

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 28, 2017**

“Subject to Approval”

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CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:02 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectwoman Lisa Heavner; Board members Sean Askham, Cheryl Cook, Michael Paine, Christopher Kelly, and Elaine Lang. Others in attendance included: Thomas Cooke, Director of Administrative Services; Melissa Appleby, Deputy Director of Administrative Services; James Rabbitt, Director of Planning and Community Development; Mohamed Razzaq, UConn Intern, and other interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Kris Barnett, 15 Ox Yoke Drive, spoke about the Deepwater Wind Solar Project. She is against this proposed project and said she attended the meeting of the Council on Environmental Quality in Hartford. The Town is considered as part of the Farmington Valley Fly Way, which should also be considered when discussing this project.

Attorney Alan Kosloff, attorney for some residents who oppose the Deepwater Wind Solar Project, said he filed an application for party status which he forwarded to the Board. He said they did receive an expert report and will give the information to the Board after it is reviewed.

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, spoke about the Performing Arts Center concerts, volunteers in the community, taxes, the Town Manager position, curling at the International Skating Rink and other issues.

Laura Nigro, 4 Kilbourne Farms, spoke about the proposed solar project. She spoke about the low water on the property and obtaining a DEEP permit. She said Congressional approval is also a significant issue.

Linda Low, 8 Kilbourne Road, also spoke about the proposed solar project. She said DEEP should be very concerned about possible flooding on this property. She also attended the meeting in Hartford and there are a lot of issues that should be further discussed.

Dave Ryan, President of the Performing Arts Center, 20 Westledge Road, reported that the 2 Left Feet Blues Festival was a great event. It was very well organized and well done. He said the next concert will be “Echoes of Sinatra” and then “Septemberfest.”

Dianne Treacy, 40 Berkshire Way, thanked the Board of Selectmen and staff for their effort and time that they have put into the Deepwater Wind Solar Project. She doesn’t feel that Connecticut will receive any benefit from this proposed project.

Robert Kalechman, 971 Hopmeadow Street, said he was confused about why the First Selectwoman said there are a lot of volunteers in Town. He feels people volunteer because they want power and not serve the Town. There needs to be better reporting, even if they are a 501c(3) organization.

Bob Duguay, 15 Nod Brook Drive, said he feels the Town is very well run. He complimented the Town work crews that worked on his road and said it was all under good management. He also spoke on the issue of negotiating contracts and salary increases.

Joe Treacy, 40 Berkshire Way, thanked everyone for their thoroughness on the proposed solar project. He explained a possible water problem on this aquafer property.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations at this time.

FIRST SELECTWOMAN’S REPORT

There was no First Selectwoman’s Report at this time.

SELECTMEN ACTION

a) Approve Tax Refunds

Mr. Kelly made a motion to approve tax refunds in the amount of \$9,156.35 as requested and approved by the Tax Collector. Ms. Lang seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b) Discussion and Action regarding the Town’s position connection with the Deepwater Wind Solar Proposal

Ms. Heavner went through her draft Siting Council submission.

Ms. Heavner said the Town opposes the Deepwater Wind Solar Petition No. 1313 as proposed and takes the following positions:

1. The Siting Council should use the highest level of review possible.
2. Petition No. 1313 lack sufficient information and data for the Siting Council to issue a decision at this time.
3. If the Petition is approved by the Siting Council, the project should be reduced in scope to lessen the impact on abutters and the public including the removal of the parcel located on the southern side of Hoskins; proposed visual “buffering” and landscaping should be improved and based on visual elements characteristic of and already existing in Simsbury; and historical landmarks which define the character of Simsbury including the view-shed and the residence at 85 Hoskins Road and tobacco barns located on the project site should be preserved.
4. A more robust financial support and decommissioning package is needed to ensure that environmental benefits and project oversight are guaranteed.

Ms. Heavner said she thinks the Siting Council will grant the extension. There is a procedural hearing of the Siting Council on Thursday that she will be attending.

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The other Board members felt that this draft was a good representation of all of the issues brought up by the Boards and Commissions as well as public comments on this issue. They understand that this testimony will change in accordance with updates on this issue.

Mr. Rabbitt went over some possible water issues and how the solar panel poles would be installed on the proposed site.

Mr. Askham made a motion to endorse the draft testimony and Town’s position on the Deepwater Wind Solar Proposal. Mr. Paine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

c) Consideration and Action on Request for Approval of the Tentative Agreements between the Town of Simsbury and CSEA Contracts and for Authorization of the First Selectwoman to Execute the Collective Bargaining Agreements as Modified

Ms. Heavner went through the tentative agreement wage increases for FY 2018 and FY 2019. She said the estimates do not factor in the impact of anticipated retirements, which will significantly decrease the total financial impact for both years.

Mr. Cooke said the Town and CSEA did reach these agreements in 2015 for a four-year period. He spoke about the Affordable Care Act’s “Cadillac Tax” provisions which were expected to take effect in 2018. Given the uncertain financial impact of this “Cadillac Tax” the Town and CSEA included a “re-opener” to negotiate wages and health insurance benefits, essentially building in flexibility to respond to Affordable Care Act changes.

Mr. Askham made a motion to approve the Agreement between the Town of Simsbury and each of the three bargaining units represented by CSEA, Service Employees International Union Local 2001 as proposed. Mr. Kelly seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

d) Appoint a member of the Board of Selectmen for the Director of Community and Social Services Position Interviews

Mr. Paine made a motion to appoint Cheryl Cook, from the Board of Selectmen, for the Director of Community and Social Services Position interviews. Ms. Lang seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ADJOURN

Mr. Askham made a motion to adjourn at 7:23 p.m. Ms. Lang seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Radocchio
Clerk