

**Town Manager's Office  
Town of Mansfield**

# Memo

To: Town Council  
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager  
CC: Town Employees  
Date: December 8, 2014  
Re: Town Manager's Report

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

## Council Business

- *Community Playground Project* – I have recently met with staff to discuss options to reduce site work costs and to locate the proposed playground on the town hall/community center campus. On a parallel track, I am discussing the term of a proposed lease of university land with UCONN staff. We have the project architect working on the site alternatives and will have more information to report in January 2015.
- *Departmental and Committee Reports* – Staff currently prints all approved committee minutes, scans them together and posts them online as part of the Town Council packet's *Departmental and Committee Reports* section. This is to some extent a redundant exercise as minutes from town committees are already posted online on the town's *Agendas and Minutes* page and citizens may also opt to receive the minutes from many town committees directly through the email-based QNotify system. Staff would like guidance from the Council on whether or not to continue the practice of including minutes of town committees in the online Council meeting packet.
- *DEEP MS4 Permit* - The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is considering modifications to the General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4), which would have a significant fiscal impact on municipalities. Proposed MS4 permit changes include increased required frequency of municipal street sweeping, a required municipal-wide leaf collection program and additional mandated additional catch basin cleanings, among other changes. If approved as initially proposed, the MS4 could increase costs in public works by approximately \$1 million. However, we are now hearing that DEEP is strongly considering a reduction in its proposed requirements. Director of Public Works John Carrington and I plan to join other municipalities at DEEP's public hearing on the MS4 permit scheduled for December 17, 2014, to testify on behalf of the town.
- *Region 19 District Wide Municipal Budget Meeting* – Region 19 will hold its district wide municipal budget meeting on December 16, 2014 at 7:00 PM at EO Smith High School. The Mayor, the Finance Chair and I typically represent the town at this meeting and all councilors are welcome to attend.
- *Town Council Communications* – I was recently contacted by a resident who expressed concern regarding the practice of including publications from outside agencies in the *Petitions, Requests and Communications* section of the Council packet. I am concerned about creating the impression of any sort of bias and have determined that my office will include as communications in the Council packet those items specifically produced by the town or one of its agents as well as correspondence addressed to the Town Council, to staff or other municipal entities. We will not include as Council communications items such as newsletters prepared by an outside organization that are direct mailed by the sender to residents or the general public. We would, however, continue to distribute via your mailboxes or by direct mail any periodicals or newsletters sent to the Town Council. These items would not be included in the packet under the communications section.
- *Traffic Concerns* – Citizens have recently raised concerns regarding engine braking, the intersection of Routes 195 and 275, and the coordination of traffic signals along Route 195 between South and North Eagleville Road. Attached please find memos from Director of Public Works John Carrington in response to these various issues. I will add these items as communications to the next Council packet.

## **Department Reports**

- *Town Manager's Office*
  - *Eagleville Dam Bridge* – ConnDOT has contacted the town to report that it is concerned with the structural integrity of Bridge 02866 carrying Route 275 over the Willimantic River. ConnDOT maintenance crews have placed traffic drums along the bridge to keep travelers safe. ConnDOT will contact the towns of Coventry and Mansfield over the next month to inform us of its planned scope of work and proposed timeline for the project.
  - *FY 2015/16 Operating Budget and CIP* – Tomorrow, December 9<sup>th</sup>, I will meet with department heads to kick-off the preparation of the FY 2015/16 Budget and CIP. I will task the department heads with preparing a current programs and services budget that is cognizant of the town's financial constraints and is designed to advance key policy initiatives of the Town Council. I would like to hold the annual budget/financial retreat with the Town Council on either Saturday, January 24 or January 31, 2015 and my office will poll the Council for its availability on those dates. I will plan to present the Proposed FY 2015/16 Operating Budget and CIP to the Town Council at a special meeting to be held on March 30, 2015.
  - *Human Resources* – Please join me in welcoming our new and recently promoted employees:
    - Alix Moriarty has been promoted to a part-time Evening-Weekend Supervisor (MOD) with the Parks and Recreation Department. Alix has been serving as a senior lifeguard with the department and is also a volunteer Firefighter/EMT with Fire and Emergency Services. Alix began her new role November 12<sup>th</sup>.
    - Walker Higgins has been appointed to a Laborer position with Public Works. Walker recently completed an associate's degree in automotive technology and had been a seasonal laborer with our DPW Department. He begins work on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Jason Chilly has been hired as a part-time Firefighter/EMT with Fire and Emergency Services. Jason has been a volunteer firefighter with the Chaplin Fire Department since 2010. He begins work on December 8<sup>th</sup>.
    - Ana Zeller, RD, has been appointed to the Eastern Highlands Health District as its new Community Health and Wellness Coordinator. In her position, Ana will also serve as our employee wellness "Be Well" program coordinator. Ana begins work on December 15, 2014.

## **Major Projects and Initiatives**

- *CL&P Interstate Reliability Project* - Work in Mansfield this week will include work on overhead lines in the vicinity of Highland Road, Mansfield City Road and Crane Hill Road and vegetation clean-up and tree trimming in various locations along the right-of-way. Weekly construction updates can be found at [www.NEEWSprojects.com](http://www.NEEWSprojects.com). Residents can also call 1-866-99NEEWS (1-866-996-3397) or email [NEEWS@NU.com](mailto:NEEWS@NU.com) for more information.

## **Upcoming Events**

- *Storrs Farmers Market* – Storrs Winter Farmers Market will be open two Saturdays a month from 3:00 – 6:00 pm at the Mansfield Public Library. The Winter Market dates are: December 13 and 20, January 17 and 31, February 14 and 28, March 14 and 28, and April 4 and 18. Everything sold at Storrs Farmers Market is grown or produced in Connecticut. Visit [www.storrsfarmersmarket.org](http://www.storrsfarmersmarket.org) for more information.
- *Winter Welcome* – The Mansfield Downtown Partnership and Storrs Center will host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Winter Welcome on Saturday, December 13. The event will take place throughout the downtown from 1:00 – 5:00 PM. Planned activities include: Strolling carolers and musicians; 2:00 PM – Look for Santa Claus to arrive via a Mountain Dairy milk truck!; 2:00 – 4:00 PM – Visit with Santa Claus at the UConn Co-op Bookstore at Storrs Center; 4:00 PM – Join the E. O. Smith High School Chamber Singers on the Town Square for a performance and community sing-along; and open houses, promotions, and specials at participating Storrs Center businesses throughout the afternoon. Winter Welcome is free and open to the public and will take place rain, snow, or shine. For more information, please contact the Partnership office (860.429.2740 or [mdp@mansfieldct.org](mailto:mdp@mansfieldct.org)).

### **Upcoming Meetings\***

- Youth Service Bureau Advisory Board, December 9, 2014, 12:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town-University Relations Committee, December 9, 2014, 4:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Historic District Commission, December 9, 2014, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Human Services Advisory Committee, December 10, 2014, 3:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Sustainability Committee, December 10, 2014, 5:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Conservation Commission, December 10, 2014, 7:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Mansfield Community Campus Partnership, December 11, 2014, 4:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Playground Committee, December 11, 2014, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Committee on Committees, December 12, 2014, 8:10 AM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Personnel Committee, December 15, 2014, 4:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Planning and Zoning Commission, December 15, 2014, 7:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- District Wide Municipal Budget Meeting, December 16, 2014, 7:00 PM, E. O. Smith High School
- Economic Development Commission, December 18, 2014, 5:30 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town Council, December 22, 2014, 7:30 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building\*\*
- Traffic Authority, December 23, 2014, 10:30 AM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Inland/Wetland Agency & Planning and Zoning Commission, January 5, 2015, 7:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Four Corners Sewer and Water Advisory Committee, January 6, 2015, 6:30 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Agriculture Committee, January 6, 2015, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Water System Advisory Committee, January 7, 2015, 7:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Mansfield Downtown Partnership Board of Directors, January 8, 2015, 4:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Solid Waste Advisory Committee, January 8, 2015, 7:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Committee on Committees, January 9, 2015, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Finance Committee, January 12, 2015, 6:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town Council, January 12, 2015, 7:30 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

*\*Meeting dates/times are subject to change. Please view the Town Calendar or contact the Town Clerk's Office at 860-429-3302 for a complete and up-to-date listing of committee meetings.*

*\*\*May be cancelled.*



TOWN OF MANSFIELD  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

John C. Carrington, P.E., Director of Public Works

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December 4, 2014

Mansfield Town Council,

This memorandum is in response to comments provided during the November 25, 2014 Town Council Meeting where a resident of the Town expressed concern regarding sound levels, most specifically compression release engine brakes (commonly referred to as "Jake Brakes") from trucks heading south on Route 195. Compression release engine brakes turn a power producing diesel engine into a power absorbing air compressor thus slowing down the truck without utilizing standard friction brakes.

Compression release engine brakes are often considered a safety device by State Highway Agencies so there is hesitation to place a ban on compression release engine brakes. It has become commonplace for truck manufacturers to make compression release engine brakes standard equipment as a result.

The Maine DOT<sup>(1)</sup> and references made in a Research Report<sup>(2)</sup> prepared by Janet K. Kaminski, Associate Legislative Attorney for the State of Connecticut indicate that existing federal and state laws already govern the maximum permissible sound levels for motor vehicles. The State of Connecticut currently regulates the Maximum Permissible Sound Level for Motor Vehicles with a GVWR or a GCWR of 10,000 pounds or greater as presented in the table below.

*Maximum Permissible Sound Level for Motor Vehicles with a GVWR or a GCWR of 10,000 Pounds or Greater, Excluding Buses*

Highway Speed	< 35 MPH	> 35 MPH
Maximum Permissible Sound Level	88 dB(A)	92 dB(A)

Source: Conn. Agencies Regulations. §14-80a-4a

Jacobs Vehicle Systems, Inc., a leader in compression release engine brakes development, indicates the following in regards to their products producing excess noise:

1. The federal government has required all vehicles manufactured since 1978 to meet noise requirements when delivered to the customers.
2. Modified or defective exhaust systems cause increased noise.

State Representatives have introduced legislation to the Committee on Transportation as recently as the January 2011 Session on the subject of authorizing municipalities to ban the use of compression release engine brakes and to enforce such ban through the use of appropriate signage. This specific bill is currently considered "dead"<sup>(3)</sup>.

**TOWN OF MANSFIELD**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

## Memorandum

Date: December 5, 2014  
To: Traffic Authority  
From: Tim Veillette, Project Engineer  
Subject: Coordination of Traffic Signals Along Route 195 from South Eagleville Road to North Eagleville Road

Issue:

Traffic congestion throughout this area is causing traffic backup and long lines (Queues) at traffic signals. Issue is more prominent at particular times of day, the bus departure from EO Smith in the afternoon, end of work shift at UConn together with off campus student traffic, and special events at UConn and EO Smith.

Discussion:

During the design of the Storrs Downtown project the ConnDOT reviewed for it for inclusion in a coordinated traffic signal system between South Eagleville and North Eagleville. Two sets of signals are currently coordinated with the adjacent intersection; Bolton Road with Mansfield Road, and Horsebarn Hill Road with North Eagleville. The remaining signals (South Eagleville and Whitney Hall) run free of the others.

DOT states that due to the unconventional timing/phasing of signals at Horsebarn Hill Road and North Eagleville Road cycling lengths would cause increased delays at adjacent intersections as the other coordinated signals have a conventional cycle/phasing. Also of issue is pedestrian activated signal (sporadic activation) in all intersection but more specifically at the Whitney Hall crosswalk light.

Improvements:

ConnDOT currently has a project (project 172-402) which will be making changes to the North Eagleville Road and Horsebarn Hill Road intersections and signals timing/phasing. Work is anticipated to start in spring 2015.

The DOT is also working with the Dave Dagon, Town of Mansfield Fire Chief, to determine if and where signals may warrant pre-emption.

Conclusion:

At this time the only solution to relieve back up on Route 195 during peak use is to provide a manual override to the signals. This would require a police officer at each signal to make this override.

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## **Memorandum**

To: Matthew Hart, Town Manager  
From: John Carrington, Director of Public Works  
Date: December 5, 2014  
Subject: Intersection Left Turn from Route 275 Eastbound to Route 195 Northbound

Issue:

A number of passenger vehicle drivers have had difficulty or been confused as to how and where they should turn on to Route 195 northbound from 275 eastbound. Some drivers have turned too early, driven over the mountable median or driven too far out and on to the east curb and have hit the street light.

Analysis:

The turning operations were analyzed using turning radii for a passenger vehicle, a WB-50 truck (fifty foot tractor trailer truck) and a WB-62 truck (sixty-two foot tractor trailer truck with sleeper cab).

A passenger vehicle has a more than adequate turning radius.

The WB-50 turning radius provides just enough space to enter the throat of the lane between the median and the easterly curb. This appears to be the design criteria used by the roadway designer.

The WB-62 turning radius requires that the truck traverse the mountable median to make this turn. This was contemplated as part of the design of the project and the median is constructed accordingly.

Observations:

The problem with the passenger size vehicle maneuvering the left turn properly appears to be one of visual sight. The low height of the driver sight together with the low profile of the median and its placement on the back side of the road crown on Route 195, as well as the blend of the concrete color background, causes confusion to the driver as to where the throat of route 195 northbound lane is located.

Recommendation:

As this is a visual problem, a visual solution is warranted. To provide proper turning guidance it is proposed that a white dashed line "cat tracks" be placed in a smooth arc which will safely guide vehicles from Route 275 eastbound to enter the throat of the Route 195 northbound lane.