

Memo

To: Town Council
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager
CC: Town Employees
Date: August 10, 2009
Re: Town Manager's Report

Below please find a report regarding various items of interest to the Town Council, staff and the community:

Council Requests for Information

- *Current Waivers for Long Driveway Service* – There are 57 long driveways, 7 extra long driveways and 11 in-yard services that have medical waivers.
- *DPW Employees Outside of Mansfield General Store* – Mr. Hultgren spoke to the citizen who had expressed a concern and asked him to contact Mark or Lon if he ran into that situation again. Mr. Hultgren queried the DPW crews and thinks it could have been a summer help mowing crew, but without details on the truck or description of the individuals, he has no way of knowing who it was.
- *Four Corners Interbasin Transfer Process* – The Four Corners/UConn water supply from the CT Water Company will require a DEP diversion permit. Part of the data and analysis of this diversion permit will include a review of both river basins to determine if there are any ill-effects of transferring this water from one basin to another. So there is no "interbasin transfer permit" per se, it is just part of the larger Diversion Permit data and analysis. When and if CT Water is able to proceed with their plans (i.e., UConn and the Town are prepared to purchase and help finance the infrastructure needed to bring the water into Mansfield), CT Water will apply for this diversion permit.
- *Gurleyville Road Bridge Railing Project* – In 2007 the Town accepted a federal rural minor collector grant from the WINCOG region in the amount of approximately \$110,000 to update the bridge railings on the Gurleyville Road bridge over the Fenton River. The project was scoped by the DOT, approved and a designer hired to design the new railing. After exploring the ways in which the new railing can be attached to the existing bridge, we have come to the conclusion (with the help of the DOT's bridge unit and our consultant) that it will be too costly to attempt to attach the new railings to the existing bridge. The bridge's beams are hollowed-out precast concrete sections that do not have enough concrete in their side walls to support the bolted connections that would be required to hold on the new railing. A solution to reconstruct the deck to provide the needed additional side-strength is not considered to be practical. As the Town has other rural minor collector roads, we have asked WINCOG and the DOT to substitute another project for this one. The project we have selected is to improve the drainage along the steep section of Wormwood Hill Road which is currently served by open ditches and is a big maintenance problem. WINCOG has agreed to back this substitution, so the next step will be to have the DOT's project concept unit review the project and determine (with the Town) a scope and grant-eligible cost. We expect

this process to be completed this year and the project to be designed and constructed in 2010.

- *Ponde Place* – Council Member Koehn requested further information on Ponde Place's role in the Northeast Regional Area Water Supply. More information regarding this request is respectfully requested.
- *Retirement Contributions* – Council Member Nesbitt asked for clarification on the Town Manager's tax implications of the current retirement contributions including social security contributions. I have attached a copy of former Director of Finance Jeffrey Smith's April 2009 communication explaining why the Town treats the deferred compensation contributions as pensionable compensation. The Municipal Employee Retirement System (MERS) is examining this issue and has not issued a ruling.

Departmental/Division News

- *Accountant Position Filled* – I am pleased to announce that Keri Rowley will be joining the Finance team to fill the Accountant's position. Ms. Rowley has non-profit experience in accounting and we are confident that she will do a fine job for the Town. Welcome Keri!
- *Birch Road Bikeway* – The wetlands permit has been renewed for the remaining section of the Birch Road bikeway, and the final revised plans, specs and estimates will be submitted to the DOT for final approval this week. A public information meeting has to be held prior to the project going forward -- Council will be asked to schedule this in the near future. This project is being funded by a \$300,000 ARRA grant.
- *Hunting Lodge Road Bikeway* – The rough grading is complete on the Hunting Lodge Road bikeway. Remaining work, which will commence the week of August 17th, includes placing the base material (processed gravel) and paving. Base and paving should be complete by August 28th. Finish work (mostly landscaping) will take place in September.
- *Personnel Appeals Board Reappointment* – Crayton Walker has agreed to be reappointed to the Personnel Appeals Board. His position is a Town Manager appointment and I have reappointed him to a term to end October 31, 2014.
- *School Renovation Project* – I attended the July 15th meeting of the School Building Committee. The committee authorized staff to conduct an engineering analysis for the Southeast School property to determine if that site would be a feasible location for a consolidated elementary school. If the engineering analysis shows that the site is feasible, the project architect will prepare a preliminary rendering. I wish to emphasize that the School Building Committee has **not** made a decision to recommend a consolidated elementary school and all four options remain under consideration. This fall the committee would like to schedule a joint meeting to provide the Town Council and the Board of Education with a project update.

Upcoming Events

- *Celebrate Mansfield Weekend, September 11-13* – Join the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, the Town of Mansfield, the Mansfield Community Center, the Mansfield League of Women Voters, the Altnaveigh Inn & Restaurant, and Storrs Farmers Market for a weekend full of community fun! Go to www.mansfieldct.org for a more information including a listing of events.

Upcoming Meetings

- Historic District Commission, August 11, 2009, 8:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Agriculture Committee, August 12, 2009, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

- Planning and Zoning Commission, August 17, 2009, 7:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Committee on Committees, August 17, 2009, 6:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town/University Relations Committee, August 18, 2009, 4:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Open Space Preservation Committee, August 18, 2009, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Conservation Commission, August 19, 2009, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town Council, Monday, August 24, 2009, 7:30PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building