

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:** A. Moran, C. Workman, P. Aho, J. Armstrong, R. Aylesworth, D. Freudmann, E. Holinko, V. Lorenz, Sgt. K. Timme, S. Vasington

**Staff:** L. Painter, C. van Zelm

**Absent:** D. Mack, N. Frank, M. Gilbert

The meeting was called to order by C. Workman at 1:03 PM

**1. Public Comment**

No public comment.

**2. Meeting Minutes**

T. Moran moved, P. Aho seconded approval of the December 8, 2020 minutes. Minutes approved. S. Vasington abstained.

**3. Updates**

- a. *Mansfield Downtown Partnership(MDP) / Economic Development.* C. van Zelm reported that the Partnership staff has reached out to businesses about relief funding opportunities, and that several businesses received funding from the CT CARES program providing \$5,000 to small businesses and/or the Paycheck Protection Program made available January through March, 2021. The Partnership continues to provide weekly updates to businesses by K. Paterson. See the website for details: <https://www.mansfieldmdp.org/reopen> MDP launched the third "Spend & Win" promotion where consumers email a receipt from any Mansfield restaurant purchase of \$25 or more to enter to win weekly prizes from local businesses in February. A new promotion is being developed for March. Winter Welcome December was well-attended with 100 promotional bags containing discount coupons distributed within 20 minutes to those attending the drive-through event. A schedule for events for the upcoming calendar year is still in development with special consideration for how to execute them successfully and safely. Strategic planning for MDP starts in the spring. Meetings with Advance CT is yielding creation of a parcel book of all targeted areas of development in Mansfield. Recently completed Explore Our Town guide being distributed first to realtors, then local employers and economic development departments positioning Mansfield as an ideal community for prospective businesses and families. Vendors who can provide software platform for a robust, engaging community events calendar are being interviewed to effectively market UConn and Mansfield events to families and visitors. Group

continuing to work on the Four-Town Plan for Economic Vitality with Tolland, Bolton, Coventry and Mansfield. Developing an asset inventory with goal to plan a tour showcasing these sites. Also considering a four-town community calendar. D. Freudmann asked if incentives such as tax abatements have been raised relative to Advance CT and C. van Zelm responded no, the parcel book just focuses on market analysis, and that incentives would be the Town Council's decision. C. Workman asked about the project with UCONN students with MDP, and C. van Zelm reported that the UCONN student on the MDP Board is leading a student consulting group is looking at the Downtown and the Town Square, interviewing businesses and preparing recommendations which is running parallel to the MDP strategic planning process. C. Workman noted that this is a strong example of the community and university collaborating to leverage resources.

- b. *Planning and Development.* L. Painter reported that the town is expecting applications in the spring for new developments. The Planning office is rolling out programs for Mansfield residents who need assistance with childcare and food security expenses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Childcare assistance applications will open February 15, and the food assistance April 1.

- 4. **UConn Construction Updates.** S. Vasington reported that the UCONN hockey arena is moving forward and Turner Construction will be construction manager for the project, launching in April. Arrangements with Department of Transportation and other agencies are being finalized for the 18 to 20-month project. All new athletic field construction is complete, and a formal opening of the performance center will take place in the spring. There may be impact to Separatist Road traffic related to the arena project or other upcoming projects this summer, but the Town will be informed with appropriate notice. Progress has been made at the construction site near UCONN Foundation and Jorgenson across from the North Garage. Hillside Road and Alumni Drive will remain closed through August as the construction project and campus' first roundabout is installed, but the North Garage will stay open through the process and is accessible from North Eagleville and Discovery Drive.
- 5. **UConn / Town COVID-19 Update.** R. Aylesworth reported that the 65-74 age group portion of Phase 1b was announced by the Governor as eligible for vaccines. Nearly 60% of Mansfield's age 75+ population has received vaccinations, and the Town is making special efforts to reach this audience. The Town engaged a reverse 9-1-1 call to landlines encouraging eligible residents to register, and is conducting other outreach to offer assistance to this 75+ age segment. Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) is now hosting a higher-volume clinic each Wednesday at E.O. Smith High School. C. van Zelm reported that the returning students returning has had a positive impact on traffic downtown. She commended the local businesses which have been resilient through this period, and encouraged everyone to continue to support these businesses. T. Moran added that there is a higher incidence of positive COVID cases among town residents than among UCONN students residing in town, and there is still no evidence that coronavirus is spreading in the public schools. Of positive cases reported in

Mansfield, 80-90% of cases are non-students. E. Holinko remarked that he is pleased at how EHHD is handling the vaccine rollout locally. V. Lorenz asked whether any vaccines have had to be disposed. R. Aylesworth and T. Moran responded that this is a rare occurrence, and a system is in place to make calls to fill missed appointments, and maintaining a will-call list through the Senior Center has minimized potentially wasted vaccinations. To register for that list, or to request transportation assistance, seniors can call the Outreach Coordinator at 860-487-9875.

C. Workman reported that classes at UCONN began January 19, and each student was pre-tested before return, and held to a two-week quarantine upon arrival. There are 4,400 residential students on campus. A new procedure is providing resident students with a pack of coronavirus test kits for submitting tests weekly, and wastewater testing is still ongoing. In the two weeks since school opened, more than 20,000 tests have been completed. Spring break has been rescheduled this semester to fall April 12-16, not in March, at which time residential students will vacate campus for the balance of the semester. The dashboard reporting tests and cases continues to be updated daily, and a COVID-19 hotline is a resource for the UCONN community. J. Armstrong shared the website ( <https://kindness.studentaffairs.uconn.edu/> ) and an overview of the U-Kindness program. One element, Jonathan's Challenge, is a reward-based program which offers resources for how students can get involved, stay active and engaged with other students. About 8,000 students have on-campus commitments this semester. The outdoor skating rink has been very popular, and students are volunteering to help clear the snow. Regarding testing, J. Armstrong also reported that when his office receives information about off-campus gatherings, he tries to visit these students personally to remind them of the need for community safety and distributes test kits.

T. Moran inquired whether as UCONN (Health Center) offers vaccinations at the location on Paterson Square in downtown for staff and students, would they consider adding Mansfield residents' testing there. C. Workman agreed to investigate and respond to the group by email. R. Aylesworth added that EHHD has shared that a high-volume vaccination site on campus for the public is being considered, but nothing is being finalized until the state's supply expands to support such a distribution.

**6. Other Business.** No other business items were raised.

**7. Future Agenda Items.** C. Workman suggested a full update on the Four-Town project should be added to the next meeting agenda.

P. Aho motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:47 PM, seconded by R. Aylesworth.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Margaret Chatey  
Communications Specialist-Town of Mansfield

**Next Meeting: April 13, 2021 at 1:00 PM**