

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
December 17, 2024 Hybrid Meeting Format

Selectboard members present: Rita Farrell/Co-Chair, Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Co-Chair and Eric Stocker

Staff present: Gabriele Voelker/Interim Town Administrator

Volunteers & Other Staff present: Joe King, Ryan Kress, Senator Jo Commerford

Guests: Tom Siefert, Matteo Pangallo, Michael DeChiara, Susie Mosher, Frank McGinn, Gail Fleischaker, Mary Jo Johnson, Dave Buchanan, Donald Fletcher, Jim Hemingway, Paul Lyons, Penelope Kim, Mary Lou Conca, Sharon Weizenbaum, April Stein, George Arvantis, Ajay Kashu, Jennifer Donnelly,

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Agenda Review: Makepeace-O'Neil asks to move Clark's Auto Wrecking ("Clark's") up in the meeting after Senator Commerford.

Public Comment: None

Review of Minutes: None

Discussion Topics:

1. Tree Hearing: Joe King and Ryan Kress from National Grid present a list of 106 trees to be removed in Shutesbury due to varying degrees of decay or decline. Work has begun on the last circuit and National Grid expects to begin this circuit in the next month or two.

VOTE: Farrell makes a Motion to authorize National Grid to proceed with the removal of hazard trees; Farrell moves, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; the motion carries.

2. Senator Commerford will be present to update and general question and answer session: Senator, Jo Commerford ("Commerford") was present to answer questions and discuss any important issues the SB has. Commerford and the Selectboard ("SB") discussed many matters of interest, the first matter discussed is the proposed cutting plan by the Department of Conservation and Recreation ("DCR"). Also discussed was the regionalization of town services. Education funding was briefly discussed, as well as, the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program ("MVP") Grant, storm water issues at Lake Wyola and regional equity. Commerford also discussed the Quabbin Bill and the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority ("MWRA") Study. Chapter 70, special education costs and a charter school reform bill was also discussed. Commerford suggests the SB invite Kristen Elechko who is the Western Massachusetts Director at the Governor's Office to come out for a town hall meeting.
3. Follow up with Conservation Commission visit at 2 Wyola Drive: The Goulds are present to discuss a small inlet that runs along their property at 2 Wyola Dr and dredging that is required to open up the inlet. The inlet is town owned and the town will need to be the ones to submit the paperwork required to open up the channel as requested by the Goulds. The SB agrees to support the Gould's request but will need to first talk with the land use clerk and ConCom regarding the process.
4. Appointment to the Buildings Committee: Phil Parker: Phil Parker is appointed to the Buildings Committee.

VOTE: Farrell makes a Motion to appoint Phil Parker to the Buildings Committee; Stocker seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; the motion carries.

5. Michael DeChiara on decision whether to appeal the Battery By-Law rejection by the Attorney General: Michael DeChiara (“DeChiara”) discusses the Battery By-Law rejection by the Attorney General’s (“AG’s”) Office and asks the SB if they would like to appeal the AG’s decision. DeChiara spoke with Town Counsel, Donna MacNicol (“MacNicol”) and MacNicol suggests filing as a place holder and the SB can make a final decision later on whether they want to pursue or not. Wendell’s bylaw was rejected as well and DeChiara believes they went to their SB last week. The SB agrees to file the appeal to the battery bylaw rejection. DeChiara also discussed briefly with the SB another EV Charger offer received.

VOTE: Makepeace-O’Neil makes a Motion to appeal the battery bylaw rejection by the Attorney General; Farrell moves, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O’Neil: aye; the motion carries.

6. Alcohol Beverage Control Commission Permit for Shutesbury Athletic Club: Jennifer Donnelly from the Shutesbury Athletic Club (“SAC”) is present to discuss the renewal of the liquor license. Not all of the required paperwork is in and the SB advises the SAC they should come to the SB’s December 30 meeting with the outstanding paperwork and required filing fee before they will vote to approve. Outstanding documents required are Proof of Liquor Liability Insurance, the DOR Certificate of Good Standing, the Department of Unemployment Assistance Certificate of Compliance, Signed Affidavit of Worker’s Compensation Insurance, Updated Letter from the Fire Chief and the FRCOG building/fire inspection report. This will be further reviewed and possibly voted at the SB’s December 30, 2024 meeting.

7. Permit for Clark’s Auto Wrecking: Sara Clark is present from Clark’s and gives the SB and update on business over the last year. The SB approves Clark’s Auto Wrecking Class III Auto Dealer License.

VOTE: Makepeace-O’Neil makes a Motion to approve Clark’s Auto Wrecking Class III License for 2025 as per MGL Ch. 40 Section 59 and waive the annual license renewal hearing; Stocker moves, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O’Neil: aye; the motion carries.

8. Administrative Secretary job description and follow up with Personnel Committee: The SB discusses various changes to the Administrative Assistant job description and will forward the updated description to the Personnel Board for their review. The SB and Voelker discussed Geneva Bickford (“Bickford”) and her employment with the town as a special employee and Bickford’s willingness to help out at this time.

9. Town Administrator Updates: Voelker has two unanticipated items for the SB. The Collins Center has sent their contract for the SB to sign and the SB also needs to sign the grant for the Recycling Dividends Program giving the town \$1,960.00. Voelker and the SB briefly discussed the police chief contract negotiations and setting up a negotiation committee. Voelker will send an email to FinCom and the Personnel Board asking for a representative. Town Hall will be closed December 24, notice has been posted on the website and Voelker plans to have it posted at town hall as well. Discussion of the TA search committee was had, Voelker has not received any responses from departments but has received interest from three community members.

VOTE: Makepeace-O’Neil makes a Motion to sign the Professional Service Agreement between the Town of Shutesbury and the Collins Center for the Fire District Feasibility Study; Makepeace-O’Neil moves, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O’Neil: aye; the motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a Motion to sign the grant scope of work between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and Shutesbury for the amount being quoted; Farrell moves, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; the motion carries.

Farrell Motions to Adjourn (8:20 pm); Stocker seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; the motion carries.

Administrative Actions:

1. Follow up with FinCom and Personnel Board on TA Search Committee representative and Police Chief Negotiation committee representative;
2. SB to send letter to follow up with ConCom and the Land Use clerk regarding 2 Wyola Drive;
3. Finalize licensing for Clark's Auto Wrecking and forward to Clark's

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Town of Shutesbury Town Owned Tree List;
2. Shutesbury Athletic Club Paperwork;
3. Photographs of inlet at 2 Wyola Drive;
4. Administrative Assistant Job Description

Respectfully submitted,
Geneva Bickford,
Administrative Secretary

** A full version of the 12/17/24 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4ajoOcJsNzf5DBgMTZgcJA>