

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 22, 2024
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CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:03 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectwoman Wendy Mackstutis; Deputy First Selectman Steven Antonio; Board members Curtis Looney, Heather Goetz, Diana Yeisley and Kevin Beal. Others in attendance included: Town Manager Marc Nelson; Deputy Town Manager Tom Fitzgerald; and other interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

- **Participants can address the Board of Selectmen in person at the meeting**
- **Email townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov by noon Monday, January 22, 2024 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 will be forwarded to all Selectmen via email**

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, spoke about the new rules in Public Audience. She also spoke about the Town Attorneys response to these new rules. Ms. Coe spoke about public audience at other meetings. Ms. Coe also spoke about filing a FOI complaint.

Ms. Mackstutis spoke about the FOI complaint. She said Public Audience is included in the Charter but is not a requirement. She said this could be discussed during the Charter Revision Commission meetings if they see fit to do so.

Lori Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, spoke about public audience and the new rules. She said the Board is voted in to serve the Town residents and they are no different than every other person in Town. She wishes more people would speak up at the meetings. The Board should not be restricting what people say or how they say it.

PRESENTATION

a) Interval House

Mary Jane Foster, President and CEO of Interval House, said they are the largest Domestic Violence Agency. She thanked the Board for their support. She said they are available 24/7, 365 days a year. They have a 25-bed safe-house, but the capacity is up to 157%, so they have to put some people up in hotels. They advocate for all victims.

Ms. Foster said they have a children's program with a master-level clinician and therapy dog. They have activities for the children like ice skating, birthday parties, etc. She also handed out cards to put in restrooms. They have a cut-off to put in victim's shoes. She noted that there will be breakfast at The Riverview. They will be asking for agency funding requests for the budget.

FIRST SELECTWOMAN’S REPORT

First Selectwoman, Wendy Mackstutis, reviewed her First Selectwoman’s report.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Town Manager, Mark Nelson, reviewed his Town Manager’s report.

SELECTMEN LIAISON AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) **Personnel** – there was no report at this time.
- b) **Finance** – there was no report at this time.
- c) **Public Safety** – there was no report at this time.
- d) **Board of Education** – Ms. Yeisley said there was a special education presentation about the state district. She said they lost a staff member at the High School and are requesting that person be replaced along with other staffing needs. There were a lot of questions on special education out-placement. She said it is always more cost effective to have additional staff hired within the district. There are currently 48 out-placed students.

Ms. Yeisley said the Aging and Disability Commission will be having a virtual meeting due to the weather. They will be nominating a new Chair so she can step down, however, she will remain liaison for the Board of Selectmen to that Commission.

Mr. Antonio said Main Street met, but there is no report at this time.

Ms. Goetz said the Planning Commission had a meeting on January 9th. They looked at the Hartford South application for 580 proposed units. They are sending the application back to Zoning with some suggestions like 3 stories instead of 4, mixed use, option to purchase instead of rent, etc.

Ms. Goetz said the Tariffville Village Plan has started. Their total budget was \$150,000, which they will be splitting \$50,000 for 3 years. They are in the process of engaging in a consultant at this time.

Mr. Looney said the Zoning meeting had two issues: one was about food trucks, in which the discussion was delayed. He said they discussed the Hartford South project and a lot of people spoke up at the meeting. They need to decide if they want to extend this discussion up to 65 more days or take a vote on this application.

Ms. Yeisley made a motion to move items a) tax refunds, under Selectmen Action, a, b, and c under Appointments and Resignations and the Review of Minutes to the Consent agenda. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

SELECTMEN ACTION

a) Tax Refund Requests

This item was moved to the Consent Agenda.

b) Simsbury Junior Women’s Club Grant Application (37:50)

Ms. Mackstutis said this is a \$500 grant from the Junior Women’s Club for the Senior Center Veterans Day Picnic.

Mr. Antonio made a motion, effective January 22, 2024, to submit a grant application to the Simsbury Junior Women’s Club and to authorize Town Manager, Marc Nelson, to execute the grant application. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

There was some discussion on streamlining the grant process.

Ms. Yeisley made a motion, effective January 22, 2024, to accept the \$500 grant and authorize Town Manager, Marc Nelson, to execute all documents related to the grant award.

Further move, to appropriate the grant funds, in awarded, and recommend said appropriation to the Board of Finance. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

c) Discussion on a Housing Advisory Committee

Ms. Mackstutis said this goes back to 2021 when the Planning Commission established the affordable housing plan, which was required by the State. She said there were a lot of internal meetings about making a task force. It was decided to have the DEI Council have a housing sub-committee to look into housing. DEI did make a presentation and the Planning Commission had in their POCD that they are to establish an affordable housing committee and one of their action steps in the POCD which the Planning Commission are in favor of doing. She said this has been a discussion for the last two years and the Town Manager said we should give them guidance and create a resolution to vote on. She said many towns set-up affordable housing task forces. This Board also needs to discuss what kind of membership the Board is looking for and what is appropriate.

Ms. Mackstutis said she is trying to get a consensus from the Board if they want to move forward with this. We need to help facilitate moving forward with their implementation plan.

After discussion, Mr. Nelson will draft information on how the Board could proceed. No motion was made at this time.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

These items were moved to the Consent Agenda

a) Reappoint Deborah Glass to the Aging and Disability Commission

b) Reappoint Bob Beinstein to Simsbury Sustainability Committee

c) Reappointments to the Economic Development Commission

REVIEW OF MINUTES

a) January 8, 2024 Regular Meeting

This item was moved to the consent agenda.

COMMUNICATIONS

a) Letter to SVAA re: Board of Selectmen Questions for the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association, dated 1/18/24

Ms. Mackstutis said the provided letter with a list of questions was sent to the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association.

Mr. Beal left the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) Pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B): Pending Litigation (1:07:03)

Ms. Yeisley made a motion, effective January 22, 2024, to adjourn to executive session pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B): Pending Litigations at 7:10 p.m. and to include Mr. Nelson, Town Assessor Francine Beland, Mr. Fitzgerald and Attorney Bob DeCrescenzo. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ADJOURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Yeisley made a motion to adjourn from Executive Session at 7:26 p.m. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

SELECTMEN ACTION

Mr. Antonio made a motion to add Approvals and Motions for “Judgement by Stipulation.” Ms. Yeisley seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Ms. Yeisley made a motion to accept the motion for Judgement by Stipulation. Mr. Looney seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING

Mr. Antonio made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Radocchio
Clerk