

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen Tuesday July 31, 2012 Meeting Minutes

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

Also Present: Residents: Melissa Makepeace, Anna Aaron, Jim Aaron, Robert Groves and Sharon Raymond, Town Administrator Rebecca Torres, Administrative Secretary Leslie Bracebridge recording. Chairman Puleo opened the meeting at 6:30 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall.

Appointments

Police Chief Harding:

- **Received resignation from part time Officer Robinson:**
 - Has received resumes of less experienced people.
 - Potential full time candidates are not interested in giving up accumulated vacation time where they are currently working in order to come to work here. What can be done about that?
- Chief Harding has spoken with the union representative, about an **Officer in Charge when the Chief is away.**
 - Something will be put into writing to waive that part of the contract for those days.
 - Selectmen will meet at 7 AM this Friday morning to sign the contract waiver wording.
- The Daily Hampshire Gazette reported Officer Soto arrested someone in Shutesbury with 10 pounds of marijuana.

Topics

1. Wired West and the Leverett Fiber project:

- Becky reported information shared at a meeting that she attended with Wired West Executive Board members, and high speed Internet advocates of Leverett and Shutesbury about the similarities and differences between Wired West and Leverett's project to address such questions as, "Why can't parts of Shutesbury attach to Leverett's project?" and "Why can't Shutesbury do what Leverett is doing?" :

Wired West:

- There's going to be a survey mailing going out to Shutesbury residents around August 15, about getting wire to the homes through Wired West.
- Wired West is determined to get outside funding in addition to municipal funding.
- Wired West has received engineering bids.
- A business plan will hopefully be done for Wired West by October.
- Because of the cooperative nature of the Wired West concept, costs will be lower than what consumers are currently paying private providers for Internet service.
- Wired West has to make-ready 70,000 poles. They have to get a permit to put a hook on every one of those poles, and there will have to be some new poles.

Town of Leverett:

- Leverett is 14 months into their project; they got a grant from the MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Institute.)
- Leverett had a detailed engineering study done before their town meeting.
- The Leverett timeline is not before 2014.
 - Leverett has eased off of their timeline because MBI talked about a January completion date, then March and now it could be June 30.
 - It would be very difficult for Leverett to be ready within 6 months of MBI's work.
- Rob Brooks spoke for Leverett at the meeting. He is committed to both the Leverett approach and to the Wired West approach.
- Once Leverett does a build-out, it will be committed to their equipment and their plan.

- Potentially there will be some stages of build-out where it would be possible for Leverett still to join Wired West.
- Both projects are complicated; both have variables and many things to be resolved.
- The 40 communities of Wired West will have an economy of scale over Leverett.
- It would not be easy for Shutesbury to just do what Leverett is doing.
- Wired West will own their wire; it won't be shared without an agreement.
- Cost models: Will everyone be required to sign-up?
 - **Wired West** is trying to get bond funding as a Cooperative.
 - Bonding will be paid for with revenues from clients who have signed up for Wired West.
 - Everyone in **Leverett** will pay for the construction piece; not the service:
 - Everyone in Leverett who signs up will pay a monthly fee to the ISP – probably Crocker.
 - No one has to sign-up in either model.
- It's a big issue – houses are not being sold because of it, some people have bought houses without realizing they will not have high speed Internet.
- Leverett's North Leverett Fire Station will be wired; Shutesbury's nearby large population at Lake Wyola would like to hook up to Leverett; the cost of those hook-ups would be huge.

Becky concluded, "We have to keep our energy behind Wired West."

2. **Space Needs: How best to approach the issue:**

- Efficient maximum use of available municipal space has come up many times over the years.
- Two surveys are needed: An evaluative inventory including size, condition and space utilization of all town buildings and a survey of all department needs present and future.
- Doing the surveys before the All Boards meeting will give people opportunity for "pre-thought."
- The All Boards meeting set for September 11 was rescheduled to October 2 to allow time to send out and receive back space surveys to and from all department heads, boards, and commissions.
- Would Community input be valuable as far as the survey goes?
 - Community input can come once the needs are defined by the people who provide the services to the town.
- Professional help for such things as engineering studies could be hired later if needed.

Selectmen voted to request the Buildings Committee evaluate all town buildings and the Buildings Committee to check in with their progress at a September Select Board meeting.

3. **Shutesbury Library:**

- Nothing more has come up since the July 17 meeting report of the 2 offers to sell private homes to the town for use as a library.

5. **Discuss possible assistance for a Master Plan update this coming semester:**

- A \$6,000 student project option was briefly available to update the Master Plan, so this item was added to the Select Board meeting agenda, but another town was already selected.
- Full price to update our Master Plan would be more than double that amount.
- Our Master Plan is 8 years old. Master Plans should be up-dated every 10 years.

6. **The date for a fall Special Town Meeting will be considered at the next Select Board meeting.**

Select Board Action Items

1. The Lake Wyola Association had changes in administration and inadvertently overlooked getting all paperwork for a 1-day liquor license in on time. **Selectmen unanimously voted to sign a one-day liquor license for the July 28 Beer and Wine Fest. Selectmen unanimously voted to sign the one-day liquor license June 30, 2012 Lake Wyola Association (LWA) Pig roast.**
2. Selectmen unanimously voted to sign Tree Warden Tom Houston's Personnel Action Form for FY 13.
3. Selectmen unanimously voted to sign-off on the appropriate event forms for the Pig Roast and Beer and Wine Fest in Select Board action item #1 above.

4. Selectmen signed payroll warrants totaling \$78,674.97.
5. Selectmen signed vendor warrants totaling \$105,000.31.
6. Selectmen unanimously voted to sign the Warrant for the September 6 Primary election.
7. Selectmen voted to approve the July 11 minutes at the Regional School Planning Committee as written. Selectmen voted to approve the July 17, 2012 meeting minutes requesting a note added in the discussion regarding swimming at Lake Wyola to include the results of a fact-check of the bylaw indicating that swimmers must be accompanied by a boat, only if greater than 150 feet from the shore.

Topics the Chairman Could Not Reasonably Have Anticipated

1. **Selectmen unanimously voted to sign 2 FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) requests for signatures for reimbursement funding for the October 2011 snow storm in the amounts of \$5,800 and \$8,000.**
2. **Selectmen unanimously voted to appoint Robert Thompson to the LWAC (Lake Wyola Advisory Committee.)**
3. **Elaine reported that the Regional School District Planning Committee work is going very fast:**
 - The Committee met at and toured the Leverett Elementary School last week.
 - Shutesbury is probably ½ the size of other schools in the proposed region.
 - The next tour will be the Wildwood School, then Shutesbury, Fort River and Pelham.
 - Right now the Committee is writing RFP's for people to write the financial and educational components of the regionalization concept.
 - The configuration of the region would be pre-K through 12 or 7 through 12 the effect would be to keep the elementary students separate from secondary students.
 - The advantages of pre-K through 12th would be one Superintendent, and one school committee.
 - The "Outer Ring" concept has been set aside since all 4 towns are at the table. There would be no reason for Amherst to be involved in an Outer Ring Region.
 - Amherst has a new Curriculum Coordinator and has been moving in the direction of the new state imposed curriculum mandates.
 - i. Members of the Regionalization Committee met with the Curriculum Coordinator.
 - ii. Trying to find out what Amherst is doing and how it would affect Shutesbury.
 - iii. Efforts are being made to get corresponding Union 28 information.
 - A Communications Subcommittee is charged with getting information out about the Regionalization Planning Committee's efforts. People will want to know how Regionalization would impact finances and the schools.
 - This is the third time Elaine has been a part of a regionalization effort and is the most comprehensive including involvement of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).
 - A major vote of the Regionalization Committee will determine which model (pre-K through 6th or pre-K through 12th) "path" the Committee will continue to follow.
 - A plan to regionalize has to be approved by all the member towns and by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) by December to open as a region by the following September.
 - This is not a random effort:
 - i. People need to know why the effort to regionalize is being made.
 - ii. The study will find out why Shutesbury has been looking at Regionalization for 2 years.
 - The next meeting of the Regional School District Planning Committee is Aug. 15 at 6 PM at the Wildwood School to agree on the RFP's for the Financial and Educational sections.

- The financial consultant will look at the books from an outside perspective for both pre-K through 12 and Pre-K through 6 models.
 - Both Senator Rosenberg and Representative Kulik feel there's a willingness on the part of the state to help with the financial part. Rosenberg has suggested 4 to 5 years of assistance and then the towns would assume the full amount:
 - i. We've talked about funds to ramp up OPEB.
 - ii. The biggest "ramping up" would be Shutesbury's salaries to Amherst's salaries.
 - a. Would we need the same configuration of teachers?
 - b. The Superintendent and transportation would be regional; special needs could be regional.
 - c. A number of Shutesbury students are currently choiced to Pelham; Shutesbury wouldn't lose that if we were all one region.
 - iii. Costs, transportation and control of schools would all be different.
 - a. Pelham (which is already a region with Amherst) appears to pay less than Shutesbury in different categories even though their teachers are paid more.
 - b. Perhaps regionalization could increase services and make the services sustainable over a period of time. The goal is to not incur ever-increasing costs.
 - Amherst is bursting in the three elementary schools – Wildwood in particular. Pelham only has 50 students and could absorb more.
 - i. The buildings are owned by the towns.
 - ii. Elaine doesn't foresee the region buying the buildings from the towns.
- 4. Robert McCormick has resigned from the Board of Health:**
- Shutesbury resident Norene Pease has forwarded a resume to the Board of Selectmen with substantial expertise in the health services field for the Board's consideration, as she would like to be voted into the open position in keeping with MGL 41§11 at a future meeting.
- 5.** At their July meeting, the Lake Wyola Advisory Committee (LWAC) independently voted to allow a certain amount of water to flow out of the Lake Wyola Dam and instructed Dam Keeper Howard Kinder to do so. This action happened without consideration of input from other town officials or boards such as the Emergency Management Director, the Emergency Management Team and the Board of Selectmen. The proper way would be for LWAC to make a recommendation to the Emergency Management Director, the Dam Keeper and the Board of Selectmen.
- The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and/or the Department of Conservation and Recreation could at any time impose their recommendations. Shutesbury has worked very hard to keep the flow of water a town decision rather than a state mandate.
 - There was no bad intent on the part of the LWAC, but other officials need to be involved in Lake water output flow decisions. April offered to get that message back to LWAC.
- 6.** The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has agreed to give funds to the regionalization study effort. A meeting of Regionalization Study Committee Chairman Andy Steinberg and Shutesbury representatives Michael DeChiara and Elaine Puleo is scheduled for August 8 to review a memorandum of understanding with FRCOG. The PVPC is giving \$15,000, and the Regional School system is giving \$20,000 toward the study. The town asked for \$116,000 in the previous grant application which was not funded. There will be a new application and the Committee will be in a better position for DESE funds because the funds are no longer tied to foundation spending levels.

The Select Board **adjourned at 8:20 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge, Administrative Secretary

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