

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – MAY 10, 2019**

“Approved”

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CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectman Eric Wellman; Deputy First Selectman Christopher Kelly; Board members Michael Paine, Sean Askham (by phone), and Chris Peterson (by phone). Selectwoman Cheryl Cook was absent. Others in attendance included: Town Manager Maria Capriola; Deputy Town Manager Melissa Appleby; Michael Glidden, Director of Planning; David Gardner, Assessor; Sarah Nielsen, Executive Director, Simsbury Main Street Partnership Inc.; Bob Decrescenzo, Town Attorney. Representatives from Ensign-Bickford Aerospace & Defense: Chad Thompson; Brendan Walsh; Jason Smith; and Dave Kametz (by phone).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Sarah Nielsen of the Main Street Partnership spoke in favor of the proposed tax abatement for EBA&D. She noted that the company is the Town's largest and oldest employer, and that the proposed expansion is critical for economic development. She thanked the Board of Selectmen and Town staff for acting so quickly on this request. She urged the Board to approve the most competitive package possible.

Dave Balboni, 13 Fox Den Road, spoke in support of the project but urged the Board of Selectmen to put the vote on hold and reevaluate the level of the abatement.

Dave Ryan, 20 Westledge, spoke in favor of the proposed abatement. He noted that the abatement is not a discount, but rather a percentage reduction on potential new taxes. He said that the increased revenue from personal property will be greater than the abatement on the real estate taxes.

SELECTMEN ACTION

a) Business Development Incentive Application for 632 (640) Hopmeadow Street

Mr. Paine recused himself as EBA&D is a client of Paine's, Inc.

Mr. Wellman said that the Business Incentive Policy permits the Board of Selectmen to waive up to 50% of permit fees and approve a tax abatement for a period not to exceed ten years. He said that the recommendation from the Business Development Committee is to waive 50% of the permit fees, not to exceed \$25,000, and to adopt a ten-year abatement schedule that applies to the incremental increase in property value. He noted that the total abatement amount based on the proposed schedule is estimated to be approximately \$375,000.

Mr. Wellman said that he is supportive of this proposal due to the fact that it will produce significant investment in the community and will create 140 professional-level jobs. He said the proposed

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expansion is good for economic development, noting that one-third of the new employees are expected to live in Simsbury and that many local contractors will be used for the project.

Mr. Askham said that he is very supportive of the proposed abatement at the recommended level.

Mr. Peterson said that economic development has been a primary focus of the Board of Selectmen, and expressed his belief that this project will have a lasting impact on the community. He said this is a rare opportunity to be at the forefront of job creation.

Mr. Kelly commended the quality of work that has been done on this request from EBA&D, Town staff, and the Business Development Committee. He expressed his gratitude to EBA&D for its continued commitment to the partnership with the Town. He noted that there is no question regarding the merits of the abatement request, and that the only debate that exists is in regards to the appropriate amount. He expressed his support for a more aggressive approach due to the fact that the request falls within policy guidelines, and because the difference between the proposed scenarios is negligible.

Mr. Kelly made a motion effective May 10, 2019 to approve a 10-year tax abatement at the percentages presented below for Ensign Bickford Aerospace and Defense for the property located at 632 (640) Hopmeadow Street:

- 100% reduction in the tax bill for year 1 (FY 21/22)
- 100% reduction in the tax bill for year 2 (FY 22/23)
- 95% reduction in the tax bill for year 3 (FY 23/24)
- 90% reduction in the tax bill for year 4 (FY 24/25)
- 85% reduction in the tax bill for year 5 (FY 25/26)
- 75% reduction in the tax bill for year 6 (FY 26/27)
- 75% reduction in the tax bill for year 7 (FY 27/28)
- 75% reduction in the tax bill for year 8 (FY 28/29)
- 75% reduction in the tax bill for year 9 (FY 29/30)
- 75% reduction in the tax bill for year 10 (FY 30/31)

The abatement and reduction in the tax bill should only apply to the real estate new growth.

Further move to waive 50% of the cost of the construction, HVAC equipment, plumbing, electrical, fire sprinkler, and demolition permit fees incurred for Phase I of the project expansion, not to exceed \$25,000.

Further move to authorize the Town Manager and Town Attorney to negotiate an agreement reflective of this resolution.

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

Mr. Wellman noted that the final agreement will come back to the Board of Selectmen for final approval. He thanked EBA&D and the Main Street Partnership for their efforts.

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Mr. Thompson thanked the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager, and Sarah Nielsen for all of their work on this, and expressed his gratitude for the partnership between EBA&D and the Town.

ADJOURN

Mr. Kelly made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 a.m. Mr. Askham seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Appleby
Deputy Town Manager