
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Wendy Mackstutis – First Selectman
DATE: April 6, 2022

In recognition of Autism Awareness Month (which I found out after writing our proclamation, has been renamed Autism Acceptance Month), the Board of Selectman will vote on lighting Eno Hall in blue at night in a show of acceptance and support, for the month of April. Keep your eyes open this month as you head down Hopmeadow Street at night.

It's been a long couple of months, but the end of the FY 22/23 Budget Season is in sight. Last night the BOF held their Public Hearing with Lisa Heavner presenting for the BOF, Susan Salina for the BOE and me for the BOS. We heard from many residents, who voiced their support and concerns for various projects in the budget. We thank you for speaking up! Now it goes out to all of you to vote at referendum, which I believe will be May 3rd. I encourage you to visit the Finance page on the town website and look at all the budget presentations. <https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/finance/pages/2022-2023-budget-information>

Please make sure you vote!

I want to emphasize that I have an 'open door' policy. I try to hold office hours every week, normally on Tues. and Thurs. afternoons. I'm happy to hear from residents, town employees and/or business owners who would like to talk about town projects, voice any concerns they have, or just want to chat with me. I'll do what I can to get the information that you need or to bring in others. Email me at wmackstutis@simsbury-ct.gov and I'll be happy to respond or call you back.

Help us find our next Hometown Hero!! The deadline for submission is April 25th, 2022. The Hometown Hero Committee will be reviewing them the first week of May. Please visit the town website for the application. Information on the program and the link to the application can be found here: <https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/town-managers-office-human-resources/pages/hometown-hero>

In the newsworthy section, I would like to share some news that I received by a resident regarding the SHS Chess team. Nakul Ramaswamy is the winner of the 2022 Connecticut State High School Chess Championship in the tournament that was held at Roger Ludlow Middle School in Fairfield, on April 3rd, 2022. Nakul will now represent the State of Connecticut in the 38th Annual GM Arnold Denker National Tournament of High School State Champions to be held in California this summer. Simsbury High School Chess Club, coached by Gert Hilhorst, also took home 1st Place represented by Nakul, Giovanni, Dibo, Aditty, Raymond Li, Raymond Zhang & Tarun. Congrats to the SHS Chess team!

Housing conversations will be coming to our meetings beginning in May. First up, the Zoning Commission will be presenting and initiating the ADU Opt Out discussion at the Board of Selectmen meeting on May 9th. At some point after date, we will be holding a Public Hearing to hear from residents. Please stay tuned. Also related to housing, the DEI Council is holding a discussion on housing as part of their Let's Talk series on May 12th. This was originally scheduled for April 14th. And the DEI Council's Housing Subcommittee will present to the BOS on June 13th.

Hope some of you are getting a break next week, as I hear its school vacation week. When your kids are 29 and 32, you lose track of the school schedule. 😊
Enjoy the time off and away from the demands of that early bus schedule.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: April 6, 2022

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

We are monitoring the state's municipal COVID alert system and are currently at "yellow" status for the period ending March 26th. This status indicates that we have more than 5 but less than 10 COVID cases per 100,000 residents. We are at 7 COVID cases per 100,000 residents. Over the most recent two-week period we had a total of 25 cases. We also had a positivity rate of 4.9%, an increase from the prior period's rate of 2.6%. As a reminder, this data does not include positive test results from at-home test kits.

FVHD has adjusted their reporting of individual hospitalizations due to COVID. They are switching from weekly updates to monthly updates.

All counties in Connecticut are considered to be "Low" according to the new 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>

On Monday, April 4, 2022, the Town of Simsbury started to make a supply of COVID test kits available for pick-up by the general public at the Simsbury Public Library, 725 Hopmeadow Street. Distribution will be limited to one test kit per individual per visit (each kit contains two tests). Kits will be distributed on a first come, first served basis while supplies last.

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 30th reports that 22,653 Simsbury residents have received at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, or 89.2% of the population, while 82.38% of our residents or 20,920 people are now fully vaccinated. Additionally, 13,408 Simsbury residents, or 52.8% of the population, have received an additional booster dose. Further vaccination data for Simsbury by age group:

- Ages 5-11, 66.3% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 62.45% are fully vaccinated.
- Ages 12-17, 89.82% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 84.3% are fully vaccinated; 41.11% 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; 60.37% 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 99.81% are fully vaccinated; 62.03% of the total population of ages 25 - 44 received an additional booster dose.
- Ages 45-64, 89.51% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 84.52% are fully vaccinated; 63.22% 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; 90.38% of the total population of ages 65+ received an additional booster dose.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS

Additions to the Agenda: With the closing of the public hearing on the budget by the Board of Finance at last night's meeting the Board of Selectmen must now adopt the operating and capital budgets, the referendum questions, and referendum date. At tonight's meeting you also have to approve the proposed budget mailer that gets mailed out to residential and commercial properties in Town.

These items can be added to the agenda with a 2/3 vote of the body. Materials have been emailed to the Board and will be posted online.

Earth Day Event: A community-wide Earth Day clean-up event is scheduled for Saturday, April 23rd. More information and registration can be found here:

https://simsburyct.myrec.com/info/activities/program_details.aspx?ProgramID=28907

Many thanks to those that have coordinated the event and partnered with the Town: Public Works; Culture, Parks and Recreation; Deputy First Selectman Amber Abbuhl; Representative Hampton; the Farmington Valley Trails Council; and Paine's, Inc.

DEPARTMENT NEWS & NOTES

Public Works:

- All of our Public Works Employees (Buildings and Grounds, Highway, WPCA and PW Administration) have recently been recertified in CPR/AED and advanced first aid, which included stop the bleed training. This training is focused on life saving measures associated with severe injuries that could occur based on the work staff is involved in. The Simsbury Ambulance Association provided this training and is also working with our staff to be sure all of our vehicles are equipped with first aid kits that include tourniquets and stop the bleed bandages.
- The Connecticut Department of Transportation began their work on the rehabilitation of Bridge No. 00653 on Route 10 over Hop Brook on April 1, 2022. A truck detour will be in place during Stage 1 of the reconstruction of the bridge for the estimated duration of April 5 through April 22, 2022. The truck detour will divert truck traffic around Bridge No. 00653 (vicinity of Dyno Nobel) south on Route 10 (Hopmeadow Street) to Route 309 (West Street) to Route 167 (Bushy Hill Road) to Route 309 (West Street). Detour signs will be posted.
- The Public Works Department has recently hired two new truck drivers. Corey Feron will begin work on April 11th. Corey has experience as an Explosive Truck Driver at EBAD and also as a Motor Vehicle Operator in the Army National Guard. Jeffrey Krul will be joining the department on April 25th. Jeffrey has experience most recently as a Maintainer 2 in the Town of East Hampton Public Works Department. I join Tom Roy and Kevin Clemens in their excitement to have Corey and Jeffrey join our Highway staff. Congratulations Corey and Jeffrey!

Social Services:

- Simsbury Community & Social Services will be handing out Take Home Kits for Spring Break. The kit includes a build you own birdhouse as well as the paint and supplies to decorate it. You can request your kit by calling 860-658-3283 or emailing Rloveland@simsbury-ct.gov. There is a limited amount of kits and they will be given away on a first come first serve basis.
- In-person meals have resumed at the Senior Center. This includes our Tuesday Lunch Café, featuring soup and sandwiches, and a hot lunch served on Wednesdays. Participants are delighted to be back and attendance is growing by the week.

- We are wrapping up our Energy Assistance Program. The last day to submit a fully completed application is Thursday, April 28th. Please call 860-658-3283 with questions or to schedule an appointment.
- Simsbury Community & Social Services will begin accepting Renter's Rebate Program Year 2021 applications May 1, 2022. Eligibility includes: those 65 and older as of December 31, 2021 or totally disabled; gross income under \$38,111 for a single person and under \$46,400 for a married couple; currently living in Simsbury; Connecticut residency for at least one year. A list of required documents can be accessed on the Social Services website and appointments can be made by calling 860-658-3283 or email Rloveland@simsbury-ct.gov. Applications are accepted through October 1, 2022.

Town Manager's Office:

- Nominations are now being accepted for our Hometown Heroes program. Please use [this link](#) to access the nomination form. Nominations are due to the Town Manager's Office by April 25th.
- The State Historic Preservation Council approved both of our grant applications for architectural and planning services related to the preservation of the Meadowood barns. Each grant award is for \$20,000 or a total of \$40,000 combined. Many thanks to our Engineering team, Project Engineer Dan Gannon and retired Town Engineer Jeff Shea for their efforts in preparing the grant applications on behalf of the town.