

**Shutesbury Planning Board
Minutes – June 9, 2025**

Approved and approved for public release: 8/18/26

Virtual

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Board Members Present: Michael DeChiara (acting Chair), Ashleigh Pyecroft, Jeff Weston, Keith Hastie, Deacon Bonnar, Steve Bressler and Tom Siefert

Recused: Nathan Murphy not present

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Michael moved to enter into Executive Session for Reason No. 3, to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's litigating position. Litigation specific to Complaint received from Cows regarding the Shutesbury Solar Bylaw. The Board will not return to open session. Ashleigh seconded.

DeChiara – aye

Hastie – aye

Weston – aye

Pyecroft – aye

Bressler – aye

Siefert – aye

Bonnar - aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Michael shared his computer screen via Zoom to display a document with the two offers from Cows and PureSky that were conveyed to the Board by Donna MacNichol on June 2 and June 6. These emails included the following information:

May Email from Donna

- *Pure Sky will consider paying \$50,000 per year for ten years to the Shutesbury Green Energy Fund for a total of \$500,000*
- *Proposed PILOT Amount to be \$120,000 per years with a 1% escalator (of course this is up to the SB and Assessors and then a vote of TM)*
- *Agree to 2: 1 ratio for conservation of land as proposed*
- *Pure Sky cannot make significant changes to Montague site*
- *Remainder of Settlement offer on the table now still stands*

June Email from Donna

Cows would be willing to gift (in fee) to the town four parcels (shown on the attached map): (i) approximately 60 acres of land proximate to the Quabbin; (ii) the "Mary Clark" lot (42.2 acres proximate to the Town garage); and, (iii) the "Dutton" lot proximate to Amherst watershed. Of course, such a gift is conditioned on PureSky achieving commercial operation on their three proposed solar projects.

When asked, Michael stated that he did not receive the attached map. The Board was therefore unable to determine if there are three or four parcels being offered by the plaintiffs.

The board had a discussion about its reaction to the offers and to what the Planning Board would do in response. It was noted that the Town was not seeking any additional parcels and members do not know if they are worth accepting. There was discussion about the increased financial offer to the town and the value of the PILOT. There was also continued consensus that the Board had concerns about the Montague Road site.

The Board arrived at the following position.

Michael moved, Jeff seconded:

The Shutesbury Planning Board appreciates the plaintiffs' offer; however, we continue to have concerns about the congruency of the Montague design with the intentions and goals that underlie our town's bylaws and regulations, including proximity to wetlands, the size of the project, driveway length, and the fragmented nature of the arrays. Jeff seconded the motion.

DeChiara – aye

Hastie – aye

Weston – aye

Pyecroft – aye

Bressler – aye

Siefert – aye

Bonnar - aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Michael said that he would forward the statement to Donna MacNichol, Adam Costa and Rita Farrell tonight so it could be shared with the plaintiffs.

Michael moved to adjourn. Ashleigh seconded.

DeChiara – aye

Hastie – aye

Weston – aye

Pyecroft – aye

Bressler – aye

Siefert – aye

Bonnar - aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Documents Used:

- Document with the two offers from Cows and PureSky