

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 and via Zoom. Present were: First Selectman Wendy Mackstutis; Deputy First Selectman Amber Abbuhl; Board members: Heather Goetz, Eric Wellman, Chris Peterson (via Zoom) and Sean Askham. Others in attendance included: Acting Deputy Town Manager Tom Fitzgerald; Chief of Police Nicholas Boulter; Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation Tom Tyburski; WPCA Superintendent Anthony Piazza and Public Works Director/Town Engineer Tom Roy.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

- Participants can address the Board of Selectmen in person at the meeting
- Written comments can be emailed to townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov. Written comments will not be read into the record, but forwarded to all Selectmen via email.

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, spoke about the Town Manager search and First Selectman hiring in the past and future attributes required. She also spoke on Chief Boulter as the Interim Town Manager.

Maria Ecke, 8 Glenbrook Drive, spoke regarding the Simsbury Police Chief, the pavement project on her road and leaf/trash pickup benefits.

Melissa Brett, 77 Seminary Road, shared regarding commercial property valuation and increased costs and the appeal process.

Nord Christensen, 35 West Mountain Road, spoke regarding his seventeen owned properties and the current valuations, timing of notices and increase amounts.

PRESENTATIONS

a. Autism Awareness Month Proclamation

Jack Knall, a Simsbury resident with Autism spoke about his community involvement and accomplishments and the importance of Autism Awareness.

Robin Batcholder, a Simsbury resident with Autism shared on her community involvement and accomplishments and the importance of Autism Awareness.

PROCLAMATION AUTISM AWARENESS

WHEREAS, autism is a neurological condition affecting millions of people in the United States that demands a national response and an increase in knowledge of the programs that have been and are being developed to support persons with autism and their families; and,

WHEREAS, autism can affect anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background;

and,

WHEREAS, symptoms and characteristics of autism may present themselves in a variety of combinations and can result in significant lifelong impairment of an individual’s ability to learn, develop healthy interactive behaviors, and understand verbal as well as nonverbal communications; and

WHEREAS, doctors, therapists, and educators continue to help persons with autism overcome or adjust to its challenges and provide early, accurate diagnosis and the resulting appropriate education, intervention, and therapy that are vital to future growth and development; and,

WHEREAS, ensuring that persons with autism have lifelong access to care and services needed to pursue the full measure of personal happiness and achieve their greatest potential;
and,

WHEREAS, The Town of Simsbury is honored to take part in the annual observance of Autism Awareness Month and World Autism Awareness Day in the hope that it will lead to a better understanding of the disorder; and,

THEREFORE, I, Wendy Mackstutis, First Selectman, do hereby proclaim April 2023 as AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH in Simsbury and call upon all of us to learn more about autism to improve early diagnosis, learn firsthand the experiences of persons with autism, and to build more welcoming and inclusive communities to support persons with autism.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have placed my seal and the great seal of the Town of Simsbury.

Dated the 17th day of April 2023

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective April 17, 2023, to authorize First Selectman Wendy Mackstutis to issue a Proclamation in support of Autism Awareness Month. Ms. Abbuhl seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b. Rotary Club

Mr. Sullivan shared that Rotary Club is worldwide, they have global projects and are always looking for new members. Mr. Menon spoke regarding Rotary International and the End Polio Now program. In 1985, there were 400,000 cases in 125 countries as of 2021 there were four cases in two countries. He shared that 2.8 billion children have been immunized and 2.9 billion has been donated by Rotarians. Ms. Case spoke regarding the Riobamaba Medical Center and outreach programs. Mr. Kaylor shared on local initiatives including group home holiday parties, fundraisers (The River Run and Rotary Golf Tournament) which each brought in roughly 75k. He also stated that some of their projects include the SHS Athletic Field press box, Simsbury Police cadet training, Salvation Army Bell Ring, Healing Meals, and the Jack Bannan Turkey Trot. Rotary Day of Service is May 20th, there are three projects going on that day, Tanager Hill Eagle Scout Pollinator Garden, ABC House Pollinator Garden and the Farmington River Kayak/Canoe clean-up. Dr. Graham shared on the local scholarships that the Rotary Club is offering, in total it is 25K between Simsbury and Granby. Mr. Deming shared on the Rotary Park playground and the Performing Arts Center creation and endeavor.

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.

LIAISON AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Personnel** – no report at this time. Ms. Mackstutis this week’s meeting was cancelled due to a lack of quorum. The next meeting is May 11, 2023.
- b. **Finance** – no report at this time.
- c. **Public Safety** – no report at this time.
- d. **Board of Education** –no report at this time.

Ms. Abbuhl shared that on 4/19 there is a Memory Cafe at the Simsbury Library put on by the Library and Senior Center, the theme will be spring. She also shared that on Saturday, from 9:30-12:30 it will be Simsbury Clean-Up Day, people can sign up on C.P.R.’s website for part of a road or trail. She also stated that there is a sensory friendly movie event at Simsbury Free Library on Sunday.

Ms. Goetz shared an update under EDC from Simsbury Main Street Partnership regarding the commercial space vacancies in Town.

Ms. Mackstutis requested that item c- Homegrown National Park Co-Branding be tabled while the Town Attorney finalizes his review, she is also waiting on clarification from Ms. Masino regarding the item.

Ms. Abbuhl made a motion to table agenda item c. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

SELECTMEN ACTION

a) Congressionally Directed Spending Program- Police Department

Chief Boulter shared that this is for two different requests. The first is to upgrade the emergency medical dispatch system. They are trying to upgrade to a digital system and use the hand card sets for a back-up. The initial ask on this is about \$12,000. Annually after that, it would be about \$3,000 for licensing. The second request is for new access system for exterior and interior doors at Town Hall. He stated they have had the same system in the Police Department since the renovation in 2005 and they are looking for a more enhanced, easier to use system. He shared that a lot of the individual interior door handles you can no longer get parts for. The estimated cost is between \$75,000-\$100,000 and there is no annual cost after that. He stated this is for fiscal year 2024.

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective April 17, 2023, to authorize Town Manager Maria E. Capriola or successor to submit two applications to the offices of Senators Blumenthal and Murphy for the Congressionally Directed Spending Request in the amount of \$112,000 for Technology Upgrades for the Simsbury Police Department and Town Hall. Further move, to accept the federal appropriations request for the Technology Upgrades for the Simsbury Police Department and Town Hall and authorize the Town Manager or successor to execute all documents related to the award. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b) Tax Refund Requests

Mr. Askham made a motion effective April 17, 2023 to approve the presented tax refunds in the amount of \$1,556.13, and to authorize Town Manager, Maria E. Capriola, to execute the tax refunds. Ms. Abbuhl seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

c) Homegrown National Park Co-Branding Opportunity

Item tabled until next meeting.

d) Schedule a Public Hearing for Proposed Amendments to the Tax Credit for Elderly Relief (Chapter 141)

Mr. Piazza shared that this is not related to a certain property but a way they can simply take advantage of the State program which the Town is already doing for tax relief and apply it to the sewer use fee. If all residents who are eligible participated the full amount would equate to \$35,000, however they don't expect anything close to that.

Mr. Wellman made a motion effective April 17, 2023, to set a public hearing to receive public comment concerning proposed revisions to Chapter 141 of the Town Code concerning Tax Credit for Elderly Relief and Totally Disabled Homeowners to include Sewer Use Fees for 6:00pm on Monday, May 8, 2023. Ms. Abbuhl seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

e. Proposed Simsbury Sustainability Committee State of Purpose and Procedures

Ms. Mackstutis shared that a few years ago they made the Sustainability Committee a subcommittee under Clean Energy and the committee members felt that the real committee should be Sustainability. This is resetting them to the Committee level. Their purpose and procedure now includes input from the Board of Education.

Mr. Fitzgerald commented that in the Purpose and Procedure it does go from six to five slots with the personnel subcommittee as the appointing board. He stated right now there are three people to appoint and the other two openings can be discussed at the May personnel subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Askham questioned why the appointment would now go through the Personnel Subcommittee. Mr. Wellman stated he doesn't recall the history as to why it was going through personnel but he stated he would be okay with leaving it up to the parties. Mr. Askham suggested striking 4A(i) from the Purpose and Procedure which references appointment by Personnel.

Mr. Wellman made a motion, effective April 17, 2023, to adopt the proposed Simsbury Sustainability Committee Statement of Purpose and Procedures as amended. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Wellman made a motion to further move, effective April 17, 2023, to appoint Jami Lewchik as a regular member of the Simsbury Sustainability Committee, with a term ending December 4, 2023 and move, effective April 17, 2023, to appoint Amy McLean Salls as a regular member of the Simsbury Sustainability Committee, with a term ending December 4, 2023. Further move, effective April 17, 2023, to appoint Mark W. Scully as a regular member of the Simsbury Sustainability Committee, with a term ending December 4, 2023. Ms. Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Wellman suggested going forward they could have two Republican slots, two Democratic slots, and then the Personnel Subcommittee could do an unaffiliated slot.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Reappointment of Melissa Appleby to Board of Directors for the Farmington Valley Health District

Mr. Fitzgerald shared that the district’s bylaws are based on our population meaning we get three seats. In the past they have done two Town and one Board of Education member. The person that was in the Board of Education slot has recently retired. Ms. Appleby has previously been on the Board for an extended period of time, she stated that she can sit and serve for now.

Mr. Askham made a motion, effective April 17, 2023, to reappoint Melissa Appleby as a member of the Farmington Valley Health District Board, with a term ending April 24, 2026. Ms. Abbuhl seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a) March 27, 2023 Regular Meeting**
- b) March 31, 2023 Special Meeting**

No changes were made to the March 27, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes or the March 31, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes. Ms. Mackstutis declared the minutes approved and requested that they be put on record.

ADJOURN

Ms. Abbuhl made a motion to adjourn at 7:09 p.m. Mr. Wellman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully
submitted,
Heather Taylor
Clerk