

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 14, 2021
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CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 5:32p.m. on ZOOM due to COVID-19. Present were: First Selectman Eric Wellman; Deputy First Selectman Sean Askham; board members Mike Paine, Wendy Mackstutis and Chris Peterson. Others in attendance included Town Manager Maria E. Capriola and Deputy Town Manager Melissa Appleby.

Mr. Wellman discussed the citizen petition initiative that occurred over this past weekend in an effort to put the Meadowood acquisition project on the referendum ballot. The required number of signatures was obtained, so the Board needs to take a couple of procedural votes this evening. Mr. Wellman said that the Board will formally accept the petition and will schedule the special Town Meeting as required by the Town Charter. Following that Town Meeting, the Board will send the proposed resolution to referendum.

Members remarked on this unprecedented display of public involvement. Mr. Askham noted that prior to the Charter revision, the Town did have an annual Town Meeting. Although this part of the annual budget process was removed, the Charter revision did preserve the citizen petition process. This allows citizens to hold their elected boards accountable when they do not make decision that accurately reflect what they want.

Ms. Capriola said that it was heartening to see the residents engage in the democratic process in this way. Mr. Peterson noted that it is usually a small percentage of residents who are engaged in major issues in Town. He said this effort proved that just because the Board, and other actively engaged volunteers, are involved regularly, this does not mean that we always know what people want.

SELECTMEN ACTION

a) Accept Certified Petition for Special Town Meeting

Mr. Askham made a motion to accept the certified petition which seeks to acquire and authorize bond funding for the property known as “Meadowood” and to call a special Town Meeting for the same topic. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

b) Pursuant to Charter Section 409 Discussion of Special Town Meeting for Meadowood and Set Special Town Meeting Date

Mr. Askham made a motion to hold a special town meeting of the electors and citizens qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of Simsbury, Connecticut at the Simsbury Farms Ice Rink, 100 Old Farms Road, in the Town of Simsbury, Connecticut on Saturday, April 24, 2021, at 11:00 a.m. to consider the following resolution:

ACQUISITION OF MEADOWOOD PROPERTY

RESOLVED,

(a) THAT THE TOWN OF SIMSBURY APPROPRIATE \$2,515,860 FOR THE PURCHASE AND IMPROVEMENT OF MEADOWOOD (APPROXIMATELY 288 ACRES OF UNDEVELOPED LAND LOCATED OFF HOSKINS ROAD, COUNTY ROAD AND FIRETOWN ROAD); AND AUTHORIZE BONDS AND NOTES IN THE SAME AMOUNT TO FINANCE SAID APPROPRIATION.

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Pursuant to Section 406 of the Charter of the Town of Simsbury, this resolution shall be subject to an automatic referendum by all qualified voters of the Town of Simsbury on a date set by the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

A brief discussion ensued regard the purpose of the Town Meeting. Ms. Capriola explained that the meeting is mainly procedural, and that the meeting will be adjourned to referendum for a vote. Staff is working out the mechanics of that procedure with the Town Attorney. She said that we will be sending out public communications in advance of the Town Meeting to explain what to expect on April 24.

ADJOURN

Mr. Askham made a motion to adjourn at 5:47p.m. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Appleby
Deputy Town Manager