

**Public Safety Subcommittee
TOWN OF SIMSBURY
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES - ADOPTED
Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 8:00 A.M.
Simsbury Town Hall - Main Meeting Room
933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, Connecticut**

Chairman Sean Askham (via phone) called the Special Meeting of the Public Safety Subcommittee to order at 8:00 A.M. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices, 933 Hopmeadow Street.

Present were: **James Baldis**, Chief, Simsbury Volunteer Fire Department (via phone); **Nicholas Boulter**, Chief of Police; **Mark Critz**, Director of Safety & Security, BOE; **Jennifer Kertanis**, Health Director, FVHD (via phone); **Kevin Kowalski**, Fire Marshal, Simsbury Volunteer Fire Department (via phone); **Karin Stewart**, Executive Director, Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association (via phone); **Neil Sullivan**, Director of Personnel, Simsbury Schools (via phone); **Thomas Roy**, Director, Public Works (via phone); **Gary Wilcox**, President, Simsbury Fire District (via phone). Also in attendance were Melissa Appleby, Deputy Town Manager; Michael Berry, Assistant Emergency Management Director, Simsbury Fire District (via phone); Maria Capriola, Town Manager (via phone); Kristen Formanek, Director of Community and Social Services (via phone); Sarah Nielsen, Simsbury Main Street Partnership (via phone); Chris Peterson, BOS (via phone); Nancy Scheetz, Visiting Nurses Association (via phone); and Karen Haberlin, Commission Clerk (via phone).

Pledge of Allegiance

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Audience

There was no public audience.

Approval of Minutes

1) April 2, 2020 Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Coronavirus Response

1) Farmington Valley Health District

Ms. Kertanis reported there are 8,700 confirmed cases in CT, 335 deaths, 31,700 tested, 79-80 cases in the Farmington Valley and 21 cases in Simsbury. They continue to do follow-up on cases and contact tracing, isolate the sick and quarantine family members. She noted some early cases have reached clearance criteria and thanked the community for their support in this effort. She stressed the need to continue social distancing as numbers rise. They have issued guidance to emergency managers and town officials regarding centralizing personal protective equipment (PPE) and donations. Guidance has also been issued to personal care assistants and home health aids regarding protecting themselves and consumers. They have sent out a memorandum encouraging the use of face masks by the general public when in public, adding that face masks

are in no way a replacement for social distancing. She spoke further about PPE, noting that Avon will be a point of distribution for the area and further details on this will be provided next week. Questions and discussion followed.

2) Town Manager's Office

Ms. Capriola reported that public buildings remain closed to the public and most staff is working remotely. Public Works and Parks and Recreation crews are working modified schedules and practices. She noted all critical infrastructure is fully operational. There are a number of facility closures, including the temporary closure of the transfer station. A listing of disposal options is on the Town website. Playgrounds, the skate park, basketball courts, paddle and tennis courts are closed to the public. Larger, more permanent signage noting areas are closed to the public has been made and installed at these facilities. Passive recreation areas, such as open space parcels and trails, remain open and social distancing is requested in the areas. Ms. Capriola reported the Board of Selectmen adopted two programs this week in response to executive orders from the Governor. One is a property tax deferral program for qualifying individuals and the second is a low interest rate program for delinquent taxes. A press release detailing these programs has been sent out. Further, she noted the budget timeframe has been extended by 30 days. Public hearings cannot be open to the public and a referendum cannot be conducted at this time. The Board of Selectmen has given the Board of Finance the authority to adopt a budget if a referendum cannot be held. Tentatively, the hope is that a referendum will be held on May 30. Meetings remain closed to the public. Public comments may be made in writing and sent via email to ebutler@simsbury-ct.gov. Meetings still being held are being broadcasted on SCTV. Only regulatory meetings are being held at this time. Residents can sign up for email updates called News and Announcements on the simsbury-ct.gov homepage and on Facebook and Twitter. And they have been doing a public service announcement every other week on SCTV.

3) Emergency Management

Mr. Berry reported that notifications are going out on WSIM. They continue to wait for PPE.

Mr. Kowalski noted they are on standby at this time and monitoring conference calls throughout the State and from FEMA. They continue to work on getting and distributing PPE. They receive information on those in the area who are sick and put that in CAD for emergency first responders to be notified.

4) Police

Chief Boulter reported staffing levels are good and there is a slight increase in general calls for service in town and in the region. Some of these calls have been related to family violence, general disputes and mental health. He noted that services are in place. People should call 211 or the Police Department for any information or services needed. He reported a very slight increase in criminal activity, noting a vehicle was stolen. He reminded people to lock car doors, keep keys inaccessible, and to not leave valuables visible in cars. He gave a special "thank you" to Anne Baldis for crafting hand-sewn face coverings for officers. He encouraged continued social distancing. Lastly, he thanked the group and those in town for their support.

5) Ambulance

Ms. Stewart reported they continue to look for PPE. She reported a slight increase in call volume and noted they are going on calls assuming sites are positive.

6) Fire

Chief Baldis reported they continue to remain focused on keeping volunteer staff safe. Volunteer strength remains strong. Training and meetings are being done online. They continue to look at PPE. He reminded people that open burning is not allowed. The Easter Bunny Fire Truck Hop last Sunday was great. He thanked the volunteers who pulled it off and especially Steph Brown of the Ladies Auxiliary. There is a picture gallery on simsburyfire.org.

7) Board of Education

Mr. Sullivan thanked Tom Roy, Andy O'Brien, Mark Critz and Chief Boulter for their help on the signage. He noted basketball hoops have been removed at the playgrounds. He reported teens have been congregating in their cars on school property but they are social distancing. The grab-n-go meals program is going well and is averaging about 70 students. He expects guidance from the Governor by the end of this week regarding the length of the school closure, but expects it will go well beyond April 20. The Board of Education will be meeting next Tuesday with the Superintendent and Board Chair present and the rest calling in remotely.

8) Public Works

Mr. Roy reported crews are ready to work using split shifts. The buildings and grounds staff continue disinfection work. They are getting disinfection supplies to the Board of Education. The April 25 Household Hazardous Waste Collection has been cancelled. The next collection will be June 13. Lastly, he noted they are here to continue to support activities going on.

9) Social Services

Ms. Formanek reported they have been very busy. They are the main collection site for hand-sewn masks for the Town. She thanked Anne Baldis as well for making masks for her staff and other staff. They continue serving the community with individual requests for food resources, and helping with grocery store gift cards. They have a large distribution this morning, which will include food, toilet paper, grocery store gift cards, and goodie bags with Necker's gift cards for children. Hot Wednesday lunches for seniors are still be distributed through McLean. She noted Public Works has been great during this time and the Library has also provided games and puzzles on paper for the distribution this morning. As a reminder, she noted services are available to people in need by calling 211, as well as a listing of resources on their website. Help is out there and please call them. Ms. Formanek and Mr. Kowalski agreed to coordinate the mask inventory.

10) VNA

Ms. Scheetz reported they are ready, prepared and the community is ready. She noted they have had a huge outpouring of support from the community and they are more than ready with PPE. They have received two COVID patient referrals from UCONN. Her staff has created Youtube videos showing the correct way to put masks on and added that nurses are available at any time to demonstrate this.

11) Main Street Partnership

Ms. Nielsen reported the business community continues to hold on and she thanked them for their donations to the community. Main Street is continually updating its business and restaurant list at shopsimsbury.com and on their Simsbury CT Facebook page. She is working with businesses on funding issues, programs, loans and grants. In addition, she is working with non profits, volunteers and first responders, and she is available anytime to help. As a reminder, she asked that people not drop used gloves or masks in parking lots or on the street. Please dispose of them properly. She is working on getting masks to businesses. She asked that people shop 7-10 days in advance and noted Fitzgerald's is taking orders into next week and is experiencing a high volume. They still offer in-store and curb-side pick-up. She thanked the Subcommittee for its support.

12) Other

The group agreed to meet again next Thursday, April 16, at 8:00 A.M.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Haberlin
Commission Clerk