

Shutesbury Historical Commission
Minutes – 05/13/25 (approved -08/23/25)

Virtual Meeting

July 29, 2025 Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order: at 7:00 PM by Chairman Henry Geddes

Members Present: Henry Geddes and Karen Czerwonka.

Members Absent: Mariah Shore and Erin McGuirl.

Also Present: Members whose terms had expired on June 30: Bert Fernandez and Janice Stone, Associate member Leslie Bracebridge and Shutesbury resident Katherine Powers.

Topics discussed:

Membership: Henry summarized that technically, there was not a quorum present to call the meeting to order: This is the first meeting of the new Fiscal Year, 3 member terms expired simultaneously on June 30, and when polled in June, did not volunteer to continue their membership. Two more recently appointed members, Mariah Shore and Erin McGuirl, are not able to attend meetings regularly. This makes achievement of a meeting quorum of 4 (for a 7-member Commission) impossible to achieve.

Members whose terms expired on June 30:

Matteo Pangallo is “stretched so thin” with obligations that he will not be returning at present.

Bert Fernandez, who wished to stay on as a non-voting Associate member only, for the same purposes as Leslie Bracebridge – to continue to answer questions from the public concerning Shutesbury’s history, and to organize and inventory the holdings of the Commission, with the long-term goal of digitization of key holdings, stated that he could stay on as a member, on a meeting-by-meeting basis, cautioning that his attendance at meetings will also have interruptions.

Janice Stone, “Hated to leave the Commission in the lurch”, and stated that there are a few projects, which she would like to see “brought to completion” before she steps down, offered the same meeting-by-meeting availability as Bert.

Henry will notify the Town Administrator to recommend that the Select Board re-appoint Bert Fernandez and Janice Stone to the Commission, due to their willingness to serve, if not for full terms, at least until new people interested in serving on the Commission, and with more complete meeting availability are found.

By “rule of necessity”, Henry called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM with the previous members, Bert Fernandez and Janice Stone, whose terms just expired on June 30, completing the quorum.

Meeting Guest Katherine Powers stated her interest in becoming a member of the Historical Commission, and voiced her availability to both attend meetings, and to participate in the process of inventorying Commission holdings. Katherine stated that she was an archivist for 15 years. Katherine stated her interest in the Commission’s holdings and will make an appointment with Leslie to view the Historical Commission’s storage closet, regardless of her appointment or not to the Commission. Katherine is currently a book reviewer, and she offers the Commission her excellent writing skills. Janice moved and Bert seconded to recommend to the Select Board that Katherine Powers be appointed as a new member of the Historical Commission: Czerwonka - aye, Fernandez – aye, Stone – aye, Geddes – aye.

Public comment: No members of the public were present to offer comment.

Guideboard Update: Henry is maintaining contact with the Williamstown conservators, has recently processed a warrant for their work, and will confirm with the Town Accountant that the warrant was processed. Henry sent out 5 inquiries for estimates to create a cement foundation on the Town Common to place the guideboard on, upon its return to Shutesbury, and has heard back from only one business so far. Henry will continue to look for the best solution for a base for the return of the guideboard to the Town Common, keeping the Town Administrator and the Select Board in the decision-making process.

Unanticipated Business: Since the Commission was relying on Erin to offer a sample accession and deaccession policy for consideration, and Erin could not attend this meeting, the topic of collection organization and digitization was not added to this agenda.

Next Meeting and Adjournment: Henry will call the next meeting according to the needs of the Commission. Karen wondered if the meetings needed to be monthly in order for the Commission to qualify for the Schmidt Foundation funds. Leslie did not know of any obligation short of meeting annually to elect officers, responding to the bank inquiries, and showing up at the Memorial Day service to march in the parade. Leslie will research Karen’s concern, and communicate with Henry if monthly meetings are required.

At 8 PM, Henry moved, and Karen seconded to adjourn: Czerwonka - aye, Fernandez – aye, Stone – aye, Geddes – aye.

Respectfully submitted by

Leslie Bracebridge