

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen Monday October 21, 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.

Guests: Town Buildings Committee member Jim Aaron for the library roof repairs and the hearse house bid awards. Hampshire Council of Governments Electricity Program Assistant and town resident Geoffrey Rogers for the NEXTERA ENERGY Business Electricity Authorization

Chairman Puleo opened the meeting at 6:30 P.M. at the Shutesbury Town Hall

Appointments

Police Chief Harding:

- Franklin County Mutual Aid agreement follow-up from October 7 Select Board meeting:
 - The model started in Berkshire County. Theirs is already in place.
 - Leverett signed on to this Franklin County agreement last week.
 - If an officer gives a ticket in another town, the town where the ticket was issued gets the revenue, and the town sending the officer pays the court costs. If there is a further appeal, the officer goes again, but the revenue is between the town where the citation was made and the state.
 - Chief Harding estimates that 50% of money tickets are appealed.
 - The magistrate hearing is usually the end of things.
 - Becky suggests that over time it “would be a wash” between towns.
 - It is up to the chiefs to make sure their officers know which towns are signed on to the mutual aid agreement. The original signed contract will have a page listing the status of all Franklin County towns that have signed on by the November sign-up cut-off date.
 - Shutesbury officers already work regularly with Leverett officers; this is not a merging of town patrols.
 - Article 5 does not affect mutual aid agreements with towns outside of Franklin County.
 - Article 5 applies to the rare event when an officer who is already on-duty for his/her home town, and is traveling through another town comes upon something dramatically wrong in that other town elsewhere in Franklin County.
 - Article 5 does not affect our mutual aid arrangements with the Hampshire County towns of Amherst and Pelham.
 - There is no intention to expand Article 5 state-wide.
 - If we find it is not working, we can vote to get out of it.

Selectmen unanimously agreed to sign the Franklin County Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement including Article 5.

- Paving is underway at Pelham Hill Road (from Leverett Road to Leonard Road). It will be finished tomorrow. Arrangements for line painting will occur later.
- The Police Department is preparing for the annual Halloween event in the town center. Five officers will be on duty and all Police Department vehicles will be in use that night.
- Faulty cruiser power ports are scheduled to be repaired this week.

Topics

1. Review Special Town Meeting Warrant:

- The higher of the 2 bids under consideration for the M.N. Spear Library roof repairs was put onto the warrant as the town can always spend less on a project than is funded, but not more.

Selectmen unanimously voted to approve and sign the November 5, 2013 Special Town Meeting Warrant. The meeting will be at the elementary school, 23 West Pelham Road, starting at 7 PM.

2. Bids: Discussed in the presence of Town Buildings Committee member Jim Aaron:

- **M.N. Spear Library roof bids:**

- Bids ranged from a low of \$14,200.00 from Timothy J. Luce Roofing through \$54,220.00 from Rockwell Roofing.
- The second lowest bid of \$14700 was from Mahan Roofing, a larger specialty Company out of Springfield/Hartford.
- The Building Committee is currently researching references of Luce and Mahan projects:
 - Also, Library Director Mary Anne Antonellis spoke with the directors of the Ludlow Library and the Lilly Library in Florence. Both gave Timothy Luce top scores on all aspects of his work, including craftsmanship and meeting timelines.
 - Timothy Luce has also worked for large roofing companies.
 - The timing for the Spear Library has not yet been determined, as the bid will not be awarded until anticipated funding is secured at the Nov. 5 Special Town Meeting.
 - Mahan did Leverett's slate school roof repair.
 - If references for low bidder, Timothy Luce are solid, he will be awarded the bid, contingent upon special town meeting funding.
 - Becky will wait to hear a recommendation from the Town Buildings Committee for which company to award the bid to; award contingent upon Town Meeting funding.

Selectmen unanimously voted to award the M.N. Spear Library roof replacement of the south panel and repairs to other sides, to Timothy J. Luce contingent upon positive feedback of the Town Building Committee and approved funding of the November 5, 2013 Special Town Meeting.

- We received responses to 3 of the 4 parts of the Hearse House rehabilitation project:
 - There was 1 bid for the masonry aspect of the project from Jeremy Brown for \$5300.
 - There was 1 bid for the timber-framing and structural work from Jesse Brown for \$4350.
 - There was also 1 bid for the carpentry from Jesse Brown for \$4350.
 - Jeremy and Jesse happen to be brothers so communication between the parts should be fine.
 - There are no bids for the painting, which can be re-bid in the spring, after the construction.
 - Jim Aaron feels the Browns are "first class craftsmen." Jesse was an apprentice with Bob Groves and then with a craftsman from Ashburnham.

Selectmen unanimously voted to award the masonry work on the hearse house to Jeremy Brown and the carpentry and timber framing/structural work to Jesse Brown.

3. Franklin County Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement:

- See discussion and vote in above discussion with Police Chief Harding.

Select Board Action Items

- 1. Minutes of the 10/07/13 Select Board Meeting were not prepared in time for tonight's review.**
- 2. Selectmen will come in to town hall tomorrow to sign vendor warrants totaling \$576,124.24.**
- 3. Select men will come in to town hall tomorrow to sign payroll warrants totaling \$88,264.64.**
- 4. Review Hearse House Bids/Contract and MN Spear Library Roof Bid/Contract – See votes under Topics above.**
- 5. Selectmen unanimously voted to sign the November 5, 2013 Special Town Meeting Warrant.**
- 6. Selectmen unanimously voted to appoint Ralph Armstrong to the Personnel Board.**
 - 6a. Selectmen were notified that the Cultural Council, which meets one time per year in the fall to review and award Shutesbury's cultural funds, may have some membership changes before the next Select Board meeting. Selectmen agreed that they felt comfortable that Cultural Council Co-Chair

Julie Stepanek would make decisions as to the Committee's membership which the Board could approve at their next meeting, and retroactively if necessary.

7. Selectmen unanimously approved a **contract between UMass and the Town of Shutesbury**: This is an annual agreement to process insurance payments for the annual flue clinic which occurred on Sat., October 19. Becky will collect any paper work to be signed, and Elaine will be contacted to sign-off.
8. **Contract between Tim Luce and the Town of Shutesbury**: See the unanimous vote of the Select Board to approve a contract with Timothy Luce for repairs to the M.N. Spear roof, in Topics above.

Topics the Chairman Could Not Reasonably Have Anticipated

1. Elaine shared the materials that she received on behalf of the Town due to the Smart Growth aspects of the town's zoning bylaws. Planning Board member Jeff Lacy was also at what Elaine described as a positive and inspiring presentation. Elaine was inspired to look into bike lanes on Shutesbury roads to help children walk and bike to school.
2. Guest Jim Aaron and Becky informed the Board about baseboard heat quotes for both 9-inch petite and 14-inch commercial currently being gathered for the downstairs of town hall. The 9-inch petite would allow for electrical outlets to also be installed on the wall.
 - a. During this process, it was discovered that there was no insulation on the exterior walls, so that will also be addressed in this project.
 - b. Energy Committee member Craig Marden will do a green energy audit with an infra-red camera on the fronts (under the aluminum siding) of the town hall, also.
3. Elaine reported that she was appointed by the School Committee to be the town's negotiator for the teacher contract renegotiations, in keeping with the recent vote of the Board of Selectmen. Her first meeting to review documents is Thursday.
4. Becky reviewed a **sample NEXTERA ENERGY Business Electricity Authorization with Hampshire Council of Governments Electricity Program Assistant Geoffrey Rogers**. Becky:
 - a. Overages of power from the Fire Station solar array and not used at the Fire Station are supposed to go toward Highway Garage and Town Hall energy usage.
 - b. One of the problems with solar generated power (as opposed to power from National grid) is that Shutesbury's energy supplier, Hampshire Power (of Hampshire Regional Council of Governments), is not able to process that transfer of usage while we are on "real time" rates.
 - c. Energy prices have become increasingly erratic, especially in the winter months. It is anticipated that the cost of energy could jump as much as 50% in the coming winter. This would cause a significant increase to real time energy prices.
 - d. If Shutesbury switches from real time rates to a fixed rate, 2 goals could be accomplished:
 1. the energy generated at the Fire Station array could be put toward energy usage at the Highway Garage and Town Hall, recapturing our excess electricity production, and
 2. We would stabilize our winter energy use rates.
 - e. For the next few days we can contract for a set price of 8.2 cents/kilowatt hour fixed rate to start November 1.
 - f. The current real time contract ends December 31st. The question of what happens at the end of the current contract was asked.

Geoff expanded on the reason for increased energy prices in the winter months:

- a. New England is becoming increasingly reliant on natural gas for electricity production.
- b. The good news with natural gas is that it is relatively cheap, but...
- c. Because it is cheap, a lot of power plants have converted over to take advantage of natural gas.
- d. Pipe lines have not kept up with demand.
- e. The problem of getting natural gas across the Connecticut River is just one problem.

- f. The gas comes from as far off as Pennsylvania and North Dakota. Experts are saying there have been no major pipeline changes in years and we're looking at 2016 for up-grades.
- g. Since the pipeline is at capacity: the gas power plants ratchet up the price when demand is high.
- h. The ISO (Independent System Operators) make decisions of where the energy will go based on market prices. All power generators submit a bid for the next day. The least expensive generators get called upon first to turn on and produce power.
- i. When it gets cold, the small inefficient and expensive power plants such as the coal generators get called upon to produce power as the pipeline is at capacity.
- j. In January, 2013 Hampshire Power paid over 10 cents per kilowatt hour before the customer. One day in February, 2013, the rate went to 26 cents per kilowatt hour.
- k. A November 2013 fixed rate contract would only be for one month. In December the prices could go up by about 1.5 cents, which by coincidence is right where National grid prices are.
- l. National grid prices are on a 6-month rolling average. Starting December 1 there will be increases in the 10 cent range for everybody. We will talk about the next contract in December when more is known about pricing. The hardest thing for Shutesbury is predicting future prices.
- m. Real time pricing has been good for the past month, but not over the whole year. Many months have been higher than National Grid rates.
- n. The federal Energy Regulatory Commission put out a document that also says prices are going up nation-wide. For lots of reasons:
 - a. Previously infrastructure hasn't been in place for exporting gas.
 - b. U.S. prices are \$4 to \$5/btu and in Europe they are \$20/btu. With European gas much more expensive, making infrastructure changes in foreign ports and on ships could quickly move energy off our shores significantly increasing U.S. prices.
 - c. There is no "crystal ball".
- o. This is all we can do right now for one month. When we come back in November for December Geoff will have some fixed pricing options for 12, 24, and 36 months.
- p. Going with a fixed rate for November will consolidate our bills right away, making the credits fluid so they can be applied to other town accounts.
- q. The power company should give us a different number; we will have options.
- r. In 3 or 5 years Hydro Quebec and other unpredictable things may affect energy prices.

Selectmen unanimously voted to approve and sign a one month NEXtera Energy Business Electricity Authorization Massachusetts Commercial Sales contract.

The Select Board **adjourned at 9:15 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary