

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 23, 2020**

“Approved”

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CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectman Eric Wellman; Deputy First Selectman Sean Askham; Board members Michael Paine, Chris Peterson, Wendy Mackstutis, and Jackie Battos. Others in attendance were: Town Manager Maria E. Capriola; Deputy Town Manager Melissa Appleby; Director of Parks and Recreation Tom Tyburski; Director of Public Works Tom Roy; Director of Finance Amy Meriwether; and Director of Planning Mike Glidden.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Wellman said this meeting is being held under unusual circumstances. Therefore, the Board members & other staff are on the phone and watching SCTV. If residents need to contact the Board, they can email EButler@Simsbury-ct.gov.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Mr. Wellman read the submitted e-mails:

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, wrote about the Police Commission, the Arbitration hearing; the Board of Selectmen budget; the budget “wish list”, adding a Deputy Police Chief and Police Lieutenant, the Meadow Wood project, the Corona virus, and other issues.

Louis and Eleanor Norton wrote about the Mountain Farms Park and open space maintenance.

John Gooch West Mountain Road, wrote about Mountain Farms Park being a long term tax revenue, and asking for the Board to allocate funds to update the Park.

Linda Thompson spoke about the Mountain Farms Park equipment being outdated

Ellen Torres supports the upgrade of the playground at Mountain Farms and tree cutting. She feels funding is needed for these things.

The Simsbury Chamber of Commerce said the COVID-19 Virus has be detrimental to local businesses and asked the Board to fix taxes on the local businesses to help them recover from these unusual circumstances.

PRESENTATION

a) Town Preparedness Update Regarding COVID-19

Ms. Capriola spoke about the current pandemic of COVID-19. She said the Town Declared a State of Emergency which allows her to protect the public’s health during this pandemic. It is intended to prepare for possible effects of this pandemic on the community and possible shortages of supplies, etc. for the community. The Town has been in constant contact with the Farmington Valley Health District as well. The Town has closed public buildings, playgrounds, courts, etc. until further notice. For more information, the residents can go to the Town’s website at Simsbury-ct.gov.

Ms. Capriola said urgent matters will be handled at the discretion of staff. The Town will provide essential services, but on a limited basis. Secure drop boxes will be in front of Town Hall for document drop-offs and in front of Eno Hall for Social Service documents or donations. Most meetings have been cancelled or no public is allowed. However, the meetings can be watched on certain TV channels.

FIRST SELECTMAN’S REPORT

First Selectman, Wellman, reviewed his First Selectman’s report. He reflected on the issues from the past week, and spoke about how to stay connected to local government. He said, as a community, he is confident that everyone will get through this difficult time.

SELECTMAN ACTION

a) Resolution to Extend Budget Process Timeframes

Mr. Wellman said Governor Lamont issued an executive order for local governments to have the option to extend their budget timeframe during this difficult time.

Ms. Capriola noted that this extension is for 30 days, which she feels is prudent seeing as cannot hold a Public Hearing until at least April 22nd. She explained how the extension works along with the possible dates we use.

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to extend the timeframes associated with the FY20/21 budget development process by thirty (30) days, pursuant to Executive Order No. 7C, issued by Governor Lamont on March 15, 2020. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b) Tax Refund Requests

Mr. Paine made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to approve the presented tax refunds in the amount of \$1,601.16, and to authorize Town Manager, Maria E. Capriola, to execute the tax refunds. Ms. Battos seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

c) FY 2020/2021 Historic Documents Preservation Program Grant

Mr. Wellman said this is a Grant that the Town applies for every year. It allows the Town to convert paper documents to microfilm. It also helps to preserve other documents.

Mr. Paine made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to submit the FY 2020/2021 Historic Documents Preservation Program Grant application and to authorize Maria E. Capriola, Town Manager, to designate Ericka L. Butler, Town Clerk, as the agent for making the above application. Also, to accept the FY 2020/2021 Historic Documents Grant and to authorize Maria E. Capriola, Town Manager, to execute all documents related to the grant award. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

d) LOTCIP Grant Applications

Mr. Wellman said these grants are available to communities to fund transportation project including reconstruction, pavement rehabilitation, sidewalks, bridges, intersection improvements and multi-use trail projects.

Ms. Battos made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to submit an application for the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program Grant for the proposed project of constructing a sidewalk along the western edge of Hopmeadow Street in the northern village, and, in the event that the grant is awarded, to authorize Town Manager, Maria E. Capriola to execute all documents related to the grant program. Mr. Paine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

e) 350th Painting – Proposed Donation and Purchase Agreement

Ms. Wellman recused himself and turned the meeting over to Deputy First Selectman Sean Askham.

Mr. Askham said the Wellman family is donating a painting of the Pinchot Sycamore Tree to the 350th Anniversary Celebration. The Board needs to accept the donation, execute the proposed donation agreement and the purchase agreement.

Ms. Battos made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to accept the donation from Rachel and Eric Wellman for the purpose of acquiring the 350th Anniversary painting depicting the Pinchot Sycamore Tree, with our thanks, and to further move to authorize Town Manager to execute the proposed donation agreement with Rachel and Eric Wellman. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Paine made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to authorize the Town Manager to execute the purchase agreement with Michael Grady, the artist of the 350th Anniversary painting depicting the Pinchot Sycamore Tree. Ms. Battos seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Ms. Wellman returned to the meeting.

f) Proposed Updates to the Accountant Classification

Ms. Capriola spoke about revising the job description for the Accountant position in the Finance Department, which has been vacant since 2013. This position is currently classified at grade “A0” with the proposal of a new pay grad of “A2-B”. This would be a 40 hour position.

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to approve the proposed changes to the job description, pay grade, and hours of work for the Accountant classification as presented. Mr. Paine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

g) Discussion of FY 20/21 Budget

Mr. Wellman said the Board of Finance has asked the Board of Selectmen to do a flat mill rate for budget year 20/21. The Board had a long discussion on different scenarios that could be done to come to the Board of Finances suggestions. They discussed bonding and cash payment items and pension/mortality rates, along with other budgetary changes.

Ms. Meriwether went through all of the changes and said the mill rate will go from 37.32 to 37.21 which will decrease the Median Home Impact by \$23. Mr. Wellman noted that this proposed budget could change before the Public Hearing and Budget Referendum.

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 23, 2020, to recommend the budget changes to the Board of Finance. Ms. Battos seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

a) Resignation of Christopher Tranberg from the Library Board of Trustees

Mr. Paine made a motion, retroactive to March 16, 2020, to accept the resignation of Christopher J. Tranberg (D) as a regular member of the Library Board of Trustees with our thanks. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting of March 9, 2020

There were no changes to the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 9, 2020 and, therefore, the minutes were adopted.

b) Special Meeting of March 11, 2020

There were no changes to the Special Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2020, and, therefore, the minutes were adopted.

SELECTMEN LIAISON AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Personnel** – There is no report at this time.
- b) Finance** – There is no report at this time.
- c) Welfare** – There is no report at this time
- d) Public Safety** – Mr. Askham said the Public Safety Committee met last Thursday and is meeting again this Thursday to keep a line of communications open on this pandemic.
- e) Board of Education** – There is no report at this time.

COMMUNICATION

a) Administrative Approvals for Public Gathering Permits

There was no discussion at this time.

ADJOURN

Mr. Paine made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Radocchio
Clerk