

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2025 Hybrid Meeting Format

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

Staff present and Guests: Hayley Voelker- Town Administrator, Gail Fleischaker, Brennan Mailloux, James Kanceruk, Don Wakoluk, Frank McGinn, Steve Soucy. Linda Dunlavy, Michael DeChiara, Penelope Kim.

Farrell calls the meeting to order at 5:01pm

Agenda Review: As posted.

General Business:

I. Approve Meeting Minutes for 4.8.25, 4.17.25:

- a. No amendments made.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes for 4.8.25 and 4.17.25, Makepeace-O'Neil seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

II. National Pole Hearing with Steve Soucy representing:

- a. Soucy stated National grid requests permission to install a pole at the intersection of Leverett Rd and West Pelham Rd between house numbers 210 and 202. The reason for it is to put a recloser on the pole. There is no aesthetic issues with the pole installation as it will be in front of woods. The abutters have been notified. Penny Kim asked if this is an additional pole or a replacement, and they stated it is a new pole. This will be going into scheduling and is not a very big job. It could be scheduled within a couple of months.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve National Grid's application for the installation of a new pole on Leverett Rd between the address numbers of 202 and 210, Makepeace-O'Neil seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

III. Review (3) Zoning Bylaw Amendments to be considered for Town Meeting Warrant.

- Remove Article VII Rate of Growth
- Tiny Houses
- Accessory Dwelling Units:

- a. DeChiara stated that there was no action for the Select Board other than to review the amendments and send them back to them. DeChiara stated Tiny Houses have been in discussion for a few years and there is international guidance now for building code. They plan to use the state and national standards in their town bylaw. In terms of the Accessory Dwelling Units, DeChiara stated the goal is to reiterate and update what they have, so that it is compliant. He noted that the law states that any expectation or regulation that you have for a primary dwelling must also hold for the secondary dwelling.

IV. Review FRCOG Charter Amendment for Town Meeting Warrant:

- a. This will need a Town Meeting vote.
- b. Dunlavy stated the county government was abolished in 1997, and that enabling legislation allowed them to create a council of governments. All 26 towns adopted the charter that then formed the Council of Governments. This charter is their governing document. The document requires a two-thirds vote at two thirds of town meetings. Their goal overall is to freshen it up and have it modernly reflect the evolution of the COG over the previous 27 years. The biggest change is they have clarified how a town can join the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, and they have also clarified how a town can withdraw. This would require that a town purposely leave the regional planning agency they are currently assigned to and join this one. Also vice versa. They also changed and amended how strict the guidelines were for the board's size, when they meet, and what they had to do.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to: Approve and put the charter change for FRCOG onto the Town Meeting Warrant, Makepeace-O'Neil seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

V. Chief Burgess Request for Educational Incentive Credit Payment.

- a. Makepeace-O'Neil stated Chief Burgess requested an educational incentive credit payment for obtaining a bachelor's degree per her contract. These would be two payments added to her base salary in the form of \$1500 for the completion of the first 30 credit hours and \$2,000 for the completion of the additional number of credits required after 30 credit hours to complete the degree. Chief Burgess provided them with a copy of her transcript with 31 credit hours, not part of a current, active, enrolled bachelor's degree program. The credits were from the Fall of 1990 to 1991, prior to the signing of the Chief contract with this incentive.
- b. Makepeace-O'Neil recommended denying the request for payment of the first 30 credits and \$1,500 payment as the time frame of the transcript does not indicate a current enrollment in a program and the achievement of the credits proceeded the signing of the Chief contract in 2022. She stated she would draft the letter to Chief

Burgess of the denial, and they would reconsider it if the enrollment became timelier and more current.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to deny the request for educational incentive credit payments based on the length of time and not being currently enrolled in the program, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil; motion carries.

VI. Request to disband the Town Administrator Search Committee:

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to disband the Town Administrator Search Committee as they have filled the position, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil aye; motion carries.

VII. Discuss Dog Officer and Inspector of Animals service for the Town of Shutesbury:

- a. As of a couple weeks ago the town no longer has a Dog Officer or Inspector of Animals. Bolton and Chief Burgess did some research and found that we can join the Franklin County Regional Council of Government. They have access to a kennel, and we have enough funds in the budget to cover now through the end of the fiscal year. There is a one-time fee to join the agreement, and it will be about \$5,000. We would need to execute an agreement with them and Bolton stated she has a draft contract. The position would fall under the Police Department.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to proceed with the Animal Control services being provided through FRCOG and give Bolton permission to go out and get the contract, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VIII. Appointment of Meryl Mandell as the Shutesbury Recycling Coordinator:

- a. Mandell will continue to serve on the committee but also be the Recycling Coordinator. She will no longer be chair. As a side note, Farrell stated trash bag distribution will start up again on April 26th, for the community members to pick up and receive their free rolls of trash bags at the school shed.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to appoint Meryl Mandell as the Shutesbury Recycling Coordinator, Makepeace-O'Neil seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

IX. Town Administrator Report:

Bolton in her report asked the questions below:

- When should the next contract negotiation session be scheduled?

- Farrell stated the Select Board should aim for a meeting on Tuesday April 29 or Wednesday April 30 at 4pm. The Board agreed no attorneys or outside counsel will be involved in the Executive Session for contract negotiations. Bolton will advise Chief Burgess of these two dates.
- When should we schedule the POST attestation meeting?
 - The Board decided they will do this together with the contract negotiation session on either the 29th or 30th at one of those meetings.
- Did we submit a formal request to the Legislators regarding the Home Rule Petition on non-citizen voting?
 - Farrell stated no we did not submit a formal request. The Board stated we should draft a letter to State Representative Aaron Saunders and reach out to Town Clerk Bannasch for advice. Bolton will include a certified copy of the town meeting vote in the letter.

Bolton then provided the following updates:

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- She met with Jeffrey Arps on the 16th to review PFAS. His team is reviewing invoices and will follow up with payment when finished. We are still not certain if the Board voted for the doubling loan borrowing.
- ARPA reporting has been submitted. Bolton shared she did a training on ARPA.
- Bolton has a meeting scheduled with Elena Cohen from Jo Comerford's office next week on the following Tuesday to check in. Farrell asked Bolton to mention to her that we will be applying for the Rural Development Fund for the Storm Water Task Force.
- Bolton is scheduled to meet with the FRCOG on May 1st.
- In terms of the Beaver Dam, Bolton discussed her follow up from 4/8/25 and how we can install a beaver deceiver. The problem is it will impact the camp's access to the lake. Bolton stated she would reach out to the camp for discussion. A company called Beaver Solutions would put the deceiver in for a fee of about \$1,500 to \$2,500. Makepeace-O'Neil and Farrell both agreed this would be the best option moving forward in addressing the problem. The funds for this could come from a few different pools of money.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to move forward with using beaver deceivers and utilizing the company Beaver Solutions, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- Bolton explained she created a personal Department Head Calendar for planned time off.
- Bolton also discussed a letter from Troutman Pepper Locke LLP about the PFAS mitigation bonds and a request for a letter from an appropriate town official

describing the project in more detail so that they can determine the appropriate borrowing authority. This is so that the town can get the bond authorized. Bolton will reach out to Ryan Mailloux and the Finance Committee regarding this letter request.

Bolton finished her Town Administrator Report by stating her future goals are to make the town website more efficient as well as the Employee Handbook. She would like to move forward with an updated Organizational Chart that is more visually appealing and less visually noisy. She has experience with graphic design as she stated.

X. Meeting adjourned at 6:02pm

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 pm, and enter Executive Meeting for reason #1, To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. -Fire Chief.

State whether the public body will reconvene in open session at the end of the executive session.

We will **Not** be returning to public session.

Take a roll call vote of the body to enter executive session. Makepeace-O'Neil seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

Administrative Actions:

1. Bolton to reach out to camp about Beaver Dam situation and using a deceiver.
2. Bolton to reach out to FINCOM and Ryan Mailloux about the loan borrowing.
3. Makepeace-O'Neil to draft and deliver a denial letter to Chief Burgess regarding the education incentive payments.
4. Bolton to fill out the contract for FRCOG to take over Dog Officer position and Inspector of Animals.
5. The Board to schedule executive sessions for contract negotiation.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Meeting Minutes for 4.8.25, 4.17.25
2. 3 Zoning Bylaw Amendments- Article VII Rate of Growth, Tiny Houses, Accessory Dwelling Units

3. FRCOG Charter Amendment
4. Dog Officer budget table document
5. Appointment Letter for Meryl Mandell

Respectfully submitted,
Brennan Mailloux
Administrative Assistant
Town Administrator/Select Board

** A full version of the 4/22/25 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's
YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWyaweEngi8>

