
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

BUDGET SEASON:

Work on the 2019 budget is underway. The Town Manager presented her proposed budget to the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on 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 26, 2018

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Hopmeadow Street Banner Policy: Staff is preparing draft modifications to our Lightpost Banner Display Policy to address issues related to the hanging of Hopmeadow Street banners. This item was flagged by the Board of Selectmen for future review by April 1st. Staff plans to present the draft revised policy, cost analysis, and related forms to the Board at your March 26th meeting.

Communications: I have included a new section for your Board agendas/packets entitled “Communications.” The purpose of this section is to include information and correspondence to the Board that may be of interest to some or all of the members but does not necessarily require action of the Board. If a Board member would like to discuss an item under “Communications” you would have the ability to do so, or to flag it as a future agenda item for a more in-depth conversation. If a Board member or members do not have an interest in discussing some or all of the items, there is no need for discussion on those item(s).

Additions to the Agenda: Late last week I received a request to have multiple appointments added to the agenda. The following is being requested to be added under Appointments and Resignations:

Proposed appointment of Andrew Walter (D) as a regular member of the Public Building Committee with a term expiring 1/1/2022

Proposed appointment of Joseph Daly (D) as a regular member of the Recycling Committee with a term expiring 12/2/2019

Proposed appointment of Philip Purciello III (D) as a regular member of the Insurance Committee with a term expiring 12/2/2019

Proposed appointment of Steven Antonio (D) as a regular member of the Fair Rent Commission with a term expiring 11/30/2021

Proposed appointment of Sheree Landerman (D) as a regular member of the Fair Rent Commission with a term expiring 11/30/2019

Proposed appointment of Sheree Landerman (D) as a regular member of the Tourism Committee with a term expiring 12/2/2019

Proposed appointment of Lawrence Boardman (D) as an alternate member for the Zoning Board of Appeals with a term expiring 12/2/2019

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

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS & NOTES:

Finance: Following the conclusion of revaluation we have received over 236 assessment appeals. The number of appeals is not more than expected following a revaluation. Most appeals are related to real estate. Of the real estate appeals, approximately 35 are appeals on commercial or apartment properties assessed at \$1,000,000 or more. Due to the volume of the received appeals, it is unlikely that the Board of Assessment Appeals will be able to conclude their hearing work by the statutory deadline of March 31st. As a result, the Board of Assessment Appeals with authorization from the Town Manager can extend the March 31st deadline by up to two additional months. The Board of Assessment Appeals will likely review this matter this week and if an extension is needed, will file accordingly.

Library: On February 16th the State Bond Commission approved Simsbury's State Library Construction Grant fund request of \$405,525. The Town was awarded this grant in November 2017 from an application submitted by the Simsbury Public Library. The grant will be used to fund the renovation of currently unfinished lower level space into an 80 seat flexible program room to be used by the Library and the community. The Town appropriated the matching funds for this grant during the FY17/18 CIP budget process.

Planning and Development: Dwight Carlson began work today, February 26th as our new Deputy Building Official. Dwight has previous municipal experience and most recently served as the Director of Facilities for the Canton Board of Education. This position is a regional initiative; the position is shared with and partially funded by the Town of Bloomfield through a professional service agreement. Welcome Dwight!

Police: Chief Ingvertsen's last day of work is February 28th. I want to thank the Chief for his dedicated and meritorious service to our community and wish him well in his retirement. The Police Department is coordinating a retirement celebration for the Chief. The event will be held on Tuesday March 27, 2018 from 5 pm – 8 pm at the Simsbury Inn. Tickets are \$50. For tickets, please pay with cash or check made payable to the Simsbury Police Union and RSVP to Captain Nick Boulter (860) 658-3106, A/Lieutenant Tom Sheehan (860) 658-3140, Detective Scott Sagan (860) 658-3130, or PFC Lauren Devin (860) 658-3131.

Town Manager's Office: Leadership Team Recruitments –

- On February 20th I had the opportunity to meet with the Board of Finance and discuss desired qualifications for a Director of Finance/Treasurer and a recruitment plan. The job ad for Finance Director/Treasurer has been released and applications are now being accepted. We are scheduled to conduct first round interviews for the position on April 4th.
- I have reached out to the Chair of the Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission regarding the recruitment for Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation. We are attempting to schedule a special meeting of the Commission for the week of March 5th to discuss desired qualifications of the Director and a recruitment plan.
- The deadline for applications for the Police Chief position is March 2nd. We are scheduled to conduct first round interviews for the position on March 22nd.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Social Services: Mindfulness Series – A series on mindfulness will be offered at the High School April 16th through May 4th, a collaboration of the Youth Service Bureau/Social Services, Simsbury High School, Library, and Community for Care. We are all working together to address prominent mental health issues and risky behaviors in our teens. At the end of February, the Director of Community and Social Services will be attending a two day conference on “Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction.” Details about the series can be obtained by contacting Simsbury High School, Regina Battaglia, Learning Strategy Support Specialist, 860-658-0451.