

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
August 25, 2026 Hybrid Meeting Format

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

Staff present and Guests: Hayley Bolton: Town Administrator, Brennan Mailloux, Gail Fleischaker, Tom Siefert, Mary David, Howie Kinder, Charlene Galenski, Nick Yarmac, Sandy Yarmac, Jean Perkins, Maura Keene, Suzanne Lyon, Michael Miller, Michael DeChiara, Bob Douglas, Jennifer Wallace, Anna Mancebo, Mark Rivers, William Wells, Judy Remmel, Kate Pfordresher.

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 5:35 pm

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: No public comments were made that were not in relation to agenda item #2.

General Business:

1. Discussion about a new proposed Lake Wyola Advisory Committee Charge:
 - a. The Select Board reviewed the revised Charge for the Lake Wyola Advisory Committee (LWAC). The LWAC will serve as a permanent advisory committee to the Select Board, providing guidance on the preservation, safety, maintenance, and enhancement of Lake Wyola. Its responsibilities include advising on dam and watershed infrastructure, monitoring water quality and invasive species, supporting public education, and working with other town committees on recreational and economic interests. The Charge also calls for joint meetings with the Stormwater Management and Implementation Committee and biannual public listening sessions. The LWAC will consist of 11 voting members appointed by the Select Board, with representatives from town boards and staff and members of the community.
 - i. **Town Board Representatives – 4 seats**
 1. 1 Planning Board member
 2. 1 Conservation Commission member
 3. 1 Recreation Committee member
 4. 1 Board of Health member
 - ii. **Town Staff – 2 seats**
 1. Shutesbury Dam Keeper - Ex-Officio
 2. Emergency Management Director or Designee - Ex-Officio
 - iii. **Community Residents – 7 seats**
 1. 3 residents or property owners within the Lake Wyola watershed area
 2. 3 at-large community members
 3. 1 non-resident community member
 - b. Comments from members of the public:

- i. Charlene Galenski sought clarification on membership eligibility for Lake Wyola Association members and the rationale for ex-officio (non-voting) status for staff seats.
 - 1. Bolton clarified that LWA members are welcome to apply as independent town residents; only officers/directors of the LWA are limited (no more than one may serve simultaneously). Regarding the ex-officio status, Bolton explained this is consistent with the Select Board's recently adopted policy on employees serving on committees, and with municipal best practice—paid employees serving in an advisory capacity should not vote on matters that directly impact their work or create conflicts of interest.
- ii. Tom Siefert offered several editorial and substantive suggestions for improving the draft Charge.
 - 1. Siefert suggested changing "infrastructure and safety advisory" to "infrastructure and safety advising" for grammatical consistency as a function.
 - 2. He suggested replacing "recreational and economic interests" with "recreational and economic development" for functional clarity.
 - 3. He recommended removing the opening clause "In fulfilling its role as a liaison between the town and the lake community" from the routine public feedback sessions section, as the term "lake community" is ambiguous and the section heading already provides context.
 - 4. He suggested replacing "town citizens" with "independent community members" or "independent town residents" to avoid the increasingly charged connotation of the word "citizen."
 - 5. He requested that the frequency of joint meetings with the SMIC be specified (e.g., at least X times per year), similar to the biannual requirement for public listening sessions.
 - 6. Seifert requested a clear reference or definition for the "Lake Wyola watershed" boundary, noting that FRCOG has offered a map.
 - 7. Siefert asked what the term lengths of the committee would be and if there would be any term limits. Bolton stated she dropped the term limits from the original proposed Charge, as it isn't typically used on other committees, and she wants to follow suit with best practices. Walton voiced his concern that this would lock people in and people out indefinitely. The Board acknowledged that it is difficult to find volunteers. Bolton stated the Charge was written with the idea of one-year appointments in mind.
- iii. Howie Kinder asked why the Dam Keeper could not vote. The Select Board stated that because he is a paid employee (stipend) who would be

ex-officio to the committee, he can still voice his professional opinions at the meetings, he just cannot vote on topics.

- iv. Jennifer Wallace acknowledged the Charge and how it structurally mirrors other town committee Charges, including her own committees. Wallace affirmed that the membership criteria and community engagement components serve the mission effectively. Wallace offered some suggestions to the Charge such as broadening the language regarding “to monitor water quality” in the *Environmental & Water Quality Monitoring* section. She suggested referencing FRCOG’s watershed-based plan for specific water quality testing benchmarks under that scope. She also suggested broadening the language regarding the “represent the geographic interests of the neighborhood” sentence. The Board suggested dropping that language all together from the sentence under *Community Residents (7 Seats)*, bullet one.
- v. Michael DeChiara offered small suggestions. He suggested striking any gender language (his/her) from the *Membership and Composition* section and replacing it with just “designee.” DeChiara suggested changing the LWAC meeting days from Saturday mornings to weekdays/nights. Walton suggested that it be left up to the committee members to decide when they can all meet together. DeChiara also suggested striking the language of “in fulfilling its role as a liaison between the town and the lake community.” Finally, he suggested further defining what the Lake Wyola Watershed area is, and who it encompasses. He referenced the Lake Wyola zoning district on the Planning Board map as one option, while acknowledging the FRCOG’s ecological watershed definition as another.
- vi. Anna Mancebo asked if Town Counsel needs to review the Charge. She suggested given the complexity of definitions and the range of opinions; it may be prudent to have Donna MacNicol review the charge. Bolton acknowledged the suggestion but noted that legal counsel review incurs cost and that this Charge follows the same standard format as other committee Charges that have not been review by Town Counsel.
- vii. Bolton summarized the list she compiled of suggested amendments.
- viii. The Select Board decided to wait on voting on the new Charge until amendments are made by Bolton. This will be presented at an upcoming meeting for a vote. (Most likely the following Tuesday, September 1st Meeting)

2. Meeting Adjourned at 6:58 pm

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

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Original LWAC Charge
2. Revised LWAC Charge
3. Performance Evaluation Forms

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

** A full version of the 8/25/26 SB meeting will be available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://youtu.be/H5QEGo557Y8>

