
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

I would like to extend the warmest of welcomes to Maria Capriola, Simsbury's first Town Manager under our new form of government. On the job for barely three weeks, she has hit the ground running, if not by choice than by necessity. It's February which means we are in the early phases of budget season in a year when, like last year, the picture from the state is uncertain. We are also preparing to hire for three important positions: Chief of Police, Finance Director, and Director of Culture Parks and Rec. When it comes to both of these efforts, budgeting and hiring, I look forward to an open and transparent process. There will be opportunities for you to provide input and I look forward to hearing from you.

BUDGET SEASON:

Work on the 2019 budget is underway. We expect the Town Manager will present her proposed budget to the Board of Selectmen at our next meeting of February 26th. Saturday March 10th will be our day-long budget workshop with additional time on March 15th if needed. The March 10th workshop will start at 8am and the public is welcome to attend.

Like last year, we are budgeting in uncertain times. Faced with a projected revenue shortfall, Governor Malloy has proposed additional cuts in municipal aid to towns across Connecticut and Simsbury would receive approximately \$200,000 less than was initially budgeted. I want to emphasize that this number is far from certain. It's the Governor's proposal, but the General Assembly will also have a key role to play in this process. I am in frequent communication with Representative Hampton and Senator Witkos and I thank them for all of their efforts.

SOLAR UPDATE:

On January 22nd, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to appeal the Connecticut Siting Council's ruling to allow a proposed 26-megawatt solar farm to move forward. The purpose of the appeal is to ensure that specific concerns are adequately addressed. The Town is currently in talks with Deepwater Wind, the developer of the project. It is my hope that these talks will continue and an agreement can be reached which will obviate the need for a drawn-out appeal.

The discussions are centering around 6 issues:

- Ensuring public health during and after the construction process
- Removing from the project, the 54-acre field south of Hoskins Road that is most visible to cars and neighbors.
- Providing appropriate screening that fits with the natural landscape.
- Developing and funding a comprehensive decommissioning plan that ensures the property will return to farmland upon the conclusion of the project
- Preserving historic barns on the property
- The option for the Town to obtain the development rights for the property after the project is decommissioned.

Deepwater Wind understands these issues and has expressed a willingness to work with the Town to address them. Given the Connecticut Citing Council's unanimous approval of this project, it's most likely that a solar farm is coming to Simsbury. The opportunity we have now is to make sure this project is done right.

OTHER NEWS:

- The Farmington Valley Trails Council will present its first annual Trails Safety Expo on March 17th, at the Simsbury Public Library. This event is open to the public and is free of charge. Their goal with this expo is to promote safety for all who use the trails we treasure.
- On the economic development front, I would like to welcome Ana and Jeff, the new owners of Peaberry's Café. Also, the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce is holding a ribbon cutting for Cardinal Gerontology on March 1st at 5:30pm at Storytellers Cottage.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: February 15, 2018

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Packet Preparation and Distribution: Now that I have had an opportunity to complete a packet for your Board of Selectmen meetings, please let me know if you have suggestions regarding format, content, or how attachments or information are presented to you moving forward. For those Board members that have not identified a preferred method for your packet delivery, please let me know your preference from the following:

- Packet “delivered” via a link in an email (if you select this option, please let us know if you would like a hard copy left at your desk on meeting nights)
- Hard copy packet mailed to you via US mail, typically arriving to your home on Fridays
- Hard copy packet left for you in your mailbox at Town Hall, typically ready no later than close of business Thursdays preceding Monday meetings

Town Manager's Goals and Long Term Projects: I am beginning to get settled in the new position. As I meet with staff, Board members, and community members I have been flagging potential future projects. This spring I would like to present a draft list of goals and potential future projects to the Personnel Sub-Committee for review and discussion, ultimately working towards a plan that would be brought to the full Board of Selectmen. Receiving feedback and guidance from you regarding the list of potential projects I have prepared will be helpful to me in establishing priorities for the organization.

Suggested Correction to the Draft January 22, 2018 Meeting Minutes: It was brought to my attention by staff that the draft January 22, 2018 meeting minutes did not include Deepwater Wind executive session attendees that provided technical support to the Board. Meeting minutes should reflect executive session attendees and the suggested correction to the draft minutes is as follows:

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a) Pursuant to CGS§1-200(6)(B) to discuss matters concerning the Deepwater Wind Proposed Solar Project

Mr. Askham made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session **along with Jamie Rabbitt, Bob DeCrescenzo, Bob Carr, Sean Kimball and Melissa Appleby** to discuss matters concerning the Deepwater Wind Proposed Solar Project pursuant to CGS§1-200(6)(B) at 5:25 p.m. Mr. Kelly seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Should the Board want to make the suggested correction to the draft January 22, 2018 meeting minutes, you can do so during that agenda item this evening.

Additions to the Agenda: This morning I received a request to have two appointments and a resignation added to the agenda. The following is being requested to be added under Appointments and Resignations:

- Acknowledge the resignation of Gerald Post (R) as a regular member of the Zoning Commission effective February 5, 2018
- Appoint Jacqueline S. Battos (R) as a regular member of the Zoning Commission with an expiration date of December 2, 2019
- Appoint Susan C. Ray (R) as a regular member of the Recycling Committee with an expiration date of December 2, 2019

These items can be added to your agenda this evening with a 2/3 vote of the body. Supporting documentation regarding these appointments and resignation were emailed to you today and hard copies have been provided.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS & NOTES:

Library: Christopher Carney has joined the Library staff this week as our new full-time Adult Services Librarian. Chris received his undergraduate degree in 2011 from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and his Masters in Library and Information Science from SUNY Albany in 2013. Chris has been the Head of Teen Services/Makerspace Manager at the Booth and Dimock Memorial Library in Coventry since 2013. Welcome Chris!

Public Works: Bright Ideas Grant – In December 2017 the Board of Selectmen authorized the Interim Town Manager to enter into an agreement with Eversource Energy to apply for and possibly receive a \$9,500 Bright Ideas Grant. Thanks to the ongoing efforts of the Clean Energy Task Force and the Town to reduce our energy consumption and promote both solar power and energy efficiency we have received full payment for this grant.

Having received this funding, we are now beginning a project to accurately monitor our energy use at six Town facilities in real time at the circuit level. The data gathered through this monitoring will be used to implement new technologies and strategies to reduce our energy use and our demand charges, ultimately reducing our energy usage and lowering our operational costs. The six buildings that will be part of this study include: WPCA, Town Hall, Department of Public Works, Eno Memorial Hall, Library, and Simsbury Farms Ice Rink. Combined these facilities use 3.25 million kWh per year at a cost of nearly \$425,000.

Public Works: Certified Energy Manager (CEM) Certification – Public Works Director Tom Roy recently became a Certified Energy Manager. In order to obtain his certification Tom had to undergo a review of his qualifications and past experience in energy work, complete an educational component, and pass a CEM exam. I am confident that the knowledge and certification Tom has gained will be valuable to the town as we further our energy management efforts.

The CEM program is widely accepted and respected both in the U.S. and internationally. Its designation is recognized by the U.S. Department of Energy, the Office of Federal Energy Management Programs and the U.S. Agency for International Developments, as well as by numerous state energy offices, major utilities, corporations and energy service companies.

Public Works: CIRMA Excellence in Risk Management Award - On January 26th the Simsbury Public Works Department was the recipient of the 2018 CIRMA Excellence in Risk Management Award for New and Innovative Risk Management Initiatives. Simsbury was one of four communities receiving awards. Simsbury Public Works received this award for our continued efforts to reduce work place injuries and to promote safety in all of our operations. The Department has a low rate of workplace injuries when compared to our peers. This award came with a \$2,500 grant to be used towards our ongoing safety and risk management efforts.

Town Manager's Office: Leadership Team Recruitments - As you know, we will be recruiting for three department head positions this spring: Director of Finance; Director of Culture, Parks, and Recreation; and Police Chief. We have initiated the recruitment for Police Chief with involvement from members of the Police Commission functioning as an Executive Search Committee, Board member Askham, and First Selectman Wellman. I will review developing a recruitment plan for the Director of Finance position with the Board of Finance at their February 20 meeting. Shortly thereafter I plan to do the same with the Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission regarding the Director of Culture, Parks, and Recreation recruitment.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Social Services: Presentation on Dangers of Vaping - YSB/Social Services is working with the Library and Community for Care to offer a presentation on vaping and the dangers of vaping at their March meeting on Wednesday, March 14th from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Simsbury Public Library Program Room. This is for parents and teens, and is open to the community at large. The Farmington Valley Health District will be providing us with a speaker for this presentation and two of our Simsbury School Resource Officers will be presenting as well.