

Town of Shutesbury
Special Town Meeting Minutes
September 30, 2025

The Town of Shutesbury convened for Special Town Meeting on September 30, 2025 at the Shutesbury Elementary School. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm with 64 voters present.

Several announcements were made: the Conservation Commission is looking for a member; Michael DiChiara gave an update about the electricity aggregation program; Matteo Pangallo gave a CPC update; Susie Mosher reminded everyone about the town birthday party; Ellen McKay made a tax bill announcement.

Moderator Nettie Harrington Pangallo then reviewed the rules for Special Town Meeting participation. The meeting began at 6:45.

Article 1.

Mellisa: (Seconded by Eric) To see if the Town will vote to authorize an increase in the FY26 (Budget Line 147) Highway Superintendent's annual salary by three thousand six hundred ninety-four dollars (\$3,694.00) to be a total of seventy-five thousand two hundred seventeen dollars (\$75,217.00); and further to raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand six hundred ninety four dollars (\$3,694.00) for this purpose.

Recommended by Finance Committee

Article 1 passed.

Article 2.

Eric: (seconded by Melissa) To see if the Town will authorize an increase in the FY26 (Budget Line 50) Tax Collector's annual salary by one thousand fifteen dollars and twenty-eight cents (\$1,015.28) to be a total of twenty four thousand seven hundred and twenty-six dollars and fifty-nine cents (\$24,726.59); and further to raise and appropriate the sum of one thousand fifteen dollars and twenty-eight cents (\$1,015.28) for this purpose.

Recommended by Finance Committee.

Article 2 passed.

Article 3.

Melissa: (seconded by Eric) To see if the Town will vote to authorize an annual stipend of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) for the position of Emergency Management Director; and further to raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) for this purpose.

Finance Committee recommends.

Article 3 passed.

Article 4.

Eric: (seconded by Melissa) To see if the Town will vote to authorize an increase in the FY26 (Budget Line 216) Health Insurance expense line by one hundred twenty-four thousand dollars(\$124,000.00) to be a total of seven hundred forty-three thousand dollars (\$743,000); and further to raise and appropriate the sum of sixty-one thousand five hundred dollars (\$61,500.00), transfer twelve thousand five-hundred dollars (\$12,500.00) from the Town Stabilization Fund, and reduce the OPEB Trust Fund expense (Budget Line 218) by fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.000) for this purpose.

Finance Committee recommends.

Article 4 passed.

Article 5.

Melissa: (seconded by Eric) To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Town Stabilization Fund to pay a bill from prior years, a bill for Shutesbury IT payments owed to Becky Torres, \$1,332.83, for Zoom, Google, GData, and MailChimp payments.

A 9/10 vote was required so a hand count was taken.

Article 5 passed 67-1.

Article 6.

Eric: (seconded by Melissa) To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Town Stabilization Fund \$5,695.00, to cover a FY25 deficit in the Snow Removal Materials line (Budget Line 164).

Article 6 passed unanimously.

Article 7.

Withdrawn by the Finance Committee

Article 8.

Eric: (seconded by Melissa) To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, an amount of money to be expended under the direction of Amherst-Pelham Regional School District for Amherst – Pelham Regional Middle School Roof Replacement Project which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program and for which the Town may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”).

The town’s share of the total budget cost of nine million, eight hundred thirty-four thousand and three hundred forty-one dollars (\$9,834,341) will be calculated based on the assessment methodology outlined in the Regional Agreement. To meet this appropriation the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District is authorized to borrow said amount under M.G.L. Chapter 44, or pursuant to any other enabling authority. The Town acknowledges that the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town; provided further that any grant that Town may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) sixty-one point ninety-five percent (61.95%) of eligible, approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA.

Finance Committee explains that the intention of this article is to support the regional school in their grant application to the MSBC.

An amendment is offered by the Finance Committee to increase the amount being requested from \$9,834,341 to \$10,024,016. Seconded.

Amendment to request \$10, 024, 016 carried.

Amended Article 8 passed.

Article 9. Appointed Town Clerk

Melissa: (seconded by Eric) To see if the Town will vote to have its elected Town Clerk become an appointed Town Clerk of the town and establish a new appointed position of Town Clerk who shall be a town employee appointed by the Select Board.

Article 9 passed.

Article 10. Moratorium and Prohibition on Data Centers

Eric: (seconded) To see if the Town will vote to establish a moratorium on the application for and installation of data centers by amending the Town of Shutesbury Zoning Bylaw by adding a new use to Section 3.1- 1 - Use Table; by adding a new Section under Article VIII – Supplementary Regulations, 8.13 – Moratorium on Data Centers; and by adding a new definition to Section 13.2 Definitions.

3.1-1 Use Table

Amend Use table by Adding to Industrial Uses Category

INDUSTRIAL	RR	FC	TC	LW
Data Centers	N	N	N	N

13.2 Definitions

Amend Definitions by adding the following:

Data Center: A facility composed of networked computers, storage systems, and computing resources that is used to process, store, and disseminate large amounts of data, and that such a facility is either a principle use or is used in a standalone capacity.

8.13: Moratorium on Data Centers

The Town of Shutesbury shall enact a moratorium on the application for or building of new data centers, as defined in Section 13.2 of the Shutesbury Bylaw. The purpose of the moratorium is to provide the Shutesbury Planning Board with sufficient time to research and understand this complex use so that reasonable regulation can be developed for consideration at spring 2026 Shutesbury Town Meeting. The moratorium will be in effect starting on September 30, 2025 upon adoption at Special Town Meeting. The moratorium will be in place until June 20, 2026.

Planning Board reads their report. Planning Board favorable and dissenting opinions given. Discussion.

Article 10 passed, 48 in favor, 16 opposed.

Article 11. Council on Aging Membership

Melissa: (seconded by Erin) To see if the Town will vote to rescind the May 7th, 2016 Annual Town Meeting vote that increased the Council on Aging from 5 members to 7.

History of the changes are given.

Article 11 passed unanimously.

Article 12. Speed Limit

Motion: Eric (seconded by Melissa) To see if the Town will vote to accept Chapter 90, Section 17C of the Massachusetts General Laws, setting the reasonable and proper speed on municipally-owned streets within thickly settled or business districts at 25 MPH. This speed limit will apply to all town ways that do not have existing speed regulations.

Many residents spoke in favor and against. Officer Curtis answered questions.

Article 12 passed.

Article 13. Date of Annual Town Meeting Bylaw Amendment

Motion: Melissa: Seconded. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Date of Annual Town Meeting Bylaw to say: *Annual Town Meeting will be held in two sessions. The spring session of the Annual Town Meeting will be held on the second Saturday in May. A Special Fall Town Meeting may be held on a Saturday in October at the discretion of the Select Board.*

Many people spoke about this article.

Merril Mandel makes a motion to strike the last sentence. Motion carried.

Melissa Makepeace O'Neil made a motion to amend to read: To see if the town will vote to amend the Date of Annual Town Meeting Bylaw to read: The second Saturday in May. Motion carried.

Motion made to call the question. Motion carried.

Amended article reads: "To see if the town will vote to amend the Date of Annual Town Meeting Bylaw to read: The Annual Town Meeting will be held on the second Saturday in May."

Amended Article 13 passed.

Motion to dissolve made at 9:05. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Stratford, Interim Town Clerk