the survey cards that were in the September mailing.
 - There is a 25% response rate thus far.
 - The easiest way to respond, if one has Internet access at home, is go to the Shutesbury website and complete the questionnaire online.
 - Wired West is being developed through a cooperative of municipal lighting plants.
 - The survey card information is needed for Wired West to go out to bond.
 - The business model is dependent upon the surveys to record the level of interest.
 - This project will not work without a strong level of interest.
 - It will not cost the town a thing.
 - Television and phone service also come in through fiber. It mimics Comcast.
 - It will be a viable less expensive alternative.
 - There will be no requirement to sign-up once it is in place.

Leverett Road resident Steve Puffer:

- Made a statement complete with examples from Worthington, Cumington and Northampton concerning towns purchasing surplus military equipment and recommending that Shutesbury consider doing so.

Planning Board Chairman Deacon Bonnar:

- The Planning Board has a Floodplain Bylaw on the November 13 town meeting warrant.
- Due to the economy, there is no building going on, so Planning Board activity is quiet.

Finance Committee Co-Chairman Russ Wilson:

- The Finance Committee is just starting the FY 14 budget planning process.
- The Committee will be sending out letters to departments for projections.

- The Finance Committee will meet with department heads to discuss budgets.
- The current \$1 million free cash report is a good advantage but there are a few things that could wipe it all out at any given time.
- Expects there will be some good requests and discussions.

Town Administrator Becky Torres:

- Special Town Meeting Nov. 13.
 - Flood Plain Bylaw.
 - Verizon settlement of \$13,000: Assessors will make transfers into surplus accounts which will be voted at the town meeting.

Correspondent for the Daily Hampshire Gazette Stefan Ward-Wheten:

- The Gazette is trying to step up coverage of smaller towns.
- Will get in touch with individuals about things discussed tonight.
- Encourages anyone to contact him about anything of public interest either municipal or other public events of any kind; don't hesitate to contact Stefan. Leslie and Becky have his contact information.

Question about Cemetery caretaker?

- Has been hired, oriented to equipment.
- Will be working to get things back in order.
- Went three months without a regular caretaker. Hope to have it back in shape in a couple of weeks.
- In response to a question of the Highway Department filling in at the cemetery: The Highway Department has been down 1 person for a year and 1/2; it's been a struggle to keep up with regular work never mind taking on extra.
- Becky: Tim takes on extremely large projects atypical of other towns which saves the town a lot of money. If we had been aware of the problem at the cemetery, we would have taken a different action.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary