

TA Report 3.9.12

NEW HIGHWAY DEPT. 5/4 TON PICK UP TRUCK Last May Town Meeting approved a new truck small plow truck, 5/4 ton pick up for the Shutesbury Highway Dept. Highway Superintendent Tim Hunting had made this request for three years before winning approval. The prior year we set aside funding for half the truck and this year set aside the balance with the warrant article approval. The new truck is silver with a black dump. It is not yet marked with the Shutesbury logo. This will be a great asset to the town for years to come. We received a good price on it through the bidding process.



SOCIAL MEDIA

The new playground, water fountain, school auditorium, where we come together and share thoughts, ideas, opinions, news and where we socialize. Social media has quickly evolved over the last 10 years. From cell phones, texts, and emails to Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Youtube, Flickr, social media is exploding. As a fifty-something... I am not as fully engaged, "liking," "blogging," etc., as many of my peers. Part of my reserve is from being in a municipal environment. In February I attended a workshop on social media and government presented by a lawyer from Kopelman & Page who writes social media policy for cities and towns. Attorney Michele E. Randazzo outlined and cautioned us on use of social media in a public arena.

While email has revolutionized the communication network of our 200 volunteers there are restrictions. Email is not to be used for deliberation between committee members or board members, only scheduling and the distribution of digital documents. Emails are public documents. There are some exemptions related to confidential and personnel matters, labor or health issues, but most are not exempt. Our town website policy is strict but follows the guidelines Attorney Randazzo outlined. It is not the goal of the web policy to create a forum for sharing of ideas. It is to provide information about the municipality and the functions of the municipal boards and committees. The URL is http://www.shutesbury.org/web_site_policy, if you are interested in the details.

Some towns maintain Facebook pages. Facebook itself has a code of conduct but she advises certain practices be in place and always make sure the Town reserves the right to remove any posts that are deemed inappropriate or offensive. She advised if you have a Facebook page to limit the number of people who post and screen for content, be careful of Likes and don't endorse or sponsor. She said it is a constant balance between being risk averse and first amendment rights. So good luck to everyone in utilizing social media, follow open meeting law, back up your emails and maintain your quality of life as a vibrant volunteer. If you need a board a committee to be on please call me, 413-259-1214.

Volunteers Needed:

On the Personnel Board, Conservation Commission and Recreation Committee

Elections for Boards will be held at Town Meeting May 5, 2012

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