

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2022 Virtual Meeting Format

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

Staff present: Becky Torres/Town Administrator

Volunteers & Other Staff present: Police Chief Burgess, Dam Keeper Howard Kinder, and Assistant Dam Keeper John Kinder

Guests: Dan Hayes/School Committee Chair, Jen Culkeen/Erving Union 28 Superintendent, Elizabeth Fernandez O'Brien and Jeanette Stockton from Village Neighbors, Glen Stockton

Farrell calls the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: Miriam Defant lets the Selectboard know she forwarded a proposal that she wants the Selectboard to review, from Emily Stockman. Glen Stockton will hold his comment for the Selectboard discussion on the dam.

Review of Minutes: Review of minutes from 9/27/22, Linda Scott's last set of minutes for the Selectboard.

VOTE: A motion is made to approve the minutes of 9/27/22. Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

Discussion Topics:

1. Erving Union 28 Request of Grant Sponsorship Elementary School Superintendent and School Committee Chair came to ask the Selectboard if the Town of Shutesbury would sponsor a Community Compact grant for the Erving Union to do an efficiency study to improve union regional efficiency. The UMass Collins Center will do the study. Selectboard supports using Shutesbury's Community Compact grant for Erving Union 28, if available.

VOTE: A motion is made for Shutesbury to be the benefactor for the Community Compact grant if it is determined that Shutesbury is eligible, Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Farrell seconds roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye, and Stocker: aye; the motion carries.

2. New Admin Secretary Appointment: Rita introduced Geneva Bickford, Admin Secretary candidate. She was interviewed by Rita and Becky. She comes to us with a lot of municipal experience and understanding. Rita did her reference checks and can say she comes highly recommended. Geneva spent the last six years working in Greenfield as an Assistant Town Clerk. Rita opened the discussion up to questions from the Selectboard. Eric asked, when can you start? and Melissa asked, why after working in a larger town are you interested in working in a small town?

VOTE: A motion is made to appoint Geneva Bickford as the new Admin Secretary. Farrell moves and Stocker seconds roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye, and Stocker: aye; the motion carries.

3. Planning Board Discussion about PB Associate members Legislative Effort:

Planning Board was not available for this meeting.

4. FRTA Discussion Regarding Local Public Transportation Rita has been in discussion with Elizabeth Fernandez O'Brien and Jeanette Stockton of Village Neighbors about transportation for seniors. What are the town's transportation options? LifePath did a comprehensive survey with 130 responses. Elizabeth did a lot of research to see what FRTA has to offer Shutesbury. We are exploring because the town has an identified need. FRTA is offering curb to curb service with a demand response. There are costs for the individual rider and the Town. The FRTA assessment would be charged for the program through the cherry sheet. The first year fee is deferred, not free. The next step is finding out from FRTA how the town will get charged and what we have to do to initiate this program? Does the Selectboard opt in? TA recommends getting a quote from PVRTA as well. There is new legislation allowing a town to get services from more than on transportation agencies if the town is considering pursuing both.

VOTE: A motion is made for the Selectboard to support and move forward with regional transportation for people in our town who qualify for the program, depending on the cost of the program. Makepeace-O'Neil and Farrell move and Stocker seconds roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye, and Stocker: aye; the motion carries.

5. Lake Wyola Dam, further discussion The Selectboard received a letter from the Lake Wyola Advisory Committee that was originally written in 2021 by John and Howie Kinder, articulating a list of things, such as pitching tents, grills, partying, bicycling, damage by removing stones and boulders and fishing. Eric is taking the lead on Lake issues. This is a working dam, not a recreational facility. We want to solve this problem of the dam being used for recreation. A new issue is the town does not own the right of way to the dam. It is owned by the abutter. We need to work with the abutters to secure an easement or purchase the property. John Kinder explained that the dam keepers have found themselves policing the dam. Chief Burgess adds her perspective. The dam keepers should not be responsible for people's safety. She finds the early morning visitors to the dam to be very reasonable. Early morning swimmers are swimming elsewhere. The police dept is the more appropriate enforcer of rules at the dam. We need to focus on these safety issues before there is a tragic accident. Tonight is just about how we are going to move forward. The Selectboard considers forming a group to do some public forums to hear from the public. We have two issues at the dam, the safety issue and the access of the dam issue. Eric will review the Selectboard's thinking with the Lake Wyola Advisory Committee (LWAC) and come back with a recommendation. Glen Stockton's concern is that the dam structure will be obstructed. Stockton also mentions that the culvert pole has been moved!
6. Administrator Updates: Lock's Pond culvert pole is still standing there with Verizon wires on it. National Grid has been working on this pole removal for 22 months. The pole removal must be complete for the contractor to commit to doing our culvert project next summer. The HVAC system at the elementary school will be turned on before October 15. Assessor's dept is still without an administrative assessor. Assessor's Clerk is maintaining office. Assessor David Burgess is now working with us to review all open issues. Roy Bishop has come onboard to do this year's revaluation. We are still in search of an Assessor to replace Administrative Assessor Kevin Rudden. We are working on a new round of PFAS testing.

7. Unanticipated by the Chair:

Dept of Transportation (DOT) sent a formal contract extension for the Municipal Small Bridge Grant for the Locks Pond culvert project. The Selectboard approves the contract extension to fiscal year end 12/31/2023.

VOTE: A motion is made for the Selectboard to approve the extension of the Municipal Small Bridge grant. .Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye, and Stocker: aye; the motion carries.

The state has added Winter Recovery Assistance Program grant of approximately \$120,000 to municipalities for gravel road upgrades, paving of roads, crack filling, and striping but no capital expenditures.

VOTE: A motion is made for the Selectboard to approve Winter Recovery Assistance grant. .Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye, and Stocker: aye; the motion carries.

Meeting adjourns at 7:37pm

VOTE: Farrell Motions to Adjourn (7:37 pm); Makepeace-O'Neil moves and Stocker seconds roll call vote: Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Torres
Town Administrator