

## **Shutesbury Board of Selectmen Tuesday March 26, 2013 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 6:35 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall.

### **Appointments**

#### **Police Chief Harding:**

- Part time Officer Wendy Masiuk has been oriented to the Police Department, has worked shifts with various officers on various days of the week, has been through the court process and has met the Leverett officers with whom Shutesbury's officers routinely work. She will begin independent shifts in April.
- Jesse Ritter will not be coming aboard as a part time officer.
- Shutesbury's former Fire Fighter Sean Sawicki has requested a position as an auxiliary officer in Shutesbury. He will meet with Selectmen at their next meeting.
- Full time Officer Soto should graduate from Fulltime Officer Academy on June 20. He has successfully passed a written comprehensive exam on Constitutional Law.

#### **Interview Registrar candidates from the Shutesbury Democratic Committee:**

**Selectmen met with Democratic Town Committee Chairman Penelope Kim and 2 of the 3**

**Democratic candidates for the Board of Registrars: Linda Seidman and Susan Millinger. The third candidate Georgianna Parkin was not present though Becky had sent her an email invitation to attend. Chairman Puleo invited both candidates present to introduce themselves:**

#### **Linda Seidman:**

- Is retired. Worked at UMass Library for 27 years as head of special collections and archives.
- Moved to Shutesbury in 1969.
- Served on the School Committee in 1974 and also served on the Historical Commission.
- Has worked on elections when there has been space.
- Is working with Penelope to update the voter lists for the Democratic Town Committee.
  - Understands problems with the lists.
  - Linda's understanding of the job is to maintain the official lists appropriately and to review those lists when questions come up to see if we can determine the appropriate thing to do.

#### **Susan Millinger:**

- Came to her interest as a Registrar from looking at the voter lists and her concern about the goings-on. Knows the work is delicate and a Registrar may have to work carefully with opposing viewpoints.
- Susan moved to Shutesbury 2008.
- Susan was originally from Massachusetts and moved to and worked in Virginia where people saw things differently from her. Susan's work required her to serve on a lot of committees with people who weren't of the same view point as Susan and so she learned how to work with others and be sensitive to varying points of view.
- Volunteers at the library and serves as a library staff substitute.
- Worked on the Tavern of Time pageant, part of Shutesbury's 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration.
- Works at the polls pretty regularly.
- Is working almost weekly on transcription of town archives at Town Hall.

Selectmen felt that both candidates are ideally qualified to serve as a Registrar.

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Leslie: Because Registrars run recounts, Registrars cannot serve as election workers. Registrars receive an annual stipend and election workers get an hourly pay.

Linda: States that she would be happy to serve and knows she would be great for the job.

Al: Since Linda is not on anything else and Susan has other involvements, let's get Linda involved.

Penny: To be clear, Linda has been involved in many areas of town government over the years.

Susan: Lives on Wendell Road and is also available, but appreciates wanting to get others involved.

April: Invites either person to consider taking the Personnel Board opening.

Susan: Would be interested in the Personnel Board as she also has some personnel experience, but doesn't want to take on anything more right now as she is busy as the publicity person on the Amherst League of Women Voters.

Elaine: Agrees with Al that we should encourage more people to get involved. The burden of others would be lighter if everyone lends a hand.

April: Understands past experience. Susan is already involved and will be joining the Personnel Board. Selectmen voice the difficulty with deciding between the two well-qualified candidates. The candidates offer to leave the room, but the Selectmen decline the need for that.

Susan: States that she is happy to cede to Linda, and

Linda: States that she is happy to participate.

**Selectmen unanimously voted to appoint Linda Seidman to the Board of Registrars for a 3-year term starting April 1, 2013.**

## **Topics**

### **1. Report on Regionalization Meeting of Wednesday, March 20, 2013. Elaine:**

- Shutesbury's 3-member Regional School District Planning Committee held 2 votes on March 14:
  1. The first vote reflected a change from their March 9 vote from not to support, to support a 4-town PreK-6 region consisting of the 4 towns of Leverett, Pelham, Shutesbury and Amherst.
  2. The second vote was to request the 12-member Amherst Regional School District Planning Board reconsider their Saturday, March 9, 3-town, preK-6 decision, so that Shutesbury would be a part of the development of a regional school district plan going forward.
- Subsequent to Shutesbury's March 14 votes in the development of the March 20 meeting agenda of the 12-member Regional School District Planning Board, Chairman Steinberg determined that because not all 12 members of the Regional School District Planning Board could be present on March 20, and because re-opening the March 9 vote would include reconsideration of the variations of preK-6, and preK-12, which were discussed at length at the long advanced planned and well publicized March 9 meeting/vote, Chairman Steinberg determined that the 12-member Committee should not, on March 20, reconsider the Saturday March 9 voted decision.
- Knowing this was the case, before the 12-member Board meeting began on March 20 Shutesbury's 3-member Regional School District Planning Committee again met and by vote went back on their second Thursday, March 14 vote: to request the 12-member Amherst Regional School District Planning Board reconsider their 3-town, preK-6 decision.
- Becky: There was one effort to push for re-opening the vote. There was a mixture of concerns of how we got to where we got. Both Elaine and Michael spoke on how they arrived at their decisions. Because of the tight 3-month timeline, the Chairman didn't feel there was enough time to debate the point; he just wanted people to move forward.
- April: What about Shutesbury's participation on the board?
- Elaine: All 12 people on the Board in the library (on March 9) were all on same page. All of a sudden (on March 20) it felt to Elaine like, we're not going to listen to what Shutesbury has to say. Elaine qualified her meeting impression with the anecdote that one of the strongest spokes persons

during the March 20 meeting told Elaine later in the parking lot that that was not what she meant at all. But Elaine felt that wasn't what was said publicly.

- Becky: We won't know until we're in the middle of it. We won't know how strong people will feel about if Shutesbury will have a vote. At this point Shutesbury still has a vote.
- Elaine: Two of the 3 officers of the board were from Shutesbury. Elaine resigned as Vice-Chair. Michael Dechiara is Secretary and head of the Timeline and Communications Subcommittee and the meeting response to him seemed to be, "We're not losing you on the Timeline Subcommittee." People didn't know. People were reacting to the quandary of what to do with this fuzzy ball in the middle. Elaine felt very uncomfortable in her position.
- Al: Darius from Pelham will be resigning.
- Becky: It was a very mixed reaction. Actions were taken when we didn't know what should be done.
- Elaine: Two of Leverett's representatives who are very understanding of Shutesbury's dilemma were not present.
- (Al?): Pelham wants regionalization, "hell or high water."
- Becky: The group was saying how it is. Becky felt very uncomfortable (on Saturday March 9) understanding the 3 participating towns may not want Shutesbury to vote in the development of an agreement. How do you participate if you can't vote? Andy (Chairman Steinberg) is an attorney and has read the statute and feels we can vote.
- April: Was concerned when we pulled out so early. We have a voice but not the "umph" behind it.
- Elaine: Doesn't see that the little sub-committees can be chaired by Shutesbury members.
- Becky: Noted an unsettled question of the weight of Amherst's vote versus that of the little towns.
- April: It sounds like it's still settling. It still isn't clear. April thinks eventually we will pull things together but we won't be the loud voice at the table that we could have been. April wonders how this affects Leverett?
- Becky: It makes their position more tenuous.
- Elaine: Leverett has 2 positions: 1. "We need Shutesbury, why is Shutesbury pulling out?" and 2. "Thank goodness Shutesbury won't pull us down."
- We have another meeting on Monday April 1 in the professional development room.
- April: Loves our town. We do not lock step with everyone. Maybe we can do something that the town could really get behind as a community. Internet or cell phone? It can't cost the town money.

## 2. Discuss Annual Town meeting in the presence of Moderator Penelope Kim:

- Penny finds it hard to have school reports and budget votes happen in an organized manner.
- Regional School Superintendent Geryk has to go to Pelham's town meeting on the same day also.
- Elaine likes having Article 4 (reports) later in the morning. Reports will include one from the Regional School District Study Committee. Elaine wants the Superintendent to speak at the same time that the school budget is reviewed.
- Discussion of when finance committee speaks.
- Which should come first: salary compensation for elected officials or budget approval? Money in the budget doesn't necessarily have to be spent.
- Duplicate articles will be eliminated.
- The Capital Planning Committee is still working on their request. Most of their requests are appropriated so there isn't a separate capital plan line item in the budget. There might be 1 or 2 non-on-going free cash requests.
- To Elaine's question of mapping out the capital plan in a broad brush stroke, or as each finance line appears, Penny suggests addressing each capital item at the time it comes up.

- Becky: We have a plan but we're getting away from 5 and 10 year specific plans because people believe the town will buy something at a specific date, even if the present item is in good condition.
- Al, Elaine and April all voice their similar understandings.
- Becky: The Building Committee needs \$1400 to make an initial repair the gym roof and to evaluate the entire school roof.
- A subcommittee of seniors spoke with the Buildings Committee about laying ceramic tile in the senior room. The Buildings Committee prefers to hire professionals and will need \$3,000 to lay the tile. The Council on Aging would pay for the Home Depot ceramic tile and the building committee would go through the process of hiring a professional person to lay the tile and pay for it. For a combination of laying the tile, the school roof and other items, the Town Buildings Committee will ask the Capital Planning Committee for \$20,000.
- There are no citizens' petitions yet.
- The meeting will start at 9 AM.
- Penny states that she has a nice invocation that came through Wendy and Elaine, and asks if there is anyone to honor. Leslie asks if it is appropriate to remember Town Buildings Committee member Al Plaza who died October 2, 2012.
- April: Suggests asking everyone who volunteers in town to stand up and clap.

#### **Select Board Action Items**

- 1. Selectmen unanimously voted to approve the March 12, 2013 meeting minutes as written.**
- 2. Selectmen unanimously voted and to sign a Personnel Action Form for Carrie Stone for clerical work that she is performing in the Town Clerk's office.**
3. Payroll warrants and
4. Vendor warrants will be available Thursday morning due to Passover which began tonight.
5. Elaine received the school budget from Union 28. Becky will make copies for everyone.

The Select Board **adjourned at 7:49 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge  
Administrative Secretary