

Shutesbury Select Board Meeting Minutes
November 23, 2021 Virtual Meeting Platform

Select Board members present: Rita Farrell/Chair, Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil, and Eric Stocker
Staff present: Becky Torres/Town Administrator; Linda Avis Scott/Administrative Secretary
Town Building Committee: Bob Groves/Chair, Nancy Matthews, Frank McGinn, Bill Wells and Steve Sullivan
Other Staff present: Walter Tibbetts/Emergency Management Director
Guests: Michael DeChiara, Sara Clark/Clark Auto Wrecking, Penny Kim, Doc Pruyne/*The Reminder*, Joan Hanson, Gail Fleischaker, Dale Houle, and Mike Vinsky

Farrell calls the meeting to order at 5:45pm.

Public Comment: None offered.

Agenda Review: Due to a number of changes, the agenda is screenshared by Torres and reviewed by Farrell.

Discussion Topics:

1. Energy and Climate Action Committee Revised Charge: By screenshare, Farrell highlights the italicized changes in Draft #2; the charge is reviewed and edited. Gail Fleischaker is familiar with and willing to do the calculations demonstrating the Town's solar energy production and savings that can be posted on the Town's website. Michael DeChiara is concerned about adding tasks to the Committee's charge. Torres: tasks will evolve from the Committee. At Stocker's suggestion, Farrell suggests the charge include informing residents about the Committee's activities and how we are doing as a town, i.e., how much solar energy are we producing and how much energy we are conserving. Current Energy Committee membership is reviewed; their willingness to continue is uncertain; the process for appointing new members is considered. Makepeace-O'Neil suggests an overlap in membership and Stocker agrees. Allen Hanson states he was appointed to the Energy Committee a long time ago and is willing to continue to serve; Ben Brau has indicated that he is unwilling to continue to serve; it seems Graeme Sephton is willing to continue. Current terms end 6.30.22. DeChiara suggests disbanding the current Energy Committee and then, given the expanded charge, create the new Committee. Fleischaker suggests leaving the current Energy Committee in place with their tasks and create the new Committee with its broader charge. Torres: the current Committee has not met in a number of years; adjusting the solar panels is done by former Energy Committee members and she completes the reporting. Stocker supports DeChiara's suggestion to disband the current Energy Committee. Torres: given the inactivity, disbanding makes sense. Makepeace-O'Neil again suggests some carryover membership. Farrell: current members will be encouraged to submit their names for consideration.
 - Stocker moves and Makepeace-O'Neil seconds a motion to dissolve the existing Energy Committee. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

- Makepeace-O’Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to create an Energy and Climate Action Committee as described in the edited charge. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O’Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.
2. Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG): Walter Tibbetts/Emergency Management Director: the EMPG is an ongoing MEMA grant which has been used for a number of years to obtain equipment; this year, we are requesting another mobile radio for the utility truck and a portable radio charger for a total of \$2,700.
 - Makepeace-O’Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to approve the EMPG grant request for \$2,700. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O’Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.
 3. Clark Auto Wrecking Class III License Renewal: Scott: Select Board members will consider whether to approve Clark Auto Wrecking’s application for a “Class III license to buy, sell, exchange for assemble second hand motor vehicles or parts” and whether to issue a Class III Auto Dealer license (per MGL Chapter 140 Section 59). Sara Clark: there is nothing unusual, the business has a contract to remove batteries and is on the roster to have anti-freeze removed. Per Clark, Charles Clark is no longer participating in the day to day activity of the business which is now managed only by Thomas Clark.
 - Makepeace-O’Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to approve Clark Auto Wrecking’s application for a Class III license and to issue a renewal of their Class III Auto Dealer’s license. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O’Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.
 4. Land Use Clerk: This item is carried over to the 11.30.21 meeting.
1. Municipal Vulnerability Planning: Farrell, noting the opportunity to apply for Municipal Vulnerability Planning (MVP) action grants, refers to the “Community Resilience Building Workshop Summary of Findings” June 2020 by Fuss & O’Neill and the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Farrell notes that pages 14-15 of the “Findings” lists the “Top Recommendations to Improve Resilience in Shutesbury”; the goal of this discussion is to consider applying for an action grant; the pre-application process is open until mid-February and the MVP Program will work with towns on the application process; Leverett and other Franklin County communities received action grants during the last round; funds have been used for a wide range of projects, i.e., more extensive planning, substantial expenditures to dam and culvert work. Farrell continues: the matching funds requirement is relatively small; this is a good opportunity for the Town however there is not enough time for the new Energy and Climate Action Committee to get up and running for this grant round. Stocker: it makes sense to apply for funds for items on the list. Makepeace-O’Neil: bridges and culverts are a high priority. Torres: Highway Superintendent Tim Hunting already has an inventory of culverts that could include more detail; the Finance and Capital Planning Committees are concerned about the dirt/gravel roads that take a beating in extreme weather events. Torres suggests a cost analysis of what needs to be done to upgrade these roads and notes that Chapter 90 funding would not be adequate for such a project. Farrell: there will be more funding for infrastructure therefore the Town needs to be prepared by assessing condition and design work prior to

funding becoming available. Farrell encourages the Select Board and other committees to think large, i.e., storm water management, culverts and bridges especially as they relate to dirt roads; expression of interest in applying for an action grant is open from 1.15.22 through 2.14.22; the earliest expressions of interest are given priority. Torres notes the need to be fully prepared with a project summary. Farrell suggests a working group to identify the top 1-2 items.

Michael DeChiara/Planning Board commends the Select Board for their interest in the action grant; taking an inventory is an action as there will be more infrastructure money; the Planning Board is meeting on 12.8.21 and will discuss the MVP action grants as well. DeChiara supports a multi-board approach. There is general agreement to organize a working group by looking at a list of those involved in the Community Resilience Workshop, i.e., Tim Hunting/Highway Superintendent, Walter Tibbetts/Emergency Management Director and Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Council on Aging, etc. representatives; the Select Board will work with Torres to consider the list with the goal of meeting in January so that committees have time to choose representation.

5. Town Administrator Updates:

- a. Email: Incoming Select Board email is receiving more substantive responses as requested.
- b. Road Issues: In response to the 11.22.21 “Wendell Road repairs” email received from Miriam DeFant/Conservation Commission Chair regarding dirt road issues and concerns about work done by the Highway Department, Torres will review the Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and Highway Department with Scott (former Land Use Clerk) and Tim Hunting/Highway Superintendent in order to prepare a response to the Commission. The ongoing bundled Notice of Intent/Order of Conditions has been in the works for a number of years.
- c. Recreation Committee: The Committee is very active right now and has requested the appointment of a new member, Ann Brigham; statute refers to a recreation commission so perhaps the benefits of changing to a commission could be considered in advance of annual town meeting; in the meantime, the Select Board could consider the new appointment. Stocker recommends making the appointment unless there is a restriction on the number of members. Torres: membership started at five though is not limited by statute. Makepeace-O’Neil recommends making the appointment as the Committee is asking for help and there is someone willing to volunteer.
 - Makepeace-O’Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to expand Recreation Committee membership from five to six members. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O’Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.
 - Makepeace-O’Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to appoint Ann Brigham to the Recreation Committee. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O’Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

6. Building Committee: Farrell: the purpose of this discussion is to talk about the roles and responsibilities of the Town Buildings Committee and how the Committee sees itself going forward. It is acknowledged that there has been some disagreement about the Committee’s role. Per Farrell, the Committee’s charge was approved by the 1988 annual town meeting and could be updated. Bob Groves/Building Committee Chair: the

Committee has had a tough time meeting quorum during the pandemic making it hard to do business; also, it is hard to obtain contractors, i.e., the sliders for the school have been delivered however it is difficult to get bids and help and it is the same with the Old Town Hall project. Per Groves, the Committee needs to meet and vote on the school bids; there is only one bid for the Old Town Hall project; the Committee needs some clarification and members; Mike Vinskey has volunteered. Groves: in general, we understand that our role is to put together the specifics for bids and make recommendations to Select Board on the bidder to hire and to then overview the work; we do not seem welcome to participate in some projects.

Torres: for the last two major building renovation projects, a specific committee was established and this will be the same avenue if we receive a library construction grant; the Building Committee is more involved with improvements to existing buildings, i.e., roofs and painting. Groves: the Building Committee can help vet and identify options that are in the best interest of the town; we audit requests by studying and making recommendations based on research. Farrell observes that Groves has been the Building Committee; the Town has valuable real estate and needs a comprehensive capital needs assessment and a systematic thorough plan in place; the Building Committee may not have the expertise to do this however may support and advocate for it.

Frank McGinn/Building Committee notes the importance of having the voices of those in the industry; our opinions do matter, i.e., the core of the school boiler was solid; he has over 40 years of experience; it has been hard during the pandemic to get contractors and materials are up 40%. Bill Wells/Building Committee notes that he found better pricing and saved considerable money for the fire door replacement.

Nancy Matthews/Building Committee: are we doing our charge and can we assist with complicated projects? Farrell reads the Town Buildings Committee charge into the record and notes the need for a capital needs assessment; large projects are overseen by a paid project manager; what does oversight mean for smaller projects; the Select Board would like to see the Committee as a functioning group working with a structure.

Matthews: maintenance figures broadly with the existing buildings; some are commercial in size; there are exciting changes in the HVAC industry; it is hard to find vendors who are objective. Groves: as a matter of routine, at least two perspectives are needed; competition is a benefit because a vendor may be wrong; we try to bring in local talent as much as we can; we have done this historically and want to continue to do so. Mike Vinskey would like to be appointed to the Committee and is unsure why there is a delay; he is willing to help out with phone calls and seeking expertise; there needs to be a sanity check on what is going out to bid; there needs to be a process for how the Committee obtains information about projects needing their guidance; the Select Board could ensure there is such a process. DeChiara: clarifying the role and how Building Committee expertise can be applied makes sense; when he served, the Building Committee was very helpful to the School Committee; there has been a philosophical battle, i.e., cost, which may lead to contention. Matthews agrees with DeChiara's sentiment; Torres is knowledgeable about the budget and State requirements; our job is to assist with vetting not to price chop. Farrell: procurement knowledge is needed; Committee members with mechanical, construction, and architectural experience are needed; phone calls or sanity checks are not needed; expertise for dealing with building contractors is needed. Farrell notes that Building Committee appointments are made

jointly with the Town Moderator however this has not been the case; there is a need to reach out for membership; the Building Committee needs to vote on recommending a new member for Select Board appointment; Vinskey's name came up without such a vote.

Stocker: we are skirting around the philosophical debate about spending money.

Makepeace-O'Neil is concerned about heavily loading a committee with members who are for/against an issue, a pre-established point of view. Penny Kim: one of the ongoing concerns is the need for a thorough assessment of town buildings; we have a capital planning prioritization process in place to clarify on what our needs are and how to address them; this helps us to be responsive and have an ongoing plan. Farrell: this would help in knowing costs. Groves: it is out of order to think we are being cheap; you always consider cost and quality; sometimes we accept the higher bid; the client interests need to be protected; this charge is more significant for the Town.

Steve Sullivan/Building Committee: his position is to straddle Building Committee and School Committee; the boiler conversation started with language problems; the Building Committee did delay in taking up the leaking school roof. Torres notes that full replacement of the school sidewalk was approved at annual town meeting; a Finance Committee member and Groves reviewed the project and recommended replacing only the badly cracked sections and now buckling has occurred; this effort to save money has resulted in increased costs and people falling; this was a horizontal project with the Highway Department. Farrell recognizes the need for further process. Groves: our biggest problem has been the inability to meet quorum; the Committee works as an advisory committee to the Select Board. Matthews: maybe the Building Committee needs to be dissolved and reformed with a new charge focused on stewardship and finding contractors; let the experts, the Town Administrator and Finance Committee, do the money management; the Building Committee can identify problems and work to solve them; we need clarity and a diverse group of people with municipal level knowledge. It is noted that the first step is to clarify the Committee's charge. Groves observes that Vinskey has been attending meetings though Matthews has not been in attendance; the need for a building survey is recognized. Farrell: the discussion will be continued after the Select Board considers the matter.

7. Town Administrator Updates:

d. Hybrid Meetings: The smart television and Owl have been obtained; by using this equipment, all the members of one committee in the building and participants on Zoom can be heard; the Select Board is asked to consider how to prioritize the hybrid meeting space, i.e., those committees with members who cannot get online and those committees critical to town function. Torres will begin sketching out a policy for hybrid meetings and is working on an instruction booklet with Town Clerk Grace Bannasch; Makepeace-O'Neil is helping Torres learn how the system works; the goal is to begin holding hybrid meetings after the first of the new year.

e. PFA's Update: One household continues to need bottled water delivered.

Administrative Actions:

1. Select Board members will sign vendor warrants #22-12 totaling \$120,278.78.
2. Select Board members will sign payroll warrants #22-12 totaling \$119,234.92.
3. Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to approve the 11.9.21 meeting minutes. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the 11.9.21 minutes are approved as presented.

At 7:49pm, Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

2. Revised Energy and Climate Action Committee Charge
3. FY 2021 Emergency Management Planning Grant
4. Clark Auto Wrecking license renewal documents
5. 11.22.21 "Wendell Road repairs" email from Miriam DeFant
6. Town of Shutesbury "Community Resilience Building Workshop Summary of Findings" June 2020 by Fuss & O'Neill
7. Shutesbury Town Buildings Committee Charge

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Avis Scott
Administrative Secretary