

Shutesbury Select Board Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2022 Hybrid Meeting Format/Town Hall

Select Board members present: Rita Farrell/Chair, Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil, and Eric Stocker
Staff present: Becky Torres/Town Administrator; Linda Avis Scott/Administrative Secretary (remote)

Other Staff/Volunteers present: Police Chief Kristin Burgess (remote) and April Stein/Personnel Board (remote)

Guests: Leonard Czerwonka/Fire Chief Candidate; John M. (remote) and an unidentified caller

Farrell calls the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

Agenda Review: As posted.

Second Interview with Fire Chief Candidate:

1. Farrell to Czerwonka: the second interview is an opportunity to reflect on/share after the first interview. Czerwonka: the department needs more people; most of the current firefighters work out of town.
2. Farrell: how will you increase membership? Makepeace-O'Neil: are there other organizations that can help? Czerwonka: the Fire Chiefs Association. Torres: paying firefighters could be an issue to be considered. Czerwonka: yes.
3. Torres: recruiting women? Czerwonka: on and off, there have been female members; it would be helpful to have someone with experience offer help with how to recruit women.
4. Farrell: you are currently working, when will you be able to start, and what is your vision if you become chief? Czerwonka: he is on a couple of jobs now though will talk with his employer as he needs to know what schedule he would want. Torres: former Chief Tibbetts worked 4/10 hour days. Czerwonka: he would want the same Monday-Thursday schedule. Stocker confirms that Czerwonka would be on call otherwise.
5. Farrell: how will you handle strong personalities and how did you handle the call last week with Police and Fire Departments? Czerwonka: there was a call to Pratt Corner Road about smoke in the area caused by a large brush fire in Granby; there were also calls to Montague and Wendell Roads about smoke; the areas were searched and there was no evidence of fire. Farrell: do you debrief? Czerwonka: yes, sometimes; we also listened on the radio to other towns receiving calls about smoke in their areas. Czerwonka to Makepeace-O'Neil's question: four firefighters attended these later afternoon calls. Makepeace-O'Neil: How did you delegate? Czerwonka: One truck to Pratt Corner Road and Wendell Road; then the brush truck was dispatched from Wendell Road over to Sand Hill Road.
6. Farrell: does the Department have policies/procedures other than training manuals? Czerwonka: we go over different types of fire calls or car accidents; there are procedures for types of alarms and the need for mutual aid. Farrell: are they written down? Czerwonka: no; it could be useful to do so; we go over response procedures and, after time, firefighters learn; there are guidelines however there are situational responses.
7. Farrell: how do you handle COVID? Czerwonka: one person in a Tyvek suit does patient care; for other medical calls, two persons with masks respond; there is a different jump bag for COVID so there is less to clean afterward. Czerwonka to Makepeace-O'Neil: the

first person at the station makes the call about what is needed, i.e., which vehicle and the manpower needed.

8. Stocker: will you take advantage of the diversity training offered by Police Chief Burgess? Czerwonka: seems fine to me; it would most likely be done during weekly training.
9. Farrell: how would you handle a resident complaint about a firefighter? Czerwonka: I would gather information about the complaint and then talk with the firefighter and proceed from there. Farrell: would a policy for handling complaints be useful? Czerwonka: yes.
10. Stocker: Tibbetts did the mechanical work; how much in house work will you do? Czerwonka will be able to handle most of the mechanical work except radios. It is noted that there is vendor support for the new radios.
11. Farrell: you noted that speaking publicly not a strength; you will be asked to come before the Select Board for All Boards meetings to do brief presentations; what would help you develop more confidence? Czerwonka: it is something I will need to get better at as I am not experienced.
12. Farrell: how will you undertake reports to the Select Board? Czerwonka: reports are filed for calls and entered into the State system; will need to learn how to report to the Select Board; we cannot release information about medical calls which are about 60% of the calls. Makepeace-O'Neil: Tibbetts noted "date/medical call" and provided a location for fires in his reports. Torres: Mark Foster was doing some work on reports. Czerwonka: some departments report general actions.
13. Stocker: what is your sense of the Emergency Management Director (EMD) position? Czerwonka: I will need to learn how to be the EMD; does not know fully what it entails; will take the ICS training. Makepeace-O'Neil: the Emergency Management Team is there for support. Torres: the Police Chief is the Deputy EMD; you will be able to work together. Czerwonka agrees; this is a good plan.
14. Stocker: why do you want to be the Fire Chief? Czerwonka: I can do the job well; the Fire Department will fare well with my being chief; I am familiar with all the equipment so am able to make the calls; I am well-liked by the firefighters and am able to handle someone who steps out of line.
15. Makepeace-O'Neil: how do you handle stress? Czerwonka: I try not to get worked up, break the situation down into small tasks, and call for help if needed.
16. Farrell: when Tibbetts was not available, was he first on the scene? Czerwonka: Tibbetts did most of the calls; it was not often that he was not the first on the scene; when Tibbetts was not around, we figured it out.

Czerwonka is asked if he has any questions: he will have questions as he goes along and will confer with Tibbetts. To Czerwonka's question, Torres explains that retirement vesting occurs after ten years in the Fire Department; he may receive credit for prior service as determined by the Franklin Regional Retirement System; safety personnel receive a higher rate of retirement/salary; you will receive vacation and sick time as well as a health insurance package through the Hampshire Group Insurance Trust.

Torres: the typical process is to make an offer contingent upon a background check and contract negotiations. Burgess, regarding the time for a background check: it matters how much information we have and how far back we need to go; usually two weeks tops.

- Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to appoint Leonard Czerwonka as Fire Chief contingent upon a background check and contract negotiations. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

Farrell to Czerwonka: the next step will be the 8.16.22 meeting to finalize the contract; this will provide time for you to confer with your employer.

Torres reviews documents requiring Select Board signatures: the CARES Grant close out document as approved 7.19.22 and special warrants outstanding for FY22.

Next meeting 7.26.22: ARPA funds for wetland delineation on Lot O-32 and the library building contract.

Torres will prepare a Fire Chief's contract for review by the Select Board then Czerwonka prior to the 8.16.22 meeting; an executive session will be held to review the contract.

At 5:44pm, Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds a motion to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Avis Scott
Administrative Secretary