

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2026 In-Person Meeting Format

Selectboard members present: Eric Stocker/ Vice-Chair, Rita Farrell/ Board Member.

Selectboard members absent: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair

Staff present and Guests: Hayley Bolton: Town Administrator, Brennan Mailloux, Frank McGinn, Tom Siefert, Leslie Bracebridge, Police Chief Devon Pelletier, Matteo Pangallo, Steve Soucy, Amanda Alix, Phil Parker, William Smith, Jon Lawless.

Stocker was Chair in Makepeace-O'Neil's absence

Stocker calls the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: No public comments.

General Business:

1. Approve Meeting Minutes for 1.10.26 Four Towns Meeting and 2.03.26:

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for the 1.10.26 Four Towns Meeting as posted, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, motion carries.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 2.03.26 as posted, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, motion carries.

2. Continuation of the 1/20/26 National Grid Pole Hearing:
 - a. The Pole Hearing was started at the 1/20/26 Select Board meeting. At that meeting there were concerns about lack of communication between National Grid and the Conservation Commission, especially with vernal pools in question. For that reason, the Select Board decided not to vote on it at the previous meeting but felt continuing it at a later meeting would provide all parties time to consult with the Conservation Commission and make a better educated decision later.
 - b. Matteo Pangallo shared that there was a Request for Determination of Applicability submitted. The Conservation Commission did a site visit and also held a public hearing on it. The Conservation Commission voted to issue the permit with a few minor conditions regarding the work.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the Pole Hearing request from National Grid for Pratt Corner Rd as amended, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, motion carries.

3. Police Department Check-In. Devon Pelletier:
 - a. Chief Pelletier shared they are still looking for a Full Time Officer. They have received 14 applicants so far, but none have stood out qualifications wise. Most lack police academy completion. Pelletier stated he is not looking to settle for anyone who is not going to be a good fit for the department, just for the sake of filling the position.
 - b. Pelletier shared that all the previous year's police logs have been uploaded to the Town Website. He also shared that the Police Department's website page has been cleaned up. Links have been fixed and you can now submit your license applications online.
 - c. Pelletier stated he will be hosting a women's self defense class hopefully in March or April.

4. Discussion on the creation of a Facilities Manager Position:
 - a. Bolton presented a cost benefit sheet for the position. The position would be 40 hours a week at \$26 an hour, which equates to an annual salary of \$54,080. Benefits and Insurance estimated at 30% of the salary would be \$16,224. Operational Budget would tack on \$3,500 and professional development trainings would be \$1,200. Overall, the total personnel request would be \$75,004.
 - b. The position would be to oversee all town buildings and work under the Town Administrator. The belief is that regular maintenance overseen by a dedicated professional will extend the life of town buildings and save money overtime.
 - c. The position is designed to lessen future costs associated with external consultants, emergency repairs, and improved grant yield.
 - d. The overall estimated net benefit of adding this position would be \$12,500 offset plus grant opportunities.
 - e. Leverett currently has this position, and Montague is hiring for a Building Maintenance position currently. Farrell asked if the Leverett Facilities Manager would like to also partner with us.
 - f. Frank McGinn shared that the Building's Committee discussed this before and that they are looking for one person that can be in charge of all of the buildings and that can coordinate projects with a vendor list. Frank stated it is important to have a designated individual dedicated towards maintenance. Phil Parker agreed and stated that you need someone with handyman skills and administrative skills.
 - g. Farrell stated it would be a good idea to add it to the new budget once everything gets straightened out. Perhaps it can go to Special Town Meeting in the Fall.
 - h. Bolton will follow up on it and look deeper into the specifics of the potential position such as a job description, pay rate, and required qualifications.

5. Vote to disband the Police Chief Search Committee:

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to disband the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, motion carries.

6. Vote to approve the revised Policy No. 010925: Plowing of Private Ways:

- a. Bolton revised the policy to add clarity to it and make it more specific. She wanted there to be less ambiguity in terms of what constitutes decision making.
- b. There was discussion about the need for concrete guidelines on tree heights and access for equipment. The group agreed to keep the issue on their radar.
- c. Farrell stated it is good to have a policy and presented the idea of having a public session encouraging residents to come and hear about what changes there may be to private roads and plowing. This will be added to a future Select Board agenda right after Town Meeting.
- d. Bolton will create a PowerPoint of what the options are.
- e. No vote was taken at this time.

7. Review and sign Resolution for the Town of Shutesbury regarding Quabbin Watershed:

- a. This resolution shares the idea that the town wants compensation, and that the town wants a voice regarding the Quabbin's water being sent to Boston, and the watershed communities not getting equal benefits. The idea is that all 8 towns involved in the watershed will sign these endorsements and work with Senator Comerford.
- b. This will be added to the Town Meeting Warrant as well.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to execute the signatures of the Resolution for the Town of Shutesbury regarding the Quabbin Watershed, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye; motion carries.

8. Sign the CAI (Cartographic Associates, Inc.) Tax Map Maintenance Proposal Contract (Assessors Department):

- a. The item in discussion was the annual CAI Tax Map Maintenance proposal that was sent to the Assessors for Fiscal Year 27 Real Estate Tax Maps, which will reflect the map changes made in calendar year 2026.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to execute the signatures of the CAI Tax Map Maintenance Proposal Contract, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye; motion carries.

9. Town Administrator's Report:

- a. Bolton shared her and Gail Fleischaker attended an AI Foundation Webinar. She stated we have a private Google account, so our information stays local which is good news. That means our account information is not being used for data analysis.

- b. Bolton shared that she has heard back from a couple of contractors regarding the Lake Wyola Dam Repairs. Quotes should be in by next week and then the contractor can be selected. Work should still be completed by the spring.
- c. Bolton stated she is going to communicate to GZA and relevant state offices that the Select Board supports proceeding with emergency dam repairs without conducting additional MEPA testing at this time. She plans to coordinate with Representative Saunders and Joe Comerford for advocacy support.
- d. Bolton shared that we cannot use CPA funds for the Lake Wyola Dam repairs but that we can reach out to the Office of Dam Safety for a grant opportunity to try and mitigate costs. The estimated construction cost is \$73,000 dollars.
- e. Bolton shared there will be a Fiscal Summit on Monday, February 23rd at 3 pm at the Shutesbury Library. Zoom will be an option and all committees and boards are invited. They are encouraged to post their meetings if they anticipate having a quorum. Initial budget figures will be presented and there will be brainstorming on cost-saving measures.

10. Meeting Adjourned at 5:52 pm

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:52 pm, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye; motion carries.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

- 1. Meeting Minutes draft for 2.03.26
- 2. Meeting Minutes draft for the 1.10.26 Four Towns Meeting
- 3. Revised Policy No. 010925 Plowing of Private Ways Draft
- 4. CAI Tax Map Maintenance Proposal Contract
- 5. Facilities Manager Cost Benefit Sheet
- 6. Pole Hearing Packet with information and maps

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

** A full version of the 2/17/26 SB meeting will be available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://youtu.be/ZqFychCM5lw>

