1. CALL TO ORDER
Mayor Moran called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building.

2. ROLL CALL
Present: Ausburger, Berthelot, Coleman, Cotton (see 9D for appointment), Moran, Schurin, Virtual: Bruder (see early departure below), Shaiken
Excused: Fratoni

3. PUBLIC HEARING
A. Setting FY 2022-23 UConn and Willimantic Sewer Budgets/Rates
Mr. Ausburger moved and Mr. Coleman seconded that the Council recess as the Town Council and convene as the Mansfield Water Pollution Control Authority. Motion passed unanimously.

The Town Clerk read the legal notice. Mayor Moran asked for comments. No comments were offered and the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Ausburger moved and Mr. Coleman seconded that the Council recess as the Mansfield Water Pollution Control Authority and convene as the Town Council. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Shaiken moved and Ms. Berthelot seconded to move the appointment of Dr. Cotton – new business item 9D – to now. Motion passed unanimously.

4. OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL
Marleen Dutra, Juniper Hill Village, spoke in opposition to a panhandling ordinance and asked the Council to prioritize the hiring of Human Services staff.
David Palmer, Juniper Hill Village, Secretary of the Juniper Hill Village resident group, indicated that the Commission on Aging and the resident group both deal with many similar issues such as affordable housing. He requested the Council prioritize the building of a new senior center and stated that transportation by WRTD is a big issue for seniors. He read a letter from Judy Lester into the record regarding transportation. (See attached). Mr. Palmer also stated that he is a founding member of Bike Mansfield and asked that roundabouts be considered on South Eagleville Road instead of lights.
Mayor Moran read an email from Elizabeth Wassmundt into the record regarding pandemic premium pay. (See attached).

5. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER
Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth presented and discussed his written report. The report is available online at www.MansfieldCT.gov and is on file with the Town Clerk. In response to an inquiry from Councilor Coleman regarding the delayed opening of the MES project and the
timeline for completion, Mr. Aylesworth reported no official new opening date has been announced.

Mr. Coleman remarked that the School Building Committee has been plagued with problems.

Mr. Coleman moved and Mr. Ausburger seconded to add to the agenda under new business Mansfield Elementary School.

In support of his motion, Mr. Coleman stated he is concerned about the lack of construction progress made at the new school. At the request of Mr. Shaiken, Mr. Coleman described his intention to propose a motion that the School Building Committee be dissolved and repopulated based on applications and qualifications.

Ms. Berthelot indicated she would want more information from the parties involved before taking any suggested action.

Motion failed with all against except Ausburger and Coleman who voted in favor.

6. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS
Mayor Moran reported that she represented the Town of Mansfield at Chaplin’s bicentennial celebration this past weekend. She also thanked everyone for their well wishes as she’s been recovering from a fall.

Mr. Schurin spoke in praise of Holly Schaefer and his work with her on the Personnel Committee over the past two years.

Mr. Bruder thanked the Board of Education and Superintendent Dart for their work on the school bus issues.

7. CONSENT AGENDA
A. Approval of Minutes
B. Federal-Local Bridge Program
C. Financial Statements dated June 30, 2022
D. Proposed FY 21/22 Yearend Transfers
E. Proposed FY 21/22 Capital Improvement Program Adjustments
Ms. Berthelot moved and Mr. Shaiken seconded to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Motions passed by consent:
- To approve the August 8, 2022 regular meeting minutes.
- Move, effective September 12, 2022 to authorize Town Manager, Ryan J. Aylesworth, to sign the Preliminary Applications for Bridge Numbers 04729, 04730, 04732 and 05353 into the Federal-Local Bridge Program.
- Move effective September 12, 2022, to accept the Financial Statements dated June 30, 2022.
- Move, to appropriate $116,000 of PILOT Funds for the purpose of transfers out to the CNR Fund. Further, move to approve the proposed yearend transfers as presented by the Director of Finance in her correspondence dated September 8, 2022.
- Move, effective September 12, 2022, to approve the adjustments to the Capital Projects fund, as presented by the Director of Finance in her correspondence dated September 8, 2022.
8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Pandemic Premium Pay for Town and School District Employees (Item #8B, 08.08.22 Agenda)

Ms. Berthelot moved and Mr. Bruder seconded, effective September 12, 2022, to amend the FY 22/23 Capital Non-Recurring Fund budget to appropriate $194,000 to provide a one-time pandemic bonus award to eligible employees working for the Town of Mansfield, Mansfield Board of Education and Regional School District 19 in the amount of $400 (pre-tax) per employee for an aggregate amount of $194,000.

Ms. Berthelot spoke in support of her motion, noting that the amount is more a recognition of the way teachers and staff stepped up during this difficult time to work creatively, learn new technology and serve the public while often needing to tend to increased family demands. Mr. Shaiken spoke in support of the motion stating that he also wished the same recognition could be given to all residents who were also on the front lines during the pandemic and wished that Willington and Ashford had contributed equivalently to the portion for Region 19 employees. Mr. Schurin stated his support for the Region 19 teachers and his hope that with more time, Willington and Ashford would contribute.

Mr. Schurin moved to delete the words Regional School District 19 and change the amount from $194,000 to $137,200. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Mr. Ausburger moved and Mr. Coleman seconded, effective September 12, 2022, to transfer two million dollars of PILOT funding from the CNR Fund to the General Fund to be distributed in equal parts to all residential homeowners (excludes commercial property, personal property, motor vehicles, land and rental properties) of the Town of Mansfield for the purpose of a one-time COVID relief payment. Town Council members who own real property are to be excluded from receiving this payment.

Mr. Ausburger spoke in support of his motion stating that all homeowners suffered hardship during the pandemic and his motion would provide around $356.89 to homeowners. Mr. Coleman spoke in support of the motion as it would help more people.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Shaiken, Mr. Aylesworth clarified that the majority of the funds referred to in the motion have already been appropriated by the Town Council and the remaining funds were deposited into the Town’s Fund Balance during the consent agenda. Mr. Shaiken indicated that he would vote no on this motion due to the funds already being allocated and stated that Fund Balance saves taxpayers more money in the long term than what is being proposed.

Ms. Berthelot indicated she would vote no on this motion as she is not comfortable taking this type of action without the involvement and recommendation of the Town’s professional staff.

Motion failed with all against except Ausburger and Coleman who voted in favor.

In consideration of the original motion, Mr. Coleman stated he appreciates what the town employees did during the pandemic but he cannot vote in support because he wants ARPA funds to be used instead of PILOT funds.
In response to an inquiry from Mr. Shaiken, Mr. Aylesworth reminded the Council that the ARPA limited premium pay eligibility and defined essential employees as only public health, public safety and human services and excluded teachers, transfer station attendants etc.

Motion passed with Berthelot, Bruder, Cotton, Moran and Shaiken in favor, Ausburger and Coleman against. Mr. Schurin abstained. (See replacement motion below).

Mr. Shaiken moved and Mr. Bruder seconded to amend the agenda to hear the Commission on Aging report now. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Local Business and Non-Profit Relief Fund Program (Item #9D, 05.09.22 Agenda)
Mr. Aylesworth updated the Council on how the program has been going and presented options for how to spend the unexpended funds to include expanding program eligibility to non-profits.

Ms. Berthelot moved and Mr. Schurin seconded to authorize the Town Manager to move forward with implementation of the Local Business and Non-Profit Relief Fund Program using ARPA funds as presented. Motion passed with all in favor except Mr. Shaiken who abstained.

C. Municipal Facilities Needs Assessment (Item #8A, 04.11.22 Agenda)
Ryszard Szczypek of TSKP Studios, the Town’s architecture and design firm, provided the Council with an update on the municipal facilities needs assessment study that commenced in October 2021, including an overview of potential design/construction “alternatives” that have been analyzed as part of the first phase of a comprehensive municipal facilities master planning project. Council will discuss the findings and recommendations in detail at a later time.

9. NEW BUSINESS
A. Commission on Aging Annual Report
John Riesen, Chair of the Mansfield Commission on Aging (COA), Martina Wharton, COA Vice Chair, and Will Bigl, COA member serving on the WRTD Board of Directors reviewed the three priorities of the COA: aging in community, transportation and the senior center.

[Mr. Bruder left the meeting.]

B. WPCA, FY 2022/23 UConn Sewer Budget
Mr. Shaiken moved and Mr. Coleman seconded that the Council recess as the Town Council and convene as the Mansfield Water Pollution Control Authority. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Ausburger moved and Ms. Berthelot seconded, effective September 12, 2022 to adopt the FY 2022/23 UConn Sewer budget as prepared by town staff. Motion passed unanimously.

C. WPCA, FY 2022/23 Willimantic Sewer Budget
Mr. Schurin moved and Ms. Berthelot seconded, effective September 12, 2022, to adopt the FY 2022/23 Willimantic Sewer Budget as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Shaiken moved and Mr. Ausburger seconded that the Council recess as the Mansfield Water Pollution Control Authority and convene as the Town Council. Motion passed unanimously.
Mr. Aylesworth indicated that an error needed to be corrected in the earlier pandemic premium pay motion and a new motion was required.

Mr. Shaiken moved and Ms. Berthelot seconded to rescind the pandemic premium pay motion made under business item 8A. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Shaiken moved and Ms. Berthelot seconded, effective September 12, 2022, to amend the FY 22/23 Capital Non-Recurring Fund budget to appropriate $51,600 to provide a one-time pandemic bonus in the amount of $400 (pre-tax) per employee to eligible employees working for the Town of Mansfield in the amount of $400.00, and

Further, to amend the FY 22/23 Capital Non-Recurring Fund budget to appropriate $85,600 to the Mansfield Board of Education to provide a one-time pandemic bonus in the amount of $400 (pre-tax) per employee to eligible Mansfield Board of Education Employees, and

Further, to amend the FY 22/23 Capital Non-Recurring Fund budget to appropriate $56,800 to the Region 19 School Board to provide a one-time pandemic bonus in the amount of $400 (pre-tax) per employee to eligible Region 19 School District employees.

Motion passed with Berthelot, Cotton, Moran and Shaiken in favor and Ausburger and Coleman against. Mr. Schurin abstained.

D. Filling an Existing Town Council Vacancy
Mr. Coleman moved and Mr. Shaiken seconded, effective September 12, 2022, to appoint Dr. Carlita Cotton (Democrat) to fill the vacant seat on the Town Council, which was previously held by Mr. Peter Kochenburger (Democrat).

Mr. Coleman spoke in support of Dr. Cotton’s nomination. Mr. Shaiken reported that the Democratic Town Committee voted unanimously to nominate Dr. Cotton and spoke in support of her appointment. Mr. Ausburger indicated he is looking forward to working with Dr. Cotton.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Chaine, Town Clerk, swore Dr. Cotton into office. Councilor Cotton thanked everyone for their support.

10. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES
Mr. Shaiken reported the Finance Committee met earlier this evening to discuss the items that appeared on the Council’s consent agenda.
Mr. Schurin reported that he hopes to have the Town Manager evaluation responses back by Friday.

11. DEPARTMENTAL AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS
None.

12. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS
A. Downtown Storrs Parking Garage Financial Report (July)
B. Troop C Monthly Reports (July - August)
C. S. Raphaelson (08.08.22)
D. EHHD COVID-19 Reports (08.12 - 09.09)
E. CT DPH News Release re Updated COVID 19 Boosters (09.02.22)

13. FUTURE AGENDAS
   - Fall Semester Update
   - Report from the School Building Committee
   - Update on School Busing

14. ADJOURNMENT
   Ms. Berthelot moved and Mr. Coleman seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Antonia Moran, Mayor                     Sara-Ann Chaine, Town Clerk
The transportation for seniors, as it stands now, is pathetic. WRTD/DAR, as its former self, worked well for those located in Willimantic. Outside of Willimantic not so much but it is worse since technology took over. Computers have NO COMMON SENSE!!! Today a senior is brought to Walmart at 8 or 8:30ish and MUST wait until the afternoon with all their bundles to be picked up. Oh, and by the way, the drivers are not allowed to help them get their purchases onto the bus. Then, on the ride home, with all the stops the bus has to make a rider doesn’t get home until mid-afternoon. WE are talking about the elderly here. They no longer have the stamina they once did. AND, please note there is still a whole generation of people out there who do not have, nor wish to have, computers. So, they just stay at their homes rather than go out and face such an arduous day.

Do I have any answers or suggestions? How about contacting many other towns to assess their system in an effort for new ideas. Personally, I would reprogram the computer to shut off and bring back a human with common sense to do the routes.
To: Town Council
  
  Town of Mansfield, CT

From: Elizabeth T. Wassmundt

RE: Pandemic Premium Pay

Dear Council Members:

Briefly, I object to this motion. To vote for it, you are spending my tax money without providing me, and all the other Mansfield tax payers, the right to vote for or against it. But then, this is the way the Mansfield Council has operated for many years.

I would agree to giving a more substantial bonus, from the appropriate federal funds, to those employees who worked directly with the public such as the firemen. But to give any bonus to say the employees in the town Clerk's office is a slap in the face to all town tax payers who had to go to work and directly interact with the public such as a cashier at Price Chopper. The Town Clerk's office employee received full pay throughout the pandemic, worked from home or returned to the office to work while the public was locked out of the building. Not much risk there.