

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2025 Hybrid Meeting Format

Selectboard members present: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair, Eric Stocker/ Vice-Chair (Virtually), Rita Farrell/ Board Member

Staff present and Guests: Brennan Mailloux, Leonard Czerwonka, Gail Fleischaker, Tom Siefert, Frank McGinn, Catherine Hilton, Katherine Powers, Michael DeChiara, Henry Geddes, Jennifer Wallace, Liz Good, Kathy Salvador, Joe Salvador, Mary Lou Conca, Mark Rivers.

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 5:00pm

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: Mary Lou Conca stated with John Letourneau's resignation, she is concerned about hearing back from him about a prior ask she had of him for paperwork. Brennan Mailloux will assist her in obtaining the paperwork she is looking for.

General Business:

- I. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes for 7/29/25 and 8/4/25:
 - a. Stocker shared in the 7/29/25 Meeting minutes, Section 5 Letter E, the letter "B" in Blue Cross Blue Shield needs to be capitalized. He also shared in Section 5 Letter A, the word "off" was used instead of "of."

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 7/29/25 as amended, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 8/4/25, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- II. Appointment of Katherine Powers to the Historical Commission:
 - a. Henry Geddes shared that the Historical Commission has had a series of appointments that have expired, and it has been difficult to meet a quorum for meetings. He shared Katherine Powers expressed interest in the committee, and she has a background in archival management which can be beneficial. This appointment will help the Historical Commission to meet a quorum again.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve the appointment of Katherine Powers to the Historical Commission, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

- III. Review and accept John Letourneau's Letter of Resignation as Plumbing and Gas Inspector:

- a. John Letourneau was our Plumbing Inspector and Gas Inspector for over 25 years. A public thank you was expressed from Chair Melissa-Makepeace-O'Neil. Brennan Mailloux will draft a thank you letter for the Select Board to sign and send to John.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to accept John Letourneau's Letter of Resignation from the position of Plumbing and Gas Inspector, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

IV. Discussion of Franklin Regional Council of Governments Plumbing Inspections:

- a. Stocker asked how the money differs from the old system to the new. Frank McGinn shared that Jim Hawkins stated there is no difference in pricing. Gail Fleischaker asked Mailloux to investigate the process in which individuals will have to go about to receive plumbing and gas inspections from FRCOG.
- b. There is a one-time \$700 fee for the online permitting software and a \$2,318 cost for the FCCIP to handle plumbing and gas permitting and inspections. FRCOG will retain all permit fees.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to sign and execute the contract with FRCOG for the plumbing and gas services, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

V. Discussion of Elliot Park Watercraft Storage:

- a. Catherine Hilton from Elliot Park Committee shared that people are leaving their personal boats and junk at the Elliot Park location. This is damaging the grass and making it a mess. Catherine Hilton stated she is hoping to get a sign made to be posted, stating property left behind will be confiscated and individuals will have to come and collect it. It could also say no personal watercraft storage. "Abandoned watercraft and abandoned property will be removed. Per the order of the Select Board."

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to approve signage for Elliot Park not allowing personal watercraft storage, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VI. Open Meeting Law Complaint from Tom Siefert on August 6th:

- a. The Board shared that on August 6th, 2025, Tom Siefert filed an Open Meeting Law Complaint against a Select Board Member about an email that was mistakenly "replied all" to other Select Board Members and the Town Administrator. Shortly after the email was sent, the member sent a follow-up email stating that he had "replied to all in error."
- b. A letter will be sent acknowledging the violation and mistake, and a public apology was given. Chair Makepeace-O'Neil stated the Board will do better and all members will sign the letter to be sent out to Tom Siefert.

VOTE: Farrell makes a motion to sign the letter to Tom Siefert regarding the Open Meeting Law Complaint Filed, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VII. Discussion of Horse Rink Fence Removal at Fire Station

- a. Leonard Czerwonka shared there is an old horse rink behind the Fire Station made of wood railings and fencing. He stated it is deteriorating and looks unattractive. He also thinks it could become a public safety hazard with someone sitting on one of the railings and it potentially breaking. He would like to have it disassembled and put in the trash. Some folks have expressed interest in using the wood to make boards out of them. The Board stated they just want him to follow all the legal avenues in its disposal.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to give Leonard Czerwonka permission to remove the dangerous horse fencing behind the Fire Station, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VIII. Fire Chief Contract

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to execute the contract with Leonard Czerwonka as Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director for the next three years, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

IX. Town Administrator Report:

- a. For the Town Administrator report, Administrative Assistant Brennan Mailloux filled in for Town Administrator Hayley Bolton.
- b. Mailloux shared a highlight that the most recent Personnel Board meeting was productive according to Bolton. Bolton had said that the meeting focused on legal updates to the personnel handbook and on clarifying definitions. The upcoming meeting will be more focused on the “meat” of the personnel handbook.
- c. Mailloux shared that there has been an advisory of a recycling disposal rate increase. Bolton and Meryl Mandell talked, and Mandell stated Springfield Materials Recycling Facility, known as MRF, did not anticipate these market changes, but there was a drop in the market and as a result they will need to increase their rates. The result will be a \$17/ton loss of value for our recyclables. With the tonnage adjustment fee included, the July processing cost is \$74.19 per ton. This is an ongoing situation.
- d. Mailloux added to the Town Administrator Report by stating a potential date change for our upcoming Special Town Meeting. To accommodate Rosh Hashanah, the newly proposed date of the Special Town Meeting is Tuesday, September 30th.

e. Mailloux concluded the Town Administrator Report by discussing the Planning Board's proposed bylaw regarding data centers to be included on the upcoming Special Town Meeting Warrant. He asked the Select Board to review it and vote to accept it and send it back to the Planning Board. Michael DeChiara stated these data centers are directly correlated to the rise in artificial intelligence (AI).

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to accept and send back the Special Town Meeting proposed bylaw Warrant article, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

X. Meeting adjourned at 5:46pm

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:46 pm. Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil aye; motion carries.

Administrative Actions:

1. Eric Stocker to sign the contracts when he returns.
2. Mailloux to get back to Mary Lou Conca on how to proceed with getting plumbing information following John Letourneau's resignation.
3. Mailloux to inform Town Clerk Grace Bannasch that Katherine Powers has been appointed to the Historical Commission.
4. Henry Geddes to find a Historical Commission representative for the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee.
5. Mailloux to help determine the process for initiating plumbing inspections through FRCOG.
6. Mailloux to prepare a thank you letter for John Letourneau for the Select Board to sign.
7. Catherine Hilton to create signage for Elliott Park stating that watercraft left will be considered abandoned and will be removed, per order of the Select Board.
8. Catherine Hilton to share the final sign wording with Hayley Bolton.
9. Leonard Czerwonka to coordinate with the Highway Department to remove the horse rink fence behind the fire station.
10. Haley to discuss with Ajay Kashu about the Finance Committee's plan for covering the health insurance cost increase.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Appointment Letter of Katherine Powers
2. John Letourneau's Letter of Resignation
3. Tom Siefert's Open Meeting Law Complaint
4. Select Board Response Letter to Tom Siefert about his OML complaint.

5. Meeting Minutes for 7/29/25 and 8/4/25
6. FRCOG Contract for Plumbing and Gas Inspection Services
7. Fire Chief Contract
8. Planning Board Data Center Warrant Article

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

** A full version of the 8/12/25 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEnh--hqFjQ>

