

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
November 12, 2024 Hybrid Meeting Format

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

Staff present: Gabrielle Voelker/Interim Town Administrator

Volunteers & Other Staff present: April Stein, Frank McGinn, Matteo Pangallo, Penelope Kim, Kathy Salvador, Donna MacNicol, Chief Burgess

Guests: Tom Siefert and Susie Mosher

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

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: Susie Mosher acknowledges the transition in town with an Interim Town Administrator and the work involved for the Town Administrator position. Mosher would like to be involved when it comes the Town Administrator process.

Review of Minutes: None

**Discussion Topics:**

1. Discuss Vacation Payout for Former Town Administrator: The Selectboard ("SB") discusses the issue regarding the payout of Rebecca Torres' ("Torres") vacation time. Torres is asking for the full 26 days as well as 20 days of rolled over vacation time to be paid out. April Stein ("Stein") says Torres has put an incredible amount of time and work in for the Town of Shutesbury, time that she was not compensated for in anyway and does not see any reason she shouldn't receive the full payout. Makepeace-O'Neil reviewed the most recent contract as well as prior years, an addendum is missing however it is noted in the contract, but the SB agrees that is ultimately an oversight on their part and all members agree that Torres should be paid out the full amount. Torres spent a great deal of time over the weekend with the SB and Susie Mosher working to get everything prepared for the Interim Town Administrator to begin and the SB is appreciative of Torres' help. Farrell did confirm with the Finance Committee ("FinCom") that there was sufficient funds to cover Torres' payout.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a Motion to that we decide to pay Rebecca Torres' accrual of 19 weeks based on 30 days accrual in addition to the 20 rollover days for vacation as a payout at the end of her employment; Farrell seconds. Roll call vote: Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

2. Discuss with Police Chief Town Hall Security: Chief Burgess ("Burgess") has been reviewing the security for Town Hall as well as the other town buildings. Town Hall has been rekeyed and new keys have been handed out to employees and committee chairs if they needed them. Interior and exterior keys have been changed. Burgess and Sargeant Pelletier have begun tracking who has exterior keys, interior keys, and alarm codes. Burgess and Pelletier are creating a policy when someone is requesting keys and has begun tracking in an excel spreadsheet who has keys, access to what offices and codes. There are forms to be completed one of which is not public record as it contains personal information. As of now Burgess is confident everyone that needs access to town hall has new keys and alarm codes, which have been documented and will review any new requests as they come in. Burgess worked with Amherst Locks and she will talk with the Fire Department and Highway Department on their building security as well. Burgess discusses the possibility and need for exterior cameras only she would like to be proactive. Burgess will send the policy over to Gabrielle Voelker ("Voelker") and the SB.

3. Check in with Interim Town Administrator: The SB met with Voelker to check in after her first day to address any immediate questions or concerns she may have. Voelker has found two bills of prior year that have been added to the Special Town Meeting Warrant (“STM”). The SB and Voelker discuss the expiration of the Police Chief’s contract and the process the SB would like to follow for negotiations. The SB asks Voelker to meet with Burgess to get some expectations. There will be a group put together comprised of a FinCom member, Personnel Board member, SB member and the Town Administrator. Voelker will add “structure for police chief negotiations” to the next SB agenda. Voelker also discussed the setup of the meeting agendas and the SB’s preferences. They discussed having the Administrative Assistant draft and post the agendas and format changes. The SB chair will review all agendas before they are posted. The SB meeting time will remain at 6 pm for the time being it may be adjusted or changed at some point. Voelker’s office hours are Tuesday 9 am to 8 pm (depending on meetings) and Thursdays 9 am to 6 pm. Voelker advises the SB she needs to purchase three computers and the accountant suggested there might be American Rescue Plan Act Funds “ARPA” funds remaining and all ARPA money needs to be used. Voelker will report back to the SB with more information. The need for Zoom was discussed as well. Town hall use was discussed and the need for a calendar that is viewable to everyone and a request process that will be managed through the administrative assistant. During the transition time the SB members will be available at town hall a few hours each week. There was some discussion of shredding documents, the records retention schedule and a request to destroy to the state. They discussed the aesthetics of town hall specifically the meeting room downstairs. IT issues and document storage were briefly discussed. Google drive was discussed and other possible options that are more secure than Google. Makepeace-O’Neil will chair the next SB meeting. Donna MacNicol (“MacNicol”), Town Council, joined the meeting at 6:21 pm via Zoom and the SB discussed the STM warrant. The SB will let MacNicol know if she needs to attend the STM. Farrell will send MacNicol the warrant for her to review.
4. Join FinCom to review and vote final 12/19/24 Special Town Meeting Warrant: The SB suspended their meeting at 6:24 pm and will join the Finance Committee Meeting at 7:15 pm to review and discuss the final Special Town Meeting Warrant.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a Motion to recess this meeting till 7:15 till the SB joins the FinCom; Stocker moves. Roll call vote: Makepeace-O’Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, and Farrell: aye; the motion carries.

Administrative Actions:

1. Voelker to follow up on several items;
2. Farrell will forward STM to MacNicol;
3. Voelker will begin discussions with Burgess;
4. Voelker will review town hall use and calendar with administrative assistant

Documents and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

- 1.

Respectfully submitted,  
Geneva Bickford,  
Administrative Secretary

\*\* A full version of the 11/12/24 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury’s YouTube page at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4ajoOcJsNzf5DBgMTZgcJA>