

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
April 28, 2026 In-Person Meeting Format

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

Staff present and Guests: Hayley Bolton: Town Administrator, Brennan Mailloux, Gail Fleischaker, Tom Siefert, Amanda Alix, Tracy McNaughton, Mary Lou Conca, Frank McGinn.

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

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: No public comments were raised.

General Business:

1. Approve Meeting Minutes for 4.14.26:

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for 4.14.26 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

2. Acknowledge Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Amanda Alix on 4/15/26. (Insufficient Executive Session Minutes for the Police Chief Search Committee):
  - a. Bolton was Chair and Secretary of the committee.
  - b. The Town will send a letter to the complainant and Attorney General's Office. Bolton will go back into the Minutes and add more details. They will then be voted on release again.
  - c. Mary Lou Conca asked if the letters would be open to the public to read. The Board acknowledged that they are public records and Bolton stated she would email Mary Lou Conca the letters. Mary Lou Conca also asked what the decisions were that were just made. Makepeace-O'Neil acknowledged her question and gave her a brief recap of the votes that were taken in regard to the Open Meeting Law Complaint response.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the letter for Amanda Alix and the Open Meeting Law Complaint, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the letter for the Attorney General's Office regarding the Open Meeting Law Complaint, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

3. Vote to allow the Town to apply for up to \$150K for the Climate Leader Technical Assistance grant, and to designate Town Administrator Hayley Bolton to sign and submit the application:
  - a. The Town needs to submit the grant application for technical assistance by the end of May in order for it to be reviewed in June. Otherwise, 6 months' time is lost before the Town could move forward again. Michael DeChiara is currently working with various engineering firms to gather the necessary data by mid may.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to apply for up to \$150k for the Climate Leader Technical Assistance Grant, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to authorize Town Administrator Hayley Bolton to sign and submit the application for the Climate Leader Technical Assistance Grant, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

4. Fire Chief Czerwonka Check-In Update:
  - a. Chief Czerwonka could not be present as he was away on an active call.
  - a. Makepeace-O'Neil said for FY24, Chief Czerwonka shared that there were 119 Fire Department calls with 74 being medical, 6 vehicle accidents, 16 wires/trees down, 1 structure fire, 2 miscellaneous fires, 1 smell of smoke, 3 chimney fires, 2 gas and oil leaks, and 1 water rescue.
  - b. FY25 had 109 calls with 51 for medical, 17 vehicle accidents, 11 for alarms sounding, 7 for wires and trees down, 4 structure fires, 3 brush fires, 2 chimney fires, 2 illegal burnings, 2 miscellaneous fires, 2 smells of smoke, 1 station coverage, 3 rescues, and 4 others.
  - c. FY26 has had 118 calls already. 57 Medical calls, 22 smoke alarm investigations, 7 vehicle accidents, 10 wires and trees down, 8 brush fires, 3 structure fires, 2 vehicle fires, 1 chimney fire, 2 illegal burns, 1 electrical fire, 1 miscellaneous fire, 1 station coverage, and 3 rescues/others. Engine 1 has responded 15 times, while Engine 2 has responded 41 times.
  - d. Farrell expressed that she wished Czerwonka was there so that she could have asked him more questions pertaining to the Wheelock fire, as well as the Annual Town Meeting request for a new Fire Truck. She would like to ask questions such as whether alternatives have been investigated. Maybe the option for leasing? Makepeace-O'Neil added that if the Article passes at the Annual Town Meeting, by 2028 when the new truck arrives, the town's older one to be replaced, (Engine 2), will be 31 years old.
    - i. Farrell will put together a list of questions for Chief Czerwonka and send them to him for response.

5. Town Administrator Report:
  - a. Lake Wyola Dam Repairs
    - i. The new trash rack has been installed. The teeth on the new rack are wider than the previous model which will improve water flow and reduce the frequency of clogging.
    - ii. Bolton shared the Town is beginning the incremental process of refilling the lake. The initial target is to refill it to the winter draw down level (2 feet below the spillway). Once at the winter level, they will enter a monitoring period in coordination with GZA Engineering and the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety to verify the integrity of the repairs. Pending positive results from the monitoring phase, they will proceed to restore the lake to its full summer pool level.
    - iii. The next step after that is a future engineering study and then conducting the permanent repairs.
    - iv. Bolton made it clear to exercise caution when recreating on the lake. Current low water levels have exposed hidden hazards, such as rocks and debris, that are typically submerged.
  - b. Shutesbury Elementary School Oil Tank Updates
    - i. At a cleanup effort on April 27th, oil contamination was located deeper than anticipated at a crack in the curb. There was also a site incident where during the contaminated soil excavation a digger broke an electrical conduit. In terms of soil disposal, the contaminated soil paperwork is complete with Ondrick Materials & Recycling. The roll-off container will be removed from the school once tests are finished.
  - b. Vault Status and Next Steps for Repairs
    - i. Bolton shared that a recent inspection on April 27th found no new fuel leaks in the vault. There was some water found in the vault, which may be entering through a leaky electrical power box or around the manhole cover. The Town has reached out to Royal Steam for a schedule of the necessary repairs to the faulty pump and related piping but is currently waiting for a response. The Licensed Site Professional agreed that cleaning the vault should wait until these repairs are completed to ensure the leak has fully stopped. Test wells will be drilled within the next two weeks to assess the extent of contamination spread. The tank passed its tightness test on March 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - c. Insurance
    - i. Bolton shared Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) framed the spill as “sudden and accidental.” Remediation efforts are covered but come with a \$10,000 deductible that the Town is required to pay. The Town is also responsible for repairing the tank and its internal components. MIIA has offered to help the Town locate grants.
  - d. Digital Outreach
    - i. Bolton shared that the official email subscriber list has reached 702 subscribers.

- ii. Friday Fives continue to go out weekly to residents and provide town updates and project outlooks.
  - iii. Shutesbury Sightings have been ongoing and so far, successful. These offer residents a chance to capture and share local observations, nature notes, and small details that make Shutesbury unique.
- 6. Any Other Discussion:
  - a. McGinn said that the lights at the Shutesbury Elementary School have a photocell, and that there is actually a timer with screw on knobs that can be adjusted.
- 7. Next Scheduled Meeting(s)
  - a. A meeting will be scheduled for a half hour before the Annual Town Meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 8:30 am. (In-person at the Shutesbury Elementary School.)
  - b. A meeting will also be scheduled for May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 6:30 pm just in case a quorum of the Select Board attends the Finance Committee Meeting.
- 8. Meeting Adjourned at 5:44 pm

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:44 pm, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

- 1. Open Meeting Law Complaint 4/15/26
- 2. Meeting Minutes for 4.14.26

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

\*\* A full version of the 4/28/26 SB meeting will be available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://youtu.be/aK3ZInoGRns>

