

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen Tuesday, September 10, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Members present: Chairwoman Elaine Puleo and members Al Springer and April Stein.

Also Present: Town Administrator Rebecca Torres, Administrative Secretary Leslie Bracebridge recording.

Chairman Puleo opened the meeting at **8:00 A.M.** at the Shutesbury Town Hall. (The meeting was changed to the morning to accommodate a conflict for an important Wired West meeting)

Appointments

Police Chief Harding: Not present.

Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director (EMD) Tibbetts: EMD Tibbetts stated that he came to the Select Board meeting to answer any questions the Board might have concerning two cooperative agreements in which he recommends the Town of Shutesbury's participation with Select Board approval:

1. The **DoD Firefighting Program Cooperative Agreement** of the US Forest Service Excess Federal Property and administered through the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry in the control of wild land and community fire protection and emergency services provides aid, advice and the actual transfer of additional firefighting equipment to the town. The transferred equipment must be in serviceable condition within 1 year of the transfer and in the use of the town's fire fighting department for a minimum of 2 years from the date of registration. This agreement is not to be confused with:
2. The **Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) Program Agreement**, also administered through the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry, which makes aid and advice available to Massachusetts fire departments, but the title of the equipment remains with the United States government.

Selectmen unanimously voted to sign both the DoD and the FEPP Firefighting Program Cooperative Agreements between the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry and the Shutesbury Fire Department.

Topics

1. Select Board support of Wired West/IT Bond Bill:

- Becky requested Select Board support of a Wired West letter, still in process, to send to the state legislature regarding the IT Bond Bill.
- The Wired West group met with the director of MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Institute) to discuss working together.
- Becky will attend the Wired West meeting tonight to interview and vote on appointing a new Executive Director who is well-versed in the industry. The terms of hiring are that he only gets paid if Wired West succeeds.
- Connecting the middle mile has been sub-contracted out in less than efficient ways.
- They hope that with the new Wired West Director, the last mile will unfold in a way beneficial to all residents of the Wired West community.
- Wired West is hopeful to be a true partner at the table with MBI.

Selectmen unanimously voted to support the letter being written by Wired West to be sent to the state legislature to support the \$40 million bond bill for provision of the last fiber mile.

2. **Knotweed:**

- Becky has prepared a note for the fall newsletter regarding elimination of roadside knotweed:
 - Discussion of terminology of "town-approved herbicide" versus "chemicals" in the note:
 - The town would approve the herbicide to be used; the town would study this and get a pulse of the community as to whether or not a specific herbicide is used.

- “Chemicals” is the term used in previous minutes.
- Both terminologies should be used.
- A town-approved herbicide is will be identified in the warrant.
- What happens if the town starts the program with one herbicide and then the company recommends a different chemical?
- Round-up has been recommended by a member of the Conservation Commission in the past.
- Rodeo is an alternative that has not been discussed.
- Becky wants to be sure that “town-approved” language allows for a change in the chemical used.
- Elaine thinks it’s the town-approval to use chemicals, but suggests expanding the sentence so it encompasses components of no specific chemical or herbicide, to the effect that whatever the committee designated for deciding on the chemical determines is best, while maintaining concept that the process is approved.
- Becky has been reading about vinegar alternatives.
- Some people think that herbicide is a softer term than chemical.
- Should citizens names be used in the article or not?
- Why knotweed, and not bittersweet, poison ivy, wild raspberry, etc.?
- Becky: Literature states that knotweed destabilizes soil, and can lift pavement, and every year knotweed spreads up to 20 more feet outward.

3. Cell Tower - RFP:

- No updates.

4. Regionalization Update:

- The next meeting of the Regional School District Planning Board will be September 23.
- The Shutesbury Regional School District Planning Committee met last Thursday to discuss options: what options are available for Shutesbury and how much each would cost.
- Clarification of the “hybrid” model:
 - One hybrid model: The other 3 towns would regionalize pre-K to 12; Shutesbury would be in the 7 to 12 segment of the region and contract elementary school services through the Amherst region.
 - (The Shutesbury Committee concluded that they don’t want to pursue the other hybrid model where Shutesbury would not contract with Amherst for the elementary services, and instead stand alone, because then there would never be an incentive for the other 3 towns to bring Shutesbury into the pre-K to 12 region.)
 - Shutesbury would have its own school committee and be in charge of its own building.
 - Shutesbury would still send a representative to the regional school committee.
 - If there is a district special needs program for pre-K to 6, there is the potential that Shutesbury could use that.
 - What is the advantage for the other 3 towns? They want to go pre-K-12 and the only way that they can do that is if we agree to go along with it. (They don’t need us for the pre-K-6.)
 - We would have control of our own school, school committee and curriculum.
 - We would have no power for special needs. The Amherst superintendent would make our recommendations. Currently our Union 28 Special Needs Director recommends to the superintendent.
 - Al: We would just have different people telling us what to do.
 - Elaine: We have Interim Superintendent Robert “Bob” Mahler right now.
 - The Union 28 Committee meets in September.

- They should be in the hiring process right now, but they're in flux as to how to hire because Leverett is in this discussion.
- Al: They're just waiting to see what happens.
- Elaine: Just hopes that Bob would stay another year.
- Becky: You don't have the same benefits as a stand alone just the independence.
- If we were pre-K to 12 and we did have an extraordinary need we would share it region wide, but we would also share every towns' extraordinary needs, and there is the potential that the proportion could be higher or lower for Shutesbury than standing alone.
- April finds it bothersome that we're basing independence on an illusion.
- Elaine: There have been discussions to really get at what the issues are and what could be a solution. Elaine believes people are trying to understand where we could go to make this a potentially commonly benefitted arrangement.
- Elaine: Monetarily we would see that going with the statutory method, in the long run Shutesbury would be saving money on the 7-12 at least. If we never have a special needs student then we would be paying for special needs, but one \$200,000 to \$300,000/year expense would change that. Al: The state pays after the first \$40,000. Elaine: The town pays it, but then the town gets it back. Al: People need to hear the whole story.
- What will Leverett save after the second year?
- Becky: We'll be paying a lot more, because Shutesbury's student population is going up and other towns' student population is going down so proportionately, we will be paying more.
- Pelham and Leverett's choice methods put them into a different situation than Shutesbury.
- Pelham is already directly aligned with Amherst.
- Leverett believes they will benefit from including special needs.
- Leverett is getting support in the community and from the school personnel for the raises.
- Elaine: Our school community is not for it. Becky: Our school community is open to listening.
- Elaine: Most people will base their decision on cost, so that is why we are trying to get that information, to determine whether it's beneficial or not.
- Elaine: The discussions are continuing. We almost decided that Shutesbury would back out which would force their hand as a pre-K to 6 but now we're back to discussing and Amherst and other towns are back to listening.

Select Board Action Items

- 1. Select men unanimously voted to accept the 8/13/13 Select Board Meeting Minutes as written.**
- 2. Selectmen unanimously voted to approve the job description and sign a Personnel Action Form (PAF) approving Linda Scott at the Zoning Board of Appeals Clerk.**
- 3. Selectmen signed vendor warrants totaling \$56,493.94.**
- 4. Selectmen signed payroll warrants totaling \$85,492.69.**
- 5. BG Disclosure Form:** Was not discussed.
- 6. See unanimous votes of the Select Board to sign both the DoD and FEPP agreements in their appointment with EMD Tibbetts above.**
- 7. See Select Board unanimous vote to support the IT Bond Bill to the legislature in Topics 1 above.**

Topics the Chairman Could Not Reasonably Have Anticipated

- 1. A motion was made by April, seconded by Al and so voted to for Elaine Puleo to serve as Select Board Chairman for another year.**
- 2. Event forms: Selectmen unanimously voted to sign an event form including the use of town hall parking area for overflow parking for a Sept. 14, 17 Leverett Road wedding and for use**

of the Town Hall for an October 2 Community Network for Children Amazing Animal adaptations program for 15 students.

- 3. Al has talked with Highway Superintendent Tim Hunting about a washout on the gravel portion of Wendell Rd. in front of the Whitter home, believed to be caused by a culvert on the abutting Footit property, which is pitched the wrong way. Should Tim talk to Footit?**
 - a. Selectmen authorized Highway Superintendent Hunting to talk with property owner Chris Footit about this problem.**
 - b. Following up on an August/September 2012 Select Board discussion about this matter, Selectmen reviewed the recommendation to Highway Superintendent Hunting to rent a vibratory roller and if it seems beneficial for gravel road management, then to go through the Capital Plan Committee to get one on an annual town meeting warrant.**
- 4. EMD Tibbetts reported: All the new road signs at Lake Wyola were installed last week.**

The Select Board **adjourned at 9:15 A.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary