

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 27, 2023
“ D r a f t ”**

Page | 1

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectman Wendy Mackstutis; Deputy First Selectman Amber Abbuhl; Board members Eric Wellman, Heather Goetz, Sean Askham and Chris Peterson. Others in attendance included: Acting Deputy Town Manager Thomas Fitzgerald; Director of Public Works/Town Engineer Tom Roy; Culture, Park and Recreation Director Tom Tyburski; Treasurer/ Finance Director Amy Meriwether; Attorney Robert DeCrescenzo; Police Chief Nicholas Boulter, and other interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

- **Participants can address the Board of Selectmen in person at the meeting**
- **Email townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov by noon on Monday, March 27, 2023, to register to address the Board of Selectmen live through Zoom**
- **Written comments can be emailed to townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov. Written comments will not be read into the records, but, forwarded to all Selectmen via email**

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, spoke about comments made at the March 13th meeting; the budget, revaluation and assessments; mental health; drug and alcohol issues; the Police Department staffing issues and other issues.

Susan Masino, 41 Madison Lane, spoke about the Olmsted bicentennial birthday on April 26th and the hope that “Fred” will visit the Town; Earth Day at Flamig Farm on April 22nd and a 5-film series beginning on April 23rd at the Grange about Beaver Pond Wildlife.

Laurie Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, spoke about the vacancy on the Juvenile Review Board and the qualifications of the proposed new member and possible conflicts of interest for employees becoming members of the Farmington Valley Health District.

Sharon Thomas, 42 Brettonwood Drive, spoke about engaging staff in the Town Manager position, having an open house to let the staff meet the Town Manager, and surveying staff for their input on what they feel appropriate skill set should be, etc.

PRESENTATION

a) Open Space Committee Update

Ms. Masino said open space is the foundation of our community’s well-being. She gave an overview of the Open Space Committees strategic plan and their national hallmarks and distinctions. She feels these are good building blocks to the future. She also went through their master plan, acquisition criteria and values. They have an opportunity to get on the map with a Homegrown National Park.

Ms. Winters spoke about the native plant policy, the municipal landscape policy and interconnecting with birds and wildlife species. She would like the Town to adopt the native plant policy for municipal landscapes. She

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 27, 2023
“ D r a f t ”**

Page | 2

wants to use best management practices for mowing of our fields. She also spoke about bird habitats and pollinator habitats.

Ms. Cordner spoke about the home-grown national park branding opportunity and the pollinator pathway. She spoke about grassroot initiatives to count native species for their ecological and health benefits. She wants to be the 1st town in the country to co-brand with Homegrown National Parks. When people start planting they should look for “native pollinator” on the packages.

After some discussion on the Homegrown National Park designation, no motion was made at this time.

FIRST SELECTMAN’S REPORT

Ms. Mackstutis, First Selectman, reviewed her First Selectman’s report.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Fitzgerald, Acting Deputy Town Manager, reviewed the Town Manager’s report.

SELECTMEN LIAISON AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

- a) **Personnel** – no report at this time.
- b) **Finance** - there was no report at this time.
- c) **Public Safety** – no report at this time.
- d) **Board of Education** – there was no report at this time.

Ms. Abbuhl said Simsbury Clean -up day is April 22nd from 9:30 – 12:30 beginning at Town Hall. This will also be sponsored by the Farmington Valley Trails Council.

Mr. Wellman said the Sustainability Committee will have a meeting on Wednesday, March 29th at the Library at 7 p.m.

SELECTMEN ACTION

a) Tax Refund Requests

Ms. Goetz made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to approve the presented tax refunds in the amount of \$2,155.27 and to authorize Town Manager, Maria E. Capriola, to execute the tax refunds. Mr. Askham seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b) FY 24 Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program

Ms. Mackstutis said this application is done every year to help preserve the Town’s records.

Ms. Abbuhl made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to submit the FY2024 Historic Documents Preservation Program Grant application and to authorize Maria E. Capriola, Town Manager, to designate Trish Monroe, Town Clerk, as the agent for making the above application.

In the event that the grant is awarded, the following motion is in order: effective March 27, 2023, to accept the FY 2024 Historic Document Preservation Program Grant and to authorize Maria E. Capriola, Town Manager, or a successor Town Manager, to execute all documents related to the grant award. Mr. Wellman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

c) Donation from Simsbury-Granby Rotary Club

Ms. Mackstutis said this donation is to support the cost for 3 cadets. Chief Boulter said this is a 20-year program for children from 14-20. They will learn volunteerism, have some police training, etc.

Mr. Wellman made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to accept a donation from Simsbury-Granby Rotary Club in the amount \$1875 to sponsor the attendance of three Simsbury Police Cadets at the Cadet Academy in the summer of 2023 with our thanks. Mr. Askham seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

d) Proposed Revisions to Fingerprinting Fee Schedule

Mr. Mackstutis said the Police are asking for an increase in the charge for fingerprinting. Chief Boulter said they do about 600+ fingerprints per year mostly for pistols, adoptions and employment. He's asking that the fees be increased as they now have to pay for the warranty and maintenance for their new system.

There was discussion about charging the Board of Education and other staff members to have this done.

After discussion Mr. Wellman made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to approve the proposed revisions to the fingerprinting fee schedule as presented, without charging Town staff. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. Ms. Abbuhl, Mr. Wellman, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Askham, and Ms. Goetz voted in favor and Ms. Mackstutis voted against. The motion passes.

e) Easements between Dorset Crossing LLC and Town of Simsbury

Mr. Roy said the developers want a decorative entrance. The Town would not be responsible when they take over the entrance. The Town attorney did review the easements.

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to authorize Town Manager, Maria E. Capriola to execute the First Amendment to Temporary Turnaround Easement Agreement between Dorset Crossing, LLC and the Town of Simsbury. Further move, to accept the Driveway and Drainage Easement from Dorset Crossing LLC to the Town of Simsbury. Further move, to accept the Conservation Easement from Dorset Crossing LLC to the Town of Simsbury. Ms. Abbuhl seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

f) Appointment of Interim Town Manager

Attorney DeCrescenzo said he is working with the Executive Search Committee and went through the process steps to find a new Town Manager. Ms. Capriola said she would stay until May 1st. The new Town Manager will begin on June 1st with an initial term of 3 months if needed. The next steps would be to submit a RFP for a Town management search firm. The proposed new Town Manager is very qualified with a lot of experience. The Board wants this to be a transparent process and would like to get the staff involved in what it is they are looking for in a Town Manager.

After discussion, Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to appoint Lee C. Erdmann to the position of Interim Town Manager effective June 1, 2023 until such time that this motion is superseded by the appointment of another Interim or permanent Town Manager. Further move, to authorize Maria E. Capriola, Town Manager to execute the proposed consulting service agreement as presented. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

g) FY 23/24 Budget Discussion

Ms. Meriwether showed the Board the changes made to the budget after discussing it with the Board of Finance. They were suggesting a \$150,000 - \$200,000 reduction in the operating budget and \$2.2M in capital by pushing projects out further. Therefore, changes were made reduce the Board of Education budget; reduction to the Debt Service; removing \$1.2M in FY 23 issuance debt service; decrease to debt service from ARPA; increase to investment income; increase to World Skate revenue; and increase to insurance rebate program revenues.

Ms. Meriwether said all the changes would make the mill rate 31.80 (including Fire District) and an increase of \$409 for median valued home families.

Ms. Meriwether went through the Capital budget plan without the Sewer District. There was also some discussion on the Board's rankings of projects. They asked residents to give them ideas about what they would like to change also. After discussion, no motion was made.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

a) Resignation of Chari Anderson from the Simsbury Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council

Mr. Askham made a motion, retroactive to March 14, 2023, to accept the resignation of Chari Chester-Anderson as a Regular Member of the Simsbury Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council with our thanks. Mr. Wellman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b) Appointment of Ed LaMontagne as an Alternate member of the Aging and Disability Commission

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to appoint Ed LaMontagne as an Alternate Member of the Aging and Disability Commission with a term ending on January 1, 2024. Mr. Wellman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

c) Appointment of Veena Raghuvir to Juvenile Review Board

After discussion on the qualifications professionalism of Ms. Raghuvir, Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to appoint Veena Raghuvir as a Regular Member of the Simsbury Juvenile Review Board. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

d) Appointment of Thomas Fitzgerald to Farmington Valley Health District

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective March 27, 2023, to appoint Thomas Fitzgerald to the Farmington Valley Health District Board of Directors for a term set to expire on April 24, 2023, then to a subsequent 3-year term set to expire on April 24, 2026. Ms. Abbuhl seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 27, 2023
“ D r a f t ”**

Page | 5

REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a) **March 9, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes** – there were no changes to the minutes, and, therefore, the minutes were adopted.
- b) **March 11, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes** – there were no changes to the minutes, and therefore, the minutes were adopted.
- c) **March 13, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes** – there were no changes to the minutes, and, therefore, the minutes were adopted.
- d) **March 15, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes** – there were no changes to the minutes, and, therefore, the minutes were adopted.

ADJOURN

Mr. Askham made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Mr. Wellman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Radocchio
Clerk

Following Adjournment Pursuant to 1-200(2), the Board of Selectmen and Its Legal Counsel met as the Executive Search Committee