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## FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

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**TO:** Board of Selectmen  
**FROM:** Wendy Mackstutis – First Selectman  
**DATE:** January 8, 2024

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### Welcome to Marc Nelson, Town Manager

The Board of Selectmen welcomes Marc Nelson, our new Town Manager, Simsbury's new Chief Executive Officer to his first BOS meeting tonight. We look forward to working with Marc and expect he will bring with him some fresh ideas, given his experience in different facets of municipal government over his career, along with key strengths in the areas of economic development and finance. He comes to us as the past City Administrator and Mayor of the City of Poughkeepsie. We are confident that with his leadership, our town staff will continue to deliver top quality services to our residents and businesses.

Looking forward to what we can all accomplish together!

### Martin Luther King Day Celebration

The annual Martin Luther King Day special program will be held on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at First Church in Simsbury at 2:00 PM. The ceremony will celebrate Dr. King's life and particularly his time in Simsbury during the summers of 1944 and 1947, appropriately coinciding with the federal holiday marking his birthday. This year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Tayarisha Batchelor, Director of Equity and Access for Simsbury Public School with the theme of "Peace and Belonging." Other guest readers include Maggie Seidel, Simsbury High School Principal, and Stephon King. Musical selections will be performed by the Gertrude Banks Gospel Choir under the direction of Rebecca Saltzman, Choir Director of Simsbury High School, and by the Simsbury Intonations under the direction of Greg Babal, Piano Faculty of The Hartt School. As First Selectman, I'm always honored to give a welcome at this event. Hope to see you there.

### Simsbury Farms AED Installation

On Friday, December 22, the Simsbury Culture, Parks, and Recreation Department put its first outdoor, automated external defibrillator (AED) into service at the Simsbury Farms Recreation Complex located at 100 Old Farms Road. The AED enclosure is located near the Tennis/Pickleball Courts and Platform Tennis Courts. This life-saving tool was made possible by a donation from Simsbury resident Christine Boswell who understands the importance of having these devices in public spaces, having lost her husband, Brian Koscher, to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) while he was playing hockey locally and an AED was not available when needed. Our Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation Director is hoping to make AEDs available in many of our parks and recreation facilities. The bright yellow, well-marked, unit contains a keypad lock which keeps the AED safe from being tampered with but does allow for quick access after calling 911. Mr. Tyburski noted that, "The hope is that this AED will never have to be used, but knowing it is there demonstrates that we care about our residents and patrons and take being known as a HeartSafe Community very seriously." The following link is to the full press release.

<https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/home/news/simsburys-first-outdoor-aed-installed-at-simsbury-farms-recreation-complex>

### 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Country

Members of the Abigail Phelps Chapter of the DAR, along with the Simsbury Historical Society are taking the lead in organizing an initial town-wide meeting for the upcoming anniversary of our country. As a community, we will work together to determine how to organize, plan and fund the related activities. If you are interested in playing a part in these initial discussions, Tony Braz, from the Simsbury Historical Society, has confirmed that we will meet on Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am in the Ellsworth Building at the Historical Society. Debbie Payne from the DAR has started activities within her chapter. If you have questions, you can reach them at the following emails: [tbraz1960@gmail.com](mailto:tbraz1960@gmail.com) or [debpayne4arrow@aol.com](mailto:debpayne4arrow@aol.com).

The town has not yet determined our role but will be at the table as discussions begin.

### Revolutionary War Display at the Library

From January 2<sup>nd</sup> thru January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Simsbury Public Library will have a display on The American Revolution: Artifacts and Stories from Across Connecticut. Connecticut in the American Revolution is a story of fervent patriots, heroic spies, and divided loyalties. This exhibit, consisting of images and text on six pop-up banners, highlights treasures from the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History collection that reveal the people and events that helped influence the war and shape the new nation. This exhibit is sponsored by: Abigail Phelps Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, The Friends of the Granby Libraries, Simsbury Historical Society, and Simsbury Public Library.

### Keep Simsbury Warm Program

If approved in tonight's agenda, we will be accepting generous donations from both the Simsbury Volunteer Department's Ladies Auxiliary and Garrity Asphalt Reclaiming, Inc to the 'Keep Simsbury Warm Program'. I've asked Social Services to include instructions, guidelines, income limits, and the town policy on how to apply for these funds that our generous donors help make possible. They are attached in the Communications Section of our agenda on pages 28-33, and this is the link:

<https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/agendas/1-8-24.pdf>

### Office Hours

I will be holding office hours in Town Hall on Wednesday 1/10 and 1/17 from 11-4 in my office.

<https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/first-selectmans-office>. Please reach out if you'd like to set up a time as I'd be happy to meet with you. More dates and times to follow.

Wendy

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## TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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**TO:** Board of Selectmen  
**FROM:** Marc Nelson – Town Manager  
**DATE:** January 8, 2024

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### **DEPARTMENT NEWS & NOTES**

***Culture, Parks and Recreation:*** The Simsbury Farms Ice Rink will be open for a holiday public skating session from 12:30-2:30pm on Monday, January 15. Skating admission is \$5 for residents and, if needed, skate rentals are \$5 per pair.

The Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation will begin registration for summer camp programming, summer swim lessons and pool passes on Tuesday, January 16 at 6:00am at [www.Simsburyrec.com](http://www.Simsburyrec.com). The Parks and Recreation Staff recommends that families log in to their account at [www.SimsburyRec.com](http://www.SimsburyRec.com) as soon as possible to check to be sure that their children's current grade levels are correct before registration opens. Summer programs such as Camp Stuff-Ta-Doo, Awesome Adventure and swim lessons historically fill quickly so staff advises to not wait to sign up if there are particular weeks or programs that are important to your family.

As winter weather has finally arrived, the Culture, Parks and Recreation staff has announced that the Tennis and Pickleball Courts at Simsbury Farms are now closed for the season. The courts will re-open, weather permitting, in mid-March.

Culture, Parks and Recreation reminds users of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail that the only portion of the multi-use trail that the Town plows during the winter months is along Iron Horse Boulevard from the intersection of Drake Hill Road to the intersection of Iron Horse and Hopmeadow (Liberty Bank intersection). The Town will also clear snow and maintain the connecting section of trail heading north along Owens Brook Boulevard to the Firetown Road intersection. For those who enjoy walking the multi-use trail, Town Staff suggests walking the trail from end to end along Iron Horse Boulevard and then using the sidewalk along either side of Hopmeadow Street to make a nice loop. There are plenty of places to duck into along Hopmeadow Street if you would feel the need to warm up for a bit during your walk and this entire route is safely lit as well for evening walkers. For those looking to enjoy the snow, Town staff suggests using the unplowed sections of trail for cross country skiing or snowshoeing, which can be excellent alternative winter workouts.

***Library:*** The Simsbury Public Library is hosting an exhibit The American Revolution: Artifacts and Stories from Across Connecticut for the month of January. This is a traveling exhibit from the Museum of Connecticut Culture and History which was generously sponsored by the Abigail Phelps Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Simsbury Historical Society. Please stop in to the Simsbury Public Library in January to see this beautiful and educational exhibit in the Library's Technology Lab on the upper level.

Work has begun to refurbish the Library's elevator. It is expected to be completed in five to six weeks. We understand the issues with the elevator have been extremely inconvenient and have greatly impacted library accessibility. We thank you for your patience during this time.

***Social Services:*** The Department of Community and Social Services supported 48 families consisting of 106 children, along with 4 seniors, during the holiday season. We worked closely with 65 donors to provide gifts and gift cards to our families. In addition to very generous gifts, a total of \$6,735 gift cards were also distributed.