
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

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

Happy New Year to those who celebrate the Jewish New Year. From the evening of September 25th, Rosh Hashanah, until sunset on October 5th, Yom Kippur, this period of atonement is observed by Jewish people around the world. Rosh Hashanah kicks off the High Holy Days, as we enter year 5783. The High Holy Days end with Yom Kippur, which is considered the most sacred of Jewish religious holidays and is known as the Day of Atonement.

On Sunday 9/25, A Promise to Jordan held their Untapped event at the Performing Arts Center. Although a bit rainy, it was a lovely event, with crafts, information, and entertainment. Lisa Gray, Executive Director shared that the town has named Simsbury a Recovery Friendly Community, with A Promise to Jordan as our Recovery Friendly Champions. The State of CT presented them with a proclamation introduced by Rep John Hampton and Senator Kevin Witkos, with the support of The Connecticut General Assembly:

In Recognition of: The Organization's extraordinary efforts in having the Town of Simsbury be recognized by the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council as a Recovery-Friendly Community. Thank you for all your dedicated hard work in the campaign to raise awareness and reduce the stigma of the nationwide problem surrounding substance abuse and addiction. Your compassion and commitment to helping individuals and families find the much needed resources and show them that recovery is possible to live a happy, successful, meaningful life has had a tremendous impact in our communities. Thank you for keeping the promise and for never letting anyone lose hope in this ongoing fight against substance abuse and addiction.

For Aquarion Water Company Customers, please see below excerpt from the notice dated 9/13/2022 sent by the Town of Simsbury regarding upcoming rate increases. This may be a big impact to you, given the chance of an almost 30% increase over the next 3 years. You can send comments that will be included in the record per below email address and zoom call. As part of tonight's agenda, Town Manager Maria Capriola has taken the initiative to include a letter from the Town against this rate increase and will be asking our Board to support it. I plan to include my name to that letter against the increase.

Aquarion is also seeking approval of a 3-year rate plan. Increases for the second and third years are estimated at 6.0% and 3.7%, in addition to the 27.8% increase. These proposed rate increases will be subject to review and approval by PURA in separate proceedings.

Customers may provide written comments on this proposal to PURA at Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051, or by sending an e-mail to PURA.ExecutiveSecretary@ct.gov (refer to Docket Number 22-07-01 in any correspondence).

Virtual public hearings are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, October 6, 2022 at

5:30pm: <https://ctdeep.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIocuurpjgtHtbCjCnSFInEZLTVlz3tdTgS>

Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at

7:00pm: [https://ctdeep.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkdO6rrDMvG92NDaf7EywU3W7at1SGMZ](https://ctdeep.zoom.us/join/https://ctdeep.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkdO6rrDMvG92NDaf7EywU3W7at1SGMZ)
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In tonight's Selectmen action, we will be voting on the creation of a work group to draft an ordinance regarding the use of smoking products, including cannabis, on town owned property.

The hope is to alleviate concerns about the outward use of cannabis, and to have this coincide with the Zoning Commission's work to draft regulations regarding the retail sale of these products in Simsbury. The Zoning Commission will be holding a **Public Hearing on October 17** to hear from community residents expressing their views from both sides of the regulations.

The Station Street Reconfiguration project that shows in FY22/23 budget as a projected FY23/24 start has received funding as part of Governor Ned Lamont's STEAP grant program (Small Town Economic Assistance Program). The Town of Simsbury will receive \$160K in funding toward this project that will turn Station Street - that runs between Eno Hall on one side and Welden Hardware, Vincent Sports, the Second Chance Shop, and more - on the other, will turn this into a 2-way street. Stay tuned for timing on this project.

Next week, the Finance Subcommittee made up of Amber Abbuhl, Heather Goetz, and myself - along with help of Melissa Appleby and Amy Meriwether, will be evaluating the applications received for the COVID-19 Relief 501(c)(3) Non-Profit (deadline was September 16th, 2022). The plan is for final awards to be approved by the Board of Selectmen at our meeting on October 12, 2022. We are still discussing and working on the proposed Business Grant/Reimbursement program with the Main Street Partnership, and will be reviewing this in October.

Wendy

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

We are monitoring the state's municipal COVID alert system and are currently at "red" status for the period ending on September 26th. This status indicates that we have more than 15 COVID cases per 100,000 residents. We are at 122 COVID cases per 100,000 residents in the last seven days. Over the most recent week, we had a total of 31 cases. We also had a positivity rate of 9.7%, a decrease from the prior period's rate of 12.64%. 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 "medium." 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>

The Farmington Valley Health District is now booking COVID-19 vaccine appointments for individuals ages 18 and older. You can schedule online at fvhd.org/vaccination or by phone at 860-352-2333 (calls received 8 AM to 4 PM Monday through Friday). Bring insurance information and proof of prior vaccination (if applicable) to your appointment, located at 95 River Road Suite A, Canton, CT 06019.

Data from the state ending September 21st reports that 22,930 Simsbury residents have received at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, or 90.29% of the population, while 83.89% of our residents are now fully vaccinated. Additionally, 57.27% of the population have received an additional booster dose. Further vaccination data for Simsbury by age group:

Age Groups	Received 1st Dose	Fully Vaccinated	Received Booster
0 - 4	28.42%	11.46%	N/A
5 - 11	71.25%	67.28%	14.65%
12 - 17	90.58%	85.7%	48.71%
18 - 24	100%	100%	65.8%
25 - 44	100%	97.89%	64.14%
45 - 64	88.43%	84.67%	65.96%
65+	100%	100%	96.08%

DEPARTMENT NEWS & NOTES

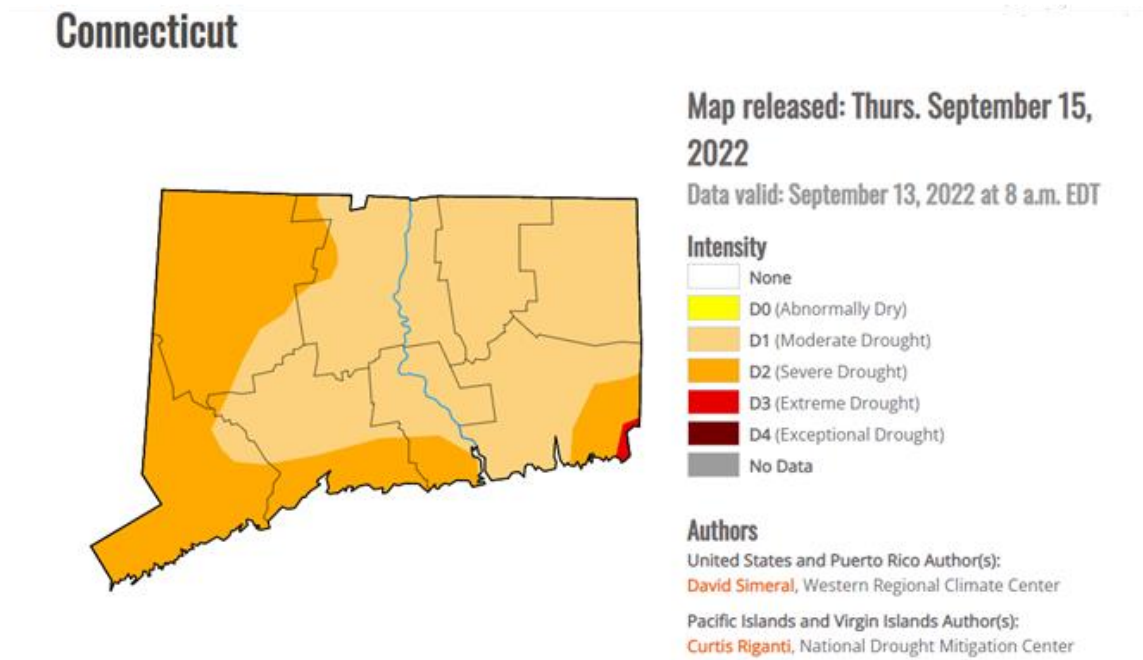
Police: At the August 30, 2022, Police Commission Special Meeting, Jeremiah Kenney was approved to be hired as a police officer. He joined the Police Department as a public safety dispatcher just over five years ago and has since performed his responsibilities as a dispatcher with efficiency, care, compassion, and good judgment. He provides a professional service, has great technical skills and has demonstrated an understanding of the expectations for the Police Department. He is a team player and has a great work ethic. In addition to being a dispatcher, Jeremiah has worked as a seasonal marine patrol officer and a public safety officer at hospitals and a university. He has specialized training in areas of crisis intervention, de-escalation, emergency medical aid, and management of aggressive behavior. Jeremiah Kenney took the oath as our newest police officer and began the police academy on September 23, 2022. Congratulations Jeremiah!

Public Works:

- **Household Hazardous Waste Event** – Simsbury Public Works will be hosting a Household Hazardous Waste Collection on Saturday, October 15th from 8:00am to 1:00pm at our facility at 66 Town Forest Road. This regional collection will allow residents to dispose of common household chemicals that do not belong in the trash, including: fluorescent and CFL lightbulbs; items like thermometer or thermostats that contain mercury; household chemicals; used motor oil; lawn care chemicals; etc. Visit the Public Works web page for a more complete list of items [by clicking here](#). In addition to the hazardous wastes, we will also be collecting household electronics, including: computers; monitors; televisions; microwaves; etc. Participants can also bring up to two boxes of papers for shredding.
- **STEAP Grant Awarded** – The Town of Simsbury has been awarded \$160,000 to convert Station Street from a one-way to two-way traffic pattern between Railroad Street and Hopmeadow Street (Route 10/202). The grant award was announced by Gov. Ned Lamont on Monday, September 19th, as part of \$31.3 million in state grants for seventy-seven small towns in Connecticut through the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP). This grant program delivers grants to small towns for economic development, community conservation, and quality-of-life capital projects. The \$160,000 grant will be matched by \$40,000 from the Town. The design phase of the project will begin this winter with construction tentatively scheduled for mid-to-late 2024.
- **Firetown Road Sidewalk Update** – The Public Works Engineering Division has started the initial survey for the design of new sidewalks along Firetown Road from West Street to Plank Hill Road. Coordination with residents and final design will take place later this fall and into the winter with the goal of constructing the new sidewalks next summer. This exciting project is funded by multiple grants from both the Connecticut DOT and Capital Region Council of Governments.
- **Sidewalks Along Hopmeadow Street from Woodland Street South to Wiggins Farm Drive** – Public Works has Murillo Construction working on the replacement of sidewalks along Hopmeadow Street from Woodland Street to Wiggins Farm Drive. This project was designed in house and is anticipated to be completed by the end of October. This work is part of our continuing efforts to upgrade the Town’s existing sidewalk infrastructure.
- **Sewer Lining Work** - Water Pollution Control (WPCA) has begun its sanitary sewer rehabilitation project for existing sewers in Tariffville and a section of Hopmeadow Street from West Street to Wiggins Farms Drive. WPCA has contracted with Granite Inliner, LLC for this work. Each home and business to be impacted will be notified prior to the work being performed in their area. The work will include cleaning of the existing pipeline, to be followed by the liner being “cured in place.” During this process, sewer service to individual homes will be interrupted

for up to an eight-hour period, during which time homeowners are advised to minimize water use. [Additional information](#) on this project, including contact information for WPCA and Granite Inliner, LLC, is posted to the home page of our website.

- **Drought Update** – As of September 15, 2022, Simsbury is in the D1 Moderate Drought category. While we are not completely out of the drought we are heading in the right direction.



Map source: National Drought Mitigation Center and the University of Nebraska

Social Services: The Simsbury Senior Center was recently selected for the 2022-2023 Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance Funding and Training Opportunity provided by the Connecticut Healthy Living Collective. Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance is an evidence-based program offered twice a week for 24 weeks that helps participants improve balance, mobility and daily functioning and prevents falls. The grant allows for up to \$2,800 in funding for the program and includes training and support for sites and instructors.

Town Manager's Office:

- **Neighborhood Assistance Act Program** - We have been notified by the Department of Revenue Services that all three of our applications for the 2022 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program have been approved. Businesses entities authorized to do business in Connecticut and subject to certain taxes may contribute to the following programs to receive a tax credit: Simsbury Food Pantry (60% tax credit); Open Space Acquisition Fund (60% tax credit); Simsbury Grange Energy Efficiency and Conservation (100% tax credit). To contribute to one or more of these programs, businesses should complete the one-page [online form \(NAA-02\)](#) by October 1, 2022. For more information, read the [full announcement](#) on the Town website under News & Announcements.
- **Frontier Fiber Work** – Recently Town staff and Emergency Management Personnel met with Frontier to discuss their upcoming fiber optic project in Simsbury. This project will help to bring high-speed internet to Simsbury homes. Frontier reports that this project will bring better reliability, smaller and more discreet equipment, a reduction in bottlenecking, and is a less expensive method to deploy. A majority of the work being performed will be on existing

overhead lines and underground substructures. The Town will be working with Frontier to publish locations of their work on our website throughout their project to allow our residents to know what is happening in their neighborhoods. Frontier will be sending letters to property owners when performing work in areas that abut their property. Residents with inquiries regarding this project can contact Frontier at (203) 694-4065.