

TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 18, 2023
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CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectman Wendy Mackstutis; Deputy First Selectman Steven Antonio; Board members Curtis Looney, Heather Goetz, Diana Yeisley and Kevin Beal. Others in attendance included: Interim Town Manager Lee C. Erdmann; Acting Deputy Town Manager Tom Fitzgerald; Attorney Bob DeCrescenzo; Police Chief Nicholas Boulter, and other interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Participants can address the Board of Selectmen in person at the meeting**
- **Email townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov by noon Monday, December 18, 2023, to register to address the Board of Selectmen live through Zoom**
- **Written comments can be emailed to townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov. Written comments will not be read into the record, but forwarded to all Selectmen via email**

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Ms. Mackstutis read a statement about the new meeting rules and procedures which were adopted at the December 4th meeting. She noted that Attorney DeCrescenzo stated that any issues with staff or Department heads should be brought before the Town Manager not the Board of Selectmen. The speaker could copy their complaint to the Board if they would like to. She said any issues with the Town Manager should be brought before the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Mackstutis said she wants the public to feel comfortable to come before the Board to share their views. The Board has an open mind and want to do what's best for the community and staff. She asked that everyone support the decorum standards. She said the Board has the right to curtail any speaker if they don't follow these rules.

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, spoke about the Charter Revisions Commission last updated the Charter in 2016 and more updates should be made. She also spoke about the First Selectman's stipend; mission statements; Board of Education candidates; the Police Commission; Memo of Understandings; Term limits; Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance that should not be supported by taxpayers; FOI requests; the Board of Education budget; and other issues. (Ms. Mackstutis did try to stop Ms. Coe, but she didn't cooperate).

Chief Boulter spoke about the Police Department Records Division by saying they serve many purposes for the Department, the Town government, and the community. They collect data and statics for the Department, State and Federal Agencies. They house and distribute public records and pursuant to CT law these records are public records. The law just requires the release of public records. These employees have access to sensitive and personal information and do a tremendous job. They are not trained to discuss open or closed cases or investigations. They are professionals who will not discuss records with the public. They process the requests for records as promptly as possible for anyone. The Chief said he would be happy to discuss any issues with residents.

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

Ms. Mackstutis, First Selectman, reviewed her First Selectman's report.

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TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Erdmann, Interim Town Manager, reviewed his Town Manager’s report.

SELECTMAN LIAISON AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel – Ms. Mackstutis said the new Personnel Sub-Committee met this morning and they discussed the RFP for the labor counsel. It just needs further review before it goes out. They also confirmed the HR classifications and contracts that will go out this week.

a) Finance – there was no report at this time.

b) Public Safety – Ms. Goetz said the ambulance co. is doing a collection for dogs and pets from 12/15/23 to 1/15/24. There is also an EMT class beginning January 9, 2024.

c) Board of Education – Ms. Yeisley said the Board will add a special education task force meeting in January 2024. They reviewed new curriculum, on a trial basis, for K-5 reading. This requires changes from the State and it is now a new mandate. Simsbury public schools received a waiver for this. They elected a new chairman, vice-chairman and secretary. They projected a 2% increase in enrollment per year. They also had a new math curriculum presentation.

Mr. Beal said he attended the Sustainability Committee. Mr. Scully sent the Board of Selectmen a message with the concerns on interoperability among government functions and support of a sustainability coordinator position that would bridge that gap with sustainability concerns for the plant and buildings.

Ms. Yeisley said she attended the Parks and Recreation meeting, and they went over the past year at the golf course along with their numbers. They said the irrigation project was on target and it went well. She said they had a 10-year OSHA inspection that had a few things to address. The next thing on their agenda includes a car-path and drainage projects. Overall, they had a great year even with weather issues.

Ms. Yeisley said she attended the Youth Services Advisory Board meeting, and they welcomed the new Henry James SRO. She said the Police and cadets enjoyed being at Simsbury Celebrates.

Ms. Yeisley said Social Services is supporting 50 families for the holidays and they are also working on energy assistance. There was a student report stating they are looking for more support for the college application process and financial aid.

Ms. Yeisley said Aging and Disabilities Santa event served 56 attendees and it was a great time.

Mr. Antonio said Simsbury Main Street had two members that resigned. They also discussed some grant writing.

Ms. Mackstutis said the Finance Sub-Committee has not met yet, but they hope to meet in early 2024 to set some goals.

Ms. Goetz said she attended the Retirement Committee where they gave an investment return update.

Ms. Goetz said Public Works is putting out wooden stakes as a reference for plows. They ask that mailboxes be 9” back. They are also implementing more crosswalk safety for the schools.

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Ms. Goetz said Social Services is looking to refill their pantry by January 9th. They will post a new list of items needed soon. There will be information on their website for energy assistance.

Ms. Mackstutis asked the Board to change items c, d and e of the Consent Agenda to the Selectmen Action agenda item as she would like discussion on them. The Board was in agreement.

CONSENT AGENDA (28:15)

a) Tax Refund Requests

b) Donation from Ron Perry to the Police Department

Ms. Goetz made a motion, effective December 18, 2023, to accept the updated consent agenda and to approve the presented tax refunds in the amount of \$1732.36, and to authorize Interim Town Manager, Lee C. Erdmann, to execute the tax refunds. Also, to accept the monetary donation of \$5,000 from Ron Perry for use by the Police Department with our thanks. Mr. Antonio seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

SELECTMEN ACTION (29:02)

a) Proposed Revisions to the Adult Services Librarian Job Description

Ms. Mackstutis said this item was discussed this morning at the Personnel Sub-Committee as they are trying to make it easier to hire people.

Mr. Fitzgerald said this is a part-time unaffiliated position. It has had a failed recruitment several times. They would like to update the minimum qualifications of the position to allow students in their final year of a MLIS program to be considered for the position. The position would also be changed to a minimum of 8 hours instead of 4 hours.

After discussion, Mr. Beal made a motion, effective December 18, 2023, to approve the updated job description for the Adult Services Librarian as presented. Mr. Looney seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b) Acceptance and Appropriation of Funds for the Connecticut Office of the Secretary of State Grants

Ms. Mackstutis said this is a new grant of \$10,500 for early voting. She said this is a mandate on the Town. More information is needed on this grant, but it is just to help with the early voting process. There were concerns about the added cost of staff, machines, etc. for early voting and how the costs would affect the budget.

After discussion, Ms. Yeisley made a motion, effective December 18, 2023, to accept the grant funds from the Office of the Secretary of State to support Early Voting and to authorize Interim Town Manager, Lee C. Erdmann to execute all documents related to the grant award. Further move, to appropriate the grant funds, if awarded, and receive said appropriation to the Board of Finance. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

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c) Proposed Appointments and Re-appointments to Various Boards and Commissions (38:32)

Ms. Mackstutis said these are Republican vacancies from the elections. Per the Charter, their term has to end at the next municipal election.

Ms. Yeisley made a motion, effective December 18, 2023, to Re-appoint:

Lucian Dragulski (R), John Salvatore (R), and Mike Eagan (R) as Regular Members of the Public Building Committee with terms ending January 1, 2028; Kathryn (Kate) Robbins (U) as a Regular Member of the Aging and Disability Commission with a term ending January 1, 2028; Mary Henault (U) as an Alternate Member of the Aging and Disability Commission with a term ending January 1, 2026; Jacques Brignac (R) and Edward Kelly (R) as Regular Members of the Water Pollution Control Authority with terms ending January 1, 2028; and Karen Cordner (U) as an At-large Member of the Open Space Committee with a term ending December 1, 2025.

Mr. Antonio seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Ms. Yeisley made a motion, effective December 18, 2023, to appoint:

Scott Barnett (R) as an Alternate Member of the Board of Assessment Appeals with a term ending December 1, 2025; Anna Erickson (R) as a Regular Member of the Library Board of Trustees with a term ending December 1, 2025; Julie Eaton (R) as a Regular Member of the Planning Commission with a term ending December 1, 2025;

Angel Goldman (R) as an Alternate Member of the Planning Commission with a term ending December 1, 2025;

Jackie Battos (R) as an Alternate Member of the Zoning Commission with a term expiring December 1, 2025; and Stacey Welczak (R) as an Alternate Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals expiring December 1, 2025

Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

d) Minutes of December 4, 2023, Regular Meeting (41:38)

Mr. Beal made a motion to approve the minutes of December 4, 2023 for discussion. Ms. Yeisley seconded the motion.

Ms. Mackstutis made a correction: Page 3 item f Ford Harrison - Mr. Beal and Ms. Mackstutis were in favor of the motion with Mr. Antonio, Ms. Goetz, Ms. Yeisley and Mr. Looney against and, therefore, the motion failed.

Ms. Goetz made a correction: Page 1 under Liaison and Sub-Committee reports – Personnel – Town staff will review the RFP for compensation study.

Ms. Goetz made a correction: Page 2, paragraph 2 – should read “can vote on added agenda items.”

Ms. Yeisley made a correction: Page 2, item 3: The First Selectman’s stipend will be looked at again during the budget process.

Ms. Mackstutis wanted it noted that the Community for Care Committee would not be renewed at this time.

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Mr. Beal made a motion to approve the December 4, 2023, minutes as amended. Ms. Yeisley seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (45:18)

a) Pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B): Attorney Client Privilege

Ms. Yeisley made a motion, effective December 18, 2023, to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B) – Attorney Client Privilege and to include Acting Deputy Town Manager Tom Fitzgerald, Interim Town Manager Lee C. Erdmann and Attorney Bob DeCrescenzo at 6:47 p.m. Mr. Antonio seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ADJOURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Beal made a motion, effective December 18, 2023, to adjourn from Executive Session at 7:02 PM. Ms. Yeisley seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ADJOURN

Ms. Goetz made a motion to adjourn at 7:03 PM. Mr. Beal seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Radocchio
Clerk