

**Shutesbury Cultural Council**  
**Meeting: December 4, 2025**

**Members Present:** Cara Brostrom, Joan Green, Cheryl Hayden, Jean Meister, Matto Pangallo, Peggy Woods

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm

**Old Business**

Library event that was funded last funding cycle to celebrate the opening of the new library has not taken place. Cara has touched base with the Mary Anne Library Director. Since the monies have been given to the library they have until July, 2026 to hold the event.

**New Business**

We have \$5,792 to distribute for the upcoming funding cycle. Decisions need to be made by January 15, 2026.

We have 26 applicants.

**Discussion to Determine Funding Decisions**

We began the discussion by reviewing our published priorities.

We would give priority to the following:

- Shutesbury-based applicants
- Projects, events, or programs that have already secured a local venue
- Projects, events, or programs that serve the widest range of local populations

We began our review by making a list of any applicants that did not meet our stated priorities.

We then made a list of applicants that met our stated priorities. As a result, we had 13 applicants who met all our priorities and 3 applicants that met our priorities, but we felt warranted further discussion.

We decided not to fund two of the applicants we discussed further (#3 “Tour of the Three Cemeteries on Leverett Road in Shutesbury” and #15 “Hands at Work”). For the “Tour of the Three Cemeteries we would have liked to have seen a stronger historical connection to Shutesbury. For “Hands at Work” we decided our mission is not to fund the making of the film. The application would have been stronger if the proposal focused more on the showing and discussion of the film.

This left us with 15 applications that put us over our budget of \$5,792.

We discussed the pros and cons of either not funding an entire program or decreasing the amount requested by the applicants. We decided to examine this on a case-by-case basis using the following criteria:

- Would the applicant be able to do their proposal at a reduced level? If they proposed doing 5 workshops, could they do fewer workshops for less money?
- Have they applied to other funding sources?
- If we only gave a proposal partial funding would this put a financial burden on the sponsor? For example, if the library would like a guest speaker and we are not able to fund the entire cost of the speaker would this put pressure to on the library to come up with the additional cost?

Based on these criteria we said No to #10 “Balloons, Books & Magic” since we would only be able to partially fund this program and thereby causing the Library to come up with the additional funds.

We decided to reduce the funding for the following:

- #17 “Hannah Moushabeck we reduced by \$13 because the PTO is committed to this event and would provide the additional funds.
- #21 “Book Art” we reduced the funding from \$1,000 to \$400 because the applicant indicated she could do less workshops depending on the funding.
- #20 “Monthly Ukulele play along” we reduced from \$600 to \$400. The library is a very strong supporter of this program and there is the option of not doing one every month.

We were able to fund the following applications:

- #2 “Shutesbury Studio Tour
- #4 “Little Bear Nature Walk”
- #5 “Musical Storytelling & Folk Songs”
- #9 “Seasonal Skywatch”
- #11 “Raptors in Flight”
- #12 “Chain Reactions & Creative Contraptions”
- #17 “Hannah Moushabeck Author Visit”
- #19 “Anti-Bullying Dinosaur Puppet Show”
- #20 “Monthly Ukelele play along”
- #21 “Book Art”
- #22 “Tunes@Noon”
- #24 Amherst Regional Public Schools @ The Drake”
- #25 Needle Felting”

Cara and Jean will meet to first notify the applicants we were not able to fund and to provide feedback. They will then notify the Mass Cultural Council of our decisions and the applicants we are funding. This will all need to be done by January 15, 2026.

### **Other Business**

Cara will be stepping down in June. She has served for six years. Thank you, Cara!

We discussed how to better advertise to get a range of proposals from different applicants. We are tending to see the same proposals each year so would be nice to see proposals from other people. We decided to make flyers well before the September 2, 2026 application deadline. Possible places to post and distribute flyers:

- Library
- Shutesbury Athletic Club
- School Newsletter
- Next Door – social media
- Leverett Co-op

Each member can also try to spread the word.

Meeting called to a close at 8:30pm.