

**Board of Finance  
TOWN OF SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, June 21, 2022, at 5:45 P.M.  
In Person Meeting/Simsbury Media Live Stream**

**PRESENT:**

Lisa Heavner, Arthur House, Derek Peterson, Robert Helfand, and Linda Schofield

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Amy Meriwether, Director of Finance; Maria Capriola, Town Manager; Amber Abbuhl, Deputy First Selectman; Tom Tyburski, Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation; and Christine Winters, Housing Authority.

**1. Call to Order - Establish Quorum**

Ms. Heavner called the meeting to order at 5:50 P.M.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Heavner opened the meeting with a request to add an executive session to the end of the meeting agenda to discuss the possible parcel purchase at 56 Wolcott.

**MOTION:** Mr. House made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, to amend the agenda to include an Executive Session at the end of the meeting. Mr. Helfand seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

**3. Public Audience**

None

**4. Supplemental Appropriation Request – Golf Equipment Purchase**

Mr. Tyburski provided an overview of the equipment request advising that they are interested in purchasing an off-lease piece of golf maintenance equipment to replace a 2006 Jacobsen Fairway Mower. He noted this was an opportunity to acquire a lightly used mower that will have an estimated useful life of 12-15 years. Staff had planned to replace this unit as new in 5-6 years, but the current equipment is failing faster than expected and replacement parts are more difficult to find. Members of the Board asked questions to Mr. Tyburski about the purchase which were addressed.

**MOTION:** Mr. House made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, to approve the supplemental appropriation for the purchase of a Golf Course Mower in the amount of \$29,500, with funding from the Golf Maintenance Equipment Surcharge Account. Mr. Helfand seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

## **5. Supplemental Appropriation Request – Simsbury Housing Authority**

Ms. Winters provided an overview of The Simsbury Housing Authority's request to the Town for funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). She said the Housing Authority has a number of capital improvements for which they are seeking funding and provided an example of some of the capital project work needed. Ms. Abbuhl added comments on the much-needed projects to make the houses livable and bring them up to code.

Ms. Heavner noted that she spoke with the Deputy First Selectwoman Amber Abbuhl and the Chair of the Housing Authority, Cheryl Cook, both of whom confirmed the dollars will be spent only on the projects listed in priority order and that none of the dollars will be spent for operating costs.

**MOTION:** Ms. Schofield made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, to approve the supplemental appropriation for funding for the Simsbury Housing Authority in the amount of \$100,000. Mr. Helfand seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

## **6. Supplemental Appropriation Request – Non-Profit Grant Program**

Ms. Abbuhl provided an overview noting the former American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Work Group (current Finance Sub-Committee) identified a non-profit grant program as a priority project for ARPA funding. The proposed program would provide funding to non-profit organizations to address a need or negative impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency. She noted the Finance Sub-Committee recommends allocating a total of \$150,000 for the program, with funding requests to be capped at \$10,000 per organization. The Board had questions which were addressed, and Ms. Abbuhl provide examples of the groups where the money would go towards.

**MOTION:** Ms. Schofield made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, to approve the supplemental appropriation for funding the 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Grant Program in the amount of \$150,000. Mr. Helfand seconded the motion. There was a discussion and Mr. Peterson opposed. The majority were in favor and the motion carried.

## **7. Supplemental Appropriation Request – Meadowood Barn Demolition**

Ms. Capriola provided a summary of the request for the Meadowood Barn Demolition. One of the barns on the property began to suddenly lean significantly due to extreme wet weather. Upon assessment of the structure by the Town's Deputy Building Official and a structural engineer, it was determined that the barn needed to come down immediately. The cost of this demolition was \$19,200. Subsequently in January 2022 another barn needed to be demolished due to similar circumstances. The cost of this demolition was also \$19,200.

Barn demolition was not anticipated within the original scope of the Meadowood purchase capital project. While bond counsel initially advised that the expenses could be charged to the capital project, there is not sufficient funding to do so. The appropriation was exceeded and therefore, bond counsel has recommended that the town approve a new barn demolition capital

project appropriation for the \$41,000. Ms. Capriola noted that due to the complex nature of the closing on the property, their legal expenses were higher than anticipated. Staff is requesting funding for this project come from the Capital Reserve Fund with the intention that this funding will be replenished during year end close with general fund savings. The board had questions which were addressed including barn safety and future of the barns and their intended purpose.

**MOTION:** Mr. Helfand made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, to approve an appropriation for the Meadowood Barn demolition and legal expenses in the amount of \$41,000 as presented and to create a capital project for the Meadowood barn demolition and legal expenses with funding from capital reserves to be replenished with year-end savings. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

### **8. Use of Non-Lapsing Fund**

Ms. Heavner provided an overview of the request stating the Board of Education is expected to end FY 2021-2022 in a deficit position by an estimated \$575,000 due to increased costs related to the hiring of three teachers at the beginning of the school year to accommodate increased enrollment, special education/social emotional support services, and increased transportation costs. In accordance with Charter the budget cannot be overspent without a supplemental appropriation. Staff is requesting approval to utilize the non-lapsing fund up to the amount of the year end loss not to exceed the non-lapsing fund balance of \$651,308.

A discussion on the request followed and Ms. Meriwether addressed questions.

**MOTION:** Mr. Helfand made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, to authorize the use of the Board of Education Non-Lapsing fund up to the amount of the FY 2021/2022 year-end deficit not to exceed \$651,308. Ms. Schofield seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

### **9. Policy Review**

Ms. Heavner stated that policies are reviewed annually by the Board of Finance to ensure they are effective and in compliance with best practices. She said Mr. Peterson will be bringing the oldest policy, OPEB Retirement Healthcare Trust Investment, to the retirement subcommittee for review by their consultants. Ms. Meriwether will also be reviewing the proposed Structurally Balanced Budget policy submit it to the Board in July for review. Ms. Schofield had questions and suggestions on the Town Fund Investment Policy which were addressed Ms. Meriwether.

### **10. Finance Director's Report**

Ms. Meriwether provided an update on the Assessor's Office position which the personnel subcommittee and Board of Selectman approved. The position was posted, and they have received several applications for review. Interviews will be set up within the next week or two. Ms. Schofield asked for an update on getting additional contractual help which Ms. Meriwether said they have not signed a contract yet but are in discussions.

Mr. Peterson asked for regular updates on the Latimer Lane project and whether it's within budget or not.

Ms. Heavner requested that any money spent from ARPA to be included in the report so that the public has transparency.

### **11. Approval of Minutes**

- May 17, 2022
- May 26, 2022

Ms. Heavner made a correction to the May 17, 2022 minutes to update the word “commit” to “assign” dollars to the Latimer Lane Project.

**MOTION:** Ms. Schofield made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, to accept the minutes as presented with the mentioned change. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

### **12. Executive Session**

**MOTION:** Mr. House made a motion, effective June 21, 2022, for the Board to go into Executive Session with Ms. Meriwether, Ms. Capriola, and Mr. Roy, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, section 1-2006d for discussion of possible parcel purchase at 56 Wolcott Street. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION:** Mr. House made a motion to adjourn from Executive Session at 7:12 p.m. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

### **13. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Mr. Helfand made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marion Lynott  
Commission Clerk