

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
November 25, 2025 Hybrid Meeting Format

Selectboard members present: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair, Eric Stocker/ Vice-Chair, Rita Farrell/ Board Member

Staff present and Guests: Hayley Bolton: Town Administrator, Brennan Mailloux, Gail Fleischaker, Tom Siefert, Jennifer Wallace, Judith Rimmel, Leslie Bracebridge, Nathaniel Masse, Senator Jo Comerford, Michael DeChiara, Nate Heard,

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 4:00pm

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment:

- A. Judith Rimmel gave public comment about the beaver trapping ongoing at Fiske Brook Culvert. She shared the traps are still in use, the permit expired on 11/3/25, and that in Massachusetts the conibear traps are illegal except to resolve immediate threat to human health and safety. She asked the Board if they would be willing to look in other solutions and pulling the traps.
- B. Tom Siefert pleaded to the Board to stop the trapping. He shared that all trapping is essentially lethal trapping. He shared that he wishes the Town focuses more on the removal of the dam than on the trapping of the beavers. He expressed his concerns for the animals, the environment, and the roads.

General Business:

- I. Approve the Meeting Minutes for 11.12.25:
 - a. "Smoothen" will be replaced with "smooth" in paragraph 3.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 11.12.25 as amended, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- II. Review and accept the letter of resignation of Erin McGuirl from the Historical Commission:

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to accept the letter of resignation from Erin McGuirl for the Historical Commission, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

III. Review and accept Town Announcement Policy #020813 update/amendment (Gail Fleischaker):

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the amendment of Town Announcement Policy #020813 as stated, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

IV. Review and sign MASSDEP Grant Scope of Work Contract:

- a. MASSDEP awarded us \$3,700 to help fund the Town's Recycling Program. This can be used to help with trash bag acquisition.
- b. Chair Makepeace-O'Neil signed the Grant Scope of Work Contract.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to execute the signature of the MASSDEP Grant Scope of Work Contract, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

V. Review and discuss Lake Wyola Storm Water Charge and Membership Composition:

- a. Farrell would like this committee to be more focused town-wide than solely Lake Wyola. Jennifer Wallace shared there could be subsets of the committee that would focus on different parts of town. Michael DeChiara from an Energy and Climate Action Committee perspective stated the Board should consider having an ECAC member on the committee.
- b. Farrell stated we could call it the Shutesbury Stormwater Mitigation Implementation Committee and have the first focus be Lake Wyola as there are time-sensitive actions that need to be taken, especially with the current status of their grant.
- c. Farrell stated there should be at least seven voting members. There could be a Lake Wyola Association Member included.
- d. The next step will be for a Town Announcement to be made, and for applications to be submitted to the Town Administrator from interested parties.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Shutesbury Stormwater Mitigation Implementation Committee as amended, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VI. Hayley Bolton as ex-officio of the Police Chief Search Committee will provide update and recommend next steps:

- a. Bolton shared the composition of the Police Chief Search Committee Member Board. She praised the committee members for their attention to detail and dedication thus far. Originally there were nine applicants for the Police Chief position, that later got cut down to four applicants for first round interviews that were just recently conducted.
- b. Bolton asked the Board for permission to have more time and go back to the committee with some more questions before they take the next step. Their next

meeting will be early December and hopefully they can make their recommendations at the second December meeting for the Select Board.

- VII. Follow-up discussion on the well water access to the Shutesbury Community Church:
- a. Makepeace-O'Neil stated she will push this discussion to a coming meeting.

VIII. Meeting with Senator Comerford:

- a. The Board publicly thanked Senator Comerford for all that she has done for the Town, especially with the new Library project.
- b. Senator Comerford expressed her appreciation for the Town of Shutesbury's local service.
- c. Makepeace-O'Neil gave a briefing on the list that was submitted to Senator Comerford for topics to discuss. The list included PFAS mitigation funding, the Watershed Bill, school state funding, the Eversource and National Grid cutting plan, and environmental impacts.
- d. Senator Comerford shared for the Quabbin Watershed Bill, there is momentum. She talked about the two actions being one, a town resolution in the Spring talking about stewardship and the disconnect with MWRA. Secondly, a more open letter to Eastern Massachusetts about the water that we cannot drink here and some of the financial challenges.
- e. Senator Comerford shared there is an Environmental Bond Bill moving, filed by Governor Healey. The Governor also set up a Pilot Commission. She discussed that she will be putting in an earmark for Shutesbury in the Environmental Bond Bill regarding the PFAS issue. She would like to secure funds for communities like Shutesbury dealing with issues of PFAS mitigation.
- f. Senator Comerford also discussed rural school issues such as ones with low and declining enrollment. She believes we need to fund rural schools at a much more elevated amount, pass the Rural Schools Bill, and have a Foundation Budget Review Commission. She also believes we need to reopen the entirety of Chapter 70.
- g. Comerford stated she has submitted robust testimony on the Eversource line.
- h. She wrapped up her segment around 5:00 pm by sharing that she has been having a lot of conversations around the regionalization of EMS and Fire.

IX. Energy and Climate Action Committee to submit final version of Decarbonization Roadmap for Select Board review and acknowledgment:

- i. ECAC called their meeting to order at 5:04 pm. Michael DeChiara, Nate Heard (virtually), and Gail Fleischaker were in attendance.
 - ii. DeChiara presented the Board the finalized Decarbonization Roadmap.
- a. Discuss Climate Leader Certification process:
- i. DeChiara shared there is potential grant money opportunities that come with the Climate Leader status. He shared that Shutesbury may be the third or fourth Western Massachusetts community to achieve this. Nate

Heard stated that having this status puts you higher in terms of priority and position for receiving money.

- ii. DeChiara shared that the next step is to apply for the official status in the next week or two to make the deadline. Some documents of the steps taken as well as their accomplished dates may need to be input.
- b. Vote to authorize the Town Administrator to submit a certification request on the Select Board's behalf:

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to authorize the Town Administrator, Hayley Bolton to apply for the official Climate Leader Certification on the Select Board's behalf, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to give the Energy and Climate Action Committee full access to MassEnergyInsight (MEI) data entry, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- i. ECAC adjourned their meeting at 5:18 pm.

X. Town Administrator Report:

- a. Bolton shared our Consulting Assessor suggested that she has the Department of Labor Services does an updated review of our financial practices and governance structure. Farrell suggested she reach out to George Arvanitis about this for more information.
- b. Emergency Management Plan- Select Board Chair Signature needed.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to sign the updated Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- c. Four Town Working Group Representative
 - i. Bolton shared they are looking for members to officially join them. She stated she would be willing to join it and attend the meetings. She also shared Ajay Khashu expressed some interest in joining as well.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to nominate the Town Administrator, Hayley Bolton, to be the Four Town Working Group Representative, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- d. Town Priorities
 - i. Bolton shared a message from Bob Dean which stated that by creating a list with projects from all 26 Franklin County municipalities we can illustrate for various state and federal agencies the need for funding assistance across Franklin County. Secondly, there is help that can be provided to match the Town's needs with potential federal and state

funding sources. Dean offered to help with preparing a grant application for state or federal funding.

e. Police Gift Drive

- i. Bolton shared the Police Department has partnered with the Shutesbury Elementary School, Fire Department, Athletic Club, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, and the Community Church to help families in need this holiday season. There will be a Community Giving Tree in the Shutesbury Town Hall where community members interested in participating can select an ornament from the tree and shop for a family in need.
- ii. Families in need will be confidential, and their information will not be shared with the public. \$100 limit per child. Families in need should submit a Google Form by December 5th to get on an ornament.
- iii. Donations should then be made by selecting an ornament anytime after December 5th and getting them in by December 19th.

XI. Meeting adjourned at 5:32pm

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 pm.

Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil aye; motion carries.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Meeting Minutes Draft for 11.12.25
2. Erin McGuirl Letter of Resignation (Historical Commission)
3. Town Announcement Policy #020813 Amendment Draft
4. MASSDEP Grant Scope of Work Contract
5. Lake Wyola Storm Water Draft Charge
6. Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
7. Decarbonization Roadmap

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

** A full version of the 11/25/25 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://youtu.be/b3ffJw-8cvU>

