
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT - OCTOBER 22ND, 2018

Bear Safety

We are hearing from a growing number of residents who are concerned about the increasing bear population. While bear sightings have become more common in recent years, this year we have seen a marked increase in bears coming closer to people and their homes. This trend is reflected in our 9-1-1 call data and is personally concerning to me. Nationally, attacks by black bears are exceedingly rare. Still, I am concerned about the growing proximity of these wild animals.

I am in regular contact with Senator Witkos and Representative Hampton and have shared my concerns. Policy that would impact our bear population is determined at the state level, which is why we are meeting with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection this week. From this meeting I want to understand what proactive steps we can take at the local level to reduce the encounters between our residents and bears. However, I believe the long-term solution involves legislation at the state level.

I know that when the conversation comes up about managing our bear population it can evoke strong feelings. I want to be clear that I am not advocating any particular policy solution at this point. I'm a fact driven person and am interested in gathering information and learning more about how other parts of our country manage similar challenges so we, as a community, can determine the best path forward for Simsbury.

In this space I will keep you informed about what steps the town is taking and what's happening at the state level.

Economic Development Commission

At its meeting Wednesday October 10th, the Board of Selectmen appointed 7 town residents to serve on the new Economic Development Commission (EDC). Over the next month, my plan is to work with the Board of Selectmen to identify specific projects with measurable goals that the EDC will focus on in its first term.

In the long-term, my hope is through sensible economic development, we can continue to grow Simsbury's tax base, taking some of the burden off of homeowners. I define sensible economic development as growing the grand list while making Simsbury an even better place to live, learn, work, and play. I am absolutely convinced these things are not mutually exclusive and I'm excited to work with my colleagues on the Board of Selectmen and the new EDC on moving this priority forward.

Planning Update

- Curaleaf has executed a signed copy of the lease for 34 Hopmeadow Street. They are proceeding with clean-up and remediation of interior spaces in order to accommodate the move. The next step will be applying to the state for a new license for the location.
- Work is proceeding at 200 Hopmeadow Street (40 acre parcel north of the former campus property). Presently the 120,000 sq ft assisted living facility is under construction. This facility will have 120 beds. 124 of the 280 residential units have been issued building permits and are presently under construction. The project is approaching a milestone based on residential units under construction that the two commercial buildings will have to be constructed.

- The zone change off route 44 has been filed and will be scheduled for a public hearing in November. The application is to change 18 acres located in Simsbury from the current R-40 (residential zoning district) to B3 (Design Business District).
- Planning staff has been approached by a person who is interested in re-developing the Wagner Ford Site (aka Big Y property). No plans have been filed.

Veterans Day Ceremony

On Veterans Day, Sunday November 11th, the public is invited to the annual Simsbury Veterans Day Ceremony beginning with a moment of silence at exactly 11:00am. It will take place at Eno Memorial Hall, 800 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury. Veterans Day dates back to the end of World War I and is traditionally a time to thank veterans, both past and present, for their service to our country.

Forum on Childhood Anxiety

The Simsbury Public Schools, The Simsbury Special Education Parent Teacher Organization, and Community For Care are sponsoring a forum on anxiety among children. We know untreated anxiety in kids is a predictor of depression in teens and young adults. Lynn Lyons, author of *Anxious Kids* and *Anxious Parents*, will be discussing strategies to cope with childhood anxiety. All people ages 13+ are invited to attend this forum at Henry James Middle School, Monday November 5th at 6:30pm.

Simsbury Trail News

1) Bicycle Safety Tips from Simsbury Police Department

As the days grow shorter and the nights grow longer cyclists are asked to take extra safety precautions when riding on the road. Below are a few tips to improve a cyclist's visibility.

Lights

- a. **Headlights:** A white headlight can be mounted on the handlebars and should be seen from 500 feet.
- b. **Rear Light:** A red light should be mounted on the rear of the bicycle. Rear blinking lights can be used throughout the day and be mounted on fenders, seat posts, racks, or saddlebags.

Reflective/Bright Colored Clothing

Reflective materials increase visibility at night. Wear a reflective vest or jacket that can be as bright, or brighter than bicycle lights. Brightly colored clothing may be highly visible in the daylight but not the same as reflective. Be sure that nightwear is reflective.

Always remember **SAFETY FIRST** and to wear a **HELMET**. For more bike safety info, click here

https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/simsburyct/files/uploads/bicycle_motorist_safety_spring_2018.pptx

2) You can support our bicycle advocates by participating in local and state events. Upcoming calendar highlights:

Sunday, October 18, at 11:30 am – The Bicycle Cellar Halloween Slow Roll
 Friday, November 2, at 5:30 pm – BikeWalk CT Annual Meeting
 Friday, November 16, at 6:30 pm - Farmington Valley Trails Council Annual Meeting

For more detailed information please visit www.simsbury.bike

- 3) Don't forget that Simsbury Free Bike will end the season on Monday, October 29. All bicycles will be removed from designated distribution centers until the season reopens on May 1, 2019. There is still time to ride the trails and enjoy the fall weather. To find a location go to www.simsbury.bike

Richman Spooktacular Chili Challenge

The Simsbury Chamber of Commerce presents its annual Chili Challenge, Saturday October 27th from noon to 5pm at Simsbury Meadows. Admission is \$10 for anyone 11 and older. Admission includes all the chili you can eat, music, vendors, and a more. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit SimsburyChili.com.

Ribbon Cuttings

Congratulations to MedSpa CT (Simsbury Town Shops) which held a ribbon cutting last Thursday. Also congratulations to the new Dunkin' Donuts (North Village) which also held a ribbon cutting on Thursday.

Stay Connected

You can sign up for email updates from the town so you always know what's happening in our community. On the homepage of the Town website, click "[subscribe to news.](#)" and you'll be able to specify exactly what kind of news you want to receive.

Opportunities to Serve Your Town

There are more than a dozen boards and commissions that serve our town whose members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. We're always looking for volunteers willing to serve and I'm pleased to share that the Town has made the process easier and more transparent. You can learn more about all of our boards and commissions, current vacancies, and how to apply [here](#).

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: October 22, 2018

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Addition to the Agenda: We received a request this morning for approval of a public gathering permit for the Simsbury Celebrates event on November 24th. I am respectfully requesting that "Public Gathering Permit – 2018 Simsbury Celebrates" be added to the agenda. This item can be added to your agenda this evening with a 2/3 vote of the body.

Budget Kick-Off: The tri-board meeting between the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and Board of Education has been scheduled for Monday, December 3, 2018 at 6pm in Program Room 1 of the Simsbury Public Library.

Eno Memorial Hall Facility Use Work Group: The work group reviewing the facility use policy, fee schedule, and fee waivers for Eno Memorial Hall is scheduled to meet this Friday, October 26th at 7:30am in the Main Meeting Room of Town Hall. The goal is for final recommendations to be brought to the full Board no later than December 17th with changes taking effect January 1, 2019.

Purchasing Ordinance/Policy Work Group: The Purchasing Work Group met on October 12th and came to a consensus on proposed changes to the policy. Staff is incorporating the proposed changes into the draft Purchasing Policy for final review, discussion and possible adoption at the November 12th Board of Selectmen meeting. As you may recall, the Town Attorney notified us that what was thought to be a Purchasing Ordinance is in fact only a Purchasing Policy; the Work Group is recommending that the revisions remain a policy as opposed to an ordinance.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS & NOTES:

Community and Social Services: We are pleased to announce that we have hired Kristyn Kalman to fill the newly created position of Community Social Worker. Kristyn will begin work on November 5th. Kristyn has her Master's Degree in Social Work from Boston University, she is a Certified School Social Worker and a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW). Most recently Kristyn has been working as a School Psychotherapist. She will bring many great social work skills to Simsbury and we are looking forward to her helping our residents.

Culture, Parks and Recreation: The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association has selected Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation Director, Tom Tyburski, as its 2018 Outstanding Professional of the Year. This award is truly a testament to Tom's hard work and dedication within the field of Parks and Recreation. On behalf of the Town of Simsbury, we congratulate Tom on this recognition. Tom will be honored at an awards luncheon on November 20th at Mohegan Sun and Convention Center.

Finance: Jennifer Russo, a staff member in our assessment division, will be presented with her Certified Connecticut Municipal Collector (CCMC) certificate at the Connecticut tax collectors' association meeting on November 8. Congratulations Jennifer on this accomplishment!

Library: Lyndsay Neffinger joins the Library staff on October 22nd as a full-time Adult Services Librarian. Lyndsay received her Master of Library and Information Services degree from Drexel University and comes to Simsbury from her position as Adult Services Librarian at the East Longmeadow Public Library. Lyndsay is filling the vacancy recently created due to the retirement of Ms. Celia Roberts. Welcome Lyndsay!

Town Manager's Office: As you are aware, we have been receiving a large volume of calls for service regarding bear activity. Year-to-date we have responded to over 500 calls for service related to bear activity. The Chief and I have scheduled a meeting for this Friday with the DEEP Director of the Wildlife Division. Eric Wellman, Sean Askham, and our state elected officials are joining us for this meeting. We are completing an analysis of our calls for service and related concerns to the bear activity. We will share that information with DEEP this Friday, will forward it onto you, and will include it as a communication in your next BOS packet. Last week through social media we distributed safety tips for keeping bears away from your garbage.

SPECIAL EVENTS & PROGRAMS:

Culture, Parks and Recreation: The Culture, Parks, and Recreation Department has partnered with the Simsbury Police Department to offer R.A.D. (Rape Aggression Defense) Self-Defense Classes, with instructors from the Simsbury Police Department. Classes begin November 27th. Registration information for this program will be available soon.

Culture, Parks and Recreation: The Simsbury Farms Ice Rink is scheduled to open on Saturday, November 3rd. Public skating is scheduled for Saturdays and Sundays from 2:15-4:15pm, and Saturdays from 7:30-9:00pm.

Culture, Parks and Recreation: The Simsbury Celebrates Gingerbread House Contest is back: Be a part of this sweet tradition! We are looking for people to create gingerbread houses for the annual Simsbury Celebrates Gingerbread House Competition. For more information visit www.simsburycelebrates.com

Culture, Parks and Recreation: Simsbury Youth Basketball registration is now available! The Simsbury Recreation Department has programs available for boys and girls in grades K-4. Registration information is available at <http://www.simsburyrec.com/info/activities/default.aspx>.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection: A household hazardous waste collection is being held on November 3rd from 8:00am to 1:00pm at Simsbury Department of Public Works, 66 Town Forest Road, West Simsbury, CT 06092. Sample items that can be brought to the collection are:

- Fluorescent and compact light bulbs
- Batteries – common household batteries including rechargeable batteries & car batteries
- Lawn care chemicals – fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides
- Switches or items containing Mercury – thermometers, thermostats, motion detectors
- Household cleaners – acids, adhesives, aerosol cans, ammonia, drain cleaner, disinfectants, moth balls, etc.
- Chemicals from the garage or workshop – antifreeze, ant/bug spray or bait, brake fluid, old gasoline, oil based and latex paints, lighter fluid, polyurethane, pool chemicals, road flares, transmission fluid, power steering fluid, wood stain, etc.

Freedom of Information Act Training: As a reminder, the Freedom of Information Act Training for Board, Committee, and Commission members and employees will be held on Monday, October 29, 2018 at 5:30pm in Program Room 1 of the Simsbury Public Library. The session will be conducted by Tom Hennick, Public Education Officer at the Freedom of Information Commission (FOIC). To RSVP, please contact Tom Fitzgerald at tmintern@simsbury-ct.gov or (860) 658-3230.