
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Eric Wellman – First Selectman
DATE: May 13, 2019

Budget Update

A reminder that 2019 budget referendum is taking place Tuesday May 14th at Henry James Middle School. Polls will be open from 6am to 8pm.

You can learn more about the proposed FY 19/20 budget on our [budget information page](#). We have also created a [budget fact sheet](#), which provides an overview of key changes and budget drivers.

The bottom line we are proposing a budget that maintains core services and would increase the mill rate just under 2.5%. That's less than \$200 for a median priced home. I have received many questions about the Board of Selectmen's Operating Budget, which is increasing 14%. Most of that increase is driven by an accounting change that is intended to improve transparency, but will have no impact on the mill rate. Throughout this process, the Board of Selectmen worked hard to balance our residents' expectations for services with the need to keep our taxes in check.

Memorial Day Parades

The Town of Simsbury, American Legion Post 84 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1926 are organizing two Memorial Day parades on May 27th. The Tariffville parade will march along Winthrop Street starting at 9am followed by a ceremony at St. Bernard's Cemetery. The Simsbury parade will start at 1:30. As usual, it will proceed south along Hopmeadow Street from Owens Brook Boulevard to the Library. There will be a ceremony on the Simsbury Veterans Memorial following the parade. The theme this year is the 75th anniversary of D-Day. We will be recognizing our World War II veterans and the Scouts will tell stories of 5 of Simsbury's World War II veterans who died in service.

2019 Hometown Hero Awards

The Hometown Hero Committee met on May 6th to review nominations and made award recipient selections. Due to the conflict with the Burgers on the Bridge event, the annual Hometown Hero Ceremony will be held on Monday, June 10th at 5:00 PM in the Main Meeting Room at Town Hall.

Planning Department

- Mcleans filed a text amendment application with the Zoning Commission for the construction of a new independent senior living facility within the campus. The proposal is for a 4 ½ story structure to be constructed with 78 apartment units which will be independent senior living.
- 200 Hopmeadow Street (former Hartford property): roadway work associated with the project is anticipated to start this week. The roadwork is associated with the CTDOT approval for the project. The plan for the property consists of apartments, an assisted living facility, and some commercial development. Work has begun on one of two commercial buildings for the development. The assisted living portion of the development is scheduled to be open in late July/early August.

Tobacco Valley Solar

Some preliminary site work has begun on the Tobacco Valley Solar project, a 26 megawatt solar farm off Hoskins and Country Road. On March 28, 2019, the Connecticut Siting Council approved the development and management (D&M) plan. The Town reviewed the D&M Plan and determined that it conforms to the agreement the Town negotiated with the project's developer. According to the D&M

Plan, the project is anticipated to be completed in 8 months. Planning Director Mike Glidden and Town Engineer Jeff Shea will provide the Board of Selectman a presentation at our next meeting on May 29th.

If you're interested in learning more about the project, we have aggregated information on the [First Selectman's Page](#) of the Town website.

Climax Road Update

The affordable housing development for the construction of 19 homes at 80 Climax Road was under appeal. The superior court judge remanded the application back to the Planning Commission with 3 areas of concern. According to the ruling, the judge ordered that a public hearing be held on these three areas only. The comments were all concerning drainage. A public hearing is scheduled for May 14, 2019 at which time the Planning Commission will discuss the areas that were remanded back to the Commission by the Court.

Bike Month

May is Bike Month and I'd like to highlight the dates for Bike/Walk to School Days:

- May 14th – Latimer Lane
- June 7th – Squadron Line

You can find the full lineup of Bike Month events at Simsbury.bike.

New Park Construction

Next month, the town is scheduled to begin work on a new park next to the Flower Bridge. It will include new landscaping, paver walkways, and a new pavilion. This project will also improve access to the river for the launching of kayaks. While this park will enhance an already amazing attraction, the town will unfortunately need to close the Flower Bridge for much of the 2019 season. It will remain open until June to allow for the annual Duck Race and Burgers on the Bridge Fundraisers.

If you have questions about the new park or the bridge closure, I encourage you to [review a presentation](#), which was recently delivered to the Board of Selectmen. The temporary closure of the bridge is not something we take lightly, but I'm very excited that we'll be able to unveil the new park in time for Simsbury's 350th celebration.

Save the Dates!

The Board of Selectman has approved public gathering permits for the following 2019 events:

- [The Iron Horse Half Marathon](#), 10k and 5k, will take place Sunday June 2nd.
- The Simsbury Freemason's Valley Lodge 36 is hosting a Battle of the Bands to support the Dana Farber Institute on June 8th at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.
- [The Valley Collector Club Car Show](#) will take place Sunday July 21st in the parking lots along Iron Horse Blvd.
- Simsbury is the summer home of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra! [The Talcott Mountain Music Festival](#) will feature five concerts June – July (6/28, 7/5, 7/12, 7/19, 7/26)
- The Simsbury Volunteer Fire Department is hosting a Chicken Barbecue on June 29th at the Weatogue Fire Station in celebration of their 75th anniversary.
- [Circus Smirkus](#) is a youth traveling circus that will be coming to the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center July 30th and 31st for four shows.
- The 2019 CT Volley DIG Tournament is a volley ball tournament that will be taking place August 3rd and 4th at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center. Spectators are welcome to watch for free.
- Septemberfest is a 3 day event at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center from September 6th – 8th. This year's event will feature a fire truck parade on Iron Horse Blvd. in celebration of the Fire Department's 75th Anniversary.

- The Simsbury Woman's Club's [50th Arts and Crafts Festival](#) will take place September 14th and 15th in the parking lots along Iron Horse Blvd.
- The [2019 Walk MS](#) will take place September 15th starting at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.
- The 2019 [Spooktacular Chili Challenge](#) is scheduled for October 20th at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.

Opportunities to Serve Your Town

There are more than a dozen boards and commissions that serve our town whose members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. We're always looking for volunteers willing to serve and I'm pleased to share that the Town has made the process easier and more transparent. You can learn more about all of our boards and commissions, current vacancies, and how to apply [here](#).

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: May 13, 2019

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

FY 19/20 Budget: The budget referendum is being held tomorrow, Tuesday, May 14th from 6am-8pm at the Henry James Memorial School. The FY 19/20 budget mailer was delivered last week, and a subsequent one page fact sheet was posted to our website on Wednesday. Both the Town Attorney and State Elections Enforcement reviewed the content of both documents to ensure it was neutral.

Budget Status Report: The budget status report for the period ending March 31, 2019 is complete. The materials were reviewed with the Board of Finance at their last meeting. Our Finance Director is on vacation, so we will present this information to the Board of Selectmen at your May 29th meeting. In the meantime, if you would like to review the report sooner, please utilize the following link:

https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/simsburyct/files/agendas/bof_packet_4-23-19.pdf

Delegation of Open Space Stewardship and Land Management Update: The Conservation Commission is preparing a response to the referral regarding the delegation of open space stewardship and land management duties. You referred the matter to the Conservation Commission at your March 25th Board of Selectmen meeting. We plan to report on this item to you at a future meeting.

Economic Development Commission: The Economic Development Commission (EDC) continues to meet and work on the action items given to them by the Board of Selectmen. Under the “business recruitment, retention, and outreach” goal the EDC and Manager’s Office will be piloting a business roundtable discussion on June 12th. Our intent is to host a small group of business owners (around 20-25) and seek their feedback on what they like about doing business in Simsbury, what concerns they have, and what the Town can do to help businesses grow and prosper in our community. If the pilot roundtable is successful, we hope to conduct roundtables on a quarterly basis, with attendees changing each time.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS & NOTES

Library: For the second year in a row the Simsbury Public Library has been awarded the CT Library Association Excellence in Public Library Service Award. This year the Library was recognized for its Teen Job Center, a collaboration between Teen Services Librarian Sara Ray and the Business Resource Center Coordinator. The Teen Job Center offers local businesses and organizations the opportunity to post job openings with the Library and have applicants pre-screened by Library staff. Another service of the Teen Job Center is providing employment skills and readiness workshops.

Police:

- The Police Department has recently received several donations. The Simsbury Police Department was recently awarded the Simsbury Woman’s Club 2019 Gift to the Community Donation. The donation of \$1,200 will go towards women’s self-defense training classes. The Police Department also received a donation in the amount of \$500 from community member Rosemary Smith with the request that the funds be used for “continuing education, cadet uniforms, equipment, etc.” Ms. Smith attended the 2019 Citizens Police Academy and shared very nice comments about her experience.
- National Drug Take Back Day was April 27, 2019. Since February 2012, the Department has maintained a medication drop box in the lobby of the Police Department. The box is available to

the public 24 hours a day. The Department collected approximately 1,400 pounds of medications between April 2018 and April 2019.

SPECIAL EVENTS & PROGRAMS:

Culture, Parks and Recreation: We invite you to join us at Stratton Brook Park on Friday, May 31st from 10am - noon as the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Connecticut Greenways Council hold their 20th Annual CT Greenways Awards and National Trails Celebration. As part of this year's event, the Connecticut Greenways Council will be celebrating the Farmington Valley Trail, the efforts of the Simsbury Bicycle and Advisory Committee, and Simsbury's recent Silver designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. The reception will be followed by a walk on the Farmington River Trail at noon. Refreshments will be served and attendees are encouraged to bring their own chair.

Community and Social Services: The Community and Social Services Department is sponsoring the program ***Hidden in Plain Sight***, from the Connecticut Association of Prevention Professionals (CAPP). Add power to your parenting by being informed and intervening if you think your child might be at risk or using drugs or alcohol. Early intervention for these risky behaviors is imperative to preventing negative consequences of use. This program provides a mock bedroom for parents to explore and attempt to locate hidden drug paraphernalia and common items used to conceal use of drugs and alcohol. A presentation will address these products, warning signs of risky behaviors, and how to initiate conversations with your teen to address these concerns. This program will be held on June 6th from 6-8pm at the Simsbury Public Library. It is open to adults only. Light refreshments will be provided. For questions, call Social Services at 860-658-3283.