

**Public Safety Subcommittee
TOWN OF SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 8:00 A.M.
Zoom Meeting/Simsbury Community Television Live Stream**

Chairman Sean Askham called the Special Meeting of the Public Safety Subcommittee to order at 8:00 A.M. via Zoom Meeting/Simsbury Community Television Live Stream.

Present were: James Baldis, Chief, Simsbury Volunteer Fire Department; Michael Berry, Assistant Emergency Management Director, Simsbury Fire District; Nicholas Boulter, Chief of Police; Maria Capriola, Town Manager; Mark Critz, Director of Safety & Security, BOE; Kristen Formanek, Director of Community and Social Services; Kevin Kowalski, Fire Marshal, Simsbury Volunteer Fire Department; Mike Long, Police Commissioner; Sarah Nielsen, Simsbury Main Street Partnership; Chris Peterson, BOS; Nancy Scheetz, Visiting Nurses Association; Karin Stewart, Executive Director, Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association; Neil Sullivan, Director of Personnel, Simsbury Schools; Thomas Roy, Director, Public Works; Gary Wilcox, President, Simsbury Fire District

Pledge of Allegiance

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Audience

There was no public audience.

Approval of Minutes

1) May 21, 2020 Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Coronavirus Response

1) Farmington Valley Health District

No report

2) Town Manager's Office

Ms. Capriola reported town facilities, programs and services are slowly reopening. The transfer station is open with full services. The Town and Board of Education tennis courts are open. Town parks, open space parcels and trails are open. As of June 1, the Library is offering a curbside pick-up program. Pools will likely open around June 20 and there will be a summer camp program opening on June 22. Administrative staff at Town Hall and Eno Hall will begin working a rotating schedule on June 22. Those buildings will remain closed to the public until at least July 5 but appointments will be accepted. The acceptance of cash payments will be temporarily suspended through September 14 per a Board of Selectmen motion. Senior Center programming will not be scheduled through at least early September and the building will not open to the public prior to the fall. Building modifications are being made, including partitions, screening and hand sanitizing stations. Per an Executive Order from the State, individuals are to

be designated to enforce sector rules related to reopening. She has designated the Police Chief, Planning Director and Building Official. Those departments will be enforcing sector rules. Additionally, the Health District will be responsible for sectors, including hair salons, spas and tattoo parlors. Meetings continue to be closed to the public. Indoor gatherings are now limited to no more than 10 people and outdoor gatherings are limited to no more than 25 people. Social distancing practices are still required. Meetings are being held via video Zoom and can be watched live on SCTV or simsburytv.org. Regulatory bodies continue to meet and agencies that need to take action are meeting, including the Economic Development Commission, which is assisting in recovery and relief efforts. As of last week, the property tax deferral program has 31 approved applications, resulting in approximately \$187,000 in deferred revenue for the first tax installment ordinarily due in July. She thanked the community for their generosity in giving donations. Lastly, she noted the Town is working with an urgent care provider to offer COVID testing in Simsbury for the larger community.

3) Emergency Management

Mr. Berry reported they have been getting PPE out to small businesses, long-term care facilities and first responders. He noted they are working on providing COVID testing as noted in the Town Manager's update. In addition, they are working with the Health Department on a flu clinic before the fall. Information is being sent out through WSIM and they are working with the school system to try to broadcast graduation. He also reinforced that people prepare for summer storms with "go" kits.

Mr. Kowalski noted Mr. Berry will replace him as Emergency Management Director as of July 1 pending Board of Selectmen approval. He reported they are coordinating logistics to have a town-wide COVID testing site. He added they will be working with the Fire Department to support the June 12 High School graduation. Regarding PPE, he noted they are sending out thousands of masks to businesses, as well as over 200 thermometers, to meet their objective of protecting businesses, seniors and first responders during the pandemic. He reported they continue to support fit testing for N95 masks. They are checking safety at restaurants, i.e. vehicle traffic, etc.

4) Police

Chief Boulter reported staff is healthy and PPE supply is very adequate. He noted they had a successful handing-out of donated masks and will do that again next week. They are working closely with the schools on end-of-year events. General activity is increasing. They continue to see heavy use of trails and roadways by pedestrians and cyclists. There has been an increase in motor vehicle thefts, totaling four in the past two weeks. He noted an increase in general activity, including family violence and disturbance calls, almost back to pre-COVID-19 levels. He noted the peaceful demonstrations at Town Hall. Bike Safety month wrapped up in May and he hopes to provide more bike patrol for the downtown area and biking areas.

5) Ambulance

Ms. Stewart reported staff remains healthy. There has been a decrease in COVID-related calls and a brief increase in 911 calls. She noted they picked up the PPE allotment from the State yesterday and have an excess of non-medical-grade masks, which will be distributed to

businesses in town. She will be handing out masks at Fitzgerald's on Monday between 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M.

6) Board of Education

Mr. Sullivan noted High School graduation will be on June 12 at 8:00 P.M. in the High School parking lot. It will be a drive-in-movie-type event and will be limited to the families of the graduating class due to space considerations. Graduates will proceed across a stage and get their diplomas. Year-round staff, including the Central Office, will return to work on June 22 on a staggered A/B schedule while continuing to work from home. For school buildings, visitors will be able to come by appointment only from mid-June to mid-July. The Return to Simsbury Schools Task Force continues to meet and is in a procurement stage, gathering electrostatic machines, PPE, additional Chrome books and technology. They will continue to meet through June and then every other week starting in July. He noted the timely, final meeting of the year of the Simsbury Schools Equity Council, which is tonight.

Mr. Critz reported the last grab-n-go meals distribution will be June 15. They are busy with end-of-year events, a turn-in and pick-up at HJMS, parades from Squadron Line School, a turn-in and pick-up at the High School, the High School senior parade at 5:00 P.M. Thursday, sixth grade promotions at the elementary schools on Friday, and reverse parades at the elementary schools on Monday.

7) Fire

Chief Baldis reported volunteers and their families continue to remain healthy. They are quiet and have had actual fire calls. He noted a displacement last week resulting from a bedroom fire. They have been conducting hands-on drills while practicing social distancing and will continue that. Virtual meetings will continue.

8) Public Works

Mr. Roy reported they are at full staff. He noted the need to keep up with cleaning workspaces and wearing masks. Buildings and Grounds staff have been busy getting buildings ready for reopening, including plexiglass screening, new hand sanitizer dispensers at entry points, disinfection wipes and sprays at shared equipment/copiers. There will be increased, uniform signage at all facilities. They continue to support other departments, including Social Services with the food distributions.

9) Social Services

Ms. Formanek reported they continue to coordinate hand-sewn masks and have received over 1,000. They are being given out at food distributions and the Police Department is handing them out at Eno Hall via drive-by pick-up. Wednesday lunches are being distributed curbside. She noted Harvest Cafe and Amici's are providing meals to families that are struggling. The curbside food distribution will continue every three weeks through summer. She added that donated gift cards are being given out to every family/individual at the food distributions. They are partnering with the Farmington Valley VNA to provide blood pressure and blood screening at the curbside lunch pick-up. Additionally, they are helping with welfare checks and home visits. She noted the Spirit Committee continues to work to identify concerns in the community and to help to address them. The June 25 meeting will be held via Zoom and recorded for the public.

Staff is healthy and they will be working with Public Works to modify workspaces to return to work on an A/B week schedule beginning June 22.

10) VNA

Ms. Scheetz reported they are providing wellness visits to homes. They have set up a tent outside for checking blood pressure and sugars because senior centers are closed. They are working with the Police Department and the FVHD to set up a mass flu vaccination clinic for the fall. She noted the FVHD is partnering with Granby and Priority Urgent Care to offer COVID testing at the Granby Senior Center on June 8 from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. She referenced the Governor's Executive Order mandating all nursing home and assisted living facility staff be required to receive weekly testing as of next week. She noted staff is healthy and they have an adequate amount of PPE. Lastly, she noted social distancing and masks help with mitigating transmission and people need to continue to follow those protocols. She also noted masks with release valves should be avoided. Mr. Kowalski also referenced the flu vaccination clinic for the fall and regarding the masks with exhale valves, he noted people should wear a surgical mask on top of those.

11) Main Street Partnership

Ms. Nielsen reported that outdoor dining is underway. She thanked those involved for their help with this and noted there is a 24-hour turn-around for businesses to reopen. She noted some protocol issues which were resolved and added that the Health District and Town are fully committed to making sure the public is safe in regard to outdoor dining. She noted the majority of hair and tanning salons are open. She noted 21 business and 2 churches have been given hand sanitizer. In addition, PPE has been distributed to businesses and more thermometers and masks will be distributed. She also noted the mask distribution for residents on Monday at Fitzgerald's from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. She thanked the Fire Department for their help with the Antonio's fire and noted they were able to reopen after 24 hours. The shopsimsbury.com list of open restaurants and businesses continues to have the most extensive and detailed information, as well as their Facebook page. Chief Baldis underscored that the Antonio's fire is a classic example of how a sprinkler system can save a building.

12) Other

Mr. Long addressed the incident in Minneapolis and the demonstrations currently going on, noting that the behavior of the Simsbury Police Department is exemplary and an example of how police officers should behave.

The group will meet again in two weeks on Thursday, June 18, at 8:00 A.M. and then once monthly beginning on July 23 at 8:00 A.M. Agenda items from the past few months will continue with the addition of the proposed ordinance to prohibit the intentional feeding of wildlife.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Public Safety Subcommittee
June 4, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

Karen Haberlin
Commission Clerk