

TOWN OF SCOTLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Meeting

Date: September 9th, 2026 Time: 7:00pm

**Location: Scotland Volunteer Community Hall
47 Brook Road**

Special Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by First Selectman Dana Barrow Jr. Present: Selectman John Aldrich; Selectman Michael Gurnack; Treasurer David Zito; Executive Administrator Wendy O'Connor and members of the audience.
2. Discussion and possible action on joining several municipalities in funding legal fees in opposition to Plainfield Trash Plant and moving to a Special Town Meeting for a vote

The Special Board of Selectmen meeting focused primarily on the proposed SMART Technology Systems trash processing facility in Plainfield, the potential impact on Scotland and surrounding communities, and whether Scotland should contribute public funds toward legal efforts to oppose the project.

Proposed Plainfield Trash Plant

Residents and meeting participants expressed significant concerns about the proposed facility, including its potential environmental, public health, and traffic impacts.

Key concerns discussed included:

- Increased truck traffic: The facility could generate hundreds of truck trips daily, with some traffic potentially traveling along Route 14 through Scotland.
- Environmental and health risks: Participants raised concerns about air pollution, groundwater, nearby aquifers and streams, and potential impacts on residents' health.
- Residential location: The proposed site is located within the Black Hills neighborhood of Plainfield, raising concerns about placing a large waste-processing facility near homes.
- Unproven technology: A participant stated that the proposed technology had not been used at full scale in a municipal waste facility.
- Regional impacts: Participants emphasized that the effects would extend beyond Plainfield to Scotland and other nearby communities.

Legal and Regulatory Status

Participants discussed the Connecticut Siting Council's review of the proposed facility and the options available to challenge it.

- The developer had sought an expedited review process.

- According to the meeting discussion, the Siting Council had agreed to hold a public hearing following requests from residents and other interested parties.
- Participants discussed whether the project would proceed under the expedited process or be moved to a full certificate proceeding.
- The meeting identified September 17, 2026, as an important upcoming date for further consideration of the application.
- Participants encouraged residents and town officials to continue communicating their concerns to the Connecticut Siting Council, the Governor's Office, state legislators, and the Attorney General.
- The discussion also covered previous legislative efforts to give Plainfield residents greater authority over the proposed project, including a bill vetoed by the Governor.

Potential Regional Legal Fund

A significant portion of the meeting focused on whether Scotland should join neighboring communities in funding a separate legal effort opposing the facility.

Plainfield had voted to pursue funding of up to \$250,000 for its own legal challenge. Participants discussed the possibility of establishing a separate regional legal fund for surrounding towns.

The proposal included:

- Coordinating with the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECOG) and other regional organizations.
- Determining which neighboring towns would participate.
- Potentially distributing legal costs among participating towns according to population.
- Hiring separate legal representation to address the interests of the surrounding communities.
- Considering a maximum contribution from Scotland rather than committing to an unlimited amount.
- A contribution of approximately \$15,000 to \$25,000 was discussed as a possible range, with other figures also mentioned. No final contribution amount was established during this meeting.

Questions and Concerns Raised by Selectmen and Residents

Several participants expressed support for opposing the facility but raised concerns about committing taxpayer funds before the details were clear.

Questions included:

- What legal arguments would be used, and what were the realistic chances of success?
- How would Scotland's contribution be calculated if some neighboring towns chose not to participate?
- Who would select and oversee the attorneys?
- Where would the money come from, and would funding the effort require cuts to other town services or affect taxes?
- Would a regional legal fund be more effective if coordinated through NECOG or other regional organizations?
- Some participants favored supporting Plainfield, while others were reluctant to spend public money without more information. The discussion also recognized that residents could support the effort through letters, public advocacy, and voluntary contributions.

Proposed Next Steps

The discussion identified several actions for further consideration:

- Contact NECOG and other regional organizations to determine their interest in coordinating a regional response.
- Contact surrounding towns directly to gauge their willingness to participate.
- Gather additional information about the legal strategy, anticipated costs, and likelihood of success.
- Obtain guidance on the timing of the Siting Council's decisions and how that timing affects the towns' options.
- Consider holding another public information meeting with legal representatives and other knowledgeable participants.
- Continue sending letters and communicating concerns to state officials and the Connecticut Siting Council.
- An additional special meeting was suggested for October 7, 2026, to allow time to gather more information. The transcript does not establish that this date was formally approved.

Other Matters Mentioned

Toward the end of the meeting, participants briefly discussed broader waste-management concerns, including:

- The importance of reducing consumption and the amount of waste generated.
 - Problems at the existing transfer station, including broken equipment and safety-related issues.
 - Potential future changes to transfer station operations, including discussion of individual trash pickup.
 - The meeting provided an opportunity for the Board of Selectmen and Scotland residents to discuss the potential consequences of the proposed Plainfield trash plant and whether Scotland should participate in a regional legal effort.
 - There was substantial discussion about environmental concerns, traffic impacts, regional cooperation, and the responsibility to protect surrounding communities. However, participants also emphasized the need to understand the legal strategy, financial commitment, and likelihood of success before using taxpayer funds.
 - The principal outcome was the identification of a need for further information and regional coordination before Scotland makes a financial commitment. The discussion pointed toward additional outreach to neighboring towns and regional organizations, followed by another public discussion.
3. Motion to adjourn at 8:38pm made by Selectman Aldrich, seconded by Selectman Michael Gurnack. Motion carried.