M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2025 Hybrid Meeting Format

Committee members present: Rita Farrell, Mary Jo Johnson, Stephen Dallmus, Paul Lyons, Susie Mosher.

Staff present and Guests: Brennan Mailloux, Mary Anne Antonellis

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

Agenda Review: As posted.

General Business:

1. Introduction of Committee Members
   1. The committee members introduced themselves as Rita Farrell, Mary Jo Johnson, Stephen Dallmus, Paul Lyons, and Susie Mosher. Brennan Mailloux also introduced himself.
2. Selection of Chair:
   1. Rita Farrell offered to be Chair and the rest of the committee members voted in her favor. Mailloux will take notes of the meetings.

**VOTE:** Dallmus makes a motion that Rita Farrell takes on the responsibility of Chair of the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee, Jo Johnson seconds. Roll call vote Jo Johnson: aye, Mosher: aye, Lyons: aye, Dallmus: aye, Farrell: abstain; motion carries.

1. Review of Committee Charge:
   1. Farrell discussed the committee's charge and that it is to determine the highest and best use for the building, including developing a conceptual plan with cost estimates, as the building needs continuous use to remain insured and heated. The committee was supposed to be 7 members, but it is a little smaller due to less applicants than expected. Farrell explained that while the new library will provide additional space, this building represents an ongoing financial obligation during challenging financial times.
2. Questions:
   1. Paul Lyons asked if this is a situation where potential state grants are available and could be tapped into for reuse. Farrell stated CPA funds could be used towards the historic preservation part of the project, but not for what is considered maintenance, upkeep, and rehabilitation. CPA funds used under historic need to follow certain preservation guidelines.
   2. Lyons also asked if the Select Board has been lobbied by residents or groups for the building’s new use, and Farrell stated she has not been directly lobbied before, but in the past administration, it was discussed that the Police Department would be the ones moving in there.
3. Discussion of tasks to be undertaken by committee:
   1. Farrell stated the goal of the committee is to lay out some options for the building’s future use, and to uncover what the real needs and costs are.
   2. Tasks include conducting a municipal needs assessment and developing a conceptual plan for reuse of the building.
   3. The Committee shall seek input from various Shutesbury Boards, Committees, and Department Heads. They will also engage the public and solicit their input. (Paul Lyons offered to develop two separate questionnaires about space needs and interest in using the M.N. Spear Library building. One for boards and committees, and another one for current Town Hall staff members.)
   4. The Committee will seek advice from professionals such as engineers and contractors.
4. Preliminary Review of current building conditions:
   1. The committee discussed a building assessment report prepared back in 2022. Dallmus who shared his 40-year background as a home inspector in Baltimore, Maryland, led the development of the spreadsheet that tracks building conditions. Key points included in the report are that the front entry requires structural renovation and stabilization that is potentially eligible for CPA funds. There is rotting trim and siding that needs attention. The heating system is old but still is functionable. The building has simplistic electrical work and Dallmus mentioned the building is handicap accessible. There is no running water and no bathrooms. The group agreed to explore MassSave options for insulation and weatherization. Dallmus stated it is important to renovate and restore but do so in a manner that will also last.
5. Discussion of meeting dates and time:
   1. The Committee decided on a schedule that will meet every other Thursday at 10:30 am. The next meeting is scheduled for 10:30 am on October 2nd.
6. Meeting adjourned at 11:05 am

Administrative Actions:

1. Paul Lyons to develop two questionnaires for board and committees, and Town Hall staff and occupants.
2. Mailloux to develop a spreadsheet of current Town Hall offices and their individual hours.
3. Committee members to review the building assessment document and email questions to Dallmus before the next meeting.
4. Committee to investigate if MassSave conducts assessments on municipal buildings and get on their list if possible.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee Charge
2. Shutesbury’s Building Assessment

Respectfully submitted,

Brennan Mailloux

Administrative Assistant

Town Administrator/Select Board

\*\* A full version of the 9/18/25 M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury’s YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAKhrFqh6Ic>