

CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 12:01 p.m. and was held via Zoom. Present were: First Selectman Eric Wellman; Deputy First Selectman Sean Askham; Board members Mike Paine, Wendy Mackstutis and Chris Peterson. Ms. Battos was absent. Others in attendance included: Town Manager Maria E. Capriola; Town Attorney Bob Decrescenzo; Management Specialist Tom Fitzgerald; Director of Public Works Tom Roy; Director of Planning Michael Glidden; Finance Director Amy Meriwether; Deputy Chief of Police Chris Davis; HR Coordinator Eric Gomes; Emergency Management Director Michael Berry; Missy DiNunno of the Simsbury Performing Arts Center; Morgan Hilyard of the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce; Sarah Nielsen of the Simsbury Main Street Partnership; and Jenna Caulfield of the Police Commission.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Joan Coe spoke about a concert at the Performing Arts Center and the Town Clerk's Office.

Marc Lubetkin spoke about having business owners decide themselves if masks should be worn in their business.

Michele Paige spoke about letting people be responsible for their own health.

SELECTMEN ACTION

a) Discussion and Action Regarding Measures to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19

Mr. Wellman gave a brief update why this special meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called and then passed to Town Manager Maria Capriola to go further in depth. Ms. Capriola provided data from the Farmington Valley Health District (FVHD) of 47 new cases in the community which are numbers not seen since last fall. One year ago the FVHD had 10 cases of COVID-19 while now it has over 120 active cases. Ms. Capriola also stated that Simsbury is approaching the red alert status from the CT-DPH which is defined as 15 cases per 100,000 residents, we currently are at 13.2 per 100,000 residents. The Town Manager stated she will be issuing an Emergency Order that mandates masks be worn when indoors. [The entire language of the Emergency Order can be found by clicking this link.](#)

Mr. Askham spoke saying it is the Town Manager as CEO of the Town that has the authority to issue an emergency order mask mandate but thinks it is important for the Board of Selectmen to issue a motion of support of the Town Manager's actions.

Ms. Mackstutis noted that West Hartford earlier in the day put out a mask mandate as well.

Mr. Paine noted that it is important to do this as a regional approach so it isn't different rules for every town. He also stated that by issuing a local mandate rather than one by the Governor it lets Simsbury be more adaptable faster should things change or get better.

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Mr. Peterson stated that this would be for the good of the town absent any action from the Governor but encouraged Mr. Wellman and Ms. Capriola to get information out to the public for a target number of cases in the community that would let us retract this order.

Mr. Wellman thanked the members of the public who spoke about the issue at hand today but feels this action will prevent us from having to go back to the way it was in the spring of 2020.

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective, August 20, 2021 to support and endorse the issuance of a municipal executive order by Town Manager Maria Capriola requiring the use of face coverings by all individuals when indoors in public settings, regardless of vaccination status. The executive order will take effect at 12:01AM Monday, August 23, 2021. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b) Recommended Appointment of Interim Town Clerk

Ms. Capriola gave background information on this topic including why it is needed for an Interim Town Clerk while the Town recruits a new full time Town Clerk. Ms. Capriola said that Ms. Keily has graciously agreed to help out. Ms. Keily was the Town Clerk from 1990 until her retirement in 2016. Ms. Mackstutis asked if there will be any interruption in service and how long could the Town function without a full time Town Clerk. Ms. Capriola answered Ms. Mackstutis' questions.

Mr. Paine made a motion, effective August 28, 2021, to appoint Carolyn Keily to the position of Interim Town Clerk until the date upon a new permanent Town Clerk officially begins work in Simsbury. Mr. Askham seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ADJOURN

Mr. Askham made a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting at 12:36 p.m. Mr. Paine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Fitzgerald
Management Specialist