

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2026 In-Person Meeting Format

Selectboard members present: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair, Eric Stocker/ Vice-Chair.

Selectboard Members absent: Rita Farrell

Staff present and Guests: Hayley Bolton: Town Administrator, Brennan Mailloux, Gail Fleischaker, Tom Siefert, Matteo Pangallo, Amanda Alix, Fire Chief Leonard Czerwonka, Police Chief Devon Pelletier, Jennifer Wallace, Diane, Frank McGinn, Elizabeth, Jon Lawless, Tracy McNaughton, Nathan Murphy.

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 5:01pm

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: Tom Siefert asked about the status of his Open Meeting Law agenda item. The Board acknowledged that it would be discussed later in the meeting.

General Business:

1. Unanticipated Business: Eric Stocker shared that Stephen Dallmus asked the Select Board to endorse the notion of using CPA funding to repair the porch of the M.N. Spear Library Building.
 - a. McGinn shared the porch is rotted and needs to be rebuilt so that it could become a legal second egress.

VOTE: Stocker makes a motion to endorse the notion of using CPA fundings to repair the porch of the M.N. Spear Library Building, Makepeace-O'Neil seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

2. Approve Meeting Minutes for 1.20.26 4:00 pm and 1.20.26 5:00 pm:
 - a. No Amendments.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 1.20.26 4:00 pm as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 1.20.26 5:00 pm as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

3. Review 1/6/26 Open Meeting Law Complaint filed on 1/27/26.
 - a. The Board and Town Administrator Bolton acknowledged the Open Meeting Law complaint from Amanda Alix and stated that they did in fact make an error. They acknowledged using the wrong number for entering Executive Session, as well as that there was no need for entering Executive Session. They will release the minutes of the Executive Sessions as requested, as soon as they are available to do so. They will also be sending out letters to the Attorney General and Amanda

Alix stating their acknowledgement of the errors and their actions that they will take in response.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to once corrected, sign the letters for the Open Meeting Law Complaint dated January 27, 2026, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

4. Approve the Appointment of Devon Pelletier as Chief of Police:
 - a. The Board discussed how they believe Devon Pelletier is a perfect and suitable fit for the Town of Shutesbury and its small town, community-oriented needs.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the appointment of Devon Pelletier as Chief of Police effective January 6th, 2026, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

5. Fire Department Check-In:
 - a. Czerwonka stated there has been 10 calls so far this year that were mostly medical related and even one emergency horse rescue. He shared that there are 8 current members on the department including himself. A new Firefighter was just sworn in a week ago. He stated his ideal number of firefighters would be around 12 to 13.
 - b. Czerwonka stated he is looking at prices for replacing Engine 2 as it is getting close to 30 years of use. He stated the price range is anywhere between \$700,000 and \$950,000. He stated this can be a timely process.
 - c. Czerwonka stated they have been keeping up with Thursday trainings.
 - d. There is an Emergency Management Meeting scheduled for Monday, February 9th.
 - e. Czerwonka stated he is checking the Dam water levels twice a day and has been working closely with the Dam Keeper Howard Kinder.
 - f. There will be a Pancake Breakfast on March 14th starting at 8:30 am.

6. Review and approve Volunteer Liability Waiver Policy (260203) and Handbook:

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Volunteer Liability Waiver Policy (260203), Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the Town of Shutesbury Volunteer Handbook, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

7. Review and grant permission for Valley Players to use the forest trails and clearings at Parcel O-32, behind the library, as the venue for *Valiant Youth Summer Shakespeare Camp*. (Matteo Pangallo):
 - a. Valley Players is in their third year of operations with about two to three plays performed a year. The core part of their mission is theatre and they donate half

of their ticket sales to other non-profits. Their age group is 12- to 16-year-olds and this program will run from June 22nd to July 2nd.

- b. They submitted a Special Event Permit with signatures from the Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Board of Health.
- c. The library will be a fallback space in the event of inclement weather.

VOTE: Stocker makes a motion to approve the request for Valley Players to use the forest trails and clearings at Parcel 0-32, behind the library, as the venue for *Valiant Youth Summer Shakespeare Camp*, Makepeace-O'Neil seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

8. Review 10/3/25 Open Meeting Law Complaint Determination:

- a. This was an Open Meeting Law complaint that regarded an open records request in which there was an email discovered that violated Open Meeting Law. The Attorney General determined that the Select Board should read the email thread publicly in a meeting and acknowledge the email thread in the Meeting Minutes.
- b. Makepeace-O'Neil read aloud the email thread mentioned in the Open Meeting Law complaint.
- c. Stocker acknowledged his mistake and apologized for his "reply all" mistake.
- d. Tom Siefert showed his appreciation for the Board reading the email thread out loud and for acknowledging that they did violate Open Meeting Law. He asked Stocker to comment on his claims in the email thread about him, and Stocker stated he did not wish to go back and forth in the public forum. Siefert also raised the complaint that Stocker potentially defamed him. The Board stated he could raise that complaint but that they would not take any further public comments or discussions on the matter.
- e. Siefert stated he is very hurt and that he is disappointed in the operation of the Select Board.

9. Town Administrator Report:

- a. Bolton shared that we are currently looking for contractors for the Dam repair project. She stated that we cannot use CPA funds because we are incurring the expenses in the current fiscal year. She shared the town will need to go after grant opportunities.
- b. Bolton shared the budget process is underway and capital planning requests were due on February 2nd.
- c. Bolton shared that by 2027 all town websites will be required to make changes to become more ADA compliant.
- d. Bolton shared at her MMA Conference they held a workshop discussing Artificial Intelligence and its usage in communities.

10. Meeting Adjourned at 5:48 pm

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 pm, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Meeting Minutes draft for 1.20.26 4:00 pm
2. Meeting Minutes Draft for 1.20.26 5:00 pm
3. Appointment Letter for Devon Pelletier - Chief of Police
4. Volunteer Liability Waiver Policy (260203) and Handbook
5. Special Event Permit for Valley players
6. 10/3/25 Open Meeting Law Determination
7. Email Thread mentioned in 10/3/25 Open Meeting Law Complaint
8. 1/27/26 Open Meeting Law Complaint

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

** A full version of the 2/3/26 SB meeting will be available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://youtu.be/qDX6QsTuKig>

