

TA Report 5.7.10

SHUTESBURY FARMERS MARKET will begin **May 22, 2010**. The hours are, **Saturday, 8:30am until noon**.

TOWN MEETING – GOOD OR BAD? What do you think? Email townadmin@shutesbury.org.

SOLAR PANELS- The 5 kilowatt pole mounted system has now turned into a 10 kilowatt pole mounted system behind town hall. The pre-construction meeting with Waterline Alternative Energy was this morning, Friday May 7. The key to this project is the coordination between the 2 firms, Waterline Alternative Energies and Fall River Electric Company, to make sure the project has matching components, configuration and design. Our highway department will do the trenching. The panels will span over 60' across east to west. A twenty foot right of way will be maintained on the west side of the field for future vehicle access. An area on the east side of the field contains the leach field for the septic system. Poles will not be located beyond the cement septic clean out man holes. There needs to be room between the panels as well. The solar gain is estimated to supply 38% of the town hall's electrical needs. The two solar installation companies are working together on the siting, American made product selection (Sharp and/or Evergreen panels) and installation.

FIRE STATION GASOLINE LEAK – DEP has asked us to move ahead with OTO to do soil borings. On Monday four holes will be dug in the floor of the reinforced concrete base of the fire station. On Tuesday Ben Fish from DEP will join OTO to take the soil borings, four in the fire station and a minimum of 2 in Leverett Rd. The soil samples will be tested on site with a PID and will go to the lab for hard data collection. Work will begin at 8:30am Tuesday morning.



TRASH BAG PICK UP Saturday, 5/8, from 9:00am to noon at TOWN HALL

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING passed the 2011 town budget, four zoning by law amendments, a winter use of Lake Wyola by law, funding for painting and windows at the school, \$2500





towards the new library building, approval of the library project and authorization to apply for state grant funding. The Library Facility Needs Assessment Committee (LFNAC) worked for 3 years to bring this request to Town Meeting. Town Meeting labored on reviewing and voting all financial housekeeping amendments such as revolving funds and authorization to accept grant money. Town meeting also approved putting \$30,000 into stabilization but declined to take \$60,000 out for a new one ton pickup truck. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) made its first report and town meeting voted to allocate 10% of CPA money into appropriate categories and \$1750 for expenses. The town again chose to support the per pupil regional assessment formula over Massachusetts Ed Reform statute for our Amherst/Pelham regionalization assessment agreement. While this option is more costly to Shutesbury at this time it is beneficial to the Region because it is predictable and makes it easier for the 4 towns to support a larger budget.

WHY TOWN MEETING? Thank you for coming to Town Meeting, especially on a beautiful warm spring day. This is the place we make decisions. The one that affects you most directly is, how should we spend the tax dollars you pay? And that leads to many other questions. How do we manage our school? What programs are available for our children? How many hours is the library open? Why are the first 50 trash bags free? Are safety personnel available to respond in emergencies? Are public recreational areas available? Do we need a bigger library? Do we actively support farming and forestry? Is our water supply protected? How can we get broadband to the last mile, to every home in Shutesbury?



Shutesbury Town Moderator Penny Kim, Selectboard Chair Elaine Puleo, Selectboard Members Al Springer and April Stein May 1, 2010

Shutesbury is a \$5.5 million operation, financed by 75% property tax, 17.5% by the state and 7.5% through local sources. These resources provide public services to all town residents and are allocated by registered voters who come to Town Meeting and vote.

I recently heard a public complaint about small town government, a criticism of the haphazard skill base of volunteers, an assertion that better decisions could be made at a regional level. There would be greater efficiencies, greater uniformity, less duplication of personnel and services. While I understand the position and agree that the wheel should not be reinvented 351 times (for every town and city in the commonwealth) for every civic function from Boston to Athol to Shutesbury, I think local decision making, and the town meeting form of municipal government is tenacious, resourceful, and affirming of the texture of a community. I encourage you to experience it if you have not. If you have and walked away frustrated by the process of questions and answers and speaking platforms I hope you will come again.

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