


## MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council  
FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager   
DATE: June 17, 2021  
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.

### **Finance**

- The Board of Finance met on Monday, June 14 and approved a mill rate of 34.53 which is .09 lower than the figure published with the budget and an overall increase of 1.39 or just over 4%. The average mill rate increase over the last two years, due to the fact that there was no mill rate change last year, is just about .69 per year. The reduction is possible due to an increase of about \$100,000 in funding that will flow to the Town from the State via the PILOT program, which pays municipalities to provide services to State-owned properties.

### **Library**

- The Library Director's report to the Library Advisory Board for May 2021 is attached to this Report.
- Kick off for the Summer Reading Program will be held on the Library's "front patio" on Friday, June 25 from 3pm to 5pm. This summer's program, themed "Tales and Tails," encourages reading through various activities, events and prizes directed at all age groups from children through teens and adults.

### **Parks and Recreation**

- As noted earlier, the Department received a state grant to support increased summer youth camp offerings for the children of East Hampton. Staff is excited to announce the promotion of Jenna DeMartino from Camp Counselor to Program Leader to provide this new programming.
- The Town is currently planning to implement a Bio Blast treatment during the week of June 21. The recent high temperatures coupled with some heavy rains has created

conditions for Cyanobacteria blooms, which seemed to have occurred in areas of the lake. The BioBlast treatment will take a few days to disperse into the lake. Residents will see the material being distributed from the Town's contractor's boats by Tuesday.

- On Saturday, June 19 from 10:00am to 12:00pm, the Department will host its first Secchi Disk monitoring training program at Sears Park. This program will teach the volunteers on how to test for turbidity (clarity) of lake water. Results will be submitted to the Town's lake scientist, NEAR, and used to better understand the impacts of Lake Pocotopaug water clarity and how it affects Cyanobacteria. This program was funded from a grant received from Rockfall Foundation.

### **Public Works**

- Connecticut DOT has completed its repair work to the drainage system in Main Street. The work consisted of a repair to a collapsed drainage structure and the addition of a catch basin at a junction point. To facilitate the work, Town DPW crews removed and stored the brick pavers from the area. The sidewalk has been temporarily paved by DPW crews to restore walkability to the area.
- Staff is evaluating a project to reinstall the Village Center memorial bricks that were removed for the storm water repairs identified above. In addition to the replacement, the project may involve an expanded project to remove and replace other brick sidewalks in the area to restore a more level walking surface and provide for a longer term installation. It is anticipated that the expanded project will be considered during the summer and implemented as soon as possible.
- The Town's contractor, Comer Contracting, is tentatively scheduled to begin chip sealing the week of June 28. This work should last approximately one week. The roads to be chip sealed are Portland Reservoir Rd, White Birch Rd, Ridge View Drive, Mott Hill Rd, and Brack Farm Rd. A press release will be in the Rivereast and on social media sites.
- DPW crews are continuing work on Edgerton Street. This work will continue through the summer and fall until complete.
- Roadside mowing is underway and will continue through the summer months.
- The street sweeper and vactor truck are also making rounds to cleanup from the recent storm event. The first focus is areas around Lake Pocotopaug.

### **Senior Center**

- Since the Senior Center fully re-opened on June 1, more and more participants are attending daily. Each week, staff is adding more groups and programs in conformance with the guidance from Chatham Health District. Based on its guidance, as shown in the attached letter, exercise programs and meals will begin again. With the exception of congregate meals, staff anticipates that all activities, at pre-COVID levels, will be offered by July. Additional, new programs are also being developed for the summer and fall. Staff and participants are pleased to have people back in the Center as all have missed the interactions.
- Staff has started communications with Community Renewal Team (CRT) to reinstate congregate meals. It is anticipated that meals will begin again in fall. In the meantime, CRT will continue to provide frozen Grab and Go Meals on Tuesdays.
- Ten people had a successful trip to Ogunquit, Maine on June 7 through 9 via Friendship tours. Staff is working to share additional trips with other senior centers this fall and are making plans to kick off National Senior Center month in September with a Food Truck Picnic at Sears Park.

### **Youth and Family Services**

- The Department has recently coordinated seven Juvenile Review Board (JRB) cases, of which six of the minors will be undertaking individual family therapy using the Department's services. In order to accommodate the growing case load, the Department will be bringing in another student clinician in the upcoming months.
- On Monday, June 21, representatives of Epoch Arts will be coming to the Department to survey the space for an art canvas installation that the Department will be sponsoring. Using Enhancement Grant funds, the Department will engage Epoch Arts to facilitate an art project in the Department's lobby and therapy rooms. The project will be open to youth in the community and will be used to present themes related to emotions, mental health and the safety of the therapeutic space.

### **Town Manager/Other**

- The Town's COVID rates continue to drop. As of yesterday, the Town had experienced only one additional case in the last week, which brings the transmission rate to the level it was when tracking began at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020. In order to be more fully protected, residents continue to be encouraged to get vaccinated and to practice safety protocols if they are not.

- The State Department of Public Health (DPH) in coordination with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Town will be conducting sampling of private residential wells in the area of the Village Center east of Main Street. The goal of the sampling program is to identify wells that may be impacted by pollutants from the historic manufacturing facilities in the area and the use of PFAS containing products. In the upcoming weeks, communications will be sent to property owners inviting them to participate in the testing.
  
- Staff is pleased to announce the filling of some key employee vacancies. Steve Fontanella has been hired as the Joint Facilities Director to replace Don Harwood, who is retiring in July. Fontanella, who has several years of private sector experience, will begin on July 1 and will provide leadership related to facilities matters on all Town facilities whether used for educational or general government purposes. Additionally, in coordination with the Prevention Partnership, Courtney Widrick has been hired to facilitate the Town's youth drug and alcohol use prevention activities as the Prevention Coordinator. The position, which operates out of Youth and Family Services, is funded entirely by grant funding received from the Centers for Disease Control and other agencies.

DC

cc: Management Staff

## May 2021 Monthly Report

### At a glance:

*This section contains a brief summary of the most important information.*

- The Library has been honored by the CT Library Association with their annual Excellence in Public Library Service award for the Library's Life Size Candy Land program. This award honors two libraries each year (one serving a population of over 15,000 people and one serving a population under 15,000 people) for an outstanding program or service to their community. Over 3,200 people participated in Candy Land, a 10-day outdoor, COVID sensitive event, making it the largest event in the Library's history. This is the second time that the Library has won this award in four years.
- Library Director Ellen Paul and Children's Librarian April Hannon gave a presentation at the Connecticut Library Association annual conference earlier in May titled: Rising Circulation in the Time of COVID-19. The Library's circulation has increased 72% in the last four years bucking national and state-wide trends. They have been asked to give their presentation again for the Connecticut State Library. The encore presentation was held on Friday, May 28.
- Given CDC and State of Connecticut changes to COVID regulations and restrictions, the Library has made adjustments to services including:
  - Masks are encouraged but not required. Out of respect for the many children who visit the Library and are cannot be vaccinated, the Library is asking patrons to continue to wear masks. Mask wearing is not being enforced.
  - The Community Room and Local History room are re-opening. The Local History Room is open on a first come first served basis. The Library will begin taking reservations to use the community room for dates after July 1, 2021.
  - The Library will continue to quarantine returned items for 48 hours on the advice of the Chatham Health Director.
  - The Library will be returning all furniture to the floor however children's toys will stay in storage on the advice of the Chatham Health Director.
  - All Library programs and events this summer will be held in person and outdoors.
  - Curbside pickup for library materials and mobile printing is still available. Residents can call the Library to schedule a pickup.
  - Public computer sessions have returned to full 2 hour sessions.

## Department Reports

### Administration:

*This section contains general updates and news about library administration.*

- Library Director Ellen Paul has accepted a nomination to be the president-elect of LION for the 2021/2022 fiscal year and President in the 2022/2023 fiscal year.
- Staff is working to make some small updates to the Library's website.
  - A button will be placed near the Library's logo on the home page that will say 'award winning'. The button will link to a page that describes the awards the Library has won in the last four years.
  - The Library will enable pop-up notifications on the homepage. This will be useful if the Library needs to announce a program cancellation or building closure.
  - We will be adding an email newsletter signup form that will link directly to our constant contact account.
- An email newsletter from Board Chair Amy Ordonez announcing the Library's recent award was sent out on May 14<sup>th</sup>. The email had a 33% open rate, slightly higher than normal.
- The Rivereast published a front page story in their Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup> edition about the Library's award.
- Staff is working to finalize a spending plan for the Library's \$17,000 ARPA grant. This unsolicited grant from the Connecticut State Library are to be used to respond to the pandemic.
- The Library is considering applying for a Federal Emergency Connectivity Fund grant. These funds, which originated from the ARPA, are earmarked for schools and libraries to lend hotspots, tablets and laptops. Federal guidance along with a timeline is expected in mid-June.

### Children's Department:

*This section contains general updates and news about the Children's Department.*

- The Library was approached by a pediatrician at Middlesex Health Family Medicine in East Hampton to establish a community partnership. Moving forward, the pediatrician will be providing library card applications to children and families at wellness visits and check-ups, which will be routinely brought to the library for processing. During the school year, the Library will provide the same early literacy kits that are distributed to local preschools to the doctor's office for distribution. Additionally, a bulletin board outside of the children's patient room will be transformed into a community literacy hub where library events and promotions can be advertised.
- The principals of Center and Memorial Schools have okayed cup delivery and classroom visits to promote summer reading. Visits to the schools will occur in the beginning of June.
- Children's staff presented two in-person story times at East Hampton Nursery School this month, which were the first in-person visits in over a year. In addition, preschool students visited the library on May 26 to participate in a story time, get a library tour, and check out books. The department will be hosting one more preschool class field trip in June, as well as seven class field trips for grade 3 from Memorial School.

- To make room for summer reading prizes, juvenile audiobooks/playaways and picture books with CDs have been moved to the top shelves of the fiction and picture book sections. Since moving the collections, patrons have commented that they did not know we had these items, and circulation on these items has increased.

#### **Adult / Young Adult Department:**

*This section contains general updates and news about the Adult / Young Adult Department.*

- Take and makes for adults were increased to 40 for this month and all 40 kits were claimed.
- The principals of the middle school and high school have okayed cup delivery and classroom visits to promote summer reading. These visits will occur in the beginning of June.
- All teen and adult programs have been planned for summer and are on the library's calendar. Registration will open on June 1.
- The last zoom program for adults, pots with piazzas was held on the 25<sup>th</sup>. The program had good attendance given the decrease of interest in virtual program over the last two months. 26 people attended the program and gave good feedback at the end of the program.
- The young adult (YA) graphic novel section was refreshed. Books that had not circulated in three years or were in bad condition were assessed for removal or replacement.

#### **Circulation and Technical Services Department:**

*This section contains general updates and news about the Circulation and Technical Services Department.*

- The Library's seven year old patron computers have been replaced. Patrons have already responded positively to higher quality computer time with the faster machines. LION staff was instrumental in setting up and formatting all of the new computers.
- Circulation staff have worked alongside the Children's staff to update or create nearly 80 new library cards for the June's upcoming class field trips.
- Riverbend, the LION delivery system that makes it possible to lend items between LION libraries, has been experiencing service disruptions resulting in increased wait times for library materials. Riverbend and LION are working to resolve these issues.

## Strategic Plan Indicators of Success

### Circulation

#### Borrowers (*Accessible and Inclusive*)

	+/- Last Month	May Borrowers	April Borrowers	March Borrowers
<b>Adults</b> (borrowing physical items)	+195	981	796	862
<b>Children</b> (borrowing physical items)	+9	167	158	140
<b>Corporate</b> (borrowing physical items)	-1	17	18	14
<b>Staff</b> (borrowing physical items)	+8	17	9	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>+211</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>1,031</b>
<b>Digital Borrowers</b>	+3	402*	399	368

\*If we add Hoopla's unique borrowers for May, total becomes 598

#### Borrowing (*Welcoming and Vibrant, Informative and Collaborative*)

	2021			2020	2019	2018
	May	April	March	May	May	May
Adult Collection	3,537	3,648	4,229	4,095	4,095	3,301
Children's Collection	2,658	3,212	3,657		1,532	1,510
Young Adult	243	258	205		131	129
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>6,438</b>	<b>7,118</b>	<b>8,091</b>		<b>5,758</b>	<b>4,940</b>
eBooks – RB Digital	0*	0*	0*		208	208
eBooks – Overdrive	992	1,036	1,000		454	150
eBooks - Hoopla	542	554	497		272	n/a
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1,534</b>	<b>1,590</b>	<b>1,497</b>		<b>934</b>	<b>358</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,972</b>	<b>8,708</b>	<b>9,588</b>		<b>6,692</b>	<b>5,298</b>

\*RB Digital has been discontinued.

\*\*This number was incorrectly reported in the February Monthly Report.

\*\*\*The Library was closed to the public because of COVID-19

### Visits

#### COVID Re-Opening Statistics (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)



	Average Number of People entering Library per day	Number of People entering without masks	Number of conflicts over mask policy	Number of Curbside Pickups
Week of 5/3	66	4		13
Week of 5/10	70	2		26
Week of 5/17	59	12*		9
Week of 5/24	74	15		8
Week of 5/31	93	15		13

\*Wednesday, 5/21, is when coronavirus restrictions lifted for the state of CT.

#### Door Counter (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
1,579	2,535	2,768	2,984	2,568	3,013	2,786	2,733	4,218	*	*	
										2086	

\*Door counter broken.

### Programs and Partners

#### Events, Workshops, Programs and Outreach (*Accessible and Inclusive*)

	<i>Programs</i>			<i>Attendance</i>		
	<i>May</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>March</i>
Adult Events	4	4	4	58	93	53
Children's Events	14	24	22	204	448	322
Young Adult Events	7	7	3*	34	96	11*
Intergenerational	0	0	1	0	0	3,223
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>3,603</b>

\*Young adult programs and attendance were incorrectly reported in the March 2021 monthly report.

### Promotion

#### Website (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

	+/- last month	May	April	March
Users	-147	1,507	1,654	3,534
New Users	-147	1,293	1,440	3,245
Sessions	-177	2,642	2,819	5,454

<b>Page Views</b>	<b>-425</b>	8,743	9,168	16,974
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**Popular Pages:** Hours and Contact Info, Events Calendar, Summer, Library Staff, Museum Passes,

**Facebook** (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

	<b>+/- last month</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>March</b>
<b>Likes</b>	+2	1,943	1,941	1,933
<b>Post Reach</b>	+683	8,627	7,944	11,446
<b>Post Engagement</b>			1,464	4,095

### Donations and Fundraising

#### Donations

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Donation</b>	<b>Restrictions</b>
A Patron	\$50	Unrestricted

#### Grants/Fundraising

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Restrictions</b>
East Hampton Rotary	\$300	End of Summer Reading Concert

BOARD MEMBERS

Andrew Tierney, Chairman  
Stan Soby, Vice Chairman  
Peter Hughes, Treasurer  
Susan Bransfield  
Rosemary Coyle  
Robert Smith  
David Cox  
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DIRECTOR of HEALTH  
Russell Melmed, MPH

*Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, & Portland*

6/15/2021

To: Senior Center Directors

Re: Reopening Guidance for Group Fitness and Communal Dining

Chatham Health District continues to monitor transmission of COVID-19 and vaccinations in our communities. Currently, all towns in our jurisdiction are experiencing very low levels of transmission, with 2-week average daily infection rates (1.4 per 100,000 in CHD overall) at levels not seen since the Summer of 2020, and vaccination rates among seniors approaching 100% (at least 1 dose administered).

**In this context of substantially reduced risk of COVID-19 transmission among seniors, Chatham Health District no longer recommends that senior centers limit their in-person programming and services, including high risk activities like indoor fitness and communal dining.** Seniors who are not fully vaccinated\* or have not recently recovered (in the past 90 days) from natural infection\*\* should continue to avoid in-person group activities, especially high risk activities that take place indoors.

If people who are not fully vaccinated or have not recently recovered (in the past 90 days) from natural infection decide to participate in any in-person activities indoors, they should be counseled regarding the risks of COVID-19 transmission and disease, and encouraged to discuss vaccination with their doctor or seek the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. [Executive Order 12a](#) requires that any person while indoors in a public place who does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person and who is not fully vaccinated for COVID-19 cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face covering. Given the high risk for severe COVID-19 among people ages 65+, Senior Centers offering indoor programs or activities should consider ways to ensure that people entering their facilities who are not fully vaccinated wear masks in accordance with Executive Order 12a.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any specific questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Melmed', is written over a horizontal line.

Russell Melmed  
Director of Health  
Chatham Health District

\* In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

\*\* In general, people who have recovered from COVID-19 disease in the past 90 days are at low risk of being re-infected. Seniors and others with compromised immune systems (for example: taking immune suppressive drugs after a transplant, chemotherapy for cancer, or having an immune suppressive disorder) may be able to be re-infected more easily, and should discuss their risk of re-infection with their doctor before resuming high risk activities.