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## FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

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**TO:** Board of Selectmen  
**FROM:** Wendy Mackstutis – First Selectman  
**DATE:** July 11, 2022

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It's been a while since the Board of Selectmen has met as we last met on June 13<sup>th</sup> (*Our June 28<sup>th</sup> was cancelled due to a lack of quorum*). Since we meet monthly in July/August, our next meeting will be August 8<sup>th</sup> at Town Hall in the Main Meeting Room at 6:00 PM.

At tonight's meeting, I will be presenting a Proclamation in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Simsbury Farms. Please check out the Simsbury Farms pages on our website and Facebook to stay tuned in to the many activities that are coming up this summer and fall.

### ***PROCLAMATION in Recognition of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Simsbury Farms***

***Whereas***, on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1972, 50 years ago, the Town of Simsbury held an official dedication and open house (and I assume a ribbon cutting), for Simsbury Farms, which began the first chapter of Simsbury's full recreation complex, as envisioned by Town Leaders; and

***Whereas***, the decision to purchase the 235 acres known as Orkil Farms, an apple orchard, by a 600-1 vote at a Town Meeting, was based on the vision presented for a complete recreation facility to meet the total needs of the community including an 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, swimming pools, hiking trails, an ice rink and platform tennis courts; and

***Whereas***, the year 2022 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Simsbury Farms Recreation Complex at which we recognize that this vision had come to pass, with the amazing facility we have all grown to love as both adults and children, that our families grew up loving, and that our children's families will get to enjoy for years to come; and

***Whereas***, residents and visitors, both young and old, continue to play and learn how to play golf, hockey, tennis, paddle tennis, basketball and pickleball, along with swimming and diving in the multiple pools; and

***Whereas***, the Simsbury Farms Recreation Complex is a source of pride for all Simsbury Residents, where we've spent many hours with our family members, friends, and neighbors of all ages, enjoying the endless recreational activities available to us; and

***Whereas***, we thank all the employees and volunteers who have made Simsbury Farms what it is today, and to all those who are playing in a golf league, taking swim lessons, joining a tennis clinic, pushing swings at the playscape, watching an early morning hockey game, or just taking a walk and enjoying the spectacular view; and

***Whereas***, a series of events called "50 for 50" will be held throughout 2022 to commemorate this milestone – Family Day, the Simsbury Farms Open, Movie Nights, the Pickleball Tournament, and a spectacular grand finale concert and fireworks show to name a few – that will provide many opportunities for our community to engage in recreation activities; and

***NOW, THEREFORE, I, Wendy Mackstutis, First Selectman of the Town of Simsbury, do hereby Proclaim in 2022 The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Simsbury Farms and request and encourage everyone in our community to support and enjoy the Simsbury Farms Recreation Complex, the "50 for***

*50'' events, and to wholeheartedly share this important milestone with their friends, family, neighbors, and peers.*

The Simsbury Aging and Disability Commission is very excited to host the annual Disability Picnic once again at the Skating Rink at Simsbury Farms on July 16<sup>th</sup> from 6-8PM! Food provided by Fitzgerald's Foods and the Aging and Disability Commission in partnership with Simsbury Social Services and the Simsbury Public Library. This FREE Event is always a hit and lots of fun! Food, friends, and fun! We hope you join us and look forward to seeing you at this welcoming evening. Please RSVP by July 8<sup>th</sup> to [yeisley2@comcast.net](mailto:yeisley2@comcast.net)

The Aging and Disability Commission, in partnership with the Town of Simsbury Community and Social Services Department is asking residents 50 and older to take a survey about Aging Well in Simsbury. There will be an in-person discussion on July 12<sup>th</sup> at Eno Hall from 6:00-7:00 along with an Ice Cream Social. The responses will be used to help Simsbury become an AARP Age-Friendly Community. The survey can be completed at this link: <https://forms.gle/5T1HyDHCPHxcyXi37>

The Non-Profit 501c3 Grant Program is in its final stages of readiness. The Finance Subcommittee will be meeting on July 20<sup>th</sup> to complete the details, with the hope of opening the program up to the community at the August 8<sup>th</sup> Board of Selectmen meeting. We will provide an application, and agreement documents that will need to be completed by each applicant. The program will collect applications for a month, followed by a review of all applications received. The maximum grant is \$10,000 and will be available for reimbursement of COVID expenditures not funded under other grant programs, and for any recovery activities by these organizations. This will be focused on non-profits that benefit Simsbury residents.

More to come.

The Personnel Subcommittee has asked the Town Manager to move forward on getting estimates for some projects that the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager have prioritized to move forward. One is to do an update to the Personnel Rules (the handbook), to clarify some of the recent items that have been discussed. This handbook has not been updated since 2009, so it is a worthwhile endeavor to make sure the rules and regulations for employees are clear to all. The other item is to get an estimate for an Employee Satisfaction Survey across the full Town of Simsbury workforce in all locations. This would require looking for a vendor that handles this activity for municipalities and employees of our size.

The Zoning Commission has planned a Public Hearing regarding their updated ADU regulation for July 25<sup>th</sup> at a Special Meeting. If you want to be heard, please plan on providing your comments and keep an eye out for the meeting announcement and details. The Board of Selectmen will be listening to what our residents have to say, as we have role in the ADU Opt Out, as stipulated by the state. Since our Zoning Commission has opted out of the state regulations, there is a requirement that the BOS opt out, too, if we so chose, to finalize the regulations that will be in place.

Sarah Nielson, Exec Director of the Main Street Partnership met with members of the Emergency Management team – Mike Berry, Jim Baldis, Nick Boulter, and Tom Roy – to discuss next steps on the Cell Phone project that they have been working on. Improvements have been made by some of the providers since the survey was done in October 2021, so the SVFC will be creating an update for this fall to see if the improvements are being felt by residents and business. There will also be continued discussions with the providers and this team regarding upgrades, handling of outages, and the potential for new towers.

Be safe out there this summer. Try to keep cool by hitting one of the pools, hiking a nice woodsy trail, or reading in our air-conditioned library.

I will continue to hold office hours this summer and will post them on my town website page.

Please let me know you are coming by reaching out to me at my email address. I'm happy to meet at other times, based on our schedules.

[wmackstutis@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:wmackstutis@simsbury-ct.gov).

Wendy

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## TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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**TO:** Board of Selectmen  
**FROM:** Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager  
**DATE:** June 13, 2022

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### **CORONAVIRUS UPDATE**

We are monitoring the state's municipal COVID alert system and are currently at "red" status for the period ending July 9th. This status indicates that we have more than 15 COVID cases per 100,000 residents. We are at 20.5 COVID cases per 100,000 residents. Over the most recent week we had a total of 25 cases. We also had a positivity rate of 11.4%, a decrease from the prior period's rate of 12%. As a reminder, this data does not include positive test results from at-home test kits.

At this time, there are no counties in Connecticut considered to be "high" according to the CDC Community Levels categorization. In Hartford County, community levels are "low." The CDC recommends that if you are at high risk for severe illness, talking to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and taking other precautions. People may choose to mask at any time. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask. If you are experiencing symptoms, it is important to get tested. 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 now place a third order for free, at-home COVID-19 rapid tests (8 tests per order). The link to order is: <https://www.covidtests.gov>.

The Health District is providing COVID vaccine appointments for people ages 18 and older. Details can be found here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4aa9ab22a7f5c07-covid19>

During the month of June we saw a slight decrease in positive COVID cases amongst staff compared to May. During the month of May we had 10 positive cases amongst our staff compared to 12 positive cases in May. We also had 2 staff members that needed to quarantine. Please continue to be patient with staff if you are experiencing a slight delay, or if we need to reschedule, for non-emergency matters. For July, month-to-date, we have had three staff members test positive.

Data from the state ending July 6th reports that 22,657 Simsbury residents have received at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, or 88.22% of the population, while 82.8% of our residents or 21,028 people are now fully vaccinated. Additionally, 14,043 Simsbury residents, or 55.3% of the population, have received an additional booster dose. Further vaccination data for Simsbury by age group:

- Ages 5-11, 72.92% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 65.36% are fully vaccinated.
- Ages 12-17, 90.2% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 84.94% are fully vaccinated; 45.44% 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 97.27% are fully vaccinated; 63.2% 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 97.33% are fully vaccinated; 62.84% of the total population of ages 25 - 44 received an additional booster dose.

- Ages 45-64, 88.63% of those eligible have received their first dose, and 84.61% are fully vaccinated; 65.16% 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; 94.61% of the total population of ages 65+ received an additional booster dose.

## **DEPARTMENT NEWS & NOTES**

### ***Culture, Parks and Recreation:***

- The Friends of Simsbury Farms will be helping to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the recreation facility with a special day of activities on Saturday, July 30. Events include free instructional youth and tennis clinics, a beginner's pickleball clinic for adults, family games on the pool deck, the Simsbury Open Golf Tournament as well a Parent/Child Golf Tournament. This fun filled day of activities will conclude with a concert featuring the Above The Treeline Band at 6pm in the Simsbury Farms Rink. Please go to [www.friendsofsimsburyfarms.com](http://www.friendsofsimsburyfarms.com) for more information.
- The Culture, Parks and Recreation Department has a variety of events planned for the Simsbury Farms 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Families are invited to take part in Fun Runs on July 19, August 2 and August 16, enjoy a magician on the pool deck on July 22, a Caddy Shack themed movie night at the Golf Course on August 6, a poolside showing of Finding Nemo on August 12, and a glow in the dark golf event on August 19. The summer 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events will conclude with a concert and fireworks show on Saturday, August 27. To get info on these events and the many others planned, please go to [www.SimsburyRec.com](http://www.SimsburyRec.com) or follow the Culture, Parks and Recreation Department on Facebook.
- Our Parks and Recreation Staff would like to remind users of Simsbury Farms to slow down and stop at all stop signs while driving within the recreation facility. As you know, Simsbury Farms is a very busy place with people at play all over the facility and we hope that everyone can enjoy the park safely this summer.
- The replacement of the West Mountain Park Playground has begun. The removal of the old playground should be complete this week and the new playground is scheduled to be installed on or about August 5. Planning for the replacement of the Simsbury Farms Playground is underway with a planned installation of Spring 2023 at this time.

### ***Library:***

- There's still time to sign up to take part in the Summer Reading Program and Celebrate Simsbury Summers. Register online at <https://simsburylibrary.readsquared.com/>
- Follow the Book Bike on its adventures throughout Town:
  - Saturday, July 16 at 4PM on the Tariffville Green - We'll have treats and books to be checked out.
  - Wednesday, August 10 at 7PM at Iron Horse Pub for Trivia Night - Register online at <https://simsbury.librarycalendar.com/event/book-bike-trivia-iron-horse> to be part of the Library's trivia team.

### ***Planning Department:***

- Savannah-Nicole Villalba began work as our Assistant Town Planner earlier this month. Savannah-Nicole has Bachelor's degrees in Sociology and Urban and Community Studies from UConn, and her Master's degree in Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning from Tufts University. She is currently a candidate for AICP certification. Savannah-Nicole has previously held planning positions with a regional council of governments, as well as municipalities. Savannah-Nicole chairs the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee for the Connecticut

Chapter of the American Planning Association. We are excited to have her join our Planning Department. Congratulations Savannah-Nicole!

- Today was Andrea Connaughton's first day as our new Building Department Specialist. Andrea joins us from a diverse career ranging from real estate, a program director for adult education, adult ESOL teacher, and a training manager for an international bank. Andrea has Bachelor's degrees from Smith College in Government and History and a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics from UMass Boston. Andrea is going to make an excellent addition to our Building Division. Congratulations Andrea!

**Public Works:** The Connecticut DOT will be milling and paving a portion of Route 10/202 starting on the Avon/Simsbury border. The milling will be starting on July 17<sup>th</sup> and completed on July 28<sup>th</sup> and the paving is scheduled for August 14<sup>th</sup> through August 25<sup>th</sup>. This work will be done between the hours on 7:00 PM to 5:00 AM Sunday through Thursday to try to minimize disruption to traffic.