
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Wendy Mackstutis – First Selectman
DATE: March 28, 2022

I'd like to start off my report by thanking Senator Richard Blumenthal, who came to Simsbury last week and joined Rep Hampton, Ukrainian charities, members of our local clergy and community to participate in the Vigil for Ukraine. This event was held on March 20th, 2022, at Trinity Church in Tariffville. Pastor Taylor Albright was the Master of Ceremonies and brought us all together to show our support and provided vetted ways to make donations to help.

Congratulations to the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company who put on their 75th Anniversary ball (2 years later than planned) this past weekend. It was a gorgeous event at the Riverview that I was honored to attend, with special thanks to Gary Wilcox, President of the Fire District, and Chief Jim Baldis of the Fire Company. We look forward to our continued partnership for another 75 years.

Tom Hazel, our Interim Town Planner (formerly known as our Assistant Town Planner) will be leaving the Town of Simsbury at the end of this week. I hope you'll join me in thanking him for the work he did here in town, and to wish him well in his new role.

The Chamber of Commerce business leaders breakfast this past week highlighted Chad Thompson, Present of Ensign Bickford Aerospace and Defense Company (EBAD) and Mark Mitchell, President of Mitchell Auto Group. Business leaders from across our community attended. We had a nice contingency from the Town including myself, Town Manager Maria Capriola, Deputy Town Manager Melissa Appleby, Director of Public Works/Engineering Tom Roy, Deputy First Selectman Amber Abbuhl, Selectman Heather Goetz, and Economic Development Committee Chair Bob Crowther.

This Thursday, John Hampton will be hosting a Children's Mental Health Forum on Zoom, with guests, including the Town of Simsbury's very own Director of Social Services Kristen Formanek.

The link is here to sign up:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Swx6iBgCQEq16HOE7VFpCg

The Recycling Subcommittee's Swap Shop has plans to open the shop for the Spring season this coming Saturday (April 2 from 9 AM to 2 PM, weather permitting). Mary Turner is working with her team and the Lions Club to get things rolling.

The Simsbury/Granby Rotary Club will be hosting a day of service planting a pollinator garden at the ABC house on April 9th at 10:00 am. Details are being worked out so keep your eyes open for how you can participate.

The Earth Day clean-up event is planned for 4/23 with more detailed info going out later this week. Amber Abbuhl has taken the lead on this for the town, partnering with Rep Hampton and engaging the Farmington Valley Trails Council.

This Thursday, the library will hold a ribbon cutting for the new 24-hour loan lockers that were purchased with their library ARPA money. The event will be held on 3/31 at 10:00am at the lower-level entrance.

The Board of Finance will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, 6:00 PM at the library in the Program Room. Residents are invited to speak. Both the BOE and BOS will present their budgets to the public. The Budget Referendum at Henry James is tentatively scheduled for May 3, 2022.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: March 28, 2022

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

We are monitoring the state's municipal COVID alert system and are currently at "grey/clear" status for the period ending March 19th. This status indicates that we have less than 5 COVID cases per 100,000 residents, which is a decrease from 6.5 cases/100,000 residents for the week prior. Over the most recent two-week period we had a total of 23 cases. This data reflects the lowest number of COVID cases for our community since July 2021, prior to the Delta variant (and later Omicron) becoming prevalent in Connecticut. We also had a positivity rate of 2.6%, a decrease from the prior period's rate of 2.9%. As a reminder, this data does not include positive test results from at-home test kits.

Farmington Valley Health District (FVHD) is reporting that "There are currently 100 individuals hospitalized with COVID-19 in Connecticut. Of those 100, 44 (44%) are not fully vaccinated. There are currently 34 individuals hospitalized with COVID-19 in Hartford County."

Overall, case rates in the FVHD have continued to decline over the last several weeks. All counties in Connecticut are considered to be "Low" according to the CDC Community Levels categorization. For additional information on why the CDC changed from measuring Community Transmission to Community Levels, please click on this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>

U.S. households can place a second order for free, at-home COVID-19 rapid tests (4 tests per order). The link to order is: <https://www.covidtests.gov>.

Data from the state ending March 23rd reports that 22,630 Simsbury residents have received at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, or 89.11% of the population, while 82.26% of our residents or 20,890 people are now fully vaccinated. Additionally, 13,344 Simsbury residents, or 52.55% of the population, have received an additional booster dose. Further vaccination data for Simsbury by age group:

- Ages 5-11, 66.13% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 62.07% are fully vaccinated.
- Ages 12-17, 89.61% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 83.96% are fully vaccinated; 40.48% of the total population of Ages 12 – 17 have received an additional booster dose.
- Ages 18-24, 100% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 100% are fully vaccinated; 59.75% of the total population of ages 18 - 24 received an additional booster dose.
- Ages 25-44, 100% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 99.96% are fully vaccinated; 61.65% of the total population of ages 25 - 44 received an additional booster dose.
- Ages 45-64, 89.49% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 84.47% are fully vaccinated; 62.99% of the total population of ages 45 - 64 received an additional booster dose.
- Ages 65+, 100% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 100% are fully vaccinated; 90.3% of the total population of ages 65+ received an additional booster dose.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS

Budget Update:

- **Public Hearing:** The public hearing on the budget is scheduled for Tuesday, April 5th at 6:00pm at the Program Room of the Simsbury Public Library, 725 Hopmeadow Street.
- **Discussion Item:** The Board of Finance will be determining where the \$564,574¹ budgeted for capital needs, but not yet allocated, should be appropriated
 - Allocate the funds to approved capital projects in FY 22/23 that are proposed to be funded by bonds
 - Allocate the funds to the capital reserve (staff recommended)
 - In the future, consider allocation of the funds to inflation costs associated with the Latimer Lane Project
 - Assign the funds to future debt service payments
 - Other, such as a one-time pension payment

If the Board of Selectmen has a strong opinion on the above, you can add FY 22/23 Budget Discussion to your agenda this evening with a two-thirds vote of the Board, otherwise no action is needed.

April 6th Board of Selectmen Meeting: As a reminder, your next regular meeting is scheduled for **WEDNESDAY**, April 6, 2022 at 6pm in the Main Meeting Room of Town Hall. There is no meeting scheduled for Monday, April 11, 2022.

DEPARTMENT NEWS & NOTES

Police: On March 28, 2022, the Police Department welcomed Jen Wellington to the Department. Jen is serving as the administrative secretary in the Police Department, replacing Kelsey Chamberlain after her promotion to Deputy Finance Director. Jen joins the Police Department with a wealth of education, knowledge and over 10 years of experience in administrative and operational functions in a variety of settings. Jen holds a Bachelor's degree in exercise science from Sacred Heart University. Congratulations and welcome Jen!

Social Services: Simsbury Community & Social Services will again be offering their Home Alone Safety Class. This class is geared towards children ages 8 to 13 who are left home alone, with a focus on safety. Class will be held on Monday, April 18th 4:30-6:00 at Eno. You can register your child by calling Social Services at 860-658-3283.

¹ This amount is subject to change depending upon the Board of Finance adopted budget (forthcoming)