

February 10, 2015

Town Council
Town of Mansfield
Storrs/Mansfield, CT 06268

Council Members:

I speak to you tonight about budget matters as a private citizen, neither as a member of our town's Board of Education nor as a member of its finance committee.

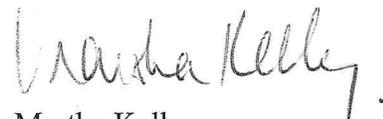
Last fall, one of the so-called attractions to the proposed sewer question was that the per-household cost would be about \$47 a year. That number has stuck with me, and I want to speak to that this evening.

Quite a few citizens come before councils and boards at this time urging that more funds be allocated for this or that program; many even suggest increasing our taxes. It is evident to me that we have two Mansfields. One is populated by the privileged who are blessed with tenured positions with ample benefits, graduate-school degrees, secure pensions and have more of a comfort level speaking before the town council. The less visible "others" have diminished agency. Their basic skills may not provide job security and result in meagre pensions; they can ill afford the frills of life. It is doubtful they will come to a town council meeting at all -- let alone suggest higher taxes. For all residents, higher taxes are passed on by merchants as a business cost -- a rippling double indebtedness.

Which returns me to \$47. I priced several essential staples in Wal-Mart this week -- from a gallon of milk to a loaf of bread to a dozen eggs, and so forth. The items are listed at the bottom of this letter. One unit of these 16 items amounts to \$38.73 and may be enough to sparsely feed a family of four for a day or so.

As you deliberate, please consider first those who live in the Mansfield of "need." Two twenty-dollar bills mean a lot to them.

Respectfully,



Martha Kelly
29 Bundy Lane
Storrs, CT 06268

1 gallon milk, \$3.08	1, 24 oz. loaf enriched wheat bread, \$1.48	2 lbs. bananas, \$1.16
18 oz. creamy peanut butter, \$2.18		1, 26 oz. can tomato soup, \$1.50
2 lbs. long-grain rice, \$1.48	18 oz. box toasted whole grain oats/cereal, \$2.74	1 lb. 80% lean hamburger, \$4.98
7.5 oz. box of mac and cheese, \$.58	1 doz. eggs, \$2.18	1, 15 oz. can peas, \$.68
64 oz. OJ with calcium/vitamin D, \$2.28	11.3 oz. can coffee, \$2.98	525 sq.ft./4 rolls TP, \$3.98
Colgate value pack/2, 25.6 oz, \$2.98		8 bars Lever 2000 bath soap, \$4.47

(All items Wal-Mart *Great Value* brand unless specified, prices as of 2/9/15.)

Arthur A. Smith
74 Mulberry Road
Mansfield, CT 06250

Mansfield Town Council

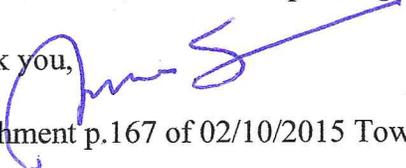
February 10, 2015

Dear Town Council Members:

I was in attendance at the Special Town Council Meeting held last Saturday morning and left with a number of questions about Master Planning Objectives. After reading the packet for tonight's agenda I find that I have a few more questions:

- (1) The Town Manager proposed long-term Master Planning Objectives in a number of areas, how will the members of the study committees be selected- by a bipartisan Committee on Committees or by the Town Manager?
- (2) Why isn't there a Master Plan for open space acquisition in Town, as former Councilor David Freudmann suggested?
- (3) The Master Planning initiative proposed by the Town Manager seems to include the expectation of increased contractual relationships with experts, to further promote transparency in accounting oversight shouldn't the Ethics Code be revisited to include "personal gain" as well as "financial gain", and clarification that a UAPA appeal is available at the conclusion of the process?
- (4) On page 167 in the packet, the BlumShapiro accounting audit notes that the "town" reclassified a sizable value of construction in process that had been capitalized in prior years, what does this mean? This reclassification related to Storrs Center project costs that did not end up creating assets owned by the Town of Mansfield, can the town capitalize the costs of private ventures?; while not capitalizable costs of the Town, these costs were incurred for the overall reconstruction and redevelopment of Storrs Center, how much town money was involved here?
[Capitalization is defined as "an **accounting** method used to delay the recognition of expenses by recording the expense as long-term assets.]
when was this practice approved by the Town Council?; and finally when did our Town Manager become aware of this practice and did he give his approval to it?
- (5) On a similar note, when did the Town Council ever approve the Town Manager's decision to assume the operating costs of the pumping stations near the Post Office?

Thank you,


Attachment p.167 of 02/10/2015 Town Council Packet, BlumShapiro