

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2025 Hybrid Meeting Format

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

Staff present and Guests: Gabriele Voelker: Interim Town Administrator, Tom Siefert, Henry Geddes, Michael DeChiara, Gail Fleischaker, Jennifer Wallace, Tracy McNaughton, Carol J, Penelope Kim,

Farrell calls the meeting to order at 5:07pm

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: Tom Siefert shared that he had baked cookies and Farrell virtually stated she wished she was there to enjoy one with the rest of the board. Stocker confirmed they were great.

General Business:

- I. Discussion about setting up a public forum on the Lake Wyola Bylaw as requested by citizens and recommended by Chief Burgess:
 - a. The board discussed organizing a public forum to address concerns about Lake Wyola bylaw, particularly regarding boating regulations. Christian Chief Burgess recommended the forum, and the board agreed to schedule it for March 13th, 2024, at the elementary school, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM.
 - i. Farrell stated they may include a presentation or summary to educate on the bylaw and receive thoughts from the public.
 - ii. It was suggested to have Paul Lyons be a moderator for the meeting and Makepeace-O'Neil said she would make note to reach out to the school.
 - iii. Farrell stated she would create an outline for the meeting.

- II. Administrative assistant screening and hiring process, 2 applicants:
 - a. The board discussed the hiring process for the Administrative Assistant position, with two candidates identified. The board decided that one Select Board member, and the Town Administrator, would conduct the interviews, with Melissa and Eric volunteering to participate. Makepeace-O'Neil won the coin toss.

- III. Vote to approve the easement for the National Grid Pole installation:

- a. The board reviewed and approved the easement for National Grid to install power lines at the new library location. The easement was previously reviewed by Donna and addressed all necessary concerns.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the easement for the National Grid pole installation at the new library location, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

IV. Review of Historical commission request for the following:

- a. Authorization to proceed with Option B in the Williamstown Art Conservation Center's guideboard phase two proposal.
- b. Authorization to position the guideboard slightly further back from the roadsides than its previous position.
- c. Authorization to proceed with the construction of a concrete foundation pad for the guideboard as described in the attached CPA grant application.
 - i. The Select Board discussed and approved the three changes to the town's guideboard: removing a 1960s roofing extension to restore its original appearance as Henry Geddes mentioned, constructing a concrete foundation pad, and moving it slightly back for better visibility and snow protection. These changes are subject to approval of CPA funds at the town meeting.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to authorize options A-C presented to them, being option B, moving the guide board slightly further back, and the construction of a concrete foundation pad for the guide board, all subject to the approval by town meeting of CPA funds, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

V. Review and Approval of the 11-19-24, 11-26-24, 12-17-24, 12-30-24 SB Meeting Minutes:

- a. All minutes approved. No amends.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes for 11-19-24, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes for 11-26-24, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes for 12-17-24, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes for 12-30-24, Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

VI. Response to Environmental Notification Form for the National Grid transmission Line expansion Project. Michael DeChiara letter sample:

- a. Michael DiCiara presents a draft response he prepared regarding the environmental notification form for National Grid's line expansion project, which the board had previously requested. Michael discussed the town's involvement in a project related to wetlands and tree cutting, expressing concerns about the potential impact on the town's roads. He mentioned that the project involves cutting trees in straight lines, which could damage the roads. He also noted that there are 10 to 15 wetlands and two spots of rare species in the area. Michael suggested that the town should be consulted before any work is done to mitigate potential damage to the roads. Stocker asked about the possibility of a bond to cover potential road damage, which Michael agreed was a good idea. The team decided to add a sentence about securing financing for potential road damages to the project's mitigation plan. Michael discussed the EEA Portal and its deadline, suggesting that Gabe could assist with its use. The team agreed to have Melissa sign the letter and upload it to the portal.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the letter and send it. Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VII. Gayle Huntress recommendation to disband the Broadband Committee.

- a. The topic of the Broadband Committee was brought up, with Gayle Huntress recommending its disbanding due to the completion of its original charge and the establishment of the Municipal Lights Plant. The committee was disbanded with a unanimous vote. Lastly, the team discussed a contract with Cai Technologies for map maintenance and system services, with a motion to sign the contract passed unanimously.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to disband Broadband. Farrell seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VIII. Town Administrator Report:

- a. Need to schedule interviews for Town Administrator Candidates, March 6, 2025
- b. • Review Town Hall Policy/cancellation
- c. • Budget for upgrade to the downstairs meeting room. Meet with the Building Committee about this? Elevator board issues, perhaps a capital plan?
- d. • Review SB budget for next meeting

-The board signed the contract for CAI given to Voelker from the Assessors, for a contract of \$5,000.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the tax map maintenance contract for the town of Shutesbury. Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- i. Discussion was made about the progress of the search committee for the town administrator, which had narrowed down the 12 applicants to three candidates for final interviews on March 6th. The interviews were scheduled to start at 5:30 PM, with each candidate expected to take about 40 minutes. It was mentioned that the committee had drafted some questions for the interviews, which could be edited and approved before the meeting. The decision on who to hire would be made in an open session, following the interviews. They mentioned the need to review the Town Hall policy, which had been updated but not yet voted on. Farrell confirmed that she had seen the policy voted on in November, and they agreed to double-check the meeting minutes.
- ii. The board discussed the need for improvements to the Town Hall, including painting, insulation, and soundproofing. The group also discussed the need for repairs to the elevator and the sink in the copy room. A suggestion was made to invite the Buildings Committee to discuss potential solutions and costs. Rita expressed concerns about the accessibility of the building, particularly the elevator. Mentioned as well was the need to address the budget, which has seen significant increases in insurance and retirement assessments. The group agreed to review the budget before the next meeting with the Finance Committee. They then discussed exploring options for a more stable internet connection to resolve issues with the copier and elevator.

IX. Meeting adjourned at 6:09pm

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil Motions to Adjourn (6:09pm) and go into Executive Session for Reason #2 To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion

personnel: Police Chief contract negotiations and to approve executive session minutes from previous Town Administrator negotiations. They will **not** return to public session.
Makepeace-O'Neil moves, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote: Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, and Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; the motion carries.

Administrative Actions:

1. Schedule public forum for Lake Wyola bylaw changes on March 13th, 2024, at the elementary school
2. Conduct interviews for administrative assistant position on February 28th, 2024
3. Submit environmental notification form for National Grid expansion project
4. Contact building committee to discuss town hall maintenance and improvement needs
5. Review and address elevator control board issue with fire chief

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

- 1.

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

** A full version of the 2/11/25 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgOdYxWtuPA>

