

Shutesbury Board of Selectmen April 12, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Members present: Chairwoman Elaine Puleo and member Al Springer. Absent: April Stein.
Also Present: Town Administrator Rebecca Torres, Administrative Secretary Leslie Bracebridge recording.

Meeting opened at 6:30 P.M.

Appointments

Police Chief Harding and Sergeant:

- **Elaine received best wishes for her first ever run in the April 18, 2011 Boston Marathon.**
- **250th Parade:**
 - An invitation letter has not yet gone out to Sheriff Donelan.
 - More Police Officers will be able to participate in the parade by driving at the front and back of the parade, and the back cruiser will pick up working officers along the way.
 - MEMA has some useful equipment including a lighted sign board that could qualify for use for this event.
 - All side streets feeding into Leverett Road will be blocked and used for viewer parking.
 - Signs in Leverett and at the Rte. 202/Prescott Road intersection will announce in advance the specific time that the road will be closed.
 - Any promotional information about the parade will include “no parking will be available at the school parking lot.”
 - There will not be an officer available to manage vehicle activity at the school.
- The **mobile computer** should be in operation by next week. Early coverage tests are encouraging.
- **Chief’s 2004 cruiser:**
 - The suspension is fine. It needs new tires, rotors, and brake pads.
 - If Fire Chief Tibbetts does not want this 2004 cruiser to replace the 1999 cruiser that he drives, more could be gained by a town sale than through trade-in where only \$500 would be offered.

Fire Chief Tibbetts joined the meeting:

- Chief Tibbetts feels the **2004 cruiser has more life than his 1999 vehicle** with 130,000 miles on it.
 - Rust has re-emerged on the ’99; it will need bodywork just to pass the next inspection.
 - Inexpensive shocks will be installed to keep the ’99 safe to drive until the 2004 is available.
 - Chief Tibbetts “will not pass up the newer cruiser if it becomes available.”
- **Fire Fighter Call wage line is over budget:**
 - There are more people on the roster than last year. (Now a total of 12 call fire-fighters)
 - So more Fire Fighters show up when an alarm sounds.
 - There have been 130 runs already this year. (This is a high number.)
 - Mutual aid calls have increased:
 - One town is trying to address the fact that their fire-fighters are not showing up.
 - Not responding to another town is a violation of mutual aid.
 - Shutesbury could someday be in the same situation.
 - We are fortunate that we have not had big events in our town.
 - Larger towns are now relying more on mutual aide due to less staffing.
 - The duration of the calls for things like brush fires, and an airplane crash take up more hours than routine medical calls.
 - A policy change will be made so that call fire-fighters who arrive at the station too late for the first run will only be paid to remain at the station on standby for 1 hour.
- **Otherwise, things are going well:**

- The new fire fighters are working out well.
 - One new person is the previous Shelburne Falls Fire Chief
 - He is really helpful for feedback.
 - Is on probation for 6 months even so.
 - He is well-received among other fire fighters by equal treatment as the other fire fighters receive.
- There is presently **one female on the roster** who is very welcome at certain medical calls.
- **Becky provided an update on the installation of the test equipment at the Fire Station:**
 - The Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) test is not happening this week, thanks to Chief Tibbetts questioning the impact of a high water table on the test. Engineer John Henry measured the ground-water and found it to be at 3 feet, much higher than the engineer anticipated it to be, and which would preclude any true results. (The average water table is at 6 to 8 feet.)
 - The contamination is currently below the water table, so a test run now would not indicate true contamination levels or what filtration materials are needed.
 - We're getting the March (slow season) installation price but the test will be run in June (busy season) when the installation price would have been higher.
 - Because John Henry lives right in Belchertown, so it will not cost the town as much for his local monitoring visits as it would if he had to travel a greater distance.
 - Both Chief Tibbetts and Selectman Springer were recognized for their support efforts during the pilot test set-up and monitoring wells installation that occurred on April 7 including:
 - Bundling tasks into one day to save funds,
 - Finding supplies and building molds for the concrete pours, and
 - General worksite preparations, support and assistance.

Topics

1. **250th Ball Triathlon Fundraiser – get names and updates:** No Select Board actions taken.
2. **Fire Station Update – SVE report/holding:** See report under Fire Chief Tibbetts' appointment above.
3. **Policy to Purchase Only Fuel Efficient Vehicles:**
 - **Selectmen unanimously voted to adopt the April 12, 2011 Green Communities policy to purchase only fuel efficient vehicles, with the exemptions listed in that policy.**
 - All highway trucks comply with the over 8500 pound exemption and the one fire and three police vehicles are exempt due to their use as emergency response vehicles.
 - This policy adoption is one of 2 remaining required sections for the Green Communities application package to be submitted before the June 10, 2011 deadline, for Shutesbury to become a Green Community, and therefore eligible for Green Communities grant funds.
 - Becky showed the Selectmen the charting of municipal energy usage posted, as required, on the Mass Energy Insight Website. This monitoring tool will show Shutesbury's baseline energy usage, which needs to be reduced by 20%. This is the second remaining requirement to become a Massachusetts Green Community.
 - Becky mentioned that in her research of B-20 biodiesel fuel she learned that Dennis K. Burke supplies B-20 at the same cost as diesel; it was \$4.04/gallon then. Switching to the B-20 diesel would lower our production of MBTU's 9% and help achieve the -20% energy usage.
4. **Regional School Debt:**
 - Finance Committee Chairman Patrick Callahan met with other Amherst-Pelham Regional Finance Committee Chairmen to further discuss Pelham's practice of paying capital expenses as they go in order to avoid expenses associated with borrowing, relative to regional capital expenses. Pelham puts \$200,000 aside every year toward capital expenses.

- Two years ago, they passed a \$200,000 override to fund capital items.
 - They will save \$29,000 in interest by doing this.
 - Discussion of the cost effectiveness of Pelham's reasoning included:
 - If you pay out of cash today, the residents using the facility for those 30 future years of debt won't be paying their fair share for it. - They will be paying toward the next purchase though.
 - If 10 years out, today's \$100,000 will only be worth \$50,000 the \$29,000 saved is actually costing \$21,000 more. With fuel costs going up, it will cost even more.
 - The debt picture is in question with a couple of years to work it out.
 - **On March 29 the Regional School Committee voted to incur debt in the sum of \$1,585,809 for the purpose of paying the costs of replacing windows and doors and re-pointing leaking capstones (the Green Repairs Project) at the District's Regional Middle School and sent notices requiring acknowledgement of receipt to the member towns as required by M.G.L. Ch. 71 § 16(b). Becky signed and sent the acknowledgement back.**
 - The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) voted final approval of this project on March 30 and will reimburse up to 59.84% of eligible costs, for an estimated reimbursement of \$884,459 and an estimated net cost to the District of \$701,350.
 - Shutesbury will owe about \$70,000, because we pay about 10% of Regional expenses.
5. **29% increase in FY 2012 Chapter 90 local transportation aid:** Good news! Total: \$136,772.
6. As the local licensing authority, Selectmen were notified of the new **Crowd Manager Requirement for the Shutesbury Athletic Club (SAC)** requiring a trained Crowd Manager to be present during all hours that the facility is open.
- This is a further requirement of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security Department of Fire Services following the February 2, 2003 devastating Station Nightclub fire in Rhode Island in which 100 people were killed and 300 others injured.
 - A complete packet of information including requirements for online training and testing was sent to the SAC.
 - Selectmen have met their re-licensing obligations. They don't know if the SAC is licensed yet because Department of Revenue information is not publicly available.
 - The SAC facility has been cleaned, painted and the ceiling tiles replaced in the community room.
 - Families are attending Sunday afternoon game sessions.
7. **Selectmen unanimously voted to remain a single precinct community and to sign the Single Precinct Authorization Form** to be returned to the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Select Board Action Items

1. **Selectmen unanimously voted to approve the minutes of March 29, 2011 as written.**
2. **Make Traffic Count request:**
 - These are provided free by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).
 - Shutesbury should do counts around the culverts that might be replaced in the future:
3. Selectmen agreed to request a count be done on the gravel portion of Wendell Road at the outflow of Ames Pond and on Locks Pond Road at the outflow of Lake Wyola.
4. **Selectmen unanimously voted to approve a request form for use of town hall for the Democratic Town Committee meeting for April 16, 2011.**
5. **Selectmen unanimously voted to approve a request form to use town property for the purpose of a parade assembly at the elementary school going to the town common from parade organizer Dagen Julty.**
6. See vote in Topics #7 above.

7. **Selectmen signed payroll warrants totaling \$83,553.95.**
8. **Selectmen signed vendor warrants totaling \$117,221.99.**

Topics the Chairman Could Not Reasonably Have Anticipated

1. **The budget from the house is coming out tomorrow.**
2. **The City of Melrose is looking to partner with up to three municipalities** to regionalize information technology and data center operations. Selectmen took no action.
3. **Eric Stocker has talked to the Town Moderator of his interest in returning to the Finance Committee.** (Chairman Patrick Callahan has reached his terms length and has resigned effective June 30, 2011.)
4. **Selectmen received draft versions of the May 7 Annual Town meeting warrant to review:**
 - **Article 7 will be sponsored by the School Committee.**
 - **Becky will coordinate a warrant review meeting with the Selectmen and Moderator.**
5. **Selectmen unanimously voted to sign the Annual Town Election warrant.**
6. **Selectmen met with the Finance Committee to review of the FY 12 budget:**

Becky reported on the most recent changes to balance the FY 2012 budget:

- **Revenues:**
 - Charter tuition lines 19 and 30 were zeroed out to be cost neutral: Last year's cherry sheet numbers were not what were actually charged. Right now they say we don't have a charter student, but we do. If we pay for one in FY 2012 it will be extra.
 - Chapter 70 was nicked down to minus 8.5%.
 - Lottery aid went from minus 7 to minus 5 in line 23.
- **Expenses:**
 - \$2500 added to the Capital Plan budget for the new Library building project; a continuation of previous years.
 - \$2000 for the War Memorial to add the Korean and Vietnam Wars; a 1-time expense.
 1. Three trees will be taken down, and replaced with small shrubs,
 2. The memorial will be rebuilt and set further back.
 - Finance Committee agreed to a \$2,000 transfer to cover the call Fire Fighters shortfall:
 1. One transfer will be made at the end of the year for the exact amount.
 2. Items need to be adjusted to be right for next year: wages and salary.
 - Stipends were raised from \$7900 to \$10,000.
 - Call line was raised to \$11,000.
 - Approximately \$2,000 over on both. There are 4 people who only got a ½ year this year. These changes will address the staff already onboard.
 - In the past, Chief Tibbetts has gone to fires short-handed and now he's going fully staffed. It's nice not to worry that there are only a few people in the fire department.
 3. The Chapter 70 aid estimate is conservative.
 4. Finance Reserve money could come down a little and used elsewhere in the budget if necessary.
 - April 26th is the last day the Select Board can sign off on the budget.
 - The Finance Committee will change their meeting from the 19th to the 26th
- **Is there funding for Article 9? Wired West annual fee of \$1,000, line 57 is in the budget.**
 - If Article 9 (to create a municipal lighting plant for the purpose of providing fiber optic Broadband for all persons in Shutesbury) fails the budget line will have to be reduced.
- **Health insurance benefits only increased for policies changing to cover a greater number of people.**

- Premium increases remained at zero.
- Accommodating the required change to cover retirees' dependents was already built into the \$70,000 increase.
- Considering this is predicted to be the worst year financially, Shutesbury should be fine.
- Patrick: For the past three years our regional school budget has gone down which has helped.
 - Because the elementary school population continues to drop, we will continue to see Regional decreases.
- Federal budget cuts could make things "dicey."
- Discussion of comparison between school raises that include steps and COLA and non-school employees that includes COLA only, led to the following vote of the Finance Committee:
 - **A motion was made and seconded and unanimously voted to put 1.5 % pay increase in the salary line items for non-school town employees.**
- **Fire Station Update:**
 - Inside and outside wells are all in.
 - Drums are set up with 1000 pounds of charcoal in each drum.
 - The lines are all set up.
 - Al and Walter made the concrete forms.
 - Walter helped throughout the day, setting up the test equipment.
 - The new hard-pack will be put down soon that will last the better part of 5 years.
 - The 7-day pilot test is on hold. The preferred ground water level is 6 to 8 feet. It is now at 3 feet.
 - The sub-contractor piece was done now for \$17,000 instead of \$30,000, because work is slow.
 - After the pilot test, the Selectmen will decide whether and how long to proceed with a soil vapor extraction (SVE) process. Selectmen think 6 months will be long enough.
 - Monitors will be out testing the water in the monitoring wells.
 - The wells installed outside the building are longer lasting than the wells that they replaced.
 - The test equipment is in. If the test is successful an incinerator piece will be brought in. It is less expensive to run the incinerator long term than the carbon filters. After the incinerator runs for a while, it may cost less to go back to charcoal filtration for a little while.
 - The noise level across the street was audible. If there is a neighborhood noise issue, a barrier will be built to direct the noise upward.
 - Engineer John Henry says the fans will be run 24/7, so if the SVE will run more permanently, more insulation will be added. They will enclose the fans.
 - It is cost prohibitive to bring in the 3-phase. If the SVE becomes permanent the electric company will bring in a dedicated service free of charge. Electrical charges will be \$500/month. The system will work, but not as well as if 3-phase electric could be used.
 - The \$70,000 allocated in fall 2010 will be back to \$40,000 after the pilot test is covered.
- Patrick has reported his resignation from the Finance Committee, effective June 30, 2011.
- A person interested in serving on the Finance Committee has already talked to the Moderator.

The Select Board **adjourned at 9:25 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Administrative Secretary

110215 Select Board