

Shutesbury Select Board Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2017 Shutesbury Town Hall

Select Board members present: Michael DeChiara/Vice-chair and Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil

Select Board member absent: Mike Vinskey/Chair

Staff present: Becky Torres/Town Administrator; Linda Avis Scott/Administrative Secretary

Guests: Steve Schmidt/Broadband Committee

DeChiara calls the meeting to order at 6:35pm.

Agenda Review: Unanticipated items will be handled within the Town Administrator's update.

Public Comment: None offered.

**Discussion Topics:**

1. 2.11.17 Four Town Meeting Preparation: DeChiara refers to the 1.27.17 email "Re: Regional Assessment Meeting" from George Arvanitis/FinCom regarding the recent Assessment Working Group meeting. Makepeace-O'Neil and DeChiara affirm the Town's need for confirmation of the agreed upon method. The 2.8.17 "Amherst Pelham Regional School District FY18 Budget Proposal" Assessment Method is reviewed. The next Shutesbury FinCom is meeting is scheduled for 2.9.17; the need for additional information from Sean Mangano/APRS Director of Finance is noted. Concern that the statutory method may trend toward hurting Shutesbury is recognized. DeChiara will follow-up with Michael Morris/Interim Superintendent and Mangano. The 15% Taxable Property Method is the approved method for FY18. The use of an outside consultant to develop a new assessment method is considered. DeChiara and Makepeace-O'Neil appreciate the benefit of an unbiased third party. Torres will contact Mangano and suggest that Roger Hatch/retired from DESE be considered as a potential consultant. DeChiara reads a portion of Arvanitis' 1.27.17 email into the record: "Jeff Lacy was there and talked about the statutory method with the 5 year rolling average. It was new to most everyone and they seemed intrigued as he described how it provides more stability and predictability than the regular statutory method."
2. Shutesbury Broadband Committee Update: Schmidt/Broadband Committee (BBC) provides the update: there are two components involved in bringing broadband to Shutesbury: "the build", i.e. hanging the cables and "the operation"- providing service at a good cost. The BBC is confident a good operations manager can be found; the Committee is looking at an "operations only" proposal from WiredWest that would achieve cost savings for the town. The BBC is focusing on the build; MBI has changed direction numerous times. Shutesbury completed a volunteer pole survey in a day; in the fall of 2016, MBI contracted

with Osmos to do a “state of the art” pole survey that is yet to be completed; the MBI design RFP bid proposals came in much higher than expected. The Committee has lost faith in MBI’s ability to do “the job” therefore wants to start the process of building the network for the town. The BBC will be proposing a special town meeting to request ~ \$60,000 from free cash for an engineering design; this design will provide a good estimate of the build costs; the Committee will work with the FinCom and Capital Planning to start the process. Torres affirms that there is time to hold a special town meeting before annual town meeting. Schmidt: a special town meeting to establish Municipal Lighting Board members as elected officials will also be needed. Schmidt: Shutesbury appropriated 2/3rds of the build costs - MBI was to pay the other third; to build on our own, Shutesbury will need to appropriate an additional ~ \$500,000; the Committee will seek reimbursement of the construction costs from MBI. Schmidt: in 2016, MBI put out the private provider RFP; Crocker responded however does not meet MBI’s financial requirement and their proposal would not work for Shutesbury; Westfield Gas and Electric does not meet MBI’s financial criteria, however, is making an offering that is worth looking into; both Comcast and Charter are not fiber to the home – they would use antiquated cable technology for the build. The BBC’s goal is 100% fiber to the home coverage. Torres: per Ken Whitney, the Charter proposal does not increase the tax base therefore needs to be vetted. DeChiara: the town needs to go it alone and seek funds to do so from MBI; we have the will and the expertise. Makepeace-O’Neil agrees. DeChiara suggests and Makepeace-O’Neil agrees for the Select Board to vote on whether to “go it alone” during the 2.21.17 meeting. The Board appreciates Schmidt’s update.

3. Select Board Reports on Meetings Attended:

a. Web/Communications Committee: DeChiara– the Committee approved the “Town of Shutesbury Web Site Policy” and the “Town of Shutesbury Subscribed Email Town Announcement List Policy”. Malcolm-Brown will update the town web site to Drupal 8; most committee web site interaction is in regard to minutes; a form will be created to allow minutes to be easily updated; the goal is to use tagging. Chief Harding sent Vlach an email indicating that he could not use the department’s town email address; Steinberg will contact Harding and explain use of this address. The Web/Communications Committee is requesting the Select Board establish a policy requiring all employees to use a shutesbury.org email address. The need for sufficient email addresses is noted.

A. Town Administrator Updates:

a. Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request – Paving Locks Pond Road: Makepeace-O’Neil moves to approve the Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request/paving Locks Pond Road for \$46, 939.12; motion is seconded by DeChiara and passes unanimously.

b. Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request – Crack Filling: Makepeace-O’Neil moves to approve the Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request for Crack

Filling/Wendell and Pelham Hill Roads for \$26,185.83; motion is seconded by DeChiara and passes unanimously.

- c. Loose Dog Violation/323 Locks Pond Road: Select Board reviews the 11.19.16 Select Board letter to Lori Saleem/323 Locks Pond Road and receives the 2.6.17 “Town of Shutesbury Dog Officer Control Form” reporting that Mocha/Saleem’s dog was found roaming freely in the yard of the residence, barking constantly, and the owner was not at home. The next step is to hold a dog hearing which the Select Board tentatively schedules for 3.7.17.
- d. Building Committee: Members are working on the Building Inspector’s requirement that there be a window in the door at the top of the Town Hall stairs. Groves is assessing interest in the renovation of the Old Town Hall to create more meeting space. The elementary school roof has about two years left before it will need attention; the town hall roof will also need attention.

B. Future Agenda Items: The 2.21.17 and 3.7.17 agenda items are reviewed.

Administrative Actions:

1. The Select Board will sign Vendor Warrants totaling \$103,926.29.
2. The Select Board will sign Payroll Warrants totaling \$95,340.06.
3. Appoint E911 Coordinator: Makepeace-O’Neil moves the Select Board appoint Walter Tibbetts as the E911 Coordinator retroactive to 7.1.16; DeChiara seconds the motion that passes unanimously.
4. Web Committee and Constable Resignation: The Select Board receives Paul Vlach’s resignation from his membership on the Web Committee and as the appointed Constable. The need to appoint a new constable is noted; Marilyn Tibbetts holds the elected constable position. A thank-you note to Vlach is signed.
5. Select Board Meeting Minutes: Makepeace-O’Neil moves to approve the 1.7.17 meeting minutes; DeChiara seconds the motion. Minutes for the 1.7.17 are unanimously approved as amended.

Makepeace-O’Neil moves and DeChiara seconds the motion to adjourn at 8:13pm; motion passes unanimously.

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. 1.27.17 email from George Arvanitis “Re: Regional Assessment Meeting”
2. Amherst Pelham Regional School District FY18 Budget Proposal dated 2.8.17
3. 2.7.17 Broadband Update notes by Steve Schmidt
4. Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request: Paving Locks Pond Road
5. Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request: Crack Filling
6. 10.19.16 letter to L. Saleem; 2.6.17 Dog Office Control Form

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Avis Scott  
Administrative Secretary