

**Minutes  
Special Town Meeting  
Town of Shutesbury  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
December 3, 2024**

The Town of Shutesbury held a Special Town Meeting on December 3 2024 at the Shutesbury Elementary School. Seventy-four Shutesbury residents qualified to vote in elections and town affairs were in attendance. In the presence of a quorum, the Moderator called the Special Town Meeting to order at 6:02pm. Moderator Lyons introduced the Interim Town Administrator, Gabrielle Voelker, and reviewed Town Meeting procedures for any voters new to Town Meetings who might be present.

**Article 1.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to transfer \$25,000 from Free Cash for the Police Dept. to be used to fund a Private Duty Detail Account pursuant to MGL c. 44, Sec 53C, for the purpose of making timely payments to officers for their Private Duty Detail work.

**(Sponsor: Selectboard) Finance Committee recommends, (6 to 0)**

**Requires a majority vote.**

**Article 1 passed unanimously.**

**Article 2.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to appropriate \$136,000 from the CPA Undesignated fund balance to the Amherst Regional Public Schools for the purposes of the rehabilitation, renovation, and improvement of the track and field athletic facilities at the Amherst Regional High School, an Open Space/Recreation project, as described in the Amherst Regional Public Schools' August 20, 2024 application to the Shutesbury Community Preservation Committee.

**(Sponsor: Regional School Committee) Finance Committee recommends (4 to 1, 1 abstention)**

**Requires a majority vote.**

**Article 2 passed by a clear majority.**

**Article 3.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to transfer \$20,000 from Free Cash to the Town Administrator's salary line in the budget, for the purpose of funding Town Administrator transition costs related to Interim Town Administrator salary, current Town Administrator vacation accrual payout and increase the salary of the new Town Administrator.

**(Sponsor: Selectboard) Finance Committee recommends, (6 to 0)**

**Requires a majority vote.**

**Article 3 passed unanimously.**

**Article 4.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to transfer \$25,000 from Free Cash to fund the Finance Committee Reserve fund.

**(Sponsor: Fincom) Finance Committee recommends, (7 to 0)  
Requires a majority vote.**

**Article 4 passed unanimously.**

**Article 5.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to transfer \$2,541 from Free Cash to increase funding of the FY25 budget line Library Assistant/Aides.

**(Sponsor: Library Trustees) Finance Committee recommends (5 to 2).  
Requires a majority vote.**

**Article 5 passed by a clear majority.**

**Article 6.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to transfer \$876.00 from Free Cash to pay prior year bills of \$756.00 to Berkshire Springs HOD \$120.00 to Encore Fire Protection.

**(Sponsor Selectboard) Finance Committee recommends (7 to 0)  
Requires nine tenths, (9/10) vote for Free Cash.**

**Article 6 passed unanimously, 70 to 0.**

**Article 7.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to authorize the Selectboard to petition the General Court for a special act in the form set forth below, providing that lawful noncitizen permanent residents of the Town of Shutesbury be permitted to vote in local elections; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court; and provided further that the Selectboard is hereby authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition.

**Text of Proposed Legislation:**

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1 of chapter 51 of the General Laws, or any other general or special law, rule or regulation to the contrary, lawful permanent residents 18 years or older who reside in Shutesbury may, upon application, have their name entered on a list of registered voters established by the Town Clerk for the town known as the Town of Shutesbury and may thereafter vote in all Shutesbury town meetings, elections and actions, and serve on elected and appointed Shutesbury municipal boards, commissions and committees.

SECTION 2. The Selectboard of the town known as the Town of Shutesbury may formulate regulations and guidelines to implement the purpose of this act.

SECTION 3. Nothing in this act shall be construed to confer upon lawful permanent residents the right to vote for any state or federal office or any state or federal ballot question or take any action relative thereto.”

**(Sponsor: Selectboard)**  
**Requires majority vote.**

**Article 7 passed by clear majority.**

**Article 8.** A motion was made and seconded to see if the town would vote to approve the Resolution to Make Shutesbury a Pollinator-Friendly Community.

**Citizen Petition. Requires majority vote.**

An amendment was proposed to strike the language: “Whereas, the repeated use of herbicides, including glyphosate and other toxic chemicals, to manage utility and road rights-of-way indiscriminately kills native vegetation and strongly disrupts pollinator habitat and soil biology, as it is toxic to beneficial soil microflora and invertebrates in soil, particularly when applied by broad spraying”

And replace it with the following language: “Whereas the Town of Shutesbury is cognizant of the need for safe and healthy landscapes for its residents and habitat for necessary pollinators. Careful consideration must be given when dealing with the need to remove invasive, in particular, knotweed which has a gross negative impact on pollinators as it overwhelms native habitats and wipes out native pollinator plants. Use of herbicides should be minimized, when necessary to control this invasive, to reclaim the native habitat and prevent it from spreading.”

**The amendment passed, 34 yes to 23 no.**

An amendment was proposed to remove the words “avoid the use of” and replace with the words “Minimize the use of” in the second to last paragraph of the proposed resolution.

**The amendment passed by a clear majority.**

**Article 8 as amended passed by a clear majority.**

**Text of Article 8 as passed**

**“Resolution to Make Shutesbury a Pollinator-Friendly Community**

PREAMBLE:

WHEREAS, bees, moths, butterflies, and other pollinators are an essential component of a healthy ecosystem and provide ecological services that support plant and animal life;

WHEREAS, locally grown fruits and vegetables, such as apples, blueberries, strawberries, squash, melons, and tomatoes depend on pollinators;

WHEREAS, most local bird species rely on vast quantities of caterpillars in order to thrive and reproduce;

WHEREAS, many native caterpillars and other beneficial insects have very specific feeding needs that can only be satisfied with the native plant species they have co-evolved with;

WHEREAS, considerable scientific research has documented the ongoing steep decline of many insect species (estimated at 45% overall in the last 40 years);

WHEREAS, our local ecosystems that support pollinators are under tremendous threat from climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation, proliferation of non-native plant species, the expanded use of pesticides, light pollution, and the spread of pollutants, pathogens, and parasites;

WHEREAS, the Town of Shutesbury is cognizant of the need for safe and healthy landscapes for its residents and habitat for necessary pollinators. Careful consideration must be given when dealing with the need to remove invasive, in particular, knotweed which has a gross negative impact on pollinators as it overwhelms native habitats and wipes out native pollinator plants. Use of herbicides should be minimized, when necessary to control this invasive, to reclaim the native habitat and prevent it from spreading.

WHEREAS, the Town of Shutesbury is cognizant of the need for safe and healthy landscapes for its residents and habitat for necessary pollinators.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Shutesbury is hereby declared a Pollinator-Friendly Community and that the Town urges Shutesbury property owners, residents, the Shutesbury Select Board, Town Departments and Committees, land trusts, and business owners to adopt the following pollinator-friendly practices:

- Prioritize the planting of native species in landscaping, land management, and restoration efforts;
- Minimize the use of other types of pesticides (including herbicides, fungicides, and rodenticides);
- Develop a Shutesbury Pollinator Habitat Action Plan that includes public education about protecting pollinators and their habitats; and
- Take any other action in relation thereto.”

**A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to dissolve Special Town Meeting at 7:37pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Grace Bannasch, Shutesbury Town Clerk

A True Copy Attest: \_\_\_\_\_