
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Eric Wellman – First Selectman
DATE: January 13, 2020

Martin Luther King Celebration

On Monday January 20th, Simsbury will once again commemorate renowned civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The ceremony will be held at First Church starting at 2pm. Congresswoman Jahana Hayes will deliver the keynote. The ceremony will celebrate Dr. King's life and particularly his time in Simsbury during the summers of 1944 and 1947. The ceremony is free and the public is encouraged to attend.

Tariffville Room

The new Tariffville Room at the Simsbury Public Library is officially open! The Library hosted a reception for the Tariffville Village Association on Sunday to celebrate the occasion. The new program space can be reserved for meetings, concerts, and presentations. This space is made possible thanks to an incredible number of groups and people who came together to make this happen. A considerable portion of the cost was picked up by the state, so I thank Senator Witkos and Representative Hampton. Thank you to the former Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance that launched this project. Also a big thank you to the Library Board of Directors, The Friends of the Library, The Library Building Committee, and the Public Building Committee. The Tariffville Room is located on the ground floor of the Library and I encourage you to come check it out!

Case work on Your Corner

On January 29th, staff from Congresswoman Hayes' office will be at the Simsbury Public Library from 10am – 1pm. Case Work on Your Corner is a free, non-partisan service, open to all residents of Connecticut's 5th District. If a constituent has a question for or problem with any federal agency (e.g IRS, SSA / Medicare, VA ...or needs help with immigration issues, passports, etc.), the Congresswoman's casework staff can inquire on behalf of the individual to get answers. Residents can drop in and do not need to make an appointment.

Farmington Valley Health District

The Farmington Valley Health District shared its strategic plan with the Board of Selectmen at our January 13th meeting. The Health District will be holding a public hearing on their budget March 3rd at noon at their offices at 95 River Road in Canton.

Ribbon Cutting

I'd like to welcome A Girl At Heart to the Simsbury Town Shops. The Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting last week. A Girl At Heart buys and sells American Girl Dolls and related accessories. Welcome to Simsbury!

Christmas Tree Collection

Christmas trees are picked up by your contracted trash hauler. Customers of Paine's will have their trees picked up on their regular trash day this week (January 13 – 17). All Waste will pick up trees on your normal collection day the week of January 27.

Simsbury Loan Locker

I am excited to share that the Simsbury Loan Locker is open for business. The Loan Locker allows our residents to borrow certain kinds of durable medical equipment free of charge. It's currently being housed in the Apple Barn near Simsbury Farms. Anyone interested in donating or borrowing equipment can call (860) 658-3224 or email SimsburyLoanLocker@gmail.com. The kinds of equipment available include walkers, canes, knee scooters, wheel chairs, and bed rails. The Loan Locker is run by volunteers and coordinated by the Simsbury Aging and Disability Commission. My thanks to all involved!

Short-term Rental Ordinance

The Board of Selectmen has formed a work group to develop an ordinance to regulate the market for short-term rentals in Simsbury on sites such as Airbnb. Selectmen Jackie Battos and Chris Peterson are representing the Board of Selectmen on the workgroup. There will also be representation from the Economic Development Commission, The Tourism Committee, and the Zoning and Planning Commissions. The model we are looking at developing would permit short-term rentals in our zoning code (rentals less than 30 days), and we would develop an ordinance that describes how short-term rentals would be regulated. Community input will be an important part of this process. The next meeting of the workgroup is scheduled for January 24th at 8am in the Main Meeting Room at Town Hall. The public is welcome to attend. I'll be sharing more in this space as this work progresses.

Wildlife Feeding Ordinance

The Board of Selectmen has asked the Public Safety Subcommittee to work on an ordinance that would address the intentional feeding of certain kinds of wildlife. Selectmen Sean Askham and Chris Peterson are representing the Board of Selectmen on this workgroup. The group has reviewed a draft ordinance and will be reviewing feedback from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Town staff, trash haulers, and other stakeholders. We expect a proposed ordinance to come to the Board of Selectmen in early spring. For more context on this issue, [here's a link](#) to a recent article on the topic from the Hartford Courant.

School Facilities Master Plan

Our school district is in the process of completing a facilities study to develop a long-term plan for managing aging buildings and a growing school-age population.

Further reading:

- [The website](#) where information is being stored on the master planning process
- [The presentation](#) shared by Tecton Architects at the November 20 forum
- [The follow-up communication](#) from the Board of Education

Simsbury's 350th Anniversary

In the coming year, Simsbury will be celebrating its 350th anniversary since it was incorporated in 1670. Work is well underway to plan a series of events throughout the year to celebrate this milestone. You can learn more about opportunities to get involved at Simsbury350.com. You can also follow the committee's Facebook page at Facebook.com/Simsbury350.

Sustainable CT Certification

Earlier this year, Simsbury became a member of Sustainable Connecticut, which provides a voluntary certification program for communities across the state. We recently learned that we have received Sustainable CT's Silver certification, the highest award currently offered by the organization. In receiving Silver status, Simsbury is recognized for implementing a broad range of sustainability initiatives. I want to thank the Clean Energy Task Force and the Sustainability Team, which headed up this effort. Also thank you to the Board of Selectmen for their support of this work.

Going forward, the Clean Energy Task Force is working on developing an Energy Plan for the Town, and will be soliciting broad community input as part of the process. It will ultimately give the Town a roadmap of projects so we're approaching our Clean Energy work in a strategic manner. Going forward, I'll provide information on how to lend your voice to this process for anyone interested.

Opportunities to Serve the Town

There are numerous opportunities to serve the Town on boards and commissions whose members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Some of the openings include:

- Board of Assessment Appeals (we are looking to fill two alternate positions)
- Aging and Disability Commission
- Clean Energy Task Force
- Community for Care
- Economic Development Commission
- Recycling Committee
- Tourism Committee
- The Hartford Area Cable Television Advisory Council (HACTAC) has openings for two Simsbury residents to serve on this volunteer board

You can find a complete list of current vacancies [here](#). You can find more information [here](#) on how to apply for one of those vacancies.

If you have questions about any of these opportunities, I'm happy to speak with any resident. Please reach out to me by email: ewellman@simsbury-ct.gov

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: January 13, 2020

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Budget Workshop: We have finalized March 7th as our annual budget workshop date, from approximately 9am-4pm. This will be similar to previous years; each department will have a representative to present and answer any questions the Board of Selectmen may have about their department's proposed operating and capital budgets. We will also provide light refreshments for breakfast and a lunch.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS & NOTES:

Planning and Community Development: The Planning Department welcomed their new Land Use Specialist Laura Barkowski on January 6th. Laura comes to Simsbury from Monroe where she served as the Land Use Administrative Assistant for 4 years. Laura has a Bachelor's degree in justice and law administration and has past experience as a paralegal. We are excited to have Laura join our organization as the Land Use Specialist and believe she will be a major asset to the department. Please join me in welcoming Laura to Simsbury!

Public Works: In our continuing efforts to harden our infrastructure and to be better prepared for natural disasters, the Town put forward a capital project that would allow for the purchase of generators to supply temporary power to the Simsbury Public Library and Eno Memorial Hall. Beyond being able to prevent pipes from freezing during a prolonged winter power outage, having permanent generation at these facilities provides significant enhancements to these facilities for both routine short duration outages, as well as reduces the burden of relocating a portable generator during a prolonged power outage. Both the Library and Eno will have the ability to serve as day shelters during periods of prolonged power outages and will be able to support the use of these facilities as cooling centers. The generators for these facilities are now completely installed. The generator for the Library is fully functional as of today, January 13th, and the generator for Eno will be ready to go effective tomorrow, January 14th.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

AARP Tax Assistance: AARP Tax-Aide Volunteers will provide free individual income tax filing assistance for Connecticut and Federal taxes on Thursdays from February 6th - April 9th, as well as Tuesdays from March 10th-31st. The program is open to anyone who needs assistance, regardless of age, income or town of residence. Ninety-minute appointments run from 10am until the last appointment ends at 4:30pm.

Please make an appointment by calling the Simsbury Senior Center at (860) 658-3273. The Tax-Aide volunteers will be located in the Simsbury Public Library's new Tariffville Room on the lower level.

AARP Smart Driver Course: The Senior Center and Public Library are co-sponsoring an AARP Smart Driver course from 1:30-5:30pm on Tuesday, February 25th at the Library. The course will teach current rules of the road, defensive driving techniques, and how to accommodate age-related changes in vision, hearing and reaction time. The course costs \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for nonmembers. Payment can be made by check on the day of the course. Please register at the Library or the Senior Center.

R.A.D Self Defense Program: The Department of Community and Social Services is partnering with the Simsbury Police Department to offer a women's self-defense program. R.A.D is a comprehensive course for women that focuses on awareness, prevention, risk reduction, and avoidance of unwanted behaviors.

It provides realistic self-defense tactics and techniques through basic hands on training. This program is funded through the Amplify grant received by Community and Social Services. Officers Devin and Harrington will be providing the training. The three part program will take place on January 22, 27, and 29. If you are interested in attending