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## FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

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**TO:** Board of Selectmen  
**FROM:** Eric Wellman – First Selectman  
**DATE:** September 14, 2020

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### 2020 General Election

There are two ways to vote in the upcoming general election; in person on November 3, or by absentee ballot. Because of the Covid 19 pandemic, anyone can vote absentee this year. The Secretary of State's office is mailing absentee ballot *applications* to all registered voters. The applications can be returned in a pre-paid envelope or dropped off at Town Hall in the official election drop box. The Secretary of State's office has started mailing applications in the past week. Ballots will be mailed out starting on October 2 to people who submit an application.

The deadline to register for the November 3 election is October 27, 2020. There is a seven-day registration blackout period before the election. If you miss the October 27 deadline, you may register and vote by personally appearing at your town's designated Election Day Voter Registration station. (Simsbury Public Library). Proof of identity and residence is required.

You can find many answers to your questions about the upcoming election on the [Registrar of Voters page](#) on the Town website. From that page you can confirm you're registered to vote, confirm your polling location, download and print an absentee ballot application, and more.

- For questions related to absentee voting, you can call our town clerk: 860-658-3243
- For any other election-related questions, you can call our one of our registrars:
  - Karen Cortes 860-658-3267
  - Susan Salina 860-658-3269

### 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History Walk

The 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee has unveiled a history walk: 350 Years of Simsbury in 350 Steps. Located along the Greenway next to the Performing Arts Center, the history walk tells the story of Simsbury with pictures, dates, and fun facts. The history walk is a collaboration with the Simsbury Historical Society, The Simsbury Free Library, and the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center. Thank you to Big Y Foods, Liberty Bank, Mitchell Auto Group, and Elkinson + Sloves, who conceived and designed the history walk.

Because of Covid, the 350<sup>th</sup> Committee has had to reschedule and reimagine many of the planned celebrations. You can find the latest at [Simsbury350.com](#). There is also an online store where you can purchase 350 merchandise including a copper plated commemorative medallion that features Simsbury's most iconic landmarks.

### Hometown Heroes

Congratulations to our 2020 Hometown Heroes! Every year since 1986, the Town has celebrated its Hometown Heroes – residents who, through a deed or service make the town a better place to live. Each spring we accept nominations. Our ceremony was delayed this year because of Covid. Congratulations to our 2020 Hometown Heroes: Jean Miles, Katie Costolnick, Margaret Diachenko, Ann Long, Rob Cushman, Jim Fleming, and Gail Ryan.

### **Supporting our Food Programs**

Simsbury Social Services has nearly doubled the number of households it's serving during the Covid-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic the Town was serving approximately 80 households per month with our food programs, which has now increased to about 140 households and we have increased the frequency to every three weeks. Once school starts, we will return to monthly because of sustainability concerns and also decreasing the amounts of gift cards we are distributing.

Local families continue to rely on your donations. Donations of money will help us purchase gift cards for groceries as well as fresh produce for our distributions. Donations of gift cards are also appreciated. We are also seeking donations of non-perishable food items, household cleaning products, and toiletries. Our goal is to give everyone at least one full bag of items at each distribution, plus a bag of produce, and a gift card.

There is a donation cart in front of Eno Memorial Hall, 754 Hopmeadow Street. If you have any questions, please call Social Services at 860-658-3283.

### **Wildlife Feeding Ordinance**

A new ordinance took effect in August that prohibits the intentional feeding of wildlife. It was developed over the past year in response to the growing encounters with bears, coyotes, and other wild animals. Most notably, the ordinance requires that residents remove their bird feeders during the warmer months unless they are using bird seed that is not an attractant to bears. If you have questions about the reason for the ordinance, what kind of bird seed is permissible, or how the ordinance will be enforced, there is a [Q&A document](#) on the Town website under News and Announcements.

### **Simsbury Woman's Club**

On August 10, the Board of Selectmen recognized the Simsbury Woman's Club, which in May of this year, made the difficult decision to dissolve due to declining membership. For more than 50 years, the Woman's Club has contributed to the Simsbury community in countless ways, most notably through its signature event, the annual Arts & Crafts Festival. Last year, the festival celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> season, having grown over the years into a regional event that brought artists and visitors to our town. Thankfully, the festival is expected to continue into the future under the leadership of the Junior Woman's Club. The Simsbury Woman's Club has touched our community in innumerable ways through scholarships, donations to civic and nonprofit organizations, historic preservation, and more. With time, talent, and money, the generosity of this community never ceases to amaze me and the Woman's Club embodies that generosity. On behalf of the Town, I want to thank the Simsbury Woman's Club for more than half a century of service.

### **Development update**

- MacLean- Site Work started on the new independent living apartments within the complex. The project start was delayed to COVID.
- Big Y – Construction is progressing on time and the store is expected to have a soft open in late October.
- I'd like to welcome a new business. Farley Mac is a new restaurant in town that is opening at 1616 Hopmeadow St.

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## TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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**TO:** Board of Selectmen  
**FROM:** Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager  
**DATE:** September 14, 2020

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### **CORONAVIRUS UPDATE**

To protect the health and safety of our residents, patrons, and staff, access to Town buildings is by appointment only until further notice. Although all buildings are closed to walk-in traffic, Town employees continue to report to duty at all locations, and are available to schedule in-person appointments for services that cannot be completed by phone, mail, email, or virtually, please see a list of our [online services](#) for items and services that you can use from home.

At this time, we are working with the information we have from public health officials and are taking a cautious approach to reopening Town Hall, the Library, and Eno to walk-ins in order to provide the greatest protection to the health and safety of our community. We continue to reevaluate the reopening time frame every two weeks. Once these facilities do reopen to walk-ins, they will initially have limited hours and some use restrictions, as is the case with many other towns in the Farmington Valley and State. The Senior Center will likely be the last facility to re-open to walk-ins. Public health is our predominant priority.

The Library is continuing to do curbside pick-up for materials and is expanding to evening hours on Tuesdays; more information can be found [here](#). The Transfer Station remains open with full services and modified practices. Our playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, skate park, the golf course, parks, open space parcels and trails are open and social distancing is still strongly encouraged at these locations.

As a reminder, at the May 27<sup>th</sup> Board of Selectmen meeting the temporary suspension of cash payments was suspended through at least September 14<sup>th</sup> to help reduce the risk of spreading COVID. At tonight's meeting the Board of Selectmen will be discussing a possible extension to the suspension of cash payments.

Meetings of town agencies will continue to be held virtually until further notice. Meetings are held utilizing Zoom and are broadcast on SCTV's television channels and SCTV's You Tube channel. Agenda items that are being discussed at a meeting will be posted online for the public to view.

We have received many inquiries from residents asking how they can help our fellow community members in need. Our Social Services Department is accepting donations of non-perishable food items, toiletries, laundry and dish detergent, baby items (wipes, diapers, baby food), kid friendly snacks, gift cards to grocery stores, gas stations, and laundromats, and financial donations for residents in need. For information on how to donate, please follow this link: <https://www.facebook.com/simscommunityandsocial/photos/a.732997960244104/1365939280283299/?type=3&theater>.

Our Social Services staff is helping to coordinate local efforts to both make and distribute sewn face masks to staff and members of our community. If you are a Simsbury resident or business, please don't hesitate to contact Social Services at 860-658-3283 if you need a free face covering.

Our Simsbury Main Street Partnership, Simsbury Chamber of Commerce, and our Business Resource Librarian Andrew Sherman have been doing a phenomenal job supporting our business community during

this difficult time. For information regarding local businesses that remain open please visit [www.shopsimsbury.com](http://www.shopsimsbury.com). Our Economic Development Commission has conducted outreach with many stakeholders to determine what, if any, unmet needs our community is experiencing during the pandemic.

## **DEPARTMENT NEWS & NOTES**

**Police:** We have received an arbitration decision in the Town's favor on the termination of former police sergeant Jason Trombly. A few excerpts from the 25 page decision include, "we think that the grievant's dishonesty was substantial...and that the Town has produced a preponderance of the evidence that it had just cause to terminate the grievant." This was the final of two arbitration cases involving Mr. Trombly. The other case was also awarded in favor of the Town and was reported on in my May 11, 2020 Town Manager's Report.

**Library:** Beginning September 15<sup>th</sup>, curbside service will be extended from 10am -8pm to better accommodate your schedule. Please visit the Library's website, [simsburylibrary.info](http://simsburylibrary.info), to schedule a curbside pickup of Library material.

### ***Social Services:***

- **Energy Assistance:** The Simsbury Social Services Department is accepting applications for the Energy Assistance 2020-2021 Heating Program. Due to COVID-19, applications this year will be completed by phone and mail. Please call Social Services at 860-658-3283 to set up an electronic appointment. Please see this [flyer](#) posted to social media for more detailed information.
- **Blood Pressure Clinics:** The Farmington Valley Visiting Nurse Association will perform blood pressure and blood sugar screenings, each Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the back parking lot of Eno Memorial Hall, at 754 Hopmeadow Street in Simsbury. Appointments are not required. For those that are unable to attend the screenings, nurses will be available to contact residents via phone for wellness checks to assess the need for a home visit. For more information, contact the Simsbury Senior Center at 860-658-3273.
- **Flu Clinics:** The Simsbury Senior Center and the Farmington Valley Visiting Nurse Association will hold Flu Clinics on Thursday, October 8, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., and Tuesday, October 20, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Eno Memorial Hall, located at 754 Hopmeadow Street in Simsbury. Regular and High Dose vaccines will be given. Prescreening is required before your appointment, and you must wear a mask.

For an appointment, call the Farmington Valley VNA at 860-651-3539. Then visit [www.farmingtonvalleyvna.org](http://www.farmingtonvalleyvna.org) to print off the Consent Form. Complete the form and bring it, your medical insurance card, and driver's license or non-driver photo ID to the Clinic. Consent Forms will also be available to pick up at Eno Memorial Hall. For more information or questions, contact the Senior Center at 860-658-3273.

- **Drive Thru Flu Clinics**

The Farmington Valley Health District and Farmington Valley VNA are hosting two separate drive thru flu clinics this fall.

- Wednesday September 30 from 1 – 5pm at the Avon DPW facility on 11 Arch Rd, Avon
- Wednesday October 7, from 1 – 5pm at the Weatogue Fire Station at 251 Hopmeadow Rd.

Pre-registration is required. You can find more information on the Town website under [News and Announcements](#).