Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2026 Hybrid Meeting Format

Selectboard members present: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair, Eric Stocker/ Vice-Chair, James Walton/ Board Member.
Staff present and Guests: Hayley Bolton: Town Administrator, Brennan Mailloux, Gail Fleischaker.

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 3:30PM

1. The Select Board will vote to enter Executive Session for Reason #2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

    a. The Board stated they would reconvene in public session upon the conclusion of the Executive Session at 5:00 PM.

VOTE**:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to Executive Session for Reason #2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

2. Executive Session Adjourned at 4:54 PM

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to exit Executive Session and enter into public session at 5:00 PM, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

3. Public Session- 5:00 PM

    Makepeace-O'Neil calls the public session to order at 5:05 PM

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: No public comments made.

General Business:

4. Approve Meeting Minutes for 10/13/26 and 10/17/26:

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 10/13/26 as posted, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: abstain, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 10/17/26 as amended, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: abstain, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

5. Appointment of Jessica Makepeace as the Council on Aging Representative to the Emergency Management Team.
    a. Makepeace-O'Neil abstained as Jessica Makepeace is her sister.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the appointment of Jessica Makepeace as the Council on Aging Representative on the Emergency Management Team, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: abstain; motion carries.

6. Review Charge for an Ad-Hoc Highway Garage Safety Planning Committee:
    a. The purpose of the Committee is to facilitate a design plan that enhances public safety, ensures unobstructed driveway sight lines, and incorporates visual aesthetics for the entrance to the Highway Garage.
    b. The Committee shall understand that public safety and sight line compliance are paramount, and design aesthetics (such as plantings) are secondary.
    c. The Committee shall:
        i. Review municipal safety standards, including necessary vertical heights and horizontal sight lines for heavy equipment entering and exiting the site.
        ii. Review the recommendations in the Site Assessment conducted by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).
        iii. Review MassDOT and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Intersection Sight Distance (ISD) standards, as well as Shutesbury Town Bylaws (including Sections 8.4 and 8.6 regarding roadway obstructions and curb cut sight lines).
        iv. Evaluate physical modification options (e.g., re-grading, selective pruning, or replanting with low-profile species) to maintain the site's visual character without compromising traffic safety.
    d. The committee will have six (6) voting members appointed by the Select Board. The Town Administrator, Highway Superintendent, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and two (2) members of the Shutesbury Garden Club.
    e. The Committee shall produce a report to the Select Board recommending conceptual design options and actionable modifications to the existing berm and landscaping to achieve full sight-line safety while addressing community aesthetic concerns
    f. This Committee is temporary. The Committee shall automatically dissolve unless explicitly extended by a vote of the Select Board after February 28, 2027.
    g. Walton raised discussion amongst the Board about what committee members should explore and look into when appointed on the committee.
    h. Makepeace-O'Neil suggested amendments to the language of the document for bullets 1 and 4. She suggested expanding "heavy equipment" to "all motorized

vehicles, including passenger cars and heavy equipment," and adding "moving" as an option alongside regarding, selective pruning, and replanting. It was also suggested to include bicycles with the non-motorized vehicles.

i. Fleischaker recommended changing "entrance to the highway garage" to "entrance to the highway department yard" for accuracy.
j. The name of the committee was discussed and changed to Ad-Hoc Highway Department Access Review Committee.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the amended Ad-Hoc Highway Department Access Review Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

7. Sign a Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) Municipal Grant from Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).
    a. Bolton shared that Shutesbury was awarded $7,200 for achieving 12 points in solid waste reduction and recycling, crediting the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee for their work.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) Municipal Grant from Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

8. Sign a Standard Contract Form to award a grant to the Town of Shutesbury for fiscal years FY2027-2028 under the Green Communities Climate Leaders Community Technical Assistance Program in the amount of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars and No Cents. ($150,000.00).
    a. Shutesbury was awarded a $150,000 grant intended to fund technical studies, design, and engineering for the electrification of heating, ventilation, and cooling systems at Shutesbury Elementary School and the development of solar photovoltaic canopy designs. The study will evaluate a decarbonization strategy prioritizing geothermal heating and cooling at the elementary school, with an alternative strategy addressing other municipal buildings if school geothermal is determined to be infeasible. The work will also assess solar photovoltaic systems, insulation, lighting, controls, building envelope improvements, and related energy conservation measures to support long-term municipal decarbonization and greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the Standard Contract Form for a FY27-FY28 Green Communities Climate Leaders Community Technical Assistance Program Grant, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

9. Sign a Standard Contract Form and Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing to begin the contract amendment process for Shutesbury's Chapter 90 Contract.
    a. The current contract expires on June 30, 2027. The contract will be extended by 10 years to June 30, 2037.
    b. This 10-year state contract enables the town to receive Chapter 90 reimbursement for road miles and road paving projects.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the Standard Contract Form and Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing for an amendment to Shutesbury's Ch. 90 Contract, amending and extending it by 10 years to expire on June 30, 2037, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

10. Review and Approve the Winter 2026/2027 Town Holiday Calendar:
    a. The October Fall Special Town Meeting voted to remove the holiday language of the Personnel Bylaw.
    b. The Board decided that if a holiday falls on a weekend day (Saturday or Sunday), it may be observed on the following Monday. If a holiday falls on a Friday and you are not originally scheduled to work on a Friday, you do not get granted an additional observance day off.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Shutesbury 2026/2027 holiday policy and calendar as amended, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

11. Vote to adopt a Municipal Maintenance & Request Policy:
    a. Bolton reported that one department head responded positively, noting it was a departure from previous practice but made sense. No opposition was received. It was acknowledged that the policy is a good step toward coordinated maintenance management and getting department head buy-in.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to adopt the Municipal Maintenance & Request Policy, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

12. Vote to issue a formal letter to the Massachusetts Water Resources Commission (MWRC) opposing the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's (MWRA) request to withdraw an additional 20 million gallons per day from the Quabbin:
    a. Bolton explained that the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) has applied to the Massachusetts Water Resources Commission to withdraw an additional 20 million gallons per day from the Quabbin Reservoir without identifying specific receiving communities, which violates the Interbasin Transfer Act.

b. Bolton read the full letter into the record, which argued the MWRA is seeking a "blank check" authorization, bypassing required conservation assessments and local alternative reviews.
c. Shutesbury's letter submits comments in opposition of the request for an additional 20 million gallons per day and urges that the MWRC vote no.
d. Public Comment Letters are due by 5:00 pm tomorrow, October 28th.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to draft and send a formal letter to the Massachusetts Water Resource Commission opposing the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority's request to withdraw an additional 20 million gallons per day from the Quabbin, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

13. Review Safety Plan submission from Kristin Mattocks as a result of the 10/13/26 Dog Hearing:
    a. Bolton read off Mattock's safety plan submission for her dog Roxy which included secure indoor housing, muzzle and leash requirements (300 lb. tensile strength, no longer than 6 feet), handler restrictions (adults only, no children), visitor protocols, veterinary and behavioral assessment commitments, incident response procedures, and a compliance review schedule (60 days, 120 days, then annually).
    b. The Board felt that Mattocks is doing everything she can to follow the safety plan and guidance that was given to her.
    c. The safety plan will be scanned and sent to Dog Officer Dragon for his review and official records.
    d. Bolton would like Kristin Mattocks to clarify who the signature is on her plan for the backup handler role.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve Kristin Mattocks' submission of her 10/13/26 Dog Hearing Safety Plan, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

14. Unanticipated Business- Discussion/Designate Membership for the Regional Agreement Review Advisory Committee:
    a. Following the September 26th Four Towns Meeting, the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee established a representative advisory committee to review the regional agreement and recommend amendments. The committee will bring together school governance, municipal finance, and elected town leadership perspectives from Amherst, Pelham, Shutesbury, and Leverett. The broader review may take approximately two to five years. Required technical updates shall proceed according to applicable deadlines.
    b. There will be 13 voting members total.
    c. Shutesbury will designate one Regional School Committee member, one Finance Committee member, and one Select Board member to serve on the committee. One alternate is also allowed.

i. Ajay Khashu will be the Finance Committee Member. Shutesbury already has a Regional School Committee member designated. The Select Board Representative will be James Walton. Bolton will email and ask the Finance Committee and the Regional School Committee Chairs if there is someone that would be willing to fill in as an alternative if needed.

d. There will also be a one-time Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) District Review meeting on Thursday, November 19th at 10 AM held virtually that requires a Select Board Representative present alongside the Town Administrator and one Finance Committee member. Eric Stocker offered to sit in on it.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to designate James Walton as the Select Board's Representative for the Regional Agreement Review Advisory Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to designate Eric Stocker as the Select Board's Representative at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) District Review meeting held on Thursday, November 19th at 10 AM, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

15. <u>Town Administrator Report:</u>
    a. Bolton proposed the idea of the Town Hall being closed on Fridays, because of discussions held at previous Department Head Meetings. The Board supported Bolton's decision to move forward with closing the Town Hall on Fridays.
    b. Bolton stated there will be an Assessor's Classification Hearing on 11/17/26. Bolton suggested moving the Select Board's 11/24/26 meeting a week forward to the 17th and leaving the week of the 24th empty.
    c. Bolton stated that Town Counsel MacNicol is working with Attorney Hooker on finalizing the property transfer of 41 Cooleyville Rd. The certified vote of acceptance from the Special Town Meeting was sent to both parties. The Town's insurance company was notified about adding the property to their policy.
    d. Bolton stated regarding the Wheelock inverter fire, she reached out to MassDEP, and they declined to pursue the complaint. She stated that MassDEP said, "they do not chase fires." They also cited no known contamination and that the battery itself did not catch fire.
    e. Bolton discussed the CARES Program and stated a survey was done over the summer on emergency needs. It is a peer-to-peer emergency outreach program developed with the Emergency Management Team. A volunteer is matched with 3-5 people on a vulnerable resident index. Those that may live alone or have health issues. Bolton is working on gathering volunteers currently. Volunteers will not need to go to any houses; they will only need to do phone outreach. A tiered escalation protocol is in place for concerning calls. Volunteers will need to be CORI checked, and the residents in need on the index will not be publicly identified.

        i. 3 volunteers have signed up so far.
    b. Bolton stated 5 people have applied so far for the new Lake Wyola Advisory Committee (LWAC), though one withdrew. Mailloux will be interviewing another applicant, and he has also reached out to the Board of Health, Recreation Committee, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission for their designated representatives. Bolton is hoping to make appointments in the month of November.

16. Meeting Adjourned at 6:40 pm

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to adjourn the meeting, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Walton: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Meeting Minutes for 10/13/26 and 10/17/26
2. Appointment Letter for the COA Representative on the Emergency Management Team
3. Municipal Maintenance & Request Policy
4. Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) Municipal Grant
5. Green Communities Grant Standard Contract Form
6. Ch. 90 Standard Contract Form and Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing
7. 2026/2027 Town Holiday Calendar
8. Regional Agreement Review Advisory Committee Letter
9. Ad-Hoc Highway Department Access Review Committee Charge

Respectfully submitted,
Brennan Mailloux
Administrative Assistant
Town Administrator/Select Board

** A full version of the 10/27/26 SB meeting will be available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: https://youtu.be/fY2YVTUWC2Q