


MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council
FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager 
DATE: November 20, 2020
SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report

The following information includes follow up from general items that were discussed at previous Council meetings as well as updates of a general nature from the departments. The items are organized by department and are intended to provide information on activities currently being undertaken by the Town's departments and those matters that are upcoming. Not all departments will be represented in each Report.

Council Meeting Follow Up

- The Town was fortunate to receive 14 responses to its Request for Proposals related to professional design assistance for the proposed athletic field projects at the High School. Based on the number of responses to review, the committee has postponed a recommendation on the matter until the December 8 Town Council Meeting. Notwithstanding any Town Meeting action on the overall financing of the project, the Council will be able to determine whether it wishes to conditionally engage a firm for the project at the meeting.

Emergency Management/Finance

- According to recent information from FEMA, East Hampton is scheduled to receive a reimbursement of just over \$3,000 for coronavirus-related expenses for the period through June. The rules related to reimbursement from FEMA are fairly restrictive so additional expenses are being covered by the State. For the same period, staff anticipates a reimbursement of over \$5,000 from the State's relief fund to cover items denied by FEMA. Separate reimbursements occur for school-related expenses and those are still in processing at the State.

Land Use

- The application for a zone change related to the gas station/convenience store at 1 Colchester Ave and 157 Main Street has been withdrawn for now. The owners and their representatives are working to address some concerns that were raised by the public and Planning and Zoning Commission members during the public hearing and will re-apply with a new concept plan in the next month or two. Once the new application is submitted, the Commission will open a new public hearing and the community will have an opportunity to view and comment on the new proposal. As a reminder, the change is

being sought in order to rebuild and expand the existing Citgo station and Food Bag store at the corner of Main Street and Route 16.

- The application that had been submitted by the East Hampton Rotary Foundation to obtain park status for their property at 45 Daly Road has been withdrawn due to concerns raised by neighbors and some members of the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency is reviewing a plan for Belltown Recycling which is in the process of cleaning and restoring the property at 101 Main Street. No significant changes are planned for the site, but parking areas will be restored and some activity is planned along Pocotopaug Creek to protect the banks from erosion. The building will be used as a warehouse and shipping/receiving facility with a few employees reporting to the site. Improvements will be made to the façade and landscaping as well as the roof and interior of the building.
- Based on conversations with the developer, staff anticipates that an application will likely be submitted in the next month or two for the construction of the next phase of Edgewater Hills. This will consist of apartment units on the southern side of the development beyond the Town Hall.

Library

- Circulation of materials in October was up 2.7% from October 2019 and 3.9% from September 2020.
- The Library will once again be sponsoring the Shop Local Holiday Raffle with Village Center businesses. Customers who make a purchase at a participating Village Center business from November 28 to December 22 will receive a raffle ticket. By returning the ticket to the Library, they are entered into a raffle drawing to win a gift basket of donated goods and gift certificates from Village Center businesses. This is the third year the Library will sponsor this program. Last year, over 650 raffle tickets were returned to the Library.
- The Library is working with the Parks and Recreation Department to reimagine this year's Jingle Bell Parade. This year's event will be a holiday lighting competition running from December 11 to 23. Houses and businesses register their address to be part of the

competition. Community members will download a map from the Library's website and drive around town, admiring the lights and voting on their favorite decorations. Children will also be able to pick up their Jingle Bell Parade Kit, complete with a donated sleigh bell from Bevin Bells.

Parks and Recreation

- The Parks Maintenance team is working on leaf clean up at schools and parks and as the fall sports season wraps up and will then turn its attention to aeration of all sports fields and Sears Park before seeding and fertilizing of fields is completed.
- Staff produced a fun contest for families to participate in prior to Thanksgiving. "The Great Turkey Hunt" involved 17 turkey signs set at different locations throughout Town, which families visited to identify the corresponding number on the turkey at each site. The turkey information was submitted to the Department and participants who identified all locations correctly were entered into a drawing held on Friday, November 20 for a chance to win a Stop and Shop Gift card.
- The CIAC has pushed back the start date for all high school and middle school winter sports to January 19, 2021. As noted in prior communications, the Department is following all guidelines identified by CIAC and DPH and will now push back Town program start dates to January 23 as the programs do not have access to the school gyms until that time. In addition, guidelines now require athletes to wear masks while participating in the sport of choice during play, which will be added to the Department's procedures. The Park and Recreation Advisory Board will determine at its meeting on December 1 whether it will offer a basketball season. See the Department's procedures here: https://easthamptonct.myrec.com/documents/protocols_for_programming_amid_covid_pandemicbasketball.pdf
- Staff has scheduled a meeting with the owners of the pond in the Edgewater Development across the street from Town Hall. At the meeting, discussion will involve outlining a plan for pond improvements and the easement process to facilitate the work. Additionally, a meeting will be set with Middlesex Land Trust representatives to discuss work and an easement off Bay Road involving Fern Brook. The projects under consideration are funded through the Town's 319 Stormwater Grant.

Police

- Pursuant to Public Act 18-161, beginning January 1, 2019 each law enforcement unit in the State of Connecticut was required to adopt and maintain the minimum standards and practices developed by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC) known as the

Compliance to Law Enforcement Standards and Practices Program (CLESP). Those sixteen standards must be inspected each year by a member of POSTC. On November 4, 2020, Mr. Bill Tanner, Program Manager for POSTC, inspected the Town's records for compliance with the standards during calendar year 2019. The Department was found to be in compliance with all standards.

- On November 14, members of the East Hampton Police Department and the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department conducted a Food Drive at Stop & Shop with the proceeds going to the local food bank. We were able to fill the back of a pickup truck with donated food and collected \$1,223.92 in cash, which was also donated to the food bank. The generosity of local residents, even during the time of a pandemic, is amazing.

Public Works

- Public Works crews are continuing to work on wrapping up projects in the 2020 construction season and have undertaken some additional smaller projects on Ola Ave, and the Middle School field access drive. Staff will be mobilizing onto Edgerton Street to accomplish some drainage installation in anticipation of paving that road next fall. Crews will also be continuing with fall cleanup of cemeteries, addressing our gravel roads, and continuing with wood/storm debris pick up.
- As the Council will recall, the Town enlisted the services of BETA Engineering Group to assist in developing a Town-wide pavement management strategy. The initial Town-wide road survey is complete as well as a draft report. This strategy will assist the Town in long term capital planning and also provide a cost benefit analysis model for decision making. A cost benefit analysis is essential in identifying which projects will have the greatest impact for dollars spent. We are currently working with BETA engineering to create a presentation for the Council and other interested parties in the near future.

Senior Center

- The Senior Center is maintaining its open status by appointment only. As the virus continues to increase in the community, it remains the best alternative not to hold any in-person group programs at the center. All group programming continues to be done virtually. Seniors can still come to the Center by appointment for CHOICES counselling related to Medicare/insurance, and for energy assistance. These meetings are offered three ways; via Zoom, telephone or in- person. To date, people have selected 3 in-person meetings, 5 zoom meetings, and 3 phone call meetings.

- As the holidays are rapidly approaching, the Senior Center continues on-line programming, with a twist. The week of December 16, staff will be hosting virtual parties for the groups who have participated in our virtual programming. Each group will be offered a 'holiday kit' to pick up for the party on their designated day. In addition, staff is planning weekly drawings, where participant names are randomly drawn for a Gift Certificate from a local business. Center School is also raising funds in classrooms to provide a special surprise to the older adults in the community. All are fun ways to add sparkle to the holiday season that may be more difficult this year.
- A VIRTUAL GATHERING FOR CT SENIOR CENTERS is being held on December 18 from 1pm to 2:30pm. The event is a statewide event being sponsored by AARP, CASP and Connecticut Community Care. The flyer related to this event is attached to this Report. People are registering online from all over the state.
- CRT continues to provide "Grab and Go" meals. CRT is also providing its usual Thanksgiving Dinner next week, in addition to the regular meals being delivered.
- Open Enrollment for Medicare finishes December 15, 2020. Our last Open Enrollment event is December 2. The Choices Volunteer Counsellor reviews the individuals plan to ensure it still is appropriate and meeting the person's needs.
- East Hampton Social Services and the Senior Center continue to collaborate to meet individual and group needs for seniors via group and individual counselling. The two departments also work together to meet individual needs when there is an overlap of services.

WPCA

- All of the Town's water customers are currently up to date on the bills as several customers have recently made catch up payments or have implemented payment plans. Additionally, staff continues to work with customers that have high water use to identify leaks to be repaired and to implement other water and cost saving plans.
- The Joint Facilities board is working on plans to investigate options for the Middletown Avenue pump/lift station, which is the main pump station moving water to the wastewater treatment plant. It moves about 1 million gallons of wastewater daily. The station and its related force main are decades old and a plan is being developed to

provide for replacement and upgrade of the equipment, force main and, if necessary, the building. The project is anticipated to cost several million dollars.

Youth and Family Services

- Currently, there are 11 open cases for fuel assistance and the staff continues to receive calls from residents who have large, unpaid utility bills. However, these residents are under winter protection and COVID protections until May.
- Staff is working with ten therapy cases, nine of which are in person and one telephonic. Clinicians continue to maintain social distancing during sessions while also implementing sanitizing practices that include using disinfectant spray and wipes on furniture and doorknobs. Clinicians are overseen by Town staff throughout the clinical process.
- Donation calls come into the Department regularly including a recent call from a person volunteering to develop care baskets for seniors. The Department will coordinate with the Senior Center on what items are needed and work with the donor to facilitate the project. Other callers are referred to the food bank when that is more appropriate while donations of clothes or other items would be handled by Department staff.
- The most recent edition of the Social Services Department newsletter is included with this Report. It is distributed to Town Departments and via email, social media and the Town website quarterly.
- Stuff a Stocking for East Hampton is a project Social Service started promoting yesterday. We have some fliers around town hall, on our Facebook page, and sent to other town departments asking them to put out for residents to see. The concept is to ask residents who can to fill a stocking (that we can provide) for families and individuals of all ages. Our department will deliver to those we identify. Stuff a stocking will take the place of a usual toy drive. In addition, staff is working with an outside donor who has agreed to provide holiday gifts for four families identified by Social Services.

Town Manager/Other

- East Hampton continues to be in Red Alert status due to increased COVID-19 infections. In order to help residents and other be tested, additional free testing has been arranged in Town and was held Friday, November 20 and more dates are being planned. Interested parties should monitor the Town website and its Facebook page for new information. Information will also be provided to the local newspapers.

- Staff is working with the Ambulance Association to ensure that all the appropriate paperwork is in place to formalize the relationship between the Town and the Association. Among the items being reviewed is the lease between the Association and the Town for the use of the 4 Middletown Avenue property, which is owned by the Town. It is anticipated that the Town Council will be asked to affirm in some way the lease relationship that has existed on the property for about 15 years despite no final documentation of the lease in Town or Association records.
- In the upcoming months, staff will be working with CGI Communications to update the "Video Tour" of East Hampton on the Town Website. The videos were produced in 2017 and are somewhat out of date. New video is likely to be shot in spring 2021 and will be on the website around late summer or fall 2021. There is no out-of-pocket cost for the Town as the company attempts to enlist local companies to advertise in conjunction with the videos on the Town site. A number of local businesses chose to advertise last time and CGI indicates they have remained successful in getting sponsor advertisement despite the impacts of the pandemic. The video will be produced regardless of the advertising success.
- Work to identify hazards at the 1 Watrous property is ongoing. Initial reports from soil sampling on the site found an area with high levels of PCBs. That area was immediately capped with asphalt to prevent its spread and to contain it in place until a long term comprehensive plan for clean up is developed. Staff is in the final stages of close out on the project that performed the latest clean up on the 13 Watrous site so that final reimbursement from the STEAP grant the Town has for that work can be requested in December. Unfortunately, there is still evidence of contaminated soils on the property so the Town's Brownfields Agency is considering further options for the property.
- Recently, there has been some concern among residents and others around why the Town was not the recipient of a Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant this year. Under rules implemented by the State, East Hampton was not eligible for a STEAP grant in this round because it already had a grant in place that was still open (see above regarding 13 Watrous). As always, staff monitors grant opportunities and takes advantage of them where possible.

DC

Attachments

cc: Management Staff



It's A Wonderful Life

DECEMBER 18TH 1 PM - 2:30 PM
A VIRTUAL GATHERING FOR
CT SENIOR CENTERS

Renee DiNino, Master of Ceremonies
Loretta Laroche, Stress Expert & Humor Consultant
John Banker, Musician & Entertainer
CT State Officials with Holiday Greetings
Val Ramos, Flamenco Guitarist
Fred Astaire Ballroom Dancers

**Scheduled to
Appear**

Gina Berreca, Humorist
Yale Trombone Quartet
Hartford Gay Men's Chorus
Branford Music Makers

Lyra Ross-Norman, International Opera Star
Stephen Fries, On the Food Scene
Ledyard High School Chamber Orchestra
The Mark Twain House and Museum
CT Dance Academy Performance Team
And more of our favorite things!

Click Here to Register

Participants registering by November 23rd will receive a holiday treat bag from their senior center. The performers listed above are scheduled to appear. Final program and order of performers is subject to change without notice. For more information, contact Karen Green at the CT Healthy Living Collective at karen.green@ctcommunitycare.org.

Brought to
you by



CT Healthy Living
COLLECTIVE



**CONNECTICUT
COMMUNITY CARE**
Caring From Every Perspective



With thanks for support from

AARP® Real
Possibilities
Connecticut

East Hampton Department of Social Services Newsletter

Winter 2020

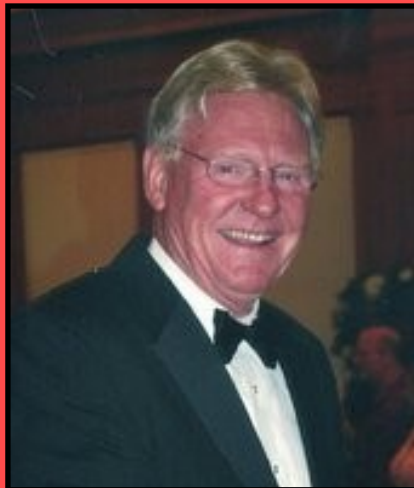


Department of Social Services and Youth & Family Services 1 Community Drive 860-267-9982

Holiday Giving

East Hampton residents are generous! We continue to be impressed by the number of residents asking to donate clothing, food, and household items to families in need. If you have a food donation you would like to make this holiday season to a family in need, we encourage you to contact the food bank at 860-365-5978. You may continue calling our office with non-food donations. We will distribute to the families we serve. Thank you East Hampton for rallying behind your neighbors. We think you're great and thought you should know.

We would like to dedicate our holiday newsletter to Red McKinney. (August 2, 1947 - December 24, 2019) Our team didn't have the pleasure of meeting Red, but his love for East Hampton and his generous spirit to his beloved town has made him a legend around here. We wish his family a happy, healthy holiday season.



Keeping Covid in its place

Covid has, unfortunately, changed the way we do things, in particular, how we gather and socialize with family and friends; however, we have learned that simple measures like handwashing and wearing a mask can drastically help minimize the spread of the virus. Before we enter into the holiday season, a time when most of us are used to gathering with large groups of friends and family and navigating through malls swarming with holiday shoppers, please consider what our Director of Chatham Health, Russell S. Melmed, MPH, has to say.

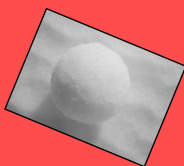
“A major driver of the current resurgence in COVID-19 cases is indoor social gatherings among friends and family. As you decide how to celebrate the upcoming holidays, be mindful that the virus doesn't care who you love, or who you trust. You, your family, and your friends are just as capable of being infected as anyone else, and even more likely to spread the virus to one another as the stranger you pass in the store aisle. The best way to prevent transmission of COVID-19 in our community over the holidays is to avoid indoor social gatherings with people who you don't already live with. If you decide to get together with extended family or friends, do it outdoors if possible. If you decide to gather inside, keep your celebrations small, keep them brief, and keep them masked as much as possible”

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, please wear a mask, maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet, avoid crowds, wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds, stay home if you're sick. For the most current updates and recommendations, visit ct.gov/coronavirus. For general questions, call 2-1-1



Free Counseling Services

Did you know that we offer free therapeutic counseling services to individuals, families, and children? That's right, free. We are incredibly fortunate as a department to offer this service to the community. If you would like to schedule counseling services, please contact our office at 860-267-9982 to do a confidential intake. Also, be sure to visit our Facebook page, **East Hampton Youth & Family**, for department news and information about upcoming Zoom events, including social groups and trivia games for seniors hosted by our clinicians in partnership with the East Hampton Senior Center.



What's that you say?

According to ancient legend (we have no idea which one but would love to find out), forest animals are able to speak human language on Christmas Eve. After 2020 there's not much left to surprise us, so there you go.



LET IT GLOW/LIGHT IT UP

East Hampton Tree lighting takes place on December 11 and the Let it Glow competition will be held December 11-23. For more information and to register, visit:

www.easthamptonpubliclibrary.org/glow

Coming up... January 2021

A special money-saving newsletter filled with tips and budgeting strategies to help you take control of your finances in 2021.

Also, tips for renters and landlords to help improve the tenant/landlord relationship.

Christmas Tree Safety

What says Christmas to you? Is it the smell of pine, holiday lights, or a snowy day? Maybe Christmas songs and cocoa give you the holiday feels. For many of us, it's the Christmas tree that lets us know the holidays have arrived. Who doesn't love a well-adorned tree? There's something magical about the twinkling lights and their reflection on perfectly placed ornaments. But there's a darker side to Christmas trees that can be devastating if we're not careful. East Hampton Fire Marshall Rich Klotzbier shared a wonderful holiday poem on fire safety. If you plan on having a Christmas tree, please take a moment to read some highlights from the poem :

Do not block doorways with your tree

Do your best to keep lights from touching tree limbs and (unplug lights every night BEFORE you go to bed and when you LEAVE the house..we're throwing that tip in ourselves.)

Make sure none of the wires on your holiday lights are damaged, that includes broken or frayed.

Use fire-resistant ornaments if possible

If you have a real tree keep wet sand in the base and water tree enough to avoid it drying out.

Make sure your tree is not too close to a space heater and that wrapped packages are not touching any lights.

