

### **TA Report 4.8.11**

#### **WIRED WEST INFORMATIONAL MEETING this MONDAY night, 4/11 at 7:00pm, AT TOWN HALL**

This meeting is to share information covered at the April 2 Wired West Delegates meeting in Springfield, the draft business plan, draft WW Cooperative Agreement and draft WW by laws. We will discuss the merits of moving ahead with a vote to establish a municipal lighting plant in Shutesbury, specifically at this time for the purpose of providing telecommunications with the intent to become a charter member of the Wired West Cooperative. The first vote was made in October, 2010. Two votes need to be taken. Wired West's purpose is to bring fiber optic cable the last mile to all the residents, businesses and institutions of the 47 charter towns. There remain funding challenges. A fundraising committee is being formed. A marketing plan is being worked on. Please come Monday with your questions, your fears, your support.

**SHUTESBURY'S PROPOSED SOLAR FARM** Cowls Lumber has announced they are leasing property to Citizens energy to develop a 6 megawatt solar facility. It will be 35 acres 500 feet back from the road. The panels will not be visible from the road. The panels do not make noise. The installation would be done over a construction season. There are no proposed changes to the roadway such as widening the road. There is not need for that. Currently logging trucks travel this area. We are glad that Cowls is working with an experienced and reputable firm on this project. Once the permit application is received there will be public hearings. At this point I know we want to answer any and all your questions as best we can and that Cowls is also happy to answer questions. If you have questions or concerns, please share them. We will do our best to get you answers. Becky Torres 259-1618.

#### **250 SHUTESBURY Always cooler**

**250<sup>th</sup> April 30, Saturday, Chain Saw Demonstration by Tom Houston, Shutesbury Tree Warden.**

**Union 28 Health Care Benefits and Retiree Benefits** This week we received some research back regarding how to move ahead with special legislation to solidify, make legal an agreement between the 5 towns, and 4 schools. The research asserted that we did not need legislation but that we only needed the vote of our Union 28 school committee to set the apportionment of the Union 28 healthcare benefits. The research relied on MGL chapter 71 sections but did not reference MGL 32B. We requested a conversation between DOR counsel and the researcher. Together they determined that 32B superseded chapter 71 union superintendency law and they have recommended that the towns pursue special state legislation to enact an agreement between the 5 towns to apportion based on enrollment that each town will pay Union 28 employees the same health insurance benefits they pay their own town employees.

Secondly an article will be going to town meeting to correct a limitation of individual healthcare benefits for retirees. In 2003 we adopted MGL 32B, sec. 9A and added in the limitation of "individual." We have learned that this limitation is incorrect and that we need to change it, expand what we voted in 2003 for retiree benefits from individual to employee plus dependence as is standard state practice and required by law. We have researched this situation carefully getting feed back from town counsel, from our Treasurer, from experts on MGL 32B which rules on healthcare benefits, from the Insurance commission, and from the Director of the Hampshire Healthcare trust for affirmation of common practice as well as a historical look at the evolution of healthcare legislation in Massachusetts. There is an economic impact to this change that has been built into the budget. The Selectboard has voted the correction in Personnel Policy handbook and the next step is for the town to vote this change to the Shutesbury Personnel ByLaw. If you have questions please call.

**FIRE STATION GASOLINE CLEANUP** On Thursday OTO came out and worked with their subcontractors to set up the SVE (soil venting extraction) equipment to run a week long pilot test. This is the test that was judged by the Selectboard as the best course of action to remediate the contaminated soil still left under the front corner of the fire station where the rescue bay is. The technicians drilled 2 7 inch wells in the fire station and one about 15' out the west side of the building. A venting hose was installed from the well in the rescue bay to a pump and blower on the other side of the building. The vacuum was tested at this location. We also tested for noise. The noise greatly decreased after all the hoses were hooked up. The system is now operational but the conditions for the test are poor at this time. The water table is at three feet. John Henry, OTO remediation expert, said, we need to hold off on the testing until the water table drops to the level of the contaminated soil. He will monitor the test wells every couple of weeks until this happens. We moved ahead at this time because we were able to get a better price because work was slow. Now we have to wait for optimal conditions to occur. But OTO will hold to their lower quote. We also moved ahead and installed 3 new test wells along the parameter of the wetland. The water tests will soon be done at these wells. Just the soil borings coming from the well drilling indicate that the once heavily contaminated soil is now clean in these areas. The soil boring from the rescue bay did have a high reading as predicted but the sample from the larger bay was very low, which is good news. All and all it was a productive day. Now we wait for the water table to drop.



I want to thank Margaret Manson for 3 years of committed service as Chair of the Personnel Board. She brought us cake to soften the blow of her resignation. It was delicious.

**Wired West informational meeting MONDAY, April 11, 7pm at Town Hall**

**Conservation Commission review of Wetland ByLaw Changes to be proposed at Town Meeting, 4/28 from 7:30-8:00pm**

**Shutesbury's Farmers & Artisans Market Meeting 4/23 at 8:30am**

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