



SPRING GREETINGS FROM THE SELECT BOARD

Hello Neighbors,

It's been a busy Fall and Winter for the Select Board. We have had very full agendas and multiple meetings in addition to our regular every-other-Tuesday meeting schedule. All of our meetings are "open" and available via Zoom or in-person. We continue to use the adopted "hybrid" meeting model. Meetings are also all recorded and available on YouTube. Minutes are available on MyTownGovernment.org/01072 for later review.

Since July 1, 2025, the Select Board has adopted new policies such as the Safe and Welcoming Policy, a new Code of Conduct Policy, a revised Town Announcements Policy, a Combined Environmentally Preferred Purchasing (EPP) Policy, and a Volunteer Liability Waiver Policy and Handbook.

The Select Board has approved new appointments to various committees and boards. A Police Chief Search Committee was created to help with the process of hiring Shutesbury's new Police Chief, Devon Pelletier. The Select Board also reached a new contract with Fire Chief Leonard Czerwonka.

With the new Shutesbury Public Library officially open, the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee was created to explore potential new uses for the former library building.

The Select Board supported community events such as Trunk or Treat and the 3rd Annual Town Wide Birthday Party in October, as well as the Road Town Turkey Trot in November, put on by the Friends of the Library, and the Community Giving Tree in December. We also approved the New Library Grand Opening on January 10th, and the Police Chief Swear-In Ceremony on February 11th.

In November, the Select Board hosted Senator Comerford and discussed the Quabbin Watershed Bill as well as rural school issues and PFAS mitigation funding. The Select Board actively engages and stays in contact with Senator Comerford for advocacy on issues.

The Select Board is working with Town Administrator Hayley Bolton and the Emergency Management Team on the Lake Wyola dam repair; access to the dam is revoked until further notice.

A new position, Election Administrator, has been created, and Matteo Pangallo has been appointed to assist with all election-related matters.

We are looking forward to the Local Election and Annual Town Meeting on May 9th. We hope to see a large participatory crowd, with lots of smiles and friendly engagement.

For any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to send us an email at selectboard@shutesbury.org, or attend one of our meetings and present a public comment.

*Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Chair,
Eric Stocker/Vice-Chair, Rita Farrell/Member*

THE LOCAL ELECTION & ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Saturday, May 9, 2026, beginning at 9 AM at the Shutesbury Elementary School, 23 West Pelham Rd.

We are returning to the Elementary School for Annual Town Meeting this year. The Local Election will also take place at the Elementary School, 8 AM–2 PM. Last year, at a Special Town Meeting in September, we updated our Annual Town Meeting bylaw to set the date as the second Saturday in May. This is the first year we will be implementing that bylaw. If you have a preference for indoor or outdoor Town Meetings, please share your thoughts with the Moderator, Town Clerk's Office, or Select Board.

To read the Town Meeting warrant (aka the agenda), or learn more about Town Meetings in general, visit the town website.

STATEMENTS OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION OF TOWN OFFICERS

Space in *Our Town* for campaign statements is available to all candidates, including known write-in candidates. Each is invited to submit a statement of no more than 125 words. Below are all statements that were received by this newsletter. The Town of Shutesbury does not endorse any candidate.

Tom Siefert, Select Board

I would be honored to be your next Select Board member. My husband and I value our community's natural beauty, welcoming residents, fast internet, and strong schools. However, Shutesbury faces significant revenue challenges.

I will advocate for increased state funding for schools and more compensation for protecting the Quabbin. Through long-term planning, we can keep Shutesbury affordable without over-relying on property taxes.

I bring deep local governance experience as an Associate Member of the Shutesbury Planning Board and the clerk for Wendell's health and planning boards. I have also served on three committees covering Lake Wyola.

I will tackle our town's challenges with thoughtfulness and dedication. Please check out tom4selectboard.com, and please vote on your ballot for "Thomas Siefert"!

Jim Walton, Select Board

I have the education, career background, and town government experience to make a meaningful impact.

My position on the Finance Committee has given me a solid understanding of how town government works, a clear picture of the challenges we face, and ideas on how to address them. I consider this a natural progression in my journey to serve a town that has been a great place for me over the past 15 years, and I'm eager to continue to serve.

I am committed to collaborative efforts and would welcome your insights on how to enhance the quality of life in our town. You can find more information at jim4selectboard.com. I ask for your support on election day or by mail-in ballot.

Garrett Simonsen, Board of Health

I have lived in Shutesbury since 2019 and have more than 20 years of experience helping health departments prepare for and respond to public health emergencies in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. During my two terms on the Board of Health, I worked with fellow members to support Shutesbury's response to COVID-19, keep residents informed, and coordinate with state agencies. I also served as co-chair of the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition. Community service is important to me, and I am seeking re-election to continue serving Shutesbury.

Anne Graham, Library Trustee

I am running for Shutesbury Public Library Trustee at a time when our new building is open and accessible to more people for more purposes. I am excited to participate in the

creation of policies to address the new space with possibilities for creative use of this community hub. I look forward to learning from fellow Trustees and the Library Director while contributing to the mission of the Shutesbury Public Library. My background as an academic librarian will provide relevant and alternative perspectives. I welcome the opportunity to work for our town as a member of the Library Board of Trustees.

Elizabeth Murphy, Library Trustee

I have served on the Library Trustees since September 2023 and have worked to help open the new Shutesbury Public Library (yay!), draft policies for the new library, and advocate for the needs of the library in our community. As a Library Trustee, I will continue to work to support the new library and represent the voice of parents with young children on our board. In addition to my work as a Library Trustee, I also assist the library as a founding member of the Turkey Trot committee. It would be my honor to continue serving as a member of the Board of Library Trustees. Please consider voting for me.

Michael DeChiara, Planning Board

I have lived in Shutesbury since 2002. I am running for re-election to the Planning Board. I see the role of the Board as balancing how Shutesbury looks and feels now with our vision for the future. I'd like our town to be a vital community for our current and future residents.

I have deep and broad town government experience—I have served Shutesbury for more than 20 years. I have been elected to the Select Board (3 years), School Committee (9 years), and Planning Board (6 years). I am Chair of the Energy and Climate Action Committee. I have served on the Zoning Board of Appeals, Web Committee, Broadband Committee and Community Preservation Committee. I appreciate your consideration and your vote.

Anna Heard, School Committee

I have served for three years on the Shutesbury School Committee and as the representative to the Regional School Committee. My focus has been on ensuring a high quality, equitable, and safe education for all students. I hope to see more improvements in how bullying is addressed and reductions in all kinds of bias within the districts. In addition, I am advocating for more funding from the state to support our schools. You may have seen me attending the Rural School Aid Action Event at Shutesbury Elementary School. I also spoke at a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education listening session in Greenfield and testified at a recent Ways and Means hearing for more state aid. I hope you will vote for me.

LIST OF OPEN SEATS FOR LOCAL ELECTION

Board of Health, 3 years (2)

Board of Library Trustees, 3 years (2)

Cemetery Commission, 3 years (1)

Constable, 2 years (1)

Municipal Light Plant Board, 3 years (1)

Planning Board, 3 years (3)

School Committee, 3 years (2)

Select Board, 3 years (1)

Town Clerk (1)

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Assistant Town Clerk: Jeannette Kiely 413-259-1204
townclerk@shutesbury.org www.shutesbury.org

Office Hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays 10am-3pm.

Hello Residents of Shutesbury! 2025/2026 has been a transitional year in the Town Clerk's Office. With the recent departure of previous Town Clerk, Grace Bannasch, Assistant Town Clerk Jeannette Kiely has been working hard to keep the Town Clerk's office going. At Special Town Meeting in September, 2025, a vote was taken to move forward with making the Town Clerk position appointed instead of being elected. The question will be presented again on May 9th for another vote to establish this policy. Lisa Stratford (Leverett's Town Clerk) and Grace Bannasch have been very generous with their time, helping Jeannette out in the office.

Remember to Turn In Your Street Listing!

By now, you all should have received a "street list" aka the annual town census. This year the forms are green. If you have not already returned your green street listing form to the Town Clerk Office, please remember to do so! If you do not return your street list before June 1, you will be "inactivated" as a voter, which means you may need to show ID next time you vote.

Very important:

INACTIVE VOTERS CAN STILL VOTE!

You just need to show ID and sign an affidavit affirming that you have maintained continuous residence in Shutesbury since June, 2025.

Dog Tags

To make sure your dog's license is up to date, check the tag: it should be orange and "2026" should appear at the top. You can get a new dog tag application at Town Hall or on the Town Clerk webpage.

Staying in the "know"

While visiting Shutesbury.org, remember to sign up for the **Town Announce mailing list!** This is the best way to receive important information and updates from town officials. If you think you have already signed up but have not been receiving emails recently, check your spam folder.

WHEN TO CONTACT THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Shutesbury Conservation Commission is a volunteer board that helps protect the town's wetlands, streams, forests, wildlife habitat, and water resources. The Commission administers state and local wetland regulations and works with residents to ensure that projects near sensitive natural areas are carried out in ways that protect Shutesbury's environment. In addition to reviewing permit applications, the Commission helps guide landowners through the process and answers questions about how conservation regulations apply to different types of projects.

If you are planning work on your property—such as construction, landscaping, tree cutting, driveway work, or other ground disturbance—and the project is near wetlands, streams, ponds, or within the 100-foot buffer area around them, it's a good idea to contact the Conservation Commission before getting started. Properties located along rivers and certain streams may also be subject to a 200-foot riverfront area setback with additional protections. Reaching out early can help determine whether permits or approvals may be needed and can prevent delays or avoid potential violations. Questions can be directed to the Land Use Clerk at 413-259-3792 or by email to the Commission at concom@shutesbury.org.

The Commission welcomes residents to attend its public meetings and encourages anyone with questions about conservation regulations or natural resource protection to get in touch. By checking in early and working together, residents and the Commission can help protect the natural landscapes and wildlife that make Shutesbury such a special place.

**2026 Annual Town Meeting
(and in-person voting
for Election of Officers)
Saturday, May 9**

SHUTESBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

We Are Open!

Together with neighbors and friends, family members, and elected officials, our community came together on January 10, 2026, to celebrate the grand opening of the Shutesbury Public Library. Just two months later, we've settled into this wonderful new space.

We continue to welcome new visitors every day and have already issued more than 60 new library cards. Programs are underway in the meeting room: Tales and Tunes, a weekly story time for young children and their caregivers offered in collaboration with the Union 28 Community Network for Children, meets most Wednesdays at 10 AM. Mahjong meets most Tuesdays from 3–5 PM, and Chair Yoga meets Fridays at 12:15 through May.

Children and families have been enjoying the children's room, where there is space to play or sit and read. Younger teens have been hanging out in the teen room, and older teens have been gathering in the study room to study! Adults have been planning informal gatherings with friends and neighbors and connecting as they browse the stacks.

The new space has filled so quickly and naturally with library materials and users that in many ways, it feels as though it has always been here. This is the library we have been waiting for and working toward for decades. And while we were working to build this welcoming new building, we were also building the community of library users who have now brought it to life.

A library is much more than a building. It is a gathering place where connections are made and nurtured, where children are celebrated and supported, and where equitable access to enriching resources is possible.

We look forward to continuing to grow our collection of materials, resources, and opportunities as we settle into this new space. We are also excited to see what unexpected possibilities unfold as we work together with our community to create the library of our future.

Currently, we are open seven days a week during the same hours we were open in the M.N. Spear Memorial Library:

Sunday – 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Monday – 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM, 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Tuesday – 3:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Wednesday – 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM, 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Thursday – 3:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Friday – 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Saturday – 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Explore the New Shutesbury Public Library Website!

Along with a new library, we have a new website, shutesburypubliclibrary.org. The website offers up-to-date information about library services, programs, and resources. The site includes links to the library catalog, digital resources, current hours, contact information, and details about getting a library card, as well as a calendar of upcoming events for all ages. Spend some time exploring the website – you might learn something new about the library!



Scan the QR code to visit the new website!

Take Our Library Survey!

The Shutesbury Public Library is gathering community input to guide our long-range plan and shape library services and programs for the years ahead. Your feedback will help us better understand what our community needs and how the library can best serve everyone.

This short survey takes about 5 minutes to complete, and all responses are anonymous.

Thank you for taking a moment to share your thoughts and help us build a strong future for your library!

Scan the QR code or visit shutesburypubliclibrary.org, click the ABOUT tab, and choose Community Needs Assessment to find the survey.



Stay Connected with the Library!

The Library is offering many new programs and services in our new space. Each week brings a variety of opportunities to connect and learn—arts and crafts, concerts, storytime, yoga, and more. There are many ways to stay up to date with what's happening at the Shutesbury Public Library:

- Visit our website: shutesburypubliclibrary.org
- Subscribe to the Town Announce Email List to receive the weekly Shutesbury Library News newsletter (find the sign-up link on the homepage of shutesbury.org)
- Sign up for the Wowbrary newsletter for weekly updates on new materials and upcoming programs (find the sign-up link under the Digital Resources Tab on shutesburypubliclibrary.org)
- Like and follow the Shutesbury Public Library on Facebook

Roadtown Turkey Trot

Save the Date: Saturday, November 21, 2026

The Roadtown Turkey Trot, a beloved Shutesbury tradition supporting the new library, returns for its fourth year! Registration opens in July. The 5K begins on Leverett Road and winds through Shutesbury's hilly roads, finishing with a big downhill at Shutesbury Elementary School. A Kids Fun Run on the track lets younger racers join in, followed by prizes, refreshments, and a Thanksgiving-themed raffle. Visit roadtown.org for more information

LIBRARY BUILDING COMMITTEE

We Did It! The new Shutesbury Public Library held its grand opening on January 10th. It has been an exciting year to watch this project develop. We hope all our residents will share in the use of this new facility. Though the building is open and functioning, our work is not complete. We look forward to the spring to establish landscaping on the property. We will be looking for volunteers to help with the planting.

Thank you to everyone who encouraged us, volunteered money and time, and motivated the project. We are delighted with the outcome.

COUNCIL ON AGING

The council is a town committee (Shutesbury.org/coa) that also reports to the State Executive Office of Aging and Independence and serves Shutesbury residents age 60 and over, along with their families and caregivers. If you have ideas about additional programs that the council might offer, please share them either by email (councilonaging@shutesbury.org) or by attending a zoom meeting, 2nd Wednesday of each month, 5:30 – 7:00 PM.

Current Council on Aging Activities

Community Potluck Lunch

This event, held at noon on the first Tuesday of each month in the Senior Lounge at Shutesbury Town Hall, is open to all ages. Bring a dish to share or simply come as you are. You'll be warmly welcomed. It's a chance to meet, greet, and eat together, building connections that make our community strong.

Physical Fitness Classes

The COA supports free yoga and strength training classes provided by Shutesbury Public Library. Shutesbury's classes, especially aimed at seniors, but open to people of any age, are offered on zoom. Contact the Shutesbury Library Director for the link(s).

Footcare Clinic

Foot care services are currently provided by Nurse Simone, an experienced LPN with a certification in footcare, and include foot massages, toenail clipping, and help with problems such as bunions. The clinic takes place in Town Hall's Senior Lounge, on the third Wednesday of every month, from 9 AM to 2 or 3 PM. To sign up for a 25- to 30- minute session, contact the Council on Aging by phone 413-259-3796 or email councilonaging@shutesbury.org. We ask that you contribute what you can to enable the COA to continue to present the Clinic.

Computer Help

This Spring, the COA and the Broadband Committee have been presenting a monthly series of Tech Talks on fourth Wednesday afternoons, from 12:30 to 2 PM in the downstairs meeting room at Town Hall. The instructor, Barbara Friedman, is generous in spending time on all questions, whether or not they are on the day's topic.

You should also know about:

Free Rides

Franklin County Regional Transit Authority (FRTA)'s Demand-Response Service provides free transportation anywhere in Franklin County to those over 60. Get information and the initial application by calling 413-774-2262 or download at frta.org. Visit frta.org/getting-around/demand-response/ or call for details.

Village Neighbors also provides free rides throughout the area to its members. To learn more about becoming a member, go to www.villageneighbors.org or call 413-345-6894 ext.2

Neighborhood Aging and Dementia Support Initiative.

Village Neighbors (VN) originated the idea, but the Shutesbury COA, like the COAs of the other three Founding Towns of VN (Leverett, Wendell, and New Salem), is fully involved in its on-going programs, which include informational programs on brain health and toolkits with ideas and activities for those dealing with memory loss and their caregivers as well as monthly memory cafes. These programs rotate among the four towns. With the new Library available, Shutesbury will host its share of programs.

Did you know *Our Town* is available online?

A digital version with clickable hyperlinks and color photos can be accessed on the home page of www.shutesbury.org

ASSESSORS' OFFICE

Staff: Administrative Assessor: John "Jay" Whelihan. Board of Assessors: Howard Shpetner (Chair), April Stein, George Arvanitis. Office Clerk: Leslie Bracebridge. (413)259-3790, assessor@shutesbury.org

Hours: Mon & Tues. 11 AM–3 PM, Wed. 10 AM–Noon. Call ahead to confirm that someone will be in the office or to make an appointment outside of regular office hours.

The Assessors' Department web page at www.shutesbury.org offers maps, applications, guidelines, values, and more.

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) regulates and monitors Assessors' tasks in keeping with statutes. Independent town audits are conducted periodically.

Assessors' Articles on the May 9, 2026, Annual Town Meeting Warrant:

1. Does the town wish to renew the Means-Tested Exemption option for another three years?
2. Does the town wish to increase the minimum personal property value of \$1500, as established in 2001, to \$6500 to align with current property values?

Forms of Lists for second home and small business owners:

Statute requires owners to annually report the values of personal property on a Form of List, and Assessors to estimate values if a Form of List is not submitted. Please contact the Assessors if you own a second home or run a small business in Shutesbury, and did not meet the March 1 Form of List deadline.

New Growth and Cyclical Inspections:

The DOR tasks Assessors with identifying and valuing all new construction and continuously conducting 10-year "cyclical" inspections, including exterior photos of all properties, in order to maintain an up-to-date property database. Updates to the database allow for proportionate valuations and taxation. You might see a vehicle with the town seal on a magnetic sign passing slowly through your neighborhood, which might stop for photos or measurements. Your input is welcome and heeded.

Exemptions:

Exemption applications and guidelines are available on the webpage for low-income seniors, seniors who qualify for the Circuit Breaker Credit on their Massachusetts Income Tax, blind citizens, and veterans with 10% or more disability. The Means-Tested applications are due August 31st each year. All others are due on April 1st. For information about exemption eligibility, or to request an application, contact the Assessors' office.

Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B:

Renewal applications for the ten-year Ch 61 and annual Ch 61A and Ch 61B land classification status will be mailed out in the summer. Applications are due in the Assessors' office no later than December 1; earlier is better. Land owners who wish to change their Chapter 61 status should contact the Assessors' office for instructions.

Motor Vehicle Excise:

Massachusetts cities and towns receive excise tax billing data from the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). Therefore, it is important that motor vehicle owners go to the RMV website or otherwise contact the RMV within 30 days of moving, to update the address on their drivers' licenses, their mailing addresses, and the place of garaging on their vehicle registrations. The excise tax rate is \$25 per \$1,000 of vehicle valuation across Massachusetts. Vehicle values are based on the manufacturers' list prices in the year of manufacture, and drop and stay at 10% of that value by the 5th and subsequent years. The condition of a vehicle is not considered in its value.

NOTE FROM THE TOWN COLLECTOR

Dear Shutesbury taxpayers,

Happy spring! Now that the warmer weather is approaching, we are nearly at the end of fiscal 2026 and the Town Meeting for fiscal 2027.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you are sending your tax payments to the Woburn address (the lockbox), it is very important that you send the TOP section of the tax bills with your payment, Sending the incorrect portion of the bill results in a delay of recording your payment because the coding is missing and the lockbox can't handle your payment. If you want a receipt, please send the entire bill (the top and bottom sections) with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Please do NOT send mailings to other town departments in the envelope that is provided for sending tax payments to the Woburn address. The town has to pay a fee of \$3.00 plus postage for resending these documents to Shutesbury.

Always open all envelopes you receive from this office immediately upon receipt. The bill you think is a real estate bill (and paid by your bank) may be an excise tax bill for which you are responsible.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

If you use on-line banking from your bank (not the Town's system), PLEASE change the mailing address to Town Collector, PO Box 175, Shutesbury, MA 01072-0175. Please make sure the memo information is correct and does not reflect information from previous payments (i.e.: listing real estate or excise bill numbers from previous years or an incorrect type of bill). Since your bill payment is NOT an automatic transfer into the Town's bank account, you must plan accordingly when authorizing the payment. DO NOT set up the payment on the due date as it won't get to the Town until almost a week later which will result in fees and interest.

If you are having financial difficulty paying your real estate bills, please contact me to arrange a payment plan.

Don't forget to contact the Board of Assessors if you no longer have a vehicle on which you have received a motor vehicle excise tax bill. All bills must be paid in full BEFORE you apply for the abatement; otherwise the bill becomes overdue with additional fees and interest. These must be paid along with any outstanding balance due on the bill after abatement.

Be sure to notify this office if you permanently change your mailing address to avoid a delay in delivery of your mail which is returned to me for forwarding. This can take as much as three weeks which reduces the time you have to pay the bill on time. I am glad to forward bills if you are temporarily away; however, I must know this is the situation before you leave to avoid the bills being returned as "temporarily away" by the post office which delays delivery to you.

Should a demand bill be issued on a motor vehicle excise tax, the law provides 14 days for receipt of payment before a warrant for collection is issued to the Deputy Collector. This results in at least \$22.00 in additional fees. Upon mailing of the demand bills, payment of the original bill will NOT be accepted and checks made out in the incorrect amount WILL be returned to the sender.

Some of you have been unable to pay your bills on-line. If the bill is on warrant, it cannot be paid on-line except through the Deputy Collector's office, which can be reached during business hours at 413-527-2388.

My office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 AM to Noon and Thursday from 9:00–11:00 AM. If you call (413 259-1615) during these hours and I don't answer, please leave a message: I'm either on the telephone or have stepped out of the office. Have a good spring and stay healthy.

Ellen McKay, Town Collector

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a state law authorizing towns to raise local funds for historic preservation, open space, recreation, and affordable housing projects. In FY25, those funds were raised through a surcharge of \$5.83 per month for the average Shutesbury homeowner. Since 2011, Shutesbury voters have used that money to award 23 CPA grants, amounting to over \$538,400 in CPA funding and millions more in matching funding. In addition, to date Shutesbury has received \$197,560 from the Commonwealth's Community Preservation Trust Fund—in other words, the state has paid 37% of the cost of Shutesbury's CPA projects.

Shutesbury currently has approximately \$484,000 in total CPA funding—\$25,268 for Historic Resources, \$10,338 for Open Space and Recreation, \$62,753 for Community Housing, \$35,000 in the Budgeted Reserve, and \$350,972 in the Undesignated Fund, which can be used for projects in any category. The Town also sets aside \$2,500 of CPA funds each year for the operational costs of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), including printing, consultants, and membership in the Community Preservation Coalition.

The CPC is the town committee charged with evaluating and recommending to Town Meeting projects seeking to use these funds. Every fall, the Committee determines whether proposed projects are eligible according to the law. In the spring, the Committee reviews full applications to determine whether they align with the criteria and priorities in the Town's Community Preservation Plan. It is then up to Town Meeting to decide whether to award grants to the recommended projects.

In FY26, Shutesbury's CPC members were Rita Farrell (affordable housing), Henry Geddes (Historical Commission), Allen Hanson (performing the duties of a Board of Park Commissioners), Matteo Pangallo (at-large community representative and chair of the Committee), Elaine Puleo (Open Space and Recreation Committees), Clif Read (Planning Board), and Beth Willson (Conservation Commission). Committee members serve one-year terms and are appointed by the Select Board.

This year, the CPC received four Determinations of Eligibility, one of which was withdrawn and three that the Committee approved as eligible for CPA funding. The Committee received five Grant Applications, one of which was withdrawn by the applicant and one tabled by the Committee. The other three, which will be presented to Annual Town Meeting in 2026, are:

- Regional Affordable Housing Coordinator (submitted by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments for \$5,000 in community housing funds)
- Elliott Park Structures Project (submitted by the Elliott Park Committee for \$9,000 in open space/recreation funds)

continued on next page

Community Preservation Committee *continued*

- South Brook Conservation Area Expansion (submitted by the Conservation Commission for \$89,000 in open space/recreation funds and community housing funds).

Full grant applications for all three projects are available on the CPC website at shutesbury.org/community_preservation.

In addition to these grant requests, the CPC will be presenting two articles to Annual Town Meeting regarding routine administrative matters and, at the request of the Recreation Committee, an article to rescind the 2021 CPA grant of \$20,000 in open space/recreation funding awarded to the Recreation Committee for a community garden project.

In operational news, the Committee voted this year to end the practice of requiring physical copies of Determination of Eligibility applications and Grant Applications. As part of its annual update to the Community Preservation Plan, the Committee also adopted “Guidelines for Shutesbury CPA Funding Recipients,” outlining the six steps grant recipients need to follow after Town Meeting awards funding.

To read the town’s Community Preservation Plan or for more information about the CPC, how to apply for a CPA grant, or the history of past CPA-funded projects in Shutesbury, visit shutesbury.org/community_preservation.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

The members of the Recreation Committee are deeply saddened by the death of Christine Robinson, a long-time and engaged member of the Committee. She organized the popular annual Night Sky events led by Tom Schieding. Dedicated to providing opportunities to children who want to ice skate, she acquired coupons that made skates more affordable. Christine was a talented knitter, one of the anchors of the Stitch-Ins, and was generous with her time and with her knitting needles and yarn! Christine lent her support to as many of the events as she could, whether making trips to pick up oranges and water for a Family Fun Day or acting as a sweeper on educational walks.

While we will miss her, her sense of adventure and her humor leave us with memories that will be told and savored many times over. This article will describe some of the activities that the Recreation Committee has organized. Know that Christine had a part in all of these.

Upcoming Activities

All events are free. If you have questions, please email us at recreation@shutesbury.org.

Monthly Hiking Meet-Ups (co-sponsored with the Conservation Committee)

Community hikes give residents the opportunity to explore

Shutesbury’s extensive network of trails and conservation lands while enjoying time outdoors with neighbors. The hike in May will be on Sunday, May 31, at 1 PM on Freeman Road. Watch for a Town-wide email with information about this and future hikes.

If you have suggestions for other hikes, please let us know (recreation@shutesbury.org).

Stitch-ins (co-sponsored with the Shutesbury Public Library)

Whether you knit, crochet, darn, needlepoint, embroider, or do any other type of stitching, or are just curious, you are welcome to participate! **Drop in between 9 and 11 at the library on Sundays, March 29, April 19, May 3, May 17, and May 31.**

Spring Bike Repairs and Tune-ups

Get your bike ready for summer! Local bike enthusiasts will be on hand **Sunday, May 17, 9-11 at the Shutesbury Elementary School** to help tune up your ride—**free of charge**. Whether your bike has been sitting all winter or just needs a quick check, stop by and get rolling again.

There will also be a **Bike Swap**—bring an old bike to drop off or see if there’s one that fits your needs better.

Kids are invited to join a **fun bike ride around the parking lot** to kick off the day!

Soccer Club (check town-wide email for start date)

This casual soccer meet-up is open to ages 3 to 10 and takes place on Sundays in the fall and spring from 9-10 AM at the Shutesbury Elementary School. Just show up! It is completely free, no registration required. Questions? Reach out to us at recreation@shutesbury.org

Past & Future Events

This fiscal year the Recreation committee has sponsored an Improv Workshop, a Trivia Night, a Night Sky Event, and a walk exploring the geology of Shutesbury as well as hike meet-ups and Stitch-Ins.

The Recreation Committee looks forward to building on this year’s successes by continuing to offer outdoor activities, creative gatherings, and family-friendly recreation opportunities.

The committee is grateful to the many volunteers, partners, and residents whose enthusiasm and support make these activities possible. Their participation helps ensure that recreation programs remain a vibrant and valued part of the Shutesbury community.

Diane Adams, Barbara Bigelow (co-chair), Ann Brigham, Jessica Carlson-Belanger, Annie Gagliardi, Christine Marglin, Elaine Puleo, Sam Spisiak (co-chair)

MLP/BROADBAND

The routers installed during ShutesburyNET's original build-out in 2019 are beginning to reach the end of their useful life. We are currently exploring plans to replace residents' routers later this year, with the goal of finding a model with good performance speed, ease of use, reliability, and security. As plans develop, we will reach out directly to all ShutesburyNET subscribers with more details about timing and next steps.

We also want to make sure ShutesburyNET remains affordable for everyone in our community. If the cost of broadband service is a challenge, assistance programs are available that can help reduce monthly internet costs to under \$40. To learn more about eligibility and how to apply, please visit: www.shutesbury.org/broadband/lifeline

We'd like to give a huge thanks to Graeme Sephton, who is retiring from the Board after twelve years of volunteer service. As a UMass network engineer, Graeme provided invaluable expertise during the early phases of Shutesbury's fiber network planning and build-out, and in recent years Graeme managed the town network electronics hut. His consistency, dedication, and generosity of time as well as good humor has been a gift to the MLP Board and he will be missed. Happy retirement, Graeme!

CEMETERY COMMISSION

The Cemetery Commission is responsible for the management and administration of Shutesbury's three cemeteries. Most of the town's burials are in the West Cemetery on Leverett Road, but we have two smaller (and older) cemeteries, one on Pratt Corner Road, the other often called Locks Village Cemetery, because it was mainly used by people who lived near Locks Pond (now Lake Wyola); all three still have space for burials.

Our responsibilities include selling burial lots, in whole or parts. You buy the right to be buried in a particular space; the Town continues to own the land itself. To buy a lot, contact the Commission Chair, Walter Tibbetts, at cemetery@shutesbury.org to choose a site, either in the conventional or green burial section. Gravestones are purchased from their makers, but the commission ensures that they are installed in the correct space. Burial is reserved for those who live in Shutesbury or have family or other connections to the Town: It's our responsibility to ensure that space remains for Shutesbury residents to be buried here for years to come.

Care for the appearance and health of the cemeteries is our responsibility. The commission would like to hire someone(s) to tend the smaller cemeteries; if you are interested, email us at cemetery@shutesbury.org. The commission employs an excellent groundskeeper, aided by Walter Tibbetts, to take care of West Cemetery – grounds, equipment, and the Hearse House and Crypt. The Crypt is on

the north side of Leverett Road, roughly across from the Hearse House, and is where those to be buried used to be kept in the winter until the frost melted and graves could be dug; nowadays bodies are refrigerated at a funeral home. The Hearse House was used to store the horse-drawn hearse. With the help of a CPA grant it was restored by a professional restoration firm, using as much of the original wood as possible and repainting it its original color.

We have also received CPA grants to restore many older gravestones, especially in the northeastern quarter of the West Cemetery, which were discolored with mold, had fallen off their bases, or were broken. A professional restoration firm, Historic Gravestone Services, did the work.

Another recent project was a ground-penetrating radar survey to identify whether lots marked "unknown" in old documents were indeed empty—in which case they were plots which could be used for burials. To our surprise, most were occupied. The project also gave us accurate maps of the burials in the cemetery, which we had not had before.

We continue to develop guidelines for use of the cemeteries, including for family-managed burials. Regulations for conventional and natural (or green) burials can be found at shutesbury.org/cemetery-commission.) Guidelines already exist for those who wish to bury ashes (cremains) themselves. Burials on private property are in the purview of the Board of Health.

Our Town Newsletter Policy

Adopted by the Shutesbury Select Board
December 23, 2019

Our Town is supported by tax dollars. We welcome news from Town of Shutesbury departments, boards, and committees, and from individuals and groups about local community projects, activities, or special events of benefit to our community. Submissions must be strictly secular and nonpartisan and are subject to review, revision, and/or non-acceptance by the editorial board of the newsletter. Submissions promoting the sale of goods and services for private profit cannot be accepted. Appeals to any review decisions can be brought to the Select Board for further discussion.

Brennan Mailloux, Catherine Hilton, Christi Payne
Newsletter co-editors

PRINTED ON RECYCLED STOCK
30% POST CONSUMER WASTE





The Valley Health Regional Collaborative (VHRC) Public Health Nurse, Sarah Fiske, has been promoting population health to Shutesbury residents since 2023. Services include communicable and infectious disease monitoring and control, community health promotion and education, seasonal vaccine administration, injury prevention training, self-management of chronic disease initiatives, new mother-child wellness visits, wellness checks, home visits and individual health consultation, resource allocation and more.

In addition, Sarah has partnered with the American Heart Association (AHA) to lend blood pressure cuffs, for self-monitoring purposes to community members. This initiative helps individuals monitor and identify blood pressure changes outside their regular scheduled doctors office visits. Prompt recognition of elevated or changes in blood pressure, help providers initiate lifestyle changes or medications in a more timely manner. She is also working with the Teaching Kitchen's of UMass Amherst's College of Nursing to deliver plant-based cooking education and hands-on classes to promote health and wellness through nutrition to community members in a variety of ways.

Specific programs available FREE of charge include the following:

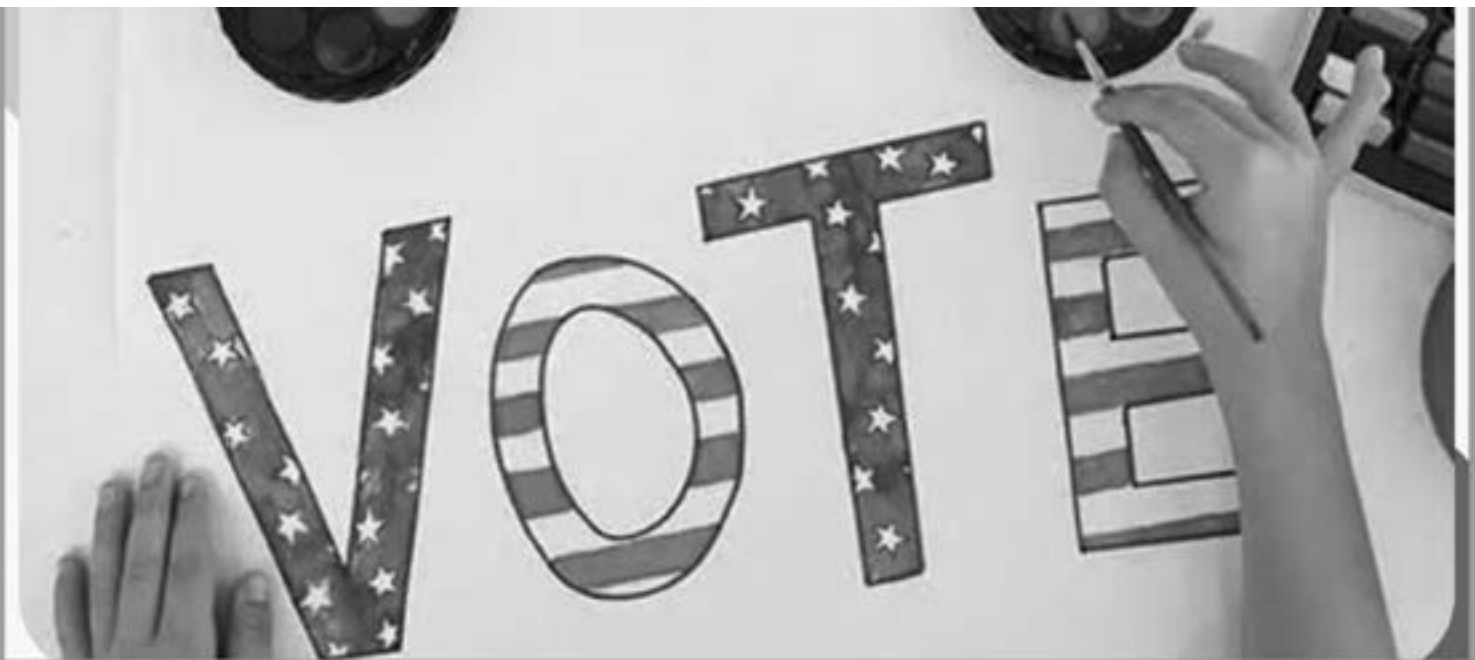
- **Mobility Device Lending Program:** Walkers, canes, crutches, elevated toilet seat, shower chair etc. available to borrow
- **Blood Pressure Cuffs in Motion:** Blood pressure cuffs available to borrow for up to 2 weeks
- **New Mother-baby Wellness Program:** New mothers receive one home visit and welcome bag with supplies and resources to promote health and reduce risks within their babies first year of life
- **Community Health Education Classes:** Tick talks, winter and summer safety sessions, and education on high blood pressure, stroke, seasonal affective disorder, bladder health, and much more
- **Plant-based Education and Cooking classes:** Plant-based education and hands-on cooking classes
- **Individual Health Consultation (by appointment only):** Review medical history, current medications, medical concerns, and monitor blood pressure. Consultation includes medical advocacy strategies, resources, and linkage with care. It does not include prescriptions, medical interventions, diagnosing or ordering tests (e.g., lab work, XRay, CT, MRI etc.). It may include a home safety visit or wellness check if necessary
- **Injury Prevention Classes:** Narcan Trainings, Stop-the-Bleed training

Coming soon: Individual Falls Risk Assessment program. This assessment follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries (**STEADI**) initiative, focusing on three core elements: **Screen, Assess, and Intervene** to reduce fall risk. During the 1 hour appointment, medical history and medications will be reviewed and three short tests, evaluating balance, strength and mental cognition, will be administered. Recommendations and resources for fall prevention strategies will be provided.

Contact: Sarah Fiske, PhD, RN, CNL

Email: Sarah.fiske@vhrcare.org

Office Hours: Fridays, Town Hall, by appointment when available



SHUTESBURY ANNUAL TOWN MEETING LITTLE VOTERS LOUNGE

Professional, on-site childcare made available during
Shutesbury Annual Town Meeting
Saturday, May 9th from 9AM to 1PM

Staffed by teachers from the Moose Lodge
Shutesbury Elementary's after school program

Located in the library and courtyard of
Shutesbury Elementary School



Funded with a gift from Shutesbury's Community Policing Fund



**Making participation in your local democratic process more accessible and equitable
for every family**

Free childcare
available from
9AM-1PM

Register Now!

moderator@shutesbury.org

413-687-0525

Registration closes May 2nd

Available for
children ages 3+

(Must be toilet trained)



TOWN OF SHUTESBURY
 P.O. Box 276
 SHUTESBURY MA 01072

Return Service Requested

Prsrt Std
 US Postage
 PAID
 Permit 65
 Amherst MA

**2026 Annual Town Meeting
 (and in-person voting
 for Election of Officers)
 Saturday, May 9**

**Current Resident
 Shutesbury MA 01072**

HOW TO CONTACT TOWN OFFICIALS

Go to www.shutesbury.org to find email addresses, or call the appropriate number below.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| ACCOUNTANT Gail Weiss 413-259-1108 | EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR Leonard Czerwonka 413-259-1211 | POLICE DEPARTMENT Devon Pelletier, Chief 413-259-1279 |
| ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Brennan Mailloux 413-259-6550 | ENERGY & CLIMATE ACTION COMM. Michael DeChiara, Chair 413-259-1059 | Dispatch 413-625-8200 |
| TOWN ADMINISTRATOR Hayley Bolton | FINANCE COMMITTEE Ajay Khashu, Chair | PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE Sarah Fiske 413-531-0657 |
| ANIMAL CONTROL FCSO Regional Animal Control 413-259-1214 | FIRE DEPARTMENT 917-582-4256 Leonard Czerwonka, Chief 413-259-1211 | RECREATION COMMITTEE Barbara Bigelow, Chair 413-801-9714 |
| ASSESSORS 413-774-7340 | HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT David Grenier 413-259-1215 | RECYCLING COORDINATOR Meryl Mandell 413-259-1282 |
| BOARD OF HEALTH Catherine Hilton, Chair 413-259-2122 | HISTORICAL COMMISSION Henry Geddes 413-259-1214 | REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE Anna Heard 413-406-2757 |
| BUILDINGS COMMITTEE Frank McGinn 401-226-1830 | LAKE WYOLA ADVISORY COMMITTEE Mark Rivers, Chair 508-259-0972 | SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE Jeremy Mailloux, Chair 413-259-1212 |
| BUILDING INSPECTOR Jim Hawkins 413-774-3167 x113 | LAND USE CLERK Matteo Pangallo 413-259-3792 | UNION #28 SCHOOL SUPT. Shannon White-Cleveland 413-423-3337 |
| CEMETERY COMMISSION Walter Tibbetts 413-259-1286 | SHUTESBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY Mary Anne Antonellis 413-259-1213 | SELECT BOARD Rita Farrell 413-259-1297 |
| COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMM. Matteo Pangallo, Chair 413-687-0402 | SPEAR LIBRARY TRUSTEES Kate Cell, Co-Chair 413-259-9129 | Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil 413-256-0312 |
| COUNCIL ON AGING For general inquires and details on Foot Clinic, leave message 413-259-3796 | OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE Leave inquires at 413-259-1214 | Eric Stocker 413-259-1250 |
| CONSERVATION COMMISSION Beth Willson 413-259-3792 | PERSONNEL BOARD Leave inquiries at 413-259-1214 | SHUTESBURY BROADBAND COMMITTEE Gayle Huntress, Chair |
| CULTURAL COUNCIL Cara Brostrom 413-256-6871 | PLANNING BOARD Nathan Murphy, Chair 413-341-0140 | TOWN COLLECTOR Ellen McKay 413-259-1615 |
| DEPT. OF VETERANS' SERVICES Christopher Demars 413-772-1571 | PLUMBING/GAS INSPECTOR Andy French 413-774-3167 x112 | TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE 413-259-1204 |
| ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR Maurice Gregoire 413-253-7505 | | TOWN MODERATOR Nettie Harrington Pangallo 413-259-1556 |
| ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Anne Magill, Principal 413-259-1212 | | TREASURER Ryan W. Mailloux 413-259-1801 |
| | | TREE WARDEN Dave Grenier 413-259-1215 |
| | | WEB COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE Gail Fleischaker, Chair 413-253-0565 |
| | | ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS Matteo Pangallo 413-259-3792 |

**EMERGENCY POLICE, FIRE,
 & RESCUE SQUAD 911**