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TOWN OF SIMSBURY - BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
JULY 22, 2011

SIMSBURY BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING  
JULY 22, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

A Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 8:30AM on Friday, July 22, 2011 in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectmen Mary Glassman; Board members; Nancy Haase, Moira Wertheimer, John Hampton, Lisa Heavner and Robert Hensley. Others in attendance included Tom Cooke, Michael Foley, Rich Sawitzke, Gerry Toner, David Gardner, Sean Kimball, Bob Lindberg, Michael Foley and other interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING

Gerry Wetjen, President of the Simsbury Farms Men's Golf Club, started by thanking the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and the tax payers for supporting the project at Simsbury Farms. Mr. Wetjen said at the end of 2008, the Board of Selectmen approved their project of tee signs at Simsbury Farms. While Mr. Wetjen has been giving Gerry Toner, Director of Culture, Parks & Recreation, financial reporting on this project over the years, he wanted to make the Board aware that revenue from the Tee Sign Advertising, they have raised \$28,275 in the last two (2) years and put back \$24,626.74 directly into the Golf Course, which are dollars that the tax payers have not had to put out. Mr. Wetjen just got a renewal for the next three (3) years from Comcast and Golf Channel. Mr. Wetjen said they have a sponsor at every tee sign and hopefully that is generating approximately \$9,000/year of revenue.

There was no additional Public Audience.

FIRST SELECTMEN REPORT

Ms. Glassman thanked Ms. Haase and Ms. Heavner for attending the Simsbury Free Bike Inaugural Announcement, which is now off and running. Folks can now put a \$10 security deposit down, with ID, and they can use the bike for 48 hours. Ms. Glassman said they were grateful to so many people who worked on this project, particularly Tom Roy, Director of Public Works. Simsbury is now the third town in the State to offer this type of program.

Ms. Glassman then announced that Mary Ann Harris will start as the Finance Director on Monday. She commented on Mike Foley's phenomenal work in the interim and the Board collectively thanked him. Ms. Glassman also thanked the entire Finance Department for their work during this period of time.

Ms. Glassman announced that Tariffville Gorge will be hosting the North American Junior Olympics Festival beginning July 30, 2011 and continuing through August 7th.

#### SELECTMEN ACTION

A. Discussion of possible change in retiree supplemental health care providers from CIGNA to Anthem (Executive Session)

Ms. Glassman first thanked Bob Lindberg of Lindberg & Ripple, and also Sean Kimball, Human Resources/Risk Manager, and Tom Cooke, Director of Administrative Services, for working with their employees and retirees with regards to this change. Ms. Glassman noted that most of their retirees would have had a significant spike in their insurance and so the staff has been working with Mr. Lindberg to come up with alternatives. She said, by switching carriers, not only will they be saving the Town money, but for most of the retirees as well. As an overview, Mr. Cooke said that we have been using CIGNA for a number of years, but Mr. Lindberg was told late last year that CIGNA wanted to increase rates by 50%, which was negotiated down to 35%, which is still a huge increase for retirees. At that point, Mr. Lindberg started working with Mr. Kimball and Mr. Cooke to find alternatives, the details of which would be covered during Executive Session. While they have kept in communication with the retirees about this situation, Mr. Cooke said they have had one (1) month with these increased rates, therefore, he thinks it is important to find an alternative. Mr. Lindberg wanted to make it clear that they were only referring to Medicare Eligible Retirees. He said those under the age of 65, are in their regular program and would not see the previously mentioned costs increases.

Mr. Hensley made a motion to go into Executive Session and to invite Mr. Kimball, Mr. Cooke and Mr. Lindberg into Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Heavner and was unanimously passed.

At 9:03 AM, Executive Session was concluded.

Mr. Hensley made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Ms. Heavner

seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

B. Action on possible change in retiree supplemental health care providers from CIGNA to Anthem

Ms. Glassman then thanked Mr. Kimball, Mr. Cooke and Mr. Lindberg for reviewing the change in retiree supplemental health care providers for medicare eligible retirees from CIGNA to Anthem. Ms. Glassman said this change will result in significant savings for retiree households, totaling approximately \$58,000/year and approximately \$99,000 in savings for the Town.

Mr. Hensley made a motion to approve the change in retiree supplemental health care providers from CIGNA to Anthem. Ms. Heavner seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

C. Approve Tax Refunds

Ms. Glassman said there are a few tax refunds from the Tax Collector. This comes to a total of \$9,760 in tax refunds.

Mr. Hampton moved to approve the tax refunds. The motion was seconded by Ms. Heavner and unanimously passed.

D. Resolution authorizing the First Selectman to execute contracts for "Agreement Between The State of Connecticut and the Town of Simsbury Concerning a State Matching Grant Program for Elderly and Disabled Demand-Responsive Transportation"

Ms. Glassman referred to an email from Ed LaMontagne, Chairman of Aging and Disability Commission, stating that the Aging and Disability Commission does support the Grant Program.

Ms. Wertheimer moved, for the approval of "Resolution authorizing the First Selectman, Mary A. Glassman, to sign and execute Agreements and Contracts, along with all necessary Agreement/Contract documents, on behalf of the Town of Simsbury with the Department of Transportation of the State of Connecticut". Mr. Hampton seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

E. Consideration and approval of revaluation proposals

Mr. Cooke said that David Gardner, Assessor, went out to bid for firms to do our revaluation and did a careful analysis of those firms. He is recommending two (2) firms, one for each of two (2) different pieces of the revaluation, E-Quality and PBS Systems. Ms. Haase then asked if the costs projected here were in-line and not exceeding projections. Mr. Gardner said yes, but what he did not allow for, is if there is litigation. Ms. Glassman asked how much more would he need including those potential legal fees. Mr. Gardner said it is hard to project that, but he would use

\$50,000 as a round figure.

Mr. Hensley asked, as an unrelated question, if someone bought a house in Simsbury, at a lower price than what it was valued at its last valuation, what would be the tax base of that home. Mr. Gardner said the most recent valuation would be used as opposed to the purchase price. Ms. Glassman noted that some states allow a challenge based on sale price, but Connecticut does not.

Ms. Glassman then followed up asking about the impact of values that have dropped. Mr. Gardner responded by saying that right now the assessment to sale ratio (assessment/sale price) is 72% for residential, which was 64% in the year of valuation, (decline of appx. 11%) which is not that bad considering the current market. Mr. Cooke then let the Board know that he and Mr. Gardner are currently looking at regionalization options with regards to the revaluation process for the future.

Mr. Hampton moved the Board approve the revaluation proposals. Ms. Haase seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

F. Approve agreement with Douglas Beach Golf Course Design to provide architectural services for the recently approved Simsbury Farms Golf Course Improvements

Ms. Glassman said that after the referendum was approved, Parks & Recreation Commission went out to bid to get proposals for the improvements. Ms. Glassman noted that Doug Beach is a well respected Simsbury resident and they are sure he will do a great job. Ms. Glassman noted that amount of the overview of the contract is \$225,000. Mr. Toner said that, as outlined in a memo distributed to the Board, they went out with an RFQ for help with the improvements. Mr. Toner felt that, especially with regards to the bunker repair and renovation, they really felt they needed an architect to provide the right prioritization, cost effective approach and the right time frame. They will now need to see if it will be more cost effective to do the work in-house, contract out, or a combination of both. Mr. Toner noted they want minimal disruption during the work. He said there were two (2) complete responses to the RFQ. Of the two (2), Doug Beach had the most cost-effective proposal and in addition, he has the qualifications and good local knowledge of the course.

Mr. Hampton then thanked Mr. Toner and the Simsbury Farms Complex Committee and said it was great that it was a local man that has history with the course.

Mr. Hampton moved the Board approve the agreement with Douglas Beach Golf Course Design to provide architectural services for the recently approved Simsbury Farms Golf Course Improvements. Mr. Hensley seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

Mr. Hensley asked Mr. Toner if the play at the course was up this July. Mr. Toner confirmed that yes, rounds this July are well over last year. He said that while play was off this spring, it was consistent with levels of other courses around New England. He thinks that along with weather we are still looking at an economy issue in terms of amount of play. Mr. Toner said they have been talking about new marketing approaches they can take to get more families up there and build a new base of players. Ms. Wertheimer mentioned that some other local courses have been working with Groupon.com. Mr. Toner said they looked at Groupon, but the Town Attorney had an issue with how that was structured, although they are looking at other similar programs. Mr. Wetjen did say he thought the e-mail campaigns were a very positive thing. Some potential avenues to increase their email distribution list and get more exposure were then discussed.

G. Approve submittal of Recreational Trail Grants and approval for First Selectman to sign the applications

Ms. Glassman mentioned that Mr. Sawitzke has a number of grants that are going to be due; the Recreational Trails Program, the Surface Transportation Non-Traditional, and the Surface Transportation Enhancement programs. She also mentioned the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program, which they are thrilled to do and that it applies to Tootin' Hills and Henry James. Mr. Hampton and Ms. Wertheimer both expressed their support of this program.

Ms. Glassman said, with regards to the Recreational Trail Grant, these are for trails in Tariffville and Bloomfield to connect, trails to connect to Route 44 and the also for Safe Routes to School.

Mr. Hensley mentioned that there is a path from Central area down to Route 10, and that there had been interest from residents of that area to be able to take strollers down to Town Center. Mr. Hensley wondered if there was any thought about doing something like that. Ms. Glassman referenced the path from Memorial Park through Shultz Park and they asked Mr. Sawitzke if something like that was doable. Mr. Sawitzke said it was quite steep and it isn't doable without cutting down a lot of trees. There was further discussion about other options with different sections of path. Ms. Glassman then asked Mr. Toner to include potential options in his Memorial Park Improvement presentation.

Ms. Haase made a motion to approve submittal of Recreational Trail Grants and approval for First Selectman to sign the applications. Ms. Heavner seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

H. Approve year end transfers

Ms. Glassman again thanked Mr. Foley. Ms. Glassman updated the Board that the Town would be closing out with giving about \$100,000 back to the

Reserves. Ms. Glassman mentioned they are thrilled that the Tax Collection rate is significantly higher than had been budgeted and higher than anticipated. There were a couple departments that did have short-falls, although most departments in the General Government had surpluses. Ms. Glassman then outlined some of those short-falls, the biggest of which was the Town Offices electricity count. Mr. Foley wanted to remind everyone that the electricity costs had been raised without notification, which was a cause for the overage. She mentioned that Mr. Toner had an overage due to the fact that the pools opened earlier than budgeted for because of the unusually hot weather and schools closed. Ms. Glassman did highlight some significant savings, one of which was due to aggressively monitoring legal fees, which resulted in a \$77,000 savings. Closing monitoring Police overtime also resulted in a surplus. While the transfers are the same this year as last year, we are giving back \$100,000, which will increase the General Fund Reserves, currently at 9.9%. Moody's wants to see Reserve at 10% and Mr. Foley confirmed that with these new numbers, our Reserves will exceed 10% (10.99%).

Ms. Heavner then made the motion to approve year end transfers. Mr. Hensley seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

Mr. Foley then thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with them.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUES - July 11, 2011

Ms. Heavner then made the motion to approve the regular minutes from July 11, 2011. Mr. Hensley seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

#### REPORTS

Mr. Hampton wanted to remind everyone about the Cooling Centers that are open at the Library and the Senior Center. He mentioned they are considering opening tomorrow as well, but they are monitoring the use today and will then make the decision. He also wanted to let everyone know that the Tariffville Music Festival was held last night and it was very successful. Mr. Hampton also let the Board know that the Aging & Disability Building Audits are complete, which will be very useful moving forward. He also thanked Paul Lanza for coordinating the Food Drive that resulted in two (2) trucks worth of food sent to Eno Hall.

Ms. Heavner announced that Joseph Loewy, Executive Director of Simsbury Housing Authority, was asked to make a presentation at the Annual Convention in August, which is a big honor. They are going to talk about the case study they did of their Strategic Planning Process that the Housing Authority used. Ms. Heavner also said she had checked with Mr. Loewy on how the residents were doing at the Owen Murphy Apartments and Virginia Connolly Residence and they have air-conditioning and community rooms open as a safe harbor.

ADJOURN

At 9:36a.m, Ms. Heavner made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Haase seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Glassman, First Selectman