

# TOWN OF SCOTLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN



Scotland Town Hall 9 Devotion Road, P.O. Box 288 Scotland, CT 06264  
(860) 456-7797 x 101

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING February 23, 2022 Meeting Minutes

### Audio Link

<https://municipal-documents.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/scotland-ct/board-of-selectmen/documents/videos/33766/02.23.22%20BOS%20Meeting.mp3>

- I. The meeting was called to order by First Selectman Gary Greenberg at 7:03. Present are Selectman Robert Keator, Selectman Wendy Sears, Treasurer MaryAnn Fitzsimmons and Administrative Assistant Wendy O'Connor
- II. Additions to Agenda: None
- III. Approval January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 BOS Meeting Minutes" Motion to approve minutes of the January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 BOS meeting made by Robert Keator, seconded by Wendy Sears. Motion carries.
- IV. Treasurer's Report – Treasurer MaryAnn Fitzsimmons gave the treasurer's report. Attached to minutes.
- V. Solar Array on Town Property - Gary stated the property in question is adjacent to the town DPW garage and is about 20-acre parcel. Santa Energy approached the town some months ago looking to develop something under a series of new initiatives that were opened up this year. Parcel is owned by the town and would be leased. William Ostrander of Santa Energy gave a presentation for a solar array on town property. (Attached to minutes). Public information session was held.
- VI. Kevin Ring Sr. presented the updated volunteer tax abatement program. It's the same range as the last 20 years, approximate cost of \$5,000 to the town. The State is now allowing volunteer tax abatements up to \$2,000, Kevin would like to explore. Ours is an incentive-based program, have had an increase in calls this year. Have had 2 individuals who made quite a few calls. Kevin is asking the town to raise this to \$1,500 this year. Discussion was held.  
**MOTION:** Wendy Sears made a motion to approve new volunteer tax abatement increase to \$1,500, seconded by Robert Keator. Motion Carries.
- VII. Approval of Tax Refund for Liberty Bank - \$2,322.45  
**MOTION:** Motion made by Robert Keator to approve a Tax Refund for Liberty Bank in the amount of \$2,322.45. seconded by Wendy Sears, Motion carries.
- VIII. Appointment of Elizabeth Delaney and Jenna Aldrich to the Library Board  
**MOTION:** Motion made by Robert Keator to appoint Elizabeth Delaney and Jenna Aldrich to the Library Board, seconded by Wendy Sears, motion carried.  
  
Gary would like to thank Carol Withington for her 25 years of service to the library.
- IX. Discussion of Emergency Communications System – We have received 2 bids that are very similar to each other, one has already acquired a database of over 500 of our households. Gary was skeptical due to our zip code issues and sent them a list of 10 addresses, 5 addresses in town and 5 out of town they got a 98. That is how the decision was made and will make implementation easier. Still need to determine if this is a



mandatory opt in service. There are several methods of communication they use; text messages, email, landline, all the social media and the town website. The cost is \$5,000/year. Discussion was held.

- X. Repairs to Scotland Volunteer Fire Department Community Hall – There was a freeze and a flood the in the community hall. The first 2 ft. of sheetrock has been stripped off the walls on the kitchen side. They froze because there are no dampers to stop the cold from coming in from the outside, the air handlers are on the outside. Damage will be covered by insurance. There are 2 options to fix this; one is to install controls, dampers, a thermostat that will run the hot water through the heat exchanger if it gets below 35 degrees outside. The other is to fill the system up with antifreeze which would cost about \$5,000, putting in controls would cost about \$25,000 and would go out to bid. There is not a lot of downside to filling it up with antifreeze. Discussion was held.
- XI. Chief Jason Beaumont gave an update on negotiations with Canterbury Fire Company. At a stand still right not. Have been in contact with our department attorney to help figure out the logistics of staffing issues and how to address them with both towns. Our attorney is working on a proposal to bring to our Board of Selectmen and the Town of Canterbury. Will sit down with our attorney and Canterbury chiefs and iron things out. We have upgraded our responses with them to both towns, doing a single pull system, anything fire related, car accidents both are responding to as mutual aid. Gary stated the ultimate goal of this is to provide 24-hour EMS/Firefighter service to both towns. If it all works out, Scotland will be paying less for the service. Discussion was held.
- XII. Report of Selectmen
- Programming subcommittee met last week, charged with looking at budget and staffing. Looking at Scotland and Hampton's budgets using real numbers not the grant reduced numbers that are in the current approved budget. How to combine the towns 2 schools into one and what the cost savings would be for each town. Talking about using the savings to enrich the schools with programs we cannot afford now. Wendy' committee is hoping to meet with Scotland BOE sometime in mid-March.
  - Met as a full committee close to finishing up the draft cooperative agreement proposal. It will be up to the boards of educations of both towns to decide whether to combine schools or not. It will also be up to the towns to decide whether it will provide the school building and the other town to decide whether to take their building out of service and these are both town meeting issues Will be holding public information meeting sometime in April hopefully.
  - Gary attended SES BOE meeting to discuss the cooperative agreement. Very cordial meeting, a lot of good questions raised. Also discussed combining the town and school bookkeeper into one position and was met with some hesitancy. Still gathering information on what the issues are.
  - Town owns a 12 ft gantry with a chain fall that can't be used, crane has been sold for \$1,000
  - Have met with architect and building inspector to go over compliance issues. Hopes by next week to have estimates on what it would cost to renovate town hall with two different options.
  - Received approval from PZC to add an additional building to the DPW location.
  - Met with an engineer about the Bass Road bridge, expecting some options soon.
  - Heard from our Congressman that the vote on the federal budget should happen on March 11<sup>th</sup> at which point we will hopefully get confirmation on the \$750,000 grant, we may also receive an additional \$200,000 from state historic commission, would include elevator. There may be alternate money available to install an elevator which would make us ADA compliant.
  - Have a site survey of town hall, which confirmed the specifics of what we already knew, most of the front staircase and piece of the ramp is on state property. One of the options being discussed is moving this to our own property which can be done. We will have to put in a new well also. Discussion was held.
- XIII. Audience for Citizens
- Kevin Benito asked if the Santa Solar will answer all questions before we go to town meeting. Will they be putting money in escrow to put the property back together. Will there be a performance bond. Gary stated there will be a public hearing to answer these questions. Discussion was held.
- XIV. Motion to adjournment at 9:02 made by Robert Keator, seconded by Wendy Sears, motion carried



## February 23, 2022 Board of Selectmen Meeting January 2022 financials

- Monthly financials for January are complete, bank statements and tax accounts reconciled. Quickbooks for all funds have been updated and the monthly P&L report has been distributed with this report. Department heads will receive their reports this week.
- Tax collections totaled \$1.07 for the month, \$4.05M year to date. This is just \$28k below the same period last year, despite the lower mill rate, and we are currently just \$316k short of the full year budget (with over \$250k received so far in February. Interest on the current levy is at about 60% of the budget, but interest on back taxes has already exceeded the full year budget, and strong back tax collections will more than make up for any shortfalls in interest.
- General Revenues have already exceeded budget due to the receipt of \$80k reimbursement from the Tech Park and a larger than expected CIRMA Equity Distribution. Excluding the unbudgeted Tech Park item, remaining revenues are at 62% of budget with interest income lagging budget. SES fuel reimbursement is also lower than budget, but this is offset by savings in the expense line item as well due to favorable pricing and usage of fuel. Departmental revenues are at 146% of budget, driven mainly by Conveyances, although most revenue lines have exceeded their full year budgets.
- We received our second ECS state grant (\$319k) in January, along with the second/final TAR payment (\$76.9k). The final ECS payment (\$638k) is expected on April 30.
- General Government expenditures have totaled \$889k year to date, including the FY22 CNR contributions/transfers totaling \$93k and debt payments totaling \$133k (including principal and interest on notes & bonds as well as the fire truck lease payment)
- School expenditures totaled \$1.08M for SES (46% of budget) and \$1.37M for RD11 and related transportation costs (63% of budget)
- At January 31, the Town General Fund had \$2.94M in cash, \$1.96M of which was held in interest-bearing accounts and another \$740k transferred by Feb 2. The amount held in non-interest bearing accounts was slightly higher than normal due to the State ECS payment received on January 31 and the large tax collections received and deposited right at the end of the month.
- **CAPITAL:** Engineering work is underway on various projects, with January spend in the range of \$4k, month end balance totaled \$177k after these expenses. No TAR activity in January other than State funding received, fund balance at \$227k at month-end. No spend from the BOE CNR account this year, balance stands at \$124.4k.

## FY23 Budget

- Creation of FY23 budget file well underway
- We have started receiving quotes from many of our recurring vendors (annual service contracts, etc.), as well as estimated revenues from the state
- Will be creating budget files for each department over the next week, and asking department heads to use these to prepare their submissions for next year. This should streamline the consolidation process quite a bit.

## Other Key activities

- Municipal Spending Cap Report filed on February 9
- Municipal Coronavirus Relief Fund audit documentation (invoice level details) submitted to OPM on February 15 (new requirement, due date set for February 28)
- Continuing Disclosure Report for our bonding filed on February 21
- Exploration of options re: bookkeeper role – will look to expand bookkeeper responsibilities and increase pay slightly to make role more meaningful and will offset cost increase with a reduction in Treasurer hours/responsibilities/pay, as that should make this role easier to replace as well

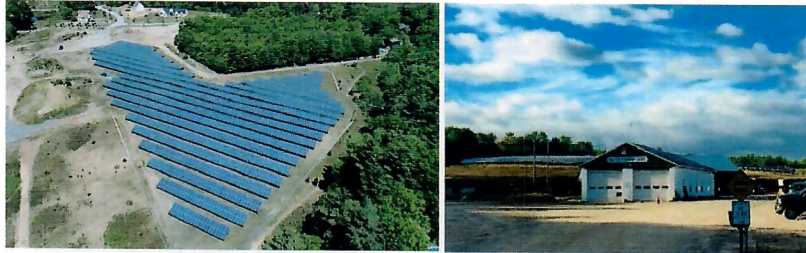
## Upcoming due dates and activities

- FOIA request received for employee pay data for the 2021 calendar year. The request was acknowledged within the required 4 day window, and my counter-offer of a reduced data set was accepted. Will be working on this request over the next two weeks.
- UCOA filing for FY21 – State has not opened the filing for this period yet, but expect it will be soon
- After attending an info session regarding the Freedom of Information Act and obtaining copies of the Records Retention policy, I believe that we need to carefully review the financial records that have been

stored by the Town. The Finance Department will undertake that effort in the coming months, once we have a new bookkeeper on board.

- Final correcting entry to clean-up BOE balance sheet in Accufund
- Attempts to resolve ongoing "account ownership" issues with Intuit have been unsuccessful, and introduces risk in the payroll process. Will be exploring other options for payroll processing as a result.
- Update to Financial Processes document has been postponed, but hope to use UCONN intern to help with this document over the coming year. The plan is to include detailed information about each of the Town's Funds as well.





**Monetize the Town's land to create a sustainable energy future!**

Santa Energy (Santa) is pleased to provide this "updated" executive summary regarding a community solar garden equal to an estimated 950 kW-Dc (750 kW-Ac) that can create a new source of revenue to offset the high energy costs at the Town of Scotland by utilizing the Brook Road land along with offering a discount on the Town & School electric bills. This project will utilize an estimated 139,000 Sq Ft of land located in Scotland, CT. Based on our initial review of the sites, layout options & optimization of the panel production, there is enough area to install a 950-kW solar garden as identified below.

**Solar Energy Lease Rate:**

- \$26,000 per MW/Ac lease rate
- **Up to \$19,500 per year based on the current system sizes**
- 25-year term
- **\$487,000 in total lease payments during the life of the project**

**"Virtual" Solar Energy kWh Discounts: (&/or other CT municipal, School or Agricultural entities)**

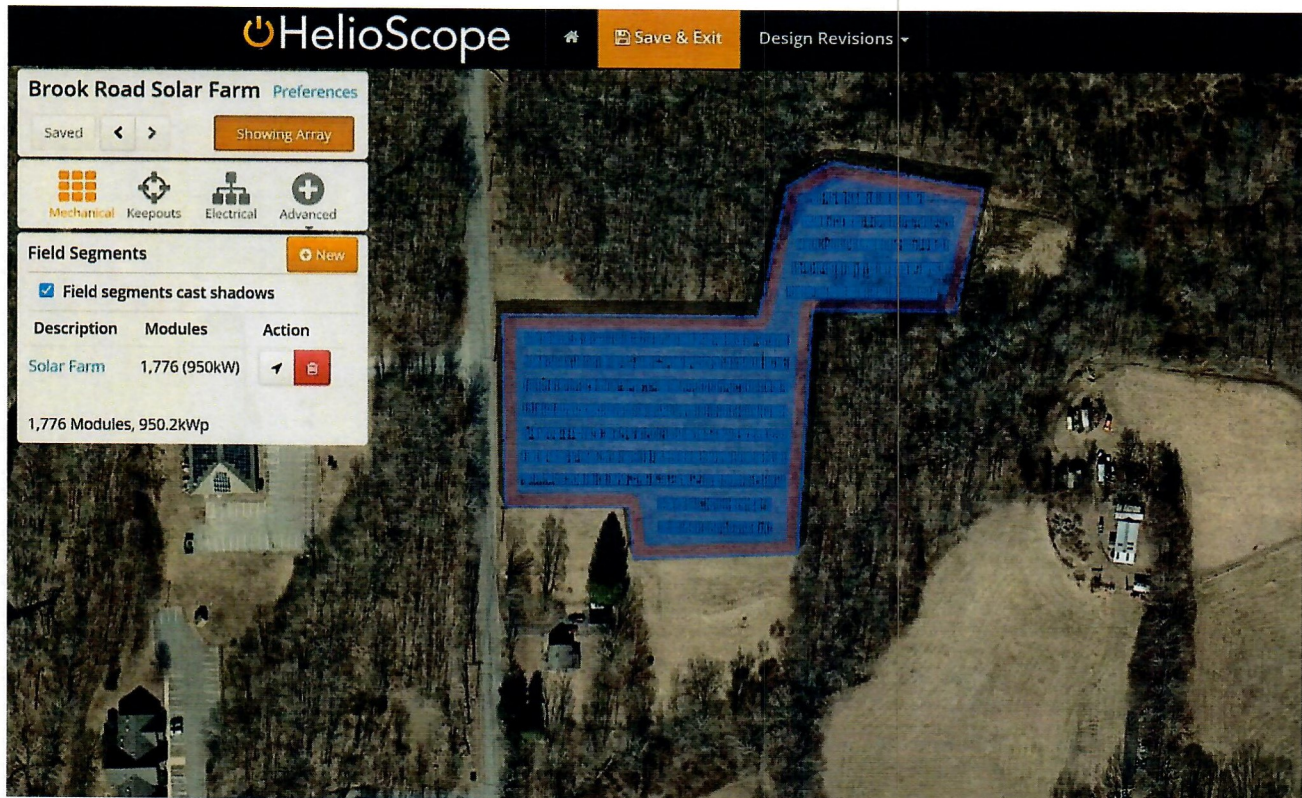
- ½ cent per kWh discount rate
- Based on an estimated 1,200,000 kWhs in solar energy annually
- **\$6,000 per year based on the current system sizes & production**
- 25-year term
- No cost to the Town of Scotland
- **\$150,000 in total energy discounts during the life of the project**

**Total "estimated" value to the Town of Scotland:**

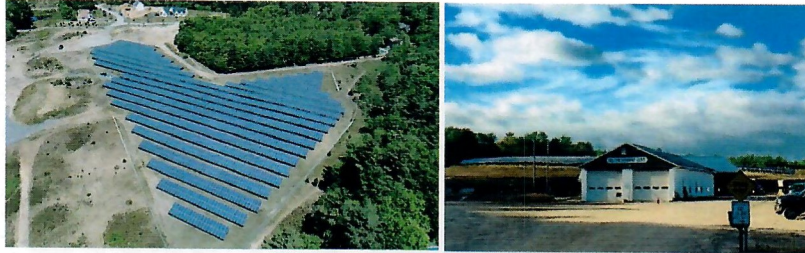
- Lease & energy savings revenue
- **\$25,500 per year based on the current system sizes & production**
- **\$637,500 in total energy discounts during the life of the project**



**Community Solar Garden est. layout:**







**Monetize the Town's land to create a sustainable energy future!**

Santa Energy (Santa) is pleased to provide this "updated" executive summary regarding a community solar garden equal to an estimated 2.94 MW-Dc (2 MW-Ac) that can create a new source of revenue to offset the high energy costs at the Town of Scotland by utilizing the Pinch Street land along with offering a discount on the Town & School electric bills. This project will utilize an estimated 403,000 Sq Ft of land located in Scotland, CT. Based on our initial review of the sites, layout options & optimization of the panel production, there is enough area to install a 2.94 MW solar garden as identified below.

**Solar Energy Lease Rate:**

- \$26,000 per MW/Ac lease rate
- **Up to \$53,000 per year based on the current system sizes**
- 25-year term
- ***\$1,325,000 in total lease payments during the life of the project***

**"Virtual" Solar Energy kWh Discounts: (&/or other CT municipal, School or Agricultural entities)**

- ½ cent per kWh discount rate
- Based on an estimated 4,000,000 kWhs in solar energy annually
- **\$20,000 per year based on the current system sizes & production**
- 25-year term
- No cost to the Town of Scotland
- ***\$500,000 in total energy discounts during the life of the project***

**Total "estimated" value to the Town of Scotland:**

- Lease & energy savings revenue
- **\$73,000 per year based on the current system sizes & production**
- ***\$1,825,000 in total energy discounts during the life of the project***



**Community Solar Garden est. layout:**

