

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2025 Hybrid 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, Gail Fleischaker, Miriam DeFant, James Fitzgerald, Leslie Bracebridge.

Makepeace-O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 9:32am

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: Miriam DeFant shared that she has a letter that has received 43 signatures from Shutesbury residents, with many more she believes in support, requesting the Select Board to adopt a resolution supporting democracy, the US Constitution, and the rule of law. This resolution would have our local government signal loudly to the community and our elected state and federal representatives that we do not support authoritarianism, and that we expect courageous actions from our congressional delegation. This resolution was submitted in honor of our upcoming Constitution Day on September 17th.

General Business:

1. Review and accept Nathaniel Masse's Letter of Resignation as a Part-Time Patrol Officer:

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to accept Nathaniel Masse's Letter of Resignation as a Part-Time Patrol Officer, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

2. Review and accept Grace Bannasch's Letter of Resignation as Town Clerk:

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to accept Grace Bannasch's Letter of Resignation as Town Clerk, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

3. Discussion of Town Clerk position:

- a. Bolton gave a presentation on the Town Clerk position. She shared that she would like to see us transition to an appointed role. She stated it would allow for better stability and make it easier for succession planning which is crucial to the position long-term.
- b. Bolton shared the pros and cons of the position being appointed and elected. As it stands elected, you have direct accountability to the voters. Appointed, the Town Clerk would be integrated into town government. Elected is solely in-town

residents, where appointed would allow for a much larger pool of individuals to draw from.

- c. Bolton shared to make this happen a Warrant Article would be put forth and then it would be voted on at the upcoming Special Town Meeting.
- d. The Town Clerk position will be filled in by Leverett's Town Clerk as an Interim.

4. Review and vote on Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 1 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 2 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 3 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 4 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 5 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 6 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 7 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 8 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 9 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 10 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 11 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 12 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to approve article 13 as worded, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

5. Appointments for Police Chief Search Committee:
- a. Bolton shared the process entailed drafting a Charge with a panel consisting of a Town Administrator (non-voting), a Select Board member, Personnel Board member, Council on Aging member, Police Chief, and three community members.
 - b. Bolton shared there were 11 candidates with all different backgrounds including policing, law, town service, and other public safety experience.
 - c. Bolton shared there was a central theme among the candidates to find a police chief who deeply understands and is a good fit for the town's rural community. Several applicants had highlighted past hiring dissatisfaction and the need for a leader who can rebuild trust and perform community policing with a focus on mental health.
 - d. Bolton recommended the 3 following candidates out of the pool: Andrew Reagan, John Hersey, and Kelly Searcy to act as the 3 community members on the panel of the committee.
 - e. Bolton shared Kathy Salvador will replace April Stein for the Personnel Committee, so her appointment will be added to the 9/15/25 Select Board Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Town Administrator Hayley Bolton to the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Mary Jo Johnson to the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil to the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: abstained; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Amherst Police Chief, Gabriel Ting to the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint community member Andrew Reagan to the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint community member Kelly Searcy to the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint community member John Hersey to the Police Chief Search Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

6. Appointments for M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee:

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Rita Farrell to the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: abstained, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Susie Mosher to the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Mary Jo Johnson to the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Paul Lyons to the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to appoint Stephen Dallmus to the M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

7. Town Administrator Report:

- a. Bolton shared it is almost her six-month mark (October 7th) and that it is moving very quickly. She proposed an evaluation form for herself so that she can gather feedback on her performance so far.
- b. Bolton discussed a \$41, 325 grant the Town has received for repairs to the Lake Wyola Dam as part of a larger distribution for dam and coastal infrastructure repairs.

8. Meeting adjourned at 10:50am

VOTE: Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:50am, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Farrell: aye, Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil aye; motion carries.

Administrative Actions:

1. Select Board to review Finance Committee's information sheet on budget articles before the Special Town Meeting.
2. Bolton to meet with Land Use Clerk and go over their salary.
3. Select Board to discuss Article 13's proposed Fall Meeting Date
4. Mailloux to add Kathy Salvador's Personnel Board appointment to the Police Chief Search Committee on the 9/15/25 Select Board Agenda.
5. Select Board to complete Hayley Bolton's six-month Performance Evaluation Form.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. Grace Bannasch's Letter of Resignation
2. Nathaniel Masse's Letter of Resignation
3. Appointment Letters for M.N. Spear Library Reuse Committee
4. Appointment Letters for Police Chief Search Committee
5. September Special Town Meeting Warrant MASTER

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

** A full version of the 9/5/25 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yotM8SDnp7k>

