

Shutesbury Select Board Meeting Minutes  
May 14, 2019 Shutesbury Town Hall

Select Board members present: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair, Elaine Puleo and April Stein  
Staff present: Becky Torres/Town Administrator; Linda Avis Scott/Administrative Secretary

Guests: Patrick Smith/National Grid and Police Chief Dan Fernandes

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 6:36pm.

Agenda Review: Puleo requests the Board schedule a hearing regarding the dog at 323 Locks Pond Road.

Public Comment: April Stein shares her deep appreciation for Walter Tibbetts/Fire Chief for his remarkable assistance when David Dann died; Tibbetts' skill and understanding are a gift to Shutesbury; all Select Board members, Torres and Scott agree.

Unanticipated Topic:

Torres: Shutesbury does not have an official tree warden at this time; Don Wakoluk is interested in the position; Dave Hawkins/Assistant Tree Warden lives in Pelham and previously worked with former Tree Warden Tom Houston; in the recent past, Hawkins has not returned Torres' calls; per Smith, the Select Board could fill the role of the Tree Warden for the tree hearing. Patrick Smith/National Grid explains that the prior practice was to perform a "hazard tree circuit" that looked at individual trees; currently, the practice is called "enhanced vegetation management" that goes 8' in from the road resulting in better electric service reliability; Eversource has been doing this type of enhanced tree trimming for several years with good results. Smith: National Grid has been mandated by the State to improve the reliability of service; the cut will take place on only 4 miles of Shutesbury roadway; for weeks, National Grid workers have been talking to residents about trees to be cut; these trees will be posted for two weeks in advance of the public hearing; some people are upset by the thought of losing trees, however, the clearing will put more sunlight onto the roads resulting in better winter conditions and increased reliability of the electric grid; documentation shows that if you remove bad trees, it is better for the lines. Per Smith, the trees to be cut are on Pratt Corner Road, Leverett Road and West Pelham Road to the school. Smith to Torres question: the tree cutting helps in an ice storm but is not perfect; with enhanced vegetation management, the goal is to start in the worst performing areas; the plan is to cut as soon as possible. Makepeace-O'Neil: the Select Board can both move the process for a tree hearing along and decide on a tree warden. Select Board members will be required to view the trees to be cut. Per Smith, the trees to be removed have red ribbons on them. Smith to Stein's question: he looks at the trees as an arborist and with the goal of keeping the trees away from the electric lines; by keeping trees away from the lines, workers are safer as this is also an OSHA issue. Smith: the wood is left in log lengths along the side of the road; the wood chips will also be left. Timing for the tree hearing is considered. Puleo moves the Select Board schedule a tree hearing for the 6.11.19 meeting; the motion is seconded by Stein. Smith will complete the legal notices that include a listing of the trees to be cut. Motion passes unanimously.

## Discussion Topics:

1. Police Department Report: Chief Dan Fernandes reports that the 5.11.19 shred day was a good event with 2,300# of paper shredded. Fernandes shares his letter “April 28<sup>th</sup> incident” regarding Officer Shoemaker’s handling of a high stress situation; “Officer Shoemaker showed great empathy and was steadfast in performing his duties, he is an invaluable asset to this community and citizens in the area”. Stein appreciates that Fernandes shared the good work of his part-time officers; Officer Shoemaker is well respected. The Select Board acknowledges that Shutesbury is very fortunate to have this kind of officer. Makepeace-O’Neil appreciates Fernandes for obtaining body cameras for his officers.
2. New Annual Town Meeting Day: Puleo notes that the date for Shutesbury’s annual town meeting is defined in a bylaw. Torres: to change this bylaw would require a vote at an annual town meeting; currently, the first Saturday in May conflicts with Northampton’s annual Pride Parade. Puleo: a lot of people want an evening annual town meeting which could take two or more evenings. Stein suggests a Saturday in late April. Makepeace-O’Neil suggests polling townspeople to see what they think. Torres suggests using “town announce” for the survey that will ask whether respondents would prefer two evenings or an earlier Saturday and whether it would be bothersome if town meeting was on a different date each year.
3. Review 2019 Annual Town Meeting: Torres notes that the 5.4.19 meeting lasted for seven hours without a break. Puleo: even though there was a lot of discussion, and in some cases turmoil, every decision the Select Board and FinCom previously made was validated by the vote. Makepeace-O’Neil: there was discussion and people were heard – this is the purpose of open discussion and a functioning democracy. Stein states she was disappointed SES did not have an adequate explanation for their proposed budget and notes her respect for the citizen petition process. Puleo: it will be interesting to see how town meeting functions with a new town moderator.
4. Annual Appointment Process: Scott will be sending letters to the contact person for each board/committee/commission with members whose terms are expiring and asking whether those individuals are willing to have their terms renewed. Puleo: there are two applicants for the Historical Commission. Select Board members plan to interview the applicants during the 5.28.19 meeting and make the decision on who to appoint while making annual appointments 6.25.19. Puleo: Don Wakoluk would like to be appointed as Tree Warden; he said he talked to Hawkins who does not seem interested in being the assistant. Select Board members acknowledge receipt of Wakoluk’s 4.11.19 letter of interest. Makepeace-O’Neil notes that the Tree Warden needs to be able to make unbiased decisions. Torres suggests asking Wakoluk to assist the Select Board with the tree hearing which will occur before the annual appointments to be made during the 6.25.19 meeting. Board members ask Torres to request Wakoluk to attend the observation of the trees to be cut with the Select Board.

5. Town Administrator Updates:
- a. 5.4.19 email from Dennis Forsman “logging on Pelham Hill Road causing massive destruction of earth at site”: Select Board members review the GIS map for Lot P13/Gjeltema and its proximity to the Forsman lot. Scott, as Land Use Clerk, emailed Forsman on 5.7.19 acknowledging receipt of her 5.4.19 email and referring Forsman to DCR Service Forester Andrew Rawcliffe for questions/concerns about the Forest Cutting Plan. No further Select Board action at this time.
  - b. Wheelock Solar Site/Lodestar: Torres met with Jeff Macel/Lodestar regarding the PILOT and the increase in property value related to backup battery storage; Lodestar will be submitting a Planning Board special permit application for the proposed backup battery storage; changes to the PILOT are in the beginning stages.
  - c. Franklin Regional Collective Highway Products and Services: Per Torres, the bids for sand and salt are open ended. Puleo moves and Stein seconds a motion for the Select Board to authorize FRCOG to contract on Shutesbury’s behalf for the FY2020 Franklin Regional Collective Highway Products and Services; motion passes unanimously.
  - d. FRCOG Fuel Bid Results: Per Torres: over time, Dennis K. Burke has been very responsive. The Board agrees to the fixed price for gasoline from Dennis K. Burke. Torres: currently, Mirabito provides Shutesbury with diesel fuel; they are currently the low bidder and have been very good about switching over to the winter blend. The Board considers choosing Sandri, a local business; all agree to having Sandri provide the Town’s diesel fuel. Torres will contact Andrea Woods/FRCOG Chief Procurement Officer regarding the Select Board’s decisions.
  - e. Mass DOT Small Bridges Grant: Puleo moves and Stein seconds a motion that the Select Board sign the Mass DOT “Statewide Small Bridges Construction Program” grant document for \$500,000; motion passes unanimously.
  - f. Puleo moves and Stein seconds motion to appoint Janis Gray to the Council on Aging; motion passes unanimously.
  - g. Dog at 323 Locks Pond Road/Saleem: The need for another hearing is considered. Torres: the order to have the dog removed was not finalized due to the death of owner’s mother. Board members plan to hold a hearing on the matter during the 5.28.19 meeting. Torres will let the complainant know of the plan to hold a hearing on 5.28.19 at 8:00pm.
  - h. Audit: Torres, per Tom Scanlon, the audits of both years (FY17 & FY18) went extremely well; he stated that Ryan Mailloux/Treasurer is doing an excellent job.
  - i. To Puleo’s question, Torres reports there has been no interest, thus far, for the assistant town clerk position. Per Torres, there is interest from three competent candidates for the Administrative Assessor position; the RFP will go out by the end of the week; it is the Board of Assessors role to provide a candidate recommendation to the Select Board.

Administrative Actions:

1. Select Board members sign vendor warrants totaling \$191,846.21.
2. Select Board members sign payroll warrants totaling \$109,440.73.
3. Select Board members sign broadband warrants totaling \$81,308.27.
4. Puleo moves and Makepeace-O’Neil seconds a motion to approve the 4.30.19 meeting minutes as presented; motion passes unanimously.

At 9:27pm, Puleo moves and Stein seconds a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion passes unanimously.

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Letter from Police Chief Fernandes: “April 28<sup>th</sup> Incident”
2. 5.4.19 email from Dennise Forsman: “logging on Pelham Hill Road causing massive destruction of earth at the site”
3. 4.23.19 email from Mary Lou Conca: “Historical Commission Seat”
4. 5.12.19 email from Craig Pepin: “Candidacy for the Historical Commission”
5. 4.11.19 email from Don Wakoluk: “Town Tree Warden”
6. “Franklin Regional Collective Highway Products and Services” Agreement
7. 5.13.19 email from Andrea Woods/FRCOG: “FRCOG Fuel Bid Results – Lock Ins Must Be Made Before Noon Thurs. 5/16”
8. Mass DOT Statewide Small Bridges Construction Program Grant documents
9. 5.13.19 email from Janis Gray: “COA”
10. 5.7.19 email from Ron Meck: “Lori Saleem’s Dog Is Here”

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Avis Scott  
Administrative Secretary