

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen February 28, 2011 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.

Meeting opened at 6:30 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall

Appointments

Police Chief Harding and Sergeant Wall:

- Sergeant Wall will be starting a new position with the Town of Wilbraham around April first.
- Shutesbury's March schedule is set; the April schedule will have some gaps to fill.
- Chief Harding will be open to hiring either multiple part timers or one or more full time officers.
- Sergeant base pay in this area is low \$40,000's/ year; with "details" pay, that income can double.
 - Sergeant Wall's pay is below the area average, even with the Quinn Bill.
 - A sergeant in Leverett with "Quinn" earns 20 % more than a sergeant in Shutesbury.
 - Because there would be a significant drop in pay for anyone of sergeant ranking to come to Shutesbury, it is anticipated that the position of sergeant will remain vacant for a while.
- Part time officer pay here is secondary to only 2 other area towns and benefits are better here.
- Chief Harding needs more regular commitment so ideally, the department would hire 2 full timers.
 - It will not be easy to fill 2 fulltime positions.
 - Free online advertising options that would reach officers from a broader area will be tried.
 - Working relationships with other towns has already been explored.
- Review of police department resources included:
 - Facility security.
 - Computer upgrades: Working toward IMC computer program which would provide interoperability for records management. The hope is for free statewide interoperability.
 - Air cards per laptop are \$40/month.
 - Right now we're paying \$80/month for just 2 computers.
 - Firearms need to be updated and made uniform across the department.
- Chief Harding inquired about the possibility of certain fees to come back to the department to make up for some of the lost grant revenues. Answer included:
 - Retention of fees was discontinued town-wide for uniformity.
 - Departments tell the Finance Committee what the department resource needs are.
 - We're on more solid footing from state projections in January; where do you need funds?
 - Priority one is the facility.
 - Priority two is staffing: Ideally 3 full timers and 2-6 part timers, and an administrative assistant.
 - Replacement funding source for loss of revenue from grants.

Topics

1. **Police Department Staffing:** See Chief Harding and Sgt. Wall Appointment above.
2. **MIIA Grant: Selectmen unanimously voted to sign an application for a loss control grant in the amount of \$760 for proactive chair purchase** to ward off future medical treatments and absences from work.
3. **Floodplain bylaw (for the National Flood Insurance Program - NFIP) proposed for Annual Town Meeting/Planning Board hearing coming up after an informational hearing.**

- The Planning Board will present a bylaw proposal to the public in early March to create a Floodplain Overlay District, which is required to join the National Flood Insurance Program.
 - Lake area property owners especially will be targeted to attend the public hearing.
 - The Planning Board has worked with Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Senior Land Use Planner Pat Smith to prepare the bylaw, for the purpose of the NFIP rather than a bylaw initiated by the Planning Board.
 - No Select Board action is needed except to review and offer comments on the bylaw.
 - Becky will try to get Planning Board representation at the next LWAC meeting also.
 - In addition to adoption of the bylaw, membership in the NFIP also requires adoption of a local Hazard Mitigation Plan. FRCOG has money from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to work on Shutesbury's hazard mitigation plan.
 - The Planning Board will be talking about the proposed bylaw at 8 PM on March 14.
- 4. UMass assistance on contamination site, review email from Dean Goodwin. Discuss options:**
- Email from Steve Goodwin: Do both things already presented based on the water table.
 - Derek Lovley offered to recommend a licensed company for implementation of experimental bioremediation if so desired.
 - Shutesbury's site is not appropriate for a research project so they are not really interested.
 - They are not Licensed Site Professionals (LSP's); they can talk about ideas, but the project doesn't progress.
 - **Selectmen agreed to speak with LSP Jim Okun about pricing and a contract for one or two treatments of the injection method and be done.**
- 5. Report on MMA legislative update:**
- Elaine and April attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association's legislative breakfast:
 - Not many people attended.
 - MMA is focusing on:
 - Municipal aide: Wants \$65 million added to the governor's budget.
 - They expect new lottery revenues.
 - There is hope local aid will be resolved by mid-April.
 - Chapter 90: The Governor hasn't filed a bill yet. The MMA wants notice by April 1.
 - They want the homeless children bussing issue resolved for the 2012 to 2013 school year
 - Smaller VA benefit reimbursement.
 - Issues with the Open Meeting Law.
 - Senators and Reps:
 - Failure of super-committees.
 - Contract cuts to Westover and Barnes.
 - MBTA is \$161 million in the hole – proposal to take excess snow and ice funds to cover it or they may want to make it a broad based gasoline tax or increase tolls.
 - Health care costs: Shift model to rewarding doctors to keep people healthy.
 - Medicaid negotiated by Governor is a concern for local facilities.
 - Worry for human services with \$1.5 million going to hospitals and oncologists.
 - Selectmen agreed to write an unfunded mandate letter.
 - Representative John Scibak is worried about the Governor's proposal for community colleges because of what happened when UMass was centralized.
 - Scibak is on a committee to look at the OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) question.
 - Western Mass has a very strong power base in both the house and senate because of where everyone sits, so make your voice heard.

- MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority) discussion will include a request for increased funding for the local Regional Transportation Authority. There is no local funding for elderly to get to medical appointments. An example was given of a \$45 taxi ride every two weeks for a blood pressure reading out here and in Boston it costs \$2.50/ride. Becky is working on getting regular rides for Shutesbury elders: Where Shutesbury would put up \$2,000/year toward a state match of \$8,000/year. It was recommended to her to put together a volunteer system.

6. Disposal of Surplus Supplies Policy:

- Becky received a request from a department head to replace a computer to keep up with the software updates and from someone within the department to purchase the old computer.
- Becky's Research: The local jurisdiction must develop written procedures for disposal of surplus goods under \$5,000.
- Becky developed a procedure for Select Board approval.
- It is important to first ask other departments if they might need the computer.
- **Selectmen unanimously voted to approve a proposed Surplus Property Disposition Procedure as edited at the meeting.**

Select Board Action Items

1. **Selectmen unanimously voted to approve and sign letters written to Senator Stanley Rosenberg and Representative Stephen Kulik requesting support of the \$11.3 million appropriation from the state budget to cover the mandated cost of transporting homeless children to their origin school district if they are forced to move to alternate housing.**
2. **Selectmen signed vendor warrants totaling \$128,956.31.**
3. **Selectmen signed payroll warrants totaling \$81,810.74.**
4. **Sign MIIA grant:** See number 2 in Topics above.
5. Selectmen unanimously voted to approve the minutes of January 31 and February 15, 2012 as written.

Topics the Chairman Could Not Reasonably Have Anticipated

1. **April praised Becky's article in the *Our Town* consolidating 2 years' work.**
2. **We will not know until March if we will receive Community Innovations Challenge (CIC) Grant funding to look at regionalization.**
3. **Elaine was asked by FRCOG Director of Community Services Phoebe Walker to sit on the Franklin Medical Center Regional Oversight Board.** Elaine agreed and has attended one meeting so far. Elaine will report on services available for elders in the area.
4. Elaine reported that she had received a **letter from Democratic Town Committee Secretary Bruce Parkin with a recommendation of 3 names for consideration to replace Registrar of Voters Ruth Todrin who is not enrolled in a political party and whose term expires on March 31, 2012.** Becky distributed an **email sent to the Select Board from Democratic Town Committee member Joanne Sunshower** summarizing a telephone conversation Joanne had had with a representative of the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division concerning MGL 51§15 regarding appointments to the Board of Registrars. Leslie reviewed with the Select Board:
 - That as a result of the closer look at party enrollment of members of the Board of Registrars, she better understood the functional importance of party enrollment for the purpose of even distribution of party affiliations on the Board of Registrars.
 - The even distribution of the two major parties coupled with Joanne's January 26 email entitled: "Why wasn't the recount done by an outside, neutral party without a stake in the outcome?" implying that an un-enrolled Registrar is really just "undisclosed" helped Leslie to better understand the reason for an un-enrolled Town Clerk to enroll in a political party.

- Leslie printed out her voter activity at primaries since such activity was first recorded in 1998. Since she had voted Democratic in all but one primary Leslie therefore enrolled in the Democratic Party in time for the up-coming March 6 Presidential Primary.
 - Though not referenced in either the letter or the email, Leslie reported her understanding that party enrollment for the purposes of membership on the Board of Registrars does not take effect for 2 years from the date of enrollment.
 - The question that needs to be answered is how to address the appointment of a Registrar for the term expiration of Registrar Todrin when there are already 2 Democrats on the Board of Registrars, if the Republican Town Committee is not duly constituted in Shutesbury.
 - Becky and Leslie will contact the Elections Division to discuss that question.
 - Leslie added that she was saddened to see Registrar Todrin forced to leave the Board as Ruth had always worked hard, carefully and with neutrality in her duties as a Registrar.
 - Elaine suggested that Ruth might want to enroll in the Republican Party for consideration to be reappointed as a Registrar.
 - Becky suggested the Select Board could send a letter of thanks to Ruth for her efforts.
 - Leslie expressed her own concern that it would be awkward for the Registrars to work with anyone who was at the same time suing the Board of Registrars and hoped that such an appointment would not be made.
 - Becky noted that Town Counsel MacNicol had stated in the previous shared telephone conversation that it would not be illegal.
 - Leslie added that Town Counsel MacNicol had been surprised that it would be considered, but on reflection had stated it wasn't illegal.
 - Ruth Todrin's term on the Board of Registrars does not expire until March 31, 2012.
5. Elaine received a mailing regarding the **FY 13 FRCOG budget and warrant article examples for the Annual Town Meeting.**
6. **Selectmen plan to attend the Community Preservation Committee Public Hearing** in the conference room at the Elementary School on Thursday March 1. Leslie reported today's email notice from Community Preservation Committee Chairman Donald Fletcher implied that more people might be attending the hearing than a year ago and wondered if others had heard the same, in that the hearing was to be held in the school conference room, which is of limited size. No one was aware of an excessively large group arriving for the hearing and felt the room could hold at least 20 people. Only four people showed up for the 2011 hearing, so the room was deemed to be of adequate size. Should a greater number of people show up than the room could accommodate, the hearing could be rescheduled another place and/or time to meet the greater need.

The Select Board **adjourned at 9:55 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary