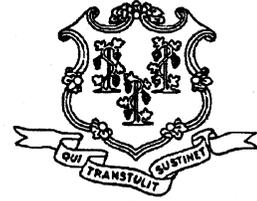




Town of Griswold

Town Hall Offices
Phone 860-376-7060
Fax 860-376-7109



The letter below was also sent individually to the following:

George Jepsen, State Attorney General	Commissioner Schriro, Dept. Public Safety
Commissioner Currey, DAS	Martin Looney, Senate President Pro Tempore
Leonard Fasano, Senate Minority Leader	Joe Aresimowicz, House Majority Leader
Themis Klarides, House Minority Leader	

October 5, 2016

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor
210 Capitol Ave.
Hartford, CT 06106

Honorable Governor Malloy:

Please consider this an official request for a meeting to discuss the State of Connecticut's quest to build a Connecticut State Police gun range in the Town of Griswold. We believe there are clear violations of State Statute and law as outlined in the enclosed letter by our town attorney. For this reason, we respectfully ask for this process to cease.

As advised by our town attorney, we will seek legal action if necessary.

We are requesting this meeting with you and your staff to discuss our concerns with this process.

Respectfully,

Kevin Skulczyk,
Griswold First Selectman

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By e-mail to: FirstSelectman@griswold-ct.org

September 30, 2016

Kevin Skulczyck
First Selectman, Town of Griswold
28 Main Street
Jewett City, CT 06351

Dear Mr. First Selectman,

You requested an opinion letter summarizing my comments made during the September 27, 2016 Griswold Board of Selectman Meeting, and overall position regarding the proposed gun range. At this time the State Properties Review Board ("SPRB") has not reviewed a State Facilities Plan ("Plan") that includes a firing range. Approval by the SPRB is required for projects such as this under the Connecticut Statutes. Currently it is unclear where the authorized funds are coming from that the State is now spending on site investigations, or purporting to use for the construction of the proposed range and training facility. For the reasons set forth below, the State of Connecticut has neither the authorized funding, nor the approval of the SPRB, for the proposed project.

The SPRB was created in 1975 as a "watchdog" agency to ensure that the State's leasing and purchasing of property would be free from 'political patronage, cronyism, personal spoils systems, and friendship.'"¹ The SPRB was created by Public Act 75-425 and later codified as Conn. Gen. Stat. § 4b-3. The composition of the board consists of consist of six members, three selected by the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate (so the majority party in the General Assembly) and three selected by the minority leaders of the House and Senate (so the minority party in the General Assembly), with no party to have more than three seats on the Board. This also keeps the Governor removed from directly influencing the composition of the Board.

The Board's powers include the authority to "review real estate acquisitions, sales, leases and subleases proposed by the Commissioner of Administrative Services," not including certain

¹ Attorney General's Opinion Letter (2010) addressed to Edwin S. Greenberg (See attached letter). This description of the Board's purpose was taken directly from the legislative history prior to the enactment of Public Act 75-425.

Kevin Skulczyck
First Selectman, Town of Griswold
September 30, 2016
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transportation and other miscellaneous projects. Also to “review, for approval or disapproval, any contract for a project described in subsection (h) of section 4b-91,” which describes “every contract for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, remodeling, repair or demolition of any public building or any other public work by the state except a public highway or bridge project” or other projects administered by the Department of Transportation.

The Board also has the power to review and approve the State Facility Plan, which is drafted every two years. The Board has to recommend the plan before it can be sent to the General Assembly as part of the budget process. The State Facility Plan is compiled from individual agency “wish lists” for the upcoming five years, which are updated (like the Plan itself) every two years. The Office of Policy and Management (“OPM”) is responsible for compiling the Plan and submitting it to the SPRB. The whole purpose of the Board and the Plan is to ensure that both the executive and legislative branches of the State government have a unified, cohesive plan for major capital projects for the upcoming five years, so that duplication and waste can be avoided.

A review of all available Plans indicates that in the 1995-2000 Plan (prepared in 1994), the Department of Public Safety² (“DPS”) requested \$5,982,000 (on top of a previously approved \$250,000) for a combination weapons training facility and emergency services facility, which would include canine training, central vehicle impound, and a training academy. The Board only approved \$2,410,000. Since that 1994 Plan, there has been no mention of any weapons training facility in any subsequent plans. Subsequent Plans have included line items by DPS for general “alterations and improvements” to existing facilities only. The 1999-2004 Plan contains line items for vehicle impound and K-9 training facility to be located *in Cheshire*. DPS relied on a \$2 million prior authorization for funding and then requested an additional \$6.2 million for the Cheshire facility, of which SPRB did recommend approval. That same plan calls for \$950,000 of previously authorized money to be used for a firearms training complex *in Meriden*. DPS requested and the SPRB approved an additional \$943,000 for the Meriden facility. Based on available information it appears this money was spent in Meriden, however it is unclear what money was or was not spent in Cheshire. To the best of our knowledge no impound facility was ever constructed or currently exists at the Cheshire facility.

Since 2007, none of the minutes of Board meetings have any mention of a gun range facility. During that same period, neither the Department of Public Safety nor the Department of Administrative Services requested a gun range in their submissions to the Board. This shouldn’t be surprising, since the inventory of State property maintained by the Office of Policy and Management has for the past several years listed the existing gun range in Simsbury as being in “good condition.” It is difficult to understand how a new, multi-million dollar gun range is being

² The Department of Public Safety has since changed its name to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

Kevin Skulczyck
First Selectman, Town of Griswold
September 30, 2016
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pressed as being such an urgent need if the OPM lists the Simsbury facility as being in “good condition”. Further, the State Police long-range facility plan doesn’t call for a new gun range; and the DAS hasn’t requested a gun range in their submission to the Board in the most recent Plan. DAS hasn’t included such a facility in any State Facility Plan since 1994 nor even discussed it since 2007; and the General Assembly has never included such a facility in its budget plans.

At this time, there is no provision in the current State Facility Plan for any weapons training facility at all, not in Glastonbury, nor in East Windsor, nor in Willington, nor in Griswold. It appears that an untold hundreds of thousands of dollars has already been spent on site investigations, feasibility studies, and other engineering studies for a facility that isn’t in the State Facility Plan; that hasn’t been requested by the Department of Public Safety in its Plan submission to the Department of Administrative Services; that has no recommendation from the State Properties Review Board, a prerequisite to inclusion in the budget; and that cannot be funded unless and until the proper procedures are followed. There is an exception in the law for “emergency” facilities, but it appears that the State already spent millions of dollars back in the 1990s for similar facilities elsewhere. Even if the extreme “emergency” argument was used, it is difficult to comprehend how a facility which would take months if not years to complete can constitute an “emergency”. This is on top of the fact that the DAS still lists the Simsbury site as being in “good condition”.

The whole purpose of the State Facility Plan and review by the State Properties Review Board is to make sure that the State doesn’t waste tax dollars on land, buildings, or other improvements that they don’t need, or that are duplicated elsewhere, or that aren’t planned for in the budget process. The proposed gun range has, from its inception, violated the State’s own procedures that were put in place more than 40 years ago to avoid exactly the kind of unplanned, unanticipated, and unnecessary expenditures that have already been made for site studies in four different towns, with millions more required for actual construction.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Very Truly Yours,



Mark K. Branse