

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Town of Shutesbury
Special Town Meeting Minutes
December 3 and December 10, 2019**

At a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the Town of Shutesbury qualified to vote in town affairs, held at the Shutesbury Elementary School at 23 West Pelham Road on the December 3, 2019 in the presence of a quorum, the following business was conducted.

Moderator Paul Lyons convened the meeting at 7:00 PM. He asked to dispense with the reading of the warrant if there were no objections. No objections were raised.

Due to the 22 inches of snow and a concern for public safety, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Special Town Meeting to Tuesday, December 10, 2019, 7 PM, at the Shutesbury Elementary School. This motion passed unanimously. The meeting recessed at 7:03 PM.

The Special Town Meeting reconvened at Shutesbury Elementary School on Tuesday, December 10 at 7:05 PM with a quorum of registered voters.

Paul Lyons, the Town Moderator welcomed the citizens and explained this is his first Town Meeting as moderator. He referenced the publication, Town Meeting Time, as his guide. He asked to dispense with the reading of the warrant if there were no objections. No objections were raised.

Article 1: A motion was made and seconded to see if the Town would vote to transfer up to \$110,000 from Free Cash for the purchase of the Baptist Parsonage property located at 32 Leverett Rd., Shutesbury, MA.

Discussion: After a description of the article and the property by Becky Torres, Town Administrator, and Mark Ellis, Pastor of the Shutesbury Community Church. Citizens discussed issues about separation of church and state, the usefulness of adding this piece of land to the abutting fire station property and the possible historical value of the 1883 Parsonage house. Concerns were raised about the old well and possible traces of gasoline as well as the liability of undocumented pollution, the arrangement the town has had in supplying water to the property and the lack of an up-to-code septic system. The value of the property depends on its future use, from \$50,000 as a lot to add land and frontage for the town, or \$90,000 as a lot with a house to renovate. The Finance Committee recommended not making this purchase with so many unknown factors.

Paper Ballots were cast: No - 83 and Yes – 21. Article 1 fails.

Article 2: A motion was made and seconded to amend the Annual Town Meeting Date by-law from the first Saturday in May to the last Saturday in April.

Article 2 passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded and passed unanimously at 8:30 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Susie Mosher – Shutesbury Town Clerk