


MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council
FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager 
DATE: July 7, 2023
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.

Clerk

- The Town Clerk's Office once again received a grant from the Connecticut State Library in the amount of \$6,000 to replace the computer used by the public for records searching and to repair and replace several volumes of the Town's historic records. The Council will be asked to take action to accept the grant at its meeting later in July.

Fire Department

- The Fire Department, Ambulance and Police Department along with other area emergency services and dispatch will be conducting a major incident drill on Lake Pocotopaug during the morning hours of Sunday, July 16. The drill will involve a staged incident requiring active response from emergency services. During the time of the drill, the boat launch at Sears Park will be closed and lake users will be asked to stay away from the drill area. This is part of the ongoing training area emergency responders use to maintain and improve their skills and experience and to practice coordination of large-scale responses.
- The Department's new Rescue One boat has been received and is available for service. The boat will be stored on the lake once some of the last equipment is installed.



- The East Hampton Fire Department will be honored at this year's Old Home Days events and parade in recognition of its 100 years of volunteer service to the community. Department members are staffing a booth at Old Home Days grounds in the Village Center at which visitors will see demonstration of some of the Department's tools and tactics. Also, in partnership with the Old Home Days committee, the parade will honor the Department's history and will feature local and area fire departments.

Fire Marshal

- The Fire Marshal's Office has continued to focus on completing inspections in multiple family residences, which are required under the State Code to be inspected annually and has been working diligently with local commercial properties to ensure they are following the proper inspection schedule as well. As a result of this effort, staff is seeing a reduction in the number of safety-related violations found.
- As shown in the table below, during the last six months, the Fire Marshal's Office has completed 161 inspections and re-inspections. These inspections range from multi-family homes, commercial properties, and new projects. The Fire Marshal works with owners who may have Code-related issues to address the matters and improve the safety at their properties. The office is also actively working on new construction projects requiring site visits and code consults to ensure code compliance. There has been 2 fire investigations and 62 burn permits issued.

| Inspection Categories | Completed Inspections |
|--|-----------------------|
| Type of Inspections | Total |
| Apartments | 91 |
| ASSEMBLY/LIQUOR PERMITS- Restaurants, Churches, | 34 |
| BUSINESS – Professional Services | 11 |
| DAYCARE | 1 |
| I-2 – Small Group Homes | 1 |
| MANUFACTURING | 1 |
| MERCANTILE- Businesses selling products | 13 |
| Residential Board & Care- | 1 |
| New Projects- Code Consults | 8 |
| Grand Total | 161 |
| Total # of Items Requiring Repair | 53 |

- As noted above, the table to the right show the increase in inspections accomplished during the last six months and the significant decrease in the number of items that required correction or repair that were discovered.

| 2022 v 2023 Comparison | January-June 2022 | January-June 2023 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Inspection Count | 109 | 161 |
| Total Items Requiring Repair | 133 | 53 |

- This year, the Town has had one 5th grade and one 4th grade winner for the CT Fire Prevention Contest. The Fire Marshal's Office coordinated with the Fire Department for the student winners to receive a Fire Truck Ride to their last day of school in recognition of their winning entry. The students also receive a small prize from the Fire Marshal's Office for their efforts and creativity in participating in the contest.

- Along with inspections, the Office has been working to update its website to provide a more user-friendly process and access to educational resources. This has included a better, more seamless burn permit application able to be completed entirely online with no need to print a hard copy, as well as inspection resources, recalls, and more.

Library

- Despite a last-minute change of venue, Summer Reading Kick Off was a big success, with 572 attendees and 453 sign-ups for the Summer Reading Program. Several patrons reached out to staff after the event to say how much they enjoyed the different activities available, which included water balloon painting, snow cones, live music by DJ Montez, face painting by Epoch Arts, and baby goats from Circle K Farm.
- The Library is collaborating with the Friends of Lake Pocotopaug to help raise awareness and appreciation for lake ecosystems and conservation efforts in the community. The Friends of Lake Pocotopaug are donating several children's books to the collection that help to support these efforts, and the Library has created a pamphlet of further resources available at the Library for the Friends to hand out at Old Home Days.
- On June 28, the Library debuted its expanded Library of Things collection. Feedback from the community was overwhelmingly positive and many of the items in the collection have already been checked out.
- Our social media channels (Facebook and Instagram) saw tremendous growth in both reach and views this month. Staff has been employing the use of "Stories" which are brief posts visible for only 24 hours. Stories are a great way to highlight activities happening at the Library in real time, without cluttering our main pages. Combined, there were 4587 views on 51 stories in June. Additionally, the Facebook post debuting our Library of Things garnered 111 clicks on the link for more information on our website, a significant increase in the typical number of click-throughs.

- The Library Director's Report for June is included with this Report.

Parks and Recreation

- Parks and Recreation Director Jeremy Hall has accepted a position with the State Parks system and will serve his last day with the Town on August 10. The Town Manager will be working with staff and others to fill the vacancy.

Planning and Zoning

- The Department is implementing a new program through which the appropriate signage required to be posted at a property that is subject to a hearing before the Planning or Zoning bodies may be borrowed from the Town instead of produced by the petitioner. This service will help ensure that the proper wording is included on the signs and assist property owners who are working with the Town.

Police Department

- During the month of June, the Department did not use Narcan, nor did it respond to any medical call in which a family member or other person had used it.

Public Works

- The Public Works Department has spent much of the past couple of weeks in preparation for Fourth of July holiday and Old Home Days. Activities include mowing of all Town owned cemeteries, mowing, weed cutting, and sidewalk cleaning along with street sweeping the parade route and the Village Center area including the Library/Senior Center property. Staff has also posted no parking signs and delivered barricades and cones as requested by the Police Department.
- Other work has included preparation of a stone pad for a shed at the Senior Center and brush removal in the area as well as Town-wide gravel road maintenance, roadside mowing, and street sweeping. In the coming weeks, staff will begin work to prepare sections of Old Clark Hill Road and Bear Swamp Road for paving. The upgrade of sections of these roads from dirt to asphalt will be performed by the Public Works Department with the materials being purchased utilizing unimproved roads funds in the Capital Reserve Fund.

Senior Center

- The Senior Center will be represented in Saturday's Old Home Days parade with a float constructed and decorated by the Center's members.

- The Meals On Wheels program is running very well. The Center is delivering 12 to 15 meals daily, Monday through Friday, with a full complement of volunteer drivers. Additionally, congregate meals are also served every weekday at the Center with 120 meals served in June.
- The new collaborative program with the East Hampton Library to deliver books to home bound older adults through the Meals On Wheels program is a growing success.
- The Center has many activities this summer including a Summer Sizzling Sale in July with the Young at Heart Boutique planned by the Crafters and Friendship Tour is sponsoring a trip to Narraganset on July 12. Thirty people are attending.

Town Manager/Other

- Staff from the TM Office, Police Department, Public Works and Planning and Zoning met with representatives of the CT DOT regarding the planned replacement of the bridge carrying RT 16 over the Salmon River. The project is scheduled to occur beginning in 2025 and a virtual public information meeting is planned for fall of this year.

DC

cc: Management Staff

June 2023

Monthly Report

At a glance:

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

- Despite a last-minute change of venue, Summer Reading Kick Off was a big success, with 572 attendees and 453 sign-ups for the Summer Reading Program. Several patrons reached out to staff after the event to say how much they enjoyed the different activities available, which included water balloon painting, snow cones, live music by DJ Montez, face painting by Epoch Arts, and baby goats from Circle K Farm.
- The Podcasters in Person series began with Mike Allen from the Amazing Tales podcast. Mr. Allen's presentation drew interest from community members with an interest in podcasting and a few out-of-towners who came because they are fans of the podcast. The series will continue with two additional podcaster presentations in July.
- Despite challenging weather, participants in the National Trails Day Bike Rodeo enjoyed learning about bike safety in a hands-on way by riding through an obstacle course put together by the East Hampton Police Department. Thanks to the grant from the Connecticut State Library, the Library was also able to hand out several coupons for free bicycle helmets from Airline Cycles to participants whose helmets did not meet current safety standards.

Strategic Plan Actions Update

This section contains information about new programs, services, collections, or initiatives directly relating to the Strategic Plan.

- The Library is partnering with the Friends of Lake Pocotopaug to help raise awareness and appreciation for lake ecosystems and conservation efforts in the community. The Friends of Lake Pocotopaug are donating several children's books to the collection that help to support these efforts, and the Library has created a pamphlet of further resources available at the Library for the Friends to hand out at Old Home Days. The group has also expressed interest in donating a stand-up paddleboard to the Library of Things collection. *(Informative & Collaborative), (Accessible & Inclusive)*
- On June 28 the Library debuted its expanded Library of Things collection. Feedback from the community was overwhelmingly positive, both on our social media platforms and in person, and many of the items in the collection have already been checked out. *(Accessible & Inclusive), (Responsible & Sustainable)*
- Our social media channels (Facebook and Instagram) saw tremendous growth in reach and views this month. Staff has been employing the use of "Stories" which are brief posts visible for only 24 hours. Stories are a great way to highlight activities happening at the library in real time, without cluttering our main pages. Combined, there were 4587 views on 51 stories in June. Additionally, the Facebook post debuting our Library of Things garnered 111 clicks on the link for more information on our website, a significant increase in the typical number of click-throughs. *(Welcoming & Vibrant)*

Department Reports

Administration:

This section contains general updates and news about Library administration.

- The Library hired two new Public Service Associates this month. New hire training will begin as soon as their background screenings are complete.
- Keri Blanda attended the LION board meeting, where voting for new officers and approval of the annual budget took place.
- The Friends of the Library held their monthly meeting on 6/5 and made final preparations for their book sale, which took place on 6/9 and 6/10.
- The Library Advisory Board (LAB) held its monthly meeting. Christine Cachuela gave an update on library operations and requested approval of the proposed policies and procedures for the new Library of Things collection. The Board approved the policies as presented. Mr. Cox gave an update on the interview process for the open Director position.
- The Library of Things Policies and Procedures were presented to and approved by Town Council on 6/13/23.
- Interviews for the vacant Director position took place this month with both Library Board members and Library staff. An update on the hiring process is expected in early July.

Children's Department:

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

- Regular storytimes have resumed for the summer following a short break for Summer Reading class visits and the Friends of the Library book sale. They have had strong attendance.
- Kindness with Kids and Bethlehem Lutheran Church are again sponsoring a free Craft Pantry in the Children's Room this summer. Any children visiting the Library are invited to select one craft to take home with them.
- 224 children enrolled in this year's Summer Reading Program at our kick off event, and many more have enrolled since.

Adult / Young Adult Department:

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

- School visits to promote Summer Reading took place in early June at both the High School and Middle School. There seemed to be a lot of enthusiasm for the program.
- Home delivery of library materials for Seniors in collaboration with the Senior Center began this month, with the cooperation of the Meals-on-Wheels drivers. Expansion of the program will be considered after evaluating the process.
- Cookbook Club attendance again exceed previous participation with 12 enthusiastic home chefs bringing in many versions of salads.
- Daniel Corr, classical guitarist, performed to a large crowd in mid-June.
- Summer reading Kick Off saw 150 adults and 79 teens register for Summer Reading. In the days following kick-off, that number has grown considerably in both age groups.

Circulation and Technical Services Department:

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

- The Library of Things was officially launched towards the end of the month. Items have begun circulating and have been met with enthusiasm from the public.
- The Library is in the process of purchasing a new circulation desk, which will help to improve workflow for staff and will be more visually appealing to patrons.
- Circulation was up nearly 25% from last month, just shy of 10,000 checkouts for the month of June.

Strategic Plan Indicators of Success

Circulation

Borrowers (*Accessible and Inclusive*)

| | +/- Last Month | June Borrowers | May Borrowers | April Borrowers |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Adults (borrowing physical items) | +146 | 1,253 | 1,107 | 1,145 |
| Children (borrowing physical items) | +126 | 361 | 235 | 227 |
| Corporate (borrowing physical items) | -3 | 11 | 14 | 16 |
| Staff (borrowing physical items) | +1 | 18 | 17 | 17 |
| SUBTOTAL | | 1,643 | 1373 | 1405 |
| Overdrive | +10 | 225 | 215 | 230 |
| Hoopla | +15 | 236 | 211 | 227 |
| SUBTOTAL | | 461 | 426 | 457 |
| TOTAL | +305 | 2,104 | 1799 | 1,862 |

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

| | 2023 | 2023 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 |
|-----------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | June | May | April | June | June | June |
| Adult Collection | 3280 | 3058 | 3582 | 3,232 | 3,762 | 1,079 |
| Children's Collection | 4068 | 2833 | 2896 | 3,541 | 3,558 | 973 |
| Young Adult | 613 | 432 | 368 | 446 | 384 | 87 |
| SUBTOTAL | 7,967 | 6323 | 6175 | 7,219 | 7,704 | 2,139 |
| eBooks – Overdrive | 1,070 | 1073 | 1046 | 981 | 1,000 | 183 |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| eBooks - Hoopla | 661 | 652 | 621 | 579 | 528 | 751 |
| eBooks – RB Digital* | 0* | 0* | 0* | 0* | 0* | 568 |
| SUBTOTAL | 1,731 | 1725 | 1667 | 1,560 | 1,528 | 1,502 |
| TOTAL | 9,698 | 7842 | 8910 | 8,779 | 9,232 | 3,641 |

*RB Digital was discontinued.

Visits

Door Counter (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

| July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 4428 | 6266 | 4046 | 4788 | 4460* | 4710* | 4606 | 4282 | 4,709 | 3,896 | 5,221 | 7,419 |

*November count is estimated due to a door counter malfunction. December count is partially estimated and started about a week late due to the counter malfunction.

Programs and Partners

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

| Onsite Programs | | | | Participants | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | <i>June</i> | <i>May</i> | <i>April</i> | <i>June</i> | <i>May</i> | <i>April</i> |
| Adult | 6 | 5 | 5 | 74 | 32 | 25 |
| Children's | 10 | 19 | 20 | 242 | 354 | 371 |
| Young Adult | 2 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 26 | 21 |
| Intergenerational | 2 | 0 | 2 | 592 | 0 | 0 |
| SUBTOTAL | 20 | 30 | 34 | 913 | 412 | 449 |
| Self-Directed Activities | | | | Participants | | |
| Adult | 1 | 1 | 1 | 20 | 16 | 35 |
| Children's | 5 | 7 | 5 | 313 | 342 | 253 |
| Young Adult | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| Intergenerational | 1 | 1 | 1 | 50 | 186 | 24 |
| SUBTOTAL | 8 | 10 | 7 | 390 | 546 | 312 |
| Offsite Programs | | | | Attendance | | |
| Adult | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Children's | 4 | 6 | 5 | 340 | 573 | 109 |
| Young Adult | 2 | 3 | 0 | 530 | 276 | 0 |
| Intergenerational | 1 | 0 | 0 | 47 | 0 | 0 |
| SUBTOTAL | 6 | 9 | 6 | 917 | 849 | 114 |
| TOTAL | 34 | 49 | 47 | 2220 | 1807 | 875 |

Promotion

Website (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

| | +/- last month | June | May | April |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| Users | +657 | 2115 | 1458 | 1511 |
| Sessions | +1101 | 3710 | 2609 | 2721 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| Page Views | +1798 | 5697 | 3899 | 3887 |
| Events Calendar | +1433 | 2319 | 886 | 1055 |

5 Most Popular Pages: Library Homepage, Summer Reading, Hours & Contact Info, Museum Passes, Library Staff.

Social Media (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

| | +/- last month | June | May | April |
|--|----------------|------|------|-------|
| Facebook | | | | |
| Reactions/Comments/Shares | +3332 | 3514 | 182 | 269 |
| Page Reach | +850 | 3543 | 2693 | 2363 |
| New Followers | +0 | 17 | 17 | 25 |
| Instagram | | | | |
| Reactions/Comments/Shares/Views | +3341 | 4351 | 1010 | 1173 |
| Page Reach | +70 | 534 | 464 | 481 |
| New Followers | +2 | 17 | 15 | 22 |

Donations and Fundraising

Donations (*Ready for the Future*)

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| East Hampton Lion's Club | \$250 |
|--------------------------|-------|