

A newsletter about what's happening in your Town of Mansfield

VOL. 3, ISSUE 6

DECEMBER 2023-JANUARY 2024

Look for these stories in this newsletter



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Message from the Town Manager

Connecting with Residents on What's Important to Our Community

Greetings Fellow Residents!



I hope that everyone had a very enjoyable Thanksgiving this past month and is poised for a fun and safe winter season.

I hope this message finds you well as we usher in the joyous holiday season. As we approach the end of the year, it's a pleasure to share with you the latest updates on the happenings in our wonderful town. Your engagement and participation in our community are truly valued, and your continued support makes Mansfield a special place to call home.

Municipal Budget Development Process: Shaping Our Future. As we prepare for the journey that a New Year represents, the Town is dedicated to thoughtful planning and prudent financial management. I am pleased to announce the commencement of the municipal budget development process. This crucial process lays the foundation for the upcoming fiscal year (Fiscal Year 2025: July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025), determining how resources are allocated to meet the needs of our growing community.

As we embark on this process, a primary goal will be maintaining (and in some cases enhancing) the quality of Town programs, projects, and services while simultaneously promoting cost savings, leveraging revenues from the state and other "non-local" sources, and minimizing (or avoiding) any increases in the mill rate to help ensure that Mansfield remains a community where people of all economic means can afford to live.

Once again, the Town will be developing its operating budget and capital improvement plan using the web-based platform called ClearGov, which enables us to produce a [comprehensive budget document](#) that is organized in a user-friendly, interactive website. Your input is invaluable in shaping our priorities, so I encourage you to stay informed and engaged as we work together to ensure a prosperous future for the Town of Mansfield.

Community Engagement in Municipal Facilities Master Planning. Our commitment to enhancing the quality of life in Mansfield is exemplified by the ongoing Mansfield Tomorrow: Municipal Facilities Master Planning process. Over the course of many months, we have shared information on the work local officials have initiated over the past year with design and engineering professionals on a comprehensive municipal facilities master plan. The goal of this work is to help us better understand both the current condition/viability of existing Town buildings to adequately meet current and anticipated future needs.

We fully recognize the necessity to seek robust public engagement in this process to ensure any projects that may move forward are best positioned to meet community needs. To this end, efforts are currently underway to obtain input from the full gamut of stakeholder groups and residents of our community. We continue to seek your input and feedback as we envision the development and improvement of key facilities that serve as the heartbeat of our community. Your insights are instrumental in crafting spaces that reflect our shared values and cater to the diverse needs of our residents.



It should also be noted that Town officials are actively exploring federal and state grant programs that may be able to offset a significant portion of the design and construction costs associated with various aspects of the municipal facility upgrades being considered. Let's build a future where our facilities enhance the well-being and vibrancy of Mansfield.

(Continued)



(Town Manager’s Message cont.)



Mansfield Local Government Academy Concludes. It is hard to believe that Year three of the 12-session Mansfield Local Government Academy has come to a conclusion (see photo above.) Over the course of the last few months, the level of participant enthusiasm and engagement in the program has been exceptional, and we have explored the full array of operations and services that our local government delivers to the community. If you have an interest in taking part in this program in the future, it is never too early to start looking ahead to next fall! Please email us and we will add you to the list for the next session. More information about the program can be found on the [Town Manager’s webpage](#).

Welcoming a New Member of our Team as Library Director. In case you missed the open house we organized to introduce her to the community last month, I am delighted to share the recent appointment of Devon Andrews as the new Director of Mansfield Public Library. Devon brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to our beloved library. With a passion for community engagement and a commitment to fostering a love for knowledge, Devon is poised to lead our library into a bright and promising future.

Devon has had an expansive breadth and depth of experiences in library services as she held a number of positions with the Charleston (SC) County Public Library including Children’s Services Manager, Regional Branch Manager, and Associate Director of Community Engagement. (Please read more about Devon on page 4.) Most recently, she has served as the Director of Partnerships and Engagement for the Charleston Parks Conservancy.



I also want to convey our sincere appreciation to Ms. Kaithlin Epling, Systems Librarian, who served as Acting Director over a roughly five-month period following Leslie McDonough’s retirement as Director in June. Kaithlin has been a dedicated member of the library team for many years, and she – along with other members of the library staff team – displayed great professionalism and competent leadership through a busy summer/fall season.

Mansfield Voters Earn the Democracy Cup. Just days before the November election, Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas paid a visit to Mansfield to present our voters with the Democracy Cup. This prize is awarded to the communities with the highest voter turnout in the 2022 election. Mansfield won in the category of mid-sized, cities and towns with between 10,000 and 30,000 people. That year Mansfield election officials saw a 79.1% voter turnout.



Every election is important. We are proud to earn this designation, and hope that we can grow voter participation every year. Congratulations, too, must be shared with the election workers and Town staff who

coordinate and host our elections in Mansfield, and partners who work to ensure every eligible voter can be registered and heard each election day.

Mansfield Community Center Celebrates 20 Years. It was such a tremendous honor to attend a special reception for the Charter Members and long-time supporters of the Mansfield Community Center. Former Director Curt Vincente and Former Town Manager Martin Berliner returned to help remind us all about the commitment Mansfield made to the region when the Community Center was planned, built, and opened on November 1, 2003. We appreciate the vision and persistence of these leaders, donors, and citizens to make MCC a reality. Thank you to the staff for organizing a full month of celebratory activities.



(Continued)



(Town Manager’s Message cont.)

Celebrate the Season in Mansfield - A Time for Togetherness. What a wonderful job the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Town staff, volunteers, and exhibitors did in organizing the Winter Welcome that took place in Downtown Storrs on Saturday, December 3.

The holiday season is a magical time in Mansfield, marked by a sense of warmth and togetherness. From festive events to the twinkling lights that adorn our streets, the spirit of joy and unity is palpable. As we gather with family and friends, let us each take a moment to appreciate the unique charm of our town and the sense of community that defines us. May this season bring you moments of joy, reflection, and connection with your loved ones.

Finally, if you have friends or family who may be interested in receiving this electronic newsletter, but may not yet be subscribed, please forward a copy of this newsletter to them. And, remember, subscribing to receive the newsletter, and other updates from your town, is easy to do. (See box to the right.)

Please do not hesitate to contact the Town Manager’s Office, 860.429.3336 or townmanager@mansfieldct.org, if you have constructive feedback on how the depth and breadth of information provided in the newsletter can be optimized to meet the needs of our residents.

In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude for your ongoing support and engagement. Together, we are building a future that reflects the shared vision of our community. Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season filled with laughter, love, and pride that you call Mansfield home.

Please Very Respectfully,

Ryan J. Aylesworth

Subscribing to the electronic newsletter is easy and straightforward. Simply:

—Go to this page on the town’s website:

<http://mansfieldct.gov/list.aspx>

—Enter your email address in the “Email Address” field

—Under the “Notify Me” section of the page check the box for “News & Press Releases”

Look for an automated email informing you that your email address has been added to the distribution list, then confirm your account. That’s it!

Parks and Recreation Master Planning Concluding



Town of Mansfield consultant, 110% Inc., is concluding its work on the Parks and Recreation master plan and financial sustainability strategy as 2023 winds down. During the nearly yearlong process, a core group of Town administrative staff have been actively engaged with 110% Inc., Town Council, Town Committees, residents and key stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, that also includes a financial sustainability strategy.

The end result of this work will provide robust guidelines for the Town in making informed decisions regarding parks and recreation services. A cost of service analysis will include revenues and expenditures data collection and a review regarding parks, trails, open space, facilities, programs, events, and other related parks and recreation services. The results of the cost of service analysis work will set the framework for a cost recovery/subsidy allocation goals based upon current performance, analysis insights, and budget projections. Ultimately, the plan will align the community’s values with a financial philosophy and plan.

The completion of the master plan will include issues and insights categorized into seven areas; Community Profile/ Demographic Considerations, Parks, Trails & Open Space Considerations, Partnerships & Collaborations Considerations, Mansfield Community Center (MCC) & Recreation Services Considerations, Infrastructure/ Physical Assets Consideration, Fiscal Considerations, and General Community Considerations.



Additionally, a summary of Parks, Trails & Level of Service of the Town of Mansfield’s parks and trails, their classifications, levels of service, and updated maps of Town parks, preserves, and trails will be presented in the following categories: Park classifications, park matrix, level of service analysis, outdoor recreation facility comparisons analysis, and maps of parks, preserves, and trails. Learn more about Mansfield Tomorrow Planning initiatives at www.mansfieldtomorrow.org

Mansfield Welcomes New Mansfield Public Library Director



Devon Andrews was welcomed to the Mansfield community in mid-November as the next Director of the Mansfield Public Library. A special welcoming reception was hosted in her honor for community members and leaders to meet Devon and her family who are relocating to Mansfield from Charleston, South Carolina.

Ms. Andrews' has had an expansive breadth and depth of experiences in library services in South Carolina. She held a number of positions with the Charleston County Public Library including Children's Services Manager, Regional Branch Manager, and Associate Director of Community Engagement. Most recently, Ms. Andrews has served as the Director of Partnerships and Engagement for the Charleston Parks Conservancy. She emphasizes collaboration and partnerships as a way to expand the benefits of library services to a community.

"Ms. Andrews was selected following a competitive search that yielded a tremendously talented pool of candidates," says Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth. "During the interview process, Devon demonstrated a genuine passion for the profession, creativity in programming, and an eagerness to be a part of our Mansfield community. Many of her programming initiatives were intriguing to hear about, including the Free and Fresh Fridge that provided free produce to library patrons. Another program, Books on Buses, provided free book boxes at area bus stops to foster a love of reading. These are innovative, and share similar values to what we hold as important here in Mansfield."

Ms. Andrews earned her Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of South Carolina, and holds a Bachelor of Arts English Language and Literature. In 2022, the *Charleston Regional Business Journal* included her in their Forty Under 40 issue. She was also named a Community Champion in 2021 by the organization Healthy TriCounty and has served as a leader with the local Chamber of Commerce.



Following the retirement of Director Leslie McDonough in June after nearly twelve years of exceptional service, the Town began to search for a director. The selection process entailed multiple rounds of review, and involved a collaborative effort among library professionals from other CT municipalities, staff from the Mansfield Public Library, Town department heads, Human Resources staff, and others.

The Mansfield Public Library is located at 54 Warrenville Road (Rte. 89). The main library offers a variety of programs and resources for all ages. In addition to traditional books, it offers an extensive digital collection. Special services include homebound book delivery, a seed and tool library, and digital support for those without computer access. The Town also operates satellite libraries at the Mansfield Senior Center and the Library Express at the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center in Downtown Storrs.

Mansfield Youth Services Welcomes Author to New Tiger Strong! Program



Mansfield Youth Services' afterschool program, Tiger Strong!, welcomed Author and Illustrator Bob Shea for a virtual Author Visit this past month. Bob sparked much creativity and excitement among the group of 3rd and 4th graders.

He opened the session with a read-aloud of his newest book, *Chez Bob*, followed by tutorials on simple, easy-to-follow drawing techniques, and ended with a Q&A session. The

children were so creative and the room was erupting with laughter.

Tiger Strong! is a new program being offered by Mansfield Youth Services this year. The tiger is the official mascot of the new Mansfield Elementary School, and the small group afterschool program meets at the school on Thursday afternoons.

The focus of this program is to practice social emotional skills through joyous movement and play with peers, and helping youngsters be strong and balanced in all areas of life!



Secretary of the State Thomas Awards Mansfield with Democracy Cup



On Wednesday, October 25, 2023, Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas presented trophies to the local election officials in four Connecticut towns that distinguished themselves as the winners of the 2022 Democracy Cup. Mansfield was awarded the Democracy Cup in the category of mid-sized Towns.

The award is bestowed on municipalities with the highest voter turnout in the most-recent even-numbered election year with four categories based on town size - small, mid-sized, large, and city. This year’s winners are Deep River (small), Mansfield (mid-sized), Glastonbury (large), and Stamford (city).

Secretary Thomas extended her congratulations and appreciation for the work done to ensure each election is conducted smoothly and fairly.

“I spend much of time every day thinking about how to foster turnout. And the answer is complex. A lot of attention is given to policy, but it takes more than that to convince people to go out and cast a ballot,” said Secretary Thomas. “It takes the hard work and care of election administrators who simply have to make things work — from working through a global pandemic to ensuring that lists are maintained and that voters are educated about how to cast a ballot.”



In Mansfield, Secretary Thomas was greeted by Mayor Toni Moran, Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth, members of the Town Council, State Representatives Gregg Haddad and Pat Boyd, and Mansfield Public Schools Superintendents Peter Dart and Sharon Cournoyer from Region 19, Mansfield party leaders, and election workers.

UConn Student Government President Jon Heiden also joined the gathering, delivering more than 140 completed voter registration forms to Mansfield Registrars Vera Ward and Anne Greineder. Town Clerk Sara-Ann Chaine and Registrars Greineder and Ward received the Democracy Cup on behalf of Mansfield (see photo above.) Former Secretary of the State Denise Merrill, who also served Mansfield as a State Representative, also joined the celebration.

FAIR RENT COMMISSION MEMBERS NEEDED !



The Town of Mansfield recently passed a Fair Rent Commission ordinance. The essence of the ordinance is to create a commission that has the power to restrict rental charges in residential housing that are “so excessive as to be harsh and unconscionable.” The Commission will hold hearings and make decisions in response to tenant complaints.

The Commission is to be comprised of town residents including landlords and tenants.

If you are interested in serving, please complete the following form:
<https://www.mansfieldct.gov/FormCenter/TownWide-37/Boards-and-Committees-75>

Questions?
Contact Allison Maynard at 860-429-3314

Town-Wide Revaluation Beginning in Mansfield December, 2023



The Town of Mansfield is initiating the October 1, 2024 Town-Wide Revaluation this month. Mansfield has entered into a contract with Tyler Technologies to facilitate the compilation of the Revaluation, as mandated by the Connecticut General Statutes.

In this context, "Revaluation" or "revalue" refers to determining the present true and actual value of all real property in a town as of a specific assessment date. This involves the systematic appraisal of groups of properties on that date, employing standardized procedures and statistical testing. The primary objective of Revaluation is to rectify any assessment inequities that may have arisen since the last revaluation, ensuring a fair distribution of the local tax burden.

Mansfield Residential Property owners can expect data mailers to arrive in their mailboxes in early February 2024. **It is crucial for the success of this project that we receive a 100% return of these mailers.** The Town of Mansfield kindly requests that you review the information provided on the forms and verify the accuracy of all data. If there are any discrepancies with the property description or features, please make a note on the form indicating the necessary corrections. Regardless of whether changes are needed or not, please sign and return the form. This step is critical in the assessment process, as accurate data ensures the most precise valuation of your property.

In addition to the data mailers, **property owners should be aware that our data collectors will commence their work starting December 1, 2023.** They will conduct building permit inspections, examine recently sold properties, perform field reviews, and capture updated photos. Data collectors may also pose several questions to residents or occupants about a property. The goal is to gather comprehensive information about each property, enabling our teams to accurately calculate the value of every parcel. This process is expected to continue through November 2024.

Once all data mailers are returned and reviewed, and all other relevant information is collected, Tyler Technologies will collaborate with the Assessor to analyze the data. Valuation conclusions will be established and tested against acceptable technical standards. Mansfield property owners can anticipate receiving their tentative assessment notices in November 2024. Property owners interested in scheduling an informal review of their tentative values with Tyler Technologies should follow the instructions provided on their notice.

For more information, please download our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and check the special website created for Mansfield’s Revaluation project. Key dates, along with pictures of the data collectors, will be uploaded to this website. If you have questions about whether a data collector is in your area, please feel free to call the Mansfield Town Assessor at (860) 429-3311 or email: assessor@mansfieldct.org.

Building Community Connections: Start with “Hello”!



Lots of people, young and old, seem to like stickers. They act like a bumper sticker for your body, telling other people what’s important to you at the moment.

At the Winter Welcome celebration in Downtown Storrs on December 3, Human Rights Commission members distributed our new sticker to promote our “Happy to Say Hello” campaign. Kids seemed to love them, and adults were happy to put them on as well.

The idea behind this sticker campaign is that a smile and a quick Hello helps people to feel welcome and acknowledged in our community. Particularly at this season, a Hello can be a gift to a person who is feeling worried, lonely or frantic because of the many responsibilities of the holidays.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Being welcomed with a Hello or other greeting offers dignity and security to the person who receives it. This is a reassuring way to include people who feel left out for any reason. These stickers will be available in our schools, the library, senior center and community center. If you see them, take one and put it on for the day. Say Hello to someone and see what happens!

The Human Rights Commission wishes everyone a happy holiday season and celebrates our human rights of freedom and equality. Reach out to the commission at HRC@mansfieldct.org

-Contributed by Jane Fried, HRC Chair

Mansfield Launches New Service Options to Help Compost Food Waste



On November 13, 2023 the Mansfield Town Council approved three new services for residents, all intended to reduce waste, which is a priority in Mansfield. The first option rewards residents who generate low volumes of trash, and the other two deal with handling food waste and promoting composting.

Once-Per-Month Trash and Recycle Collection. The first new service is a once-per-month trash and recycle collection option. For residents who barely fill a 20-gallon trash container every week or use the Transfer Station infrequently for trash disposal, they can now opt to have their recyclables and trash emptied one time a month curbside. The cost is \$4.00 per month, just one quarter the cost of the weekly 20-gallon trash service.

The other two services help reduce food waste. Food waste accounts for 22% of waste deposited into landfills, according to State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). To help Mansfield residents trim their trash, the Town is now also offering two new options for handling food scraps. Currently resident options for handling food scraps are backyard composting (the most environmentally sound option) or bringing them to the Transfer Station for composting in the leaf pile. Two more options have just been added - curbside food scrap collection and dehydrating food scraps at home with a FoodCycler.

Curbside Food Scrap Collection. Blue Earth Compost, a family-owned business based in Hartford, will be providing the curbside food scrap collection service. They have been connecting the loop between food waste and compost for a decade and have collected more than 35 million pounds from dozens of communities.

The program is an optional add-on to trash and recycling services and it will cost \$14.75 per month. The Town is offering the first month free to residents to encourage participation. In order to make this service viable, Blue Earth Compost needs at least 100 households to sign up before beginning collection.

Blue Earth will collect the food scraps and haul them to a composting site approved by the DEEP. For now, the material will be brought to Quantum Biopower in Southington, but more local options are being explored. Within 21 days, Quantum converts food scraps into compost, and contains the methane byproduct inside the facility into biogas that generates electricity for the Town of Southington.

FoodCycler Dehydrator. Another option for Mansfield residents for reducing food waste is to rent a FoodCycler, which dehydrates food scraps, including meat and most bones. Dehydrating converts scraps into an odorless, dry material that looks like peat moss that can then be sprinkled on lawns, gardens or added to a compost pile. Casella, based in Vermont, has teamed up with a Canadian company called Food Cycle Science to provide the FoodCycler to participating households. The cost is \$20 per month to rent the equipment, receive technical support and replacement charcoal filters.

Mansfield pays \$115 per ton to have municipal solid waste hauled to the Preston Incinerator. Pulling food waste out of the regular waste stream helps lessen the overall amount of waste that Mansfield throws away. Incinerating food creates greenhouse gasses, and burns off any valuable organic nutrients that are inside of food. Boosting access to composting is a major benefit of these new service options. Compost is a well-known soil type that improves overall soil quality, reduces the need for chemical fertilizers, helps to retain water in the soil, and reduces soil erosion.

“By choosing backyard composting, composting at the Transfer Station, using the FoodCycler material to add to soil or participating in curbside food scrap collection, the nutrient cycle is kept intact,” states Mansfield Recycling Coordinator, Virginia Walton. “Mansfield’s commitment to overall sustainability is a part of our culture. We hope that residents will take advantage of these new opportunities that help us connect to our earth.”

Residents can sign up for these new services by going to mansfieldct.gov/setupservice or by calling 860-429-3333 or emailing Virginia Walton, Mansfield Recycling Coordinator, at waltonvd@mansfieldct.org.

Repair Café January 13: Learn to Fix It, Not Toss It!



Do you have an item that needs a little fixing, but still has plenty of life? Bring it to the next Repair Café on January 13, 2024 at the First Congregational Church, 199 Valley St., Willimantic from 10AM to 2PM. Meet some great neighbors who are willing to fix your item for free, or teach you to fix it the next time!

Did you know that the Repair Café was featured on Connecticut Public Television? Check out this segment on the show, [“Resourceful!”](#)

Let's Scrap Food Waste!

Eat what you buy. Compost the scraps.



If you already compost, read no further! If not, we can help!

Climate change may seem like a problem too big to deal with in our daily lives. But we can do some things that are not going to bust your budget and, in fact, may save money.

Start with food. The production, distribution, and disposal of food significantly contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Food waste makes up 22% of Connecticut's trash. We can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by composting food instead of incinerating it along with our trash.

If you currently put your food in a compost pile or bring it to the Mansfield Transfer Station for composting, thank you! That is the best way to deal with scraps. **If you don't have a back yard, or are not ready to start a compost pile for scraps at home, we now have two new options for you.**

OPTION 1:

Weekly Curbside Food Scrap Collection
\$14.75/ month (first month is free)

- You will receive a 6-gallon container to collect food scraps
- Place at the curb to be emptied weekly by Blue Earth Compost
- Collection will begin once we have 100 households signed up
- Benefits: Eliminates the management of a backyard compost pile, includes meat, bones, fats

Sign up at: Mansfieldct.gov/setupservice

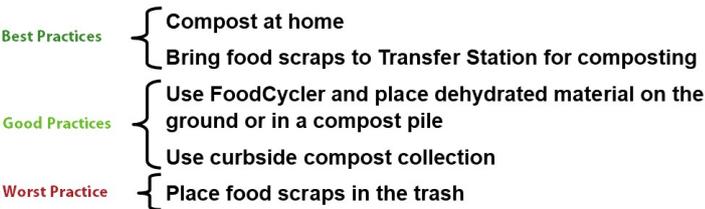
OPTION 2:

In-Home FoodCycler
\$20.00/ month

- You will receive a FoodCycler that will dehydrate food scraps
- Rental includes tech support and regular filter replacements
- The resulting finished material is perfect for sprinkling on the ground or composting
- Benefit: Eliminates the management of a compost pile, includes most bones and all meat, odorless process

Sign up at: Mansfieldct.gov/setupservice

Which is the right option for you? Below shows the order of best to worst practices for handling food scraps based on greenhouse gas emissions impacts.



LOCAL ASSISTANCE

- Mansfield Human Services**
860-429-3315
Case management, referrals, public assistance programs, crisis intervention, food pantry, seasonal programs
- Mansfield Youth Services**
860-429-3319
Clinical services, prevention, youth programs, parenting support, truancy and attendance support
- Mansfield Senior Center**
860-429-0262
Daily programing, transportation services, meal programs, outreach, and volunteer services
- Fee Waiver Program**
Eligible residents can receive a reduction in fees for designated Town services
- Food Programs**
FoodShare Mobile Food Pantry, Mansfield Farms to Family
- R.A.RE Program**
Rent, mortgage, utility and emergency assistance for eligible residents affected by COVID-19
- Seasonal Programs**
Back to School, Campership, and Holiday Program

DO YOU NEED ACCESS TO FOOD?

Food Pantries

- Mansfield Human Services
860-429-3315
- Storrs Congregational Church
860-429-9382
- Husky Harvest Food Pantry
860-486-3918
- Covenant Soup Kitchen
860-423-4603

Additional Assistance

- Connecticut FoodShare**
A mobile food pantry that stops in Mansfield. <https://ctfoodshare.org/>
- 2-1-1**
Dial 2-1-1 or go to www.211ct.org for free connections to critical health and human services within the community.
- Mansfield Farms to Family Program**
Partially sponsored CSA shares from local farms. Please contact MFFP@mansfieldct.org
- Mansfield Public Schools Free and Reduced Lunch**
If you believe you qualify, please contact foodserve@mansfieldct.org



Learn How Solar+Storage Helps Homeowners Take Control of Their Energy Use. Powersmart Informational Session December 13.



The Mansfield Sustainability Committee is announcing a partnership with SmartPower, the nation's leading non-profit marketing organization dedicated to promoting clean energy and energy efficiency.

Together, the groups are co-hosting a special PowerSmart Mansfield Info Session at 6pm on Wednesday, December 13th at the Municipal Building's Town Council Chamber, 4 South Eagleville Road in Storrs/Mansfield. The presentation will explain how a home battery system can be paired with a new or existing residential solar array to provide power at night and especially during a power outage, and how various financial incentives can be accessed.

Energy storage at the local level can provide stability and resilience to Connecticut's power supply. Home-owning members of the public are invited to attend this presentation — virtually or in person — by Bob Wall, Vice President of SmartPower. More details can be found at <https://powersmartmansfield.wee.green>

PowerSmart Mansfield is a special 20-week community outreach campaign that is funded by a grant from the US Department of Energy, and features a team including Yale School of the Environment, New York University - Stern School of Business, and SmartPower. The program is designed to present local residents with the various opportunities and incentives available to them to have solar and battery energy storage systems, which allow residents to convert sunlight into electrical energy and store that energy in a battery for use at a later time. The "EnergyStorageSolutions" solar+storage combination also allows program participants to sell their excess stored energy to Eversource and helps make the grid more resilient during critical "peak demand" periods.

"Mansfield has been leading the way in helping residents to make smart energy choices," said Lynn Stoddard, chair of the Sustainability Committee. "Now we're pleased to help accelerate the transition to solar plus energy storage in our homes. This combination helps to provide greater independence and autonomy with respect to personal energy use."

Mansfield is among the first dozen communities to launch a PowerSmart campaign in Connecticut. Over the years, the Town has been a sustainability leader in many ways including:

- The achievement of a Silver Level Certification in the Sustainable CT initiative
- Participation in the "Neighbor-to-Neighbor" home energy efficiency program
- Conducting a Solarize CT Program
- Conducting a Solar for All campaign
- Connecticut's first new net-zero elementary school, Mansfield Elementary School
- Climate Emergency Resolution pledging net zero carbon emissions from municipal operations by 2030

There are three different incentives that make battery storage systems an attractive investment opportunity. First, homeowners who enroll in the Energy Storage Solutions program can get a generous upfront rebate incentive. (Residents who live in areas that are prone to power outages and lower income residents may qualify for additional incentives.) Second, they get a 30% federal income tax credit, per the Inflation Reduction Act, for the net cost of the solar panels and/or battery system that they have installed. Finally, they will get payments from Eversource for agreeing to have their batteries partially drawn down during the summer months and for a handful of days during the winter. Eversource has safeguards in place so that drawdowns are suspended in the event of a potential grid power outage.

Homeowners who purchase a battery system can choose not to participate in the Energy Storage Solutions program. By doing so, they would forego the state incentives, but would be free to use their stored power however they see fit.

How Are We Doing? There are Lots of Ways to Let Us Know!



The Town of Mansfield is committed to excellence in service. How are we doing? Please give us feedback now by replying through [this form](#).

The Town Manager's Office has also placed suggestion boxes at locations around town including the Senior Center, the Mansfield Public Library and Library Express, and at the Mansfield Community Center. You can either access the input form through the QR code, or fill out the card and drop it in the box. Or just call us at 860.429.3336.

We want to hear how we can better serve our residents!



Mansfield Human Services Season of Giving Campaign 2023

The Mansfield Human Services Department is welcoming donations for various assistance programs that benefit our community.

Season of Giving focuses on several ways in which you can help your neighbors in need.

We are grateful for your support!

All donations can be sent to: Mansfield Human Services, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield, CT 06268.

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

This fund assists low-income families with basic needs in emergency situations. Residents are able to utilize the fund for heat, electricity, rent, or any number of other extenuating circumstances. This fund is used throughout the entire year, but especially during the winter season. Checks can be made payable to: **Mansfield Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund.**

HOLIDAY FUND

The Holiday Fund assists low-income families by providing gifts for their children for the holidays. Donors can contribute monetary or gift card donations. The Holiday Fund works in conjunction with our Stuff-a-Cruiser event to provide toys and other support for children in our community. Checks can be made payable to: **Mansfield Holiday Fund.**

STUFF-A-CRUISER

Stuff-a-Cruiser is an annual event where we team up with the Mansfield Resident State Trooper's office to collect toys and gift cards for the holidays. You can drop off new, unwrapped toys or gift cards to the Resident Trooper's office in Town Hall. The Stuff-a-Cruiser event takes place at the Winter Welcome in early December. All items collected are distributed to families in need.

BACK TO SCHOOL

This fund assists low-income families with assistance to purchase back-to-school necessities, such as back packs and school supplies. Checks can be made payable to: **Mansfield Back to School.**

CAMPERSHIP FUND

Our Campership Fund helps send children in town to summer camp. Children can attend Camp Mansfield, or other private eligible camps, and receive a subsidy amount to offset the costs. This year, the Campership Fund helped over 30 children attend camp. Checks can be made payable to: **Town of Mansfield/The Betsy Hamill Memorial Campership Fund.**



Winter is the Time for Getting Active with Mansfield Parks & Recreation

If you love seasonal activities, be sure to add these to the calendar:



Nov. 24-Dec. 11 – [Letters to Santa](#) accepted in the Community Center lobby

Dec. 6 – [Mitten Day!](#)

Dec. 8 – [Kids Night Out Holiday PJ Party!](#)

Dec. 9-10 – [Nutcracker](#) performances at the Mansfield Middle School; tickets available now at the Mansfield Community Center

Dec 12 – [Calling All Elves](#); letters to Santa transport assistance needed.

Dec. 27, 28, 29 – Winter Vacation Days – Day Camp

Dec. 30 – Family Fun Night Theme: Snow Day!

Jan. 1 – [First Day Hike](#)

Jan. 14 – Feet, Hooves, and Paws – Winter Animal Tracking for all ages! (See our Winter Brochure pg. 49)



Mansfield Senior Center Ready for a Season of Fun

We have lots of fun activities to engage in at our Senior Center during the month of December! Consider joining us for a delicious home cooked meal, take a trip up to Bright Nights or wind down with us after the holidays with pizza and a sweet treat!

[Click here](#) to check out everything we have happening at the Senior Center in December in our newsletter, *Senior Sparks*.



Mansfield Public Library Presents Sugarplum Fairy Storytime & Ballet

Thread City Classical Dance returns for a special Winter ballet storytime & dance demonstration! All ages will enjoy this magical performance.

Saturday, December 16 at 10:30AM in Buchanan Auditorium



Mansfield Resident State Troopers and Human Services Department Host Toy Drive for Mansfield Families

Please bring your winter clothing, gift, or toy for children of all ages! Stuff the cruiser:

- December 5-8 to Town Hall parking lot facing So. Eagleville Road
- Eastbrook Mall on Saturday, December 9





Mansfield Community Center Announces Winter 2024 Registration!



The Parks and Recreation winter 2024 registration is opening soon! [Click here](#) for the seasonal program brochure, featuring all the usual favorites (fitness, language, aquatics, certifications, dance, arts, guided hikes, rental spaces, and more), and save the dates to sign up for something to keep you active and engaged this season:

Monday, December 11: Members of the Community Center may register for Fitness & Aquatic related programs ONLY

Thursday, December 14: Mansfield Residents begin registration for all programs/activities

Monday, December 18: Non-residents begin to register for all programs/activities.

Programs and classes begin as soon as January 2nd!

Give a Gift of Activity, Community, and Wellness to Someone You Love.

Parks & Recreation activities and Community Center memberships make for great experience gifts. Purchase a [gift certificate](#) at the Mansfield Community Center reception desk today. Gift certificates do not expire, and are available in any denomination. Here are some common ideas and approximate gifting values (based on non-member or resident rates for Winter 2024):

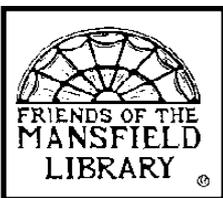
- Annual Resident Individual Membership with Enrollment Fee: \$436
- One session of adult or youth group swim lessons: \$107
- Adult/Pediatric CPR Course: \$106
- Winter Season 30-minute Private Music Lessons: \$356
- Youth Dance Class: \$67
- Personal Training: \$90 per session
- Summer Camp: \$200-\$350 per week
- Language Class: \$103-\$123

Have you seen our video about 20 years of Family, Fitness, and Fun?

Enjoy this video created for the MCC 20th Anniversary Celebration that shows a little of what the center does. Enjoy!

<https://www.facebook.com/MansfieldCommunityCenter/videos/1283588178906232>

Winter Book Sale from the Friends of the Mansfield Library



Did you know that you can find great reads to purchase for yourself or a holiday friend throughout December at the Mansfield Public Library?

The Friends of the Mansfield Library will hold their Annual Mini Holiday Book Sale from Thursday, November 30 through Saturday, December 30. The sale table will be inside the main library and will feature gift-quality used books for children and adults, as well as small books for stocking stuffers or small gifts and many Christmas themed books.

You'll find treasures to give as gifts and great deals on books you didn't know you needed. Find all the details at: friendsmansfieldlibraryct.org/event/holiday-book-sale-2022/

As always, all the money raised through these book sales benefit the Mansfield Public Library. If you choose, [monetary donations](#) are always welcome, too, through the [Friends website](#).

Taste2Towns: Restaurant Week Returns January 29 to February 11

If your business or organization is interested in becoming a sponsor for the 2024 Taste2Towns collaboration between the Towns of Mansfield and Windham, please visit the website for details: taste2towns.com. Sponsorship packages start as low as \$100. Please reach out to us by December 15 to ensure your business is part of our promotion activities, including our private kick-off event!

If you're ready to dine around our region, watch the website in late January as our participating restaurants post their tasty menus!

3RD ANNUAL TASTE 2 TOWNS 2024
20+ RESTAURANTS AWAIT

JAN 29 'til FEB 11

PLAN YOUR DELICIOUS:


MANSFIELD & WINDHAM

PRIX FIXE AND TAKEOUT

TASTE2TOWNS.COM

From January 29 to February 11, we're serving up some of the best dining experiences in town. Enjoy everything from international haute cuisine to authentic down home comfort food.

Windham CONNECTICUT
MANSFIELD CONNECTICUT
 Mansfield DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
 Willimantic DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Congratulations to the new Mansfield Town Council, elected November 2023.



From left to right, Bill Tomecko, Sam Bruder, Mayor Toni Moran, Deputy Mayor Ben Shaiken, Chris Kueffner, David Litrico, Ronald Schurin, Dr. Carlita Cotton, and Brian Coleman



Three New Leases Signed for Businesses in Downtown Storrs



The [Mansfield Downtown Partnership](#) is happy to announce three businesses have signed new leases for spaces along Wilbur Cross Way in Downtown Storrs!

Action Packed and Nautical Bowls plan to open in December, while Huskies Restaurant and Bar will open in late winter 2024.

Read more about their plans [here](#).

- ACTION PACKED will offer retro video games, comic books, and collectibles in their new store at 34 Wilbur Cross Way, Suite 102
- NAUTICAL BOWLS will serve up superfood bowls at their shop next door in 34 Wilbur Cross Way, Suite 101A.
- HUSKIES RESTAURANT AND BAR will open a new, full-service restaurant serving lunch and dinner & offering a pub style menu at 33 Wilbur Cross Way!

With the addition of these businesses, there will be 73 businesses and organizations operating in Downtown Storrs. Of these businesses, 52% are independently-owned. Sixteen percent are locally owned franchises. The remaining businesses and organizations are a mix of UConn entities (e.g. UConn Health), national businesses (e.g. Chase Bank), and non-profit organizations (e.g. the Mansfield Downtown Partnership).

To see a full directory of businesses in Downtown Storrs, please visit downtownstorrs.org/explore.

Learn the Best Ways to Recycle or Dispose of Holiday Packaging



With all the shipping cartons, wrapping paper, and food packaging we handle this time of year, it can be very confusing to know how to properly dispose of and recycle waste.

Community volunteers and Recycling Coordinator Virginia Walton have created these easy-to-follow videos as a service to local residents!

- In the Kitchen: What Can I Recycle?: https://youtu.be/luh_avx1dJA
- Packaging: What Can I Recycle? <https://youtu.be/z779rejVa3U>.

There are two more that will be coming soon: The Holidays: What Can I Recycle? And Ordering Take-Out: What Can I Recycle? Watch for them on the Town's YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Town+of+Mansfield+CT+Youtube

Protect Yourself From Property Fraud: Sign up for PropertyCheck



It wasn't until our years trudging through the pandemic that professionals who work directly in or adjacent to the real estate world began to hear about property fraud more frequently. According to the National Association of Realtors: "Title piracy has become increasingly more common since 2020, especially with the rise of remote and mail-away closings and remote notarization in our post-COVID society."

When a property owner decides to convey their property, they often do so by use of a deed. A deed is a legal document showing ownership of a piece of property. The deed usually states the name(s) of those conveying the property and the name(s) of those receiving the property. Only the selling party signs most deeds; the new owners usually do not sign the deed. Signing happens at the real estate closing and the attorney will bring the legal documents to the Town Clerk for recording onto the land records. Once recorded, a public copy of the deed is preserved by the Town Clerk in perpetuity.

Property fraud can occur if someone forges your identity, transfers your property into their name, and records the document on the land records. This fraudulent activity can make it appear as if that person owns your home or property, and you may not have any idea that this happened.

Mansfield is proud to offer PropertyCheck for free to our residents to help combat property fraud. PropertyCheck from Cott Systems works jointly with the Town of Mansfield's records management system software, RECORDhub, automatically sending registered users an alert if a document with a matching name is recorded in the land records.

To opt-in to this free service, residents will need to create a RECORDhub account, create alerts for their name and choose their preference of alerts – email or text message. Paul Fetters, Product Implementation Specialist at Cott Systems, recommends creating multiple alerts based on variations of a first, middle and last name as well as a spouse's name to ensure that an alert will be triggered if a recording happens with some kind of slight name variation.

Please visit www.mansfieldct.gov/townclerk to find out more about Property Check and sign up for free.

Mansfield Parks & Recreation's Community School of the Arts



Did you know that collectively, UConn and Mansfield Parks and Recreation have delivered more than 40 years of Community School of the Arts (CSA) music, visual art, programs and performance instruction in Mansfield.?

Today, Lenard Hall is the primary facility for programs and is at home in the renovated and expanded Old Mansfield Schoolhouse located at 450 South Eagleville Road. Through the generosity of principal donors John and Jean Lenard, and others including the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation, the Lenard Hall facility was made possible.

As a result, Mansfield Parks and Recreation provides year-round, high-quality group and individual instruction in music, theater, visual arts, and dance to all ages and abilities. In addition to affordable and professional instruction, CSA supports community performances, open art studio space, and rental space.

Additionally, Lenard Hall and the Mansfield Community Center are proud to support quarterly art displays of artists and welcome community members to stop by both facilities to view the inspirational talent of local artists.

Please visit our recently update and engaging [CSA website](#) to learn more about programs, instruction, performances, displays and facility hours.

Reminder: When the Weather is Bad, Please Heed the Parking Ban

The Town of Mansfield winter parking ban is in effect beginning November 1st. Per Mansfield's Motor Vehicle & Parking Ordinance, Section 182-3, "No motor vehicle shall be parked on any public highway under the jurisdiction of the Town of Mansfield, or in any area designated as a municipal parking area, between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., from November 1 through April 15; or at all times when there is any accumulation of snow or ice on said highways or parking areas."

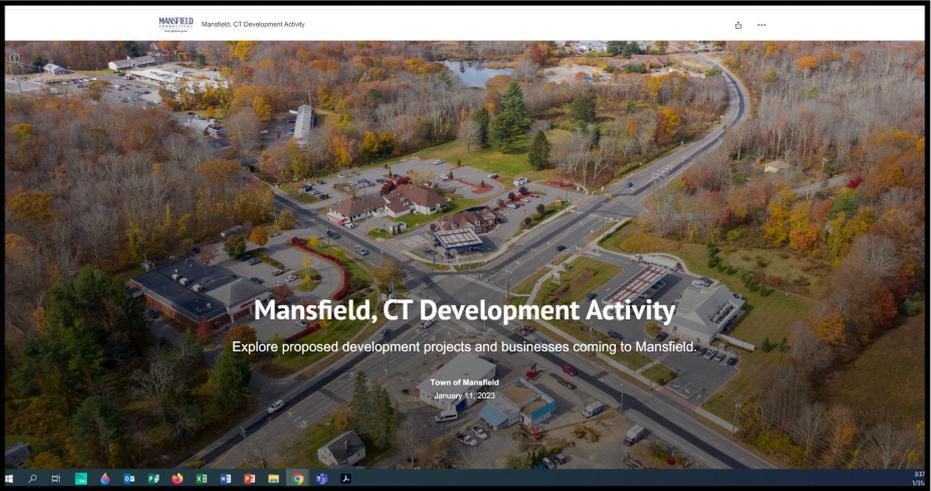
[Read the full guidance here.](#) If you have any questions, please call the Department of Public Work Administrative Office at 860-429-3331.

Keep Up With the Latest News on Development Activity in Mansfield



There are a number of mixed-use and multi-family developments in various stages of the permitting process. If you are interested in staying informed about these proposals, the Planning and Development Department has a helpful tool for you.

The Department maintains a Development Activity page on the Town's website which provides updates on upcoming and recently approved projects. We encourage residents to visit the site frequently to stay informed on the proposals before the Planning and Zoning Commission and other activity.



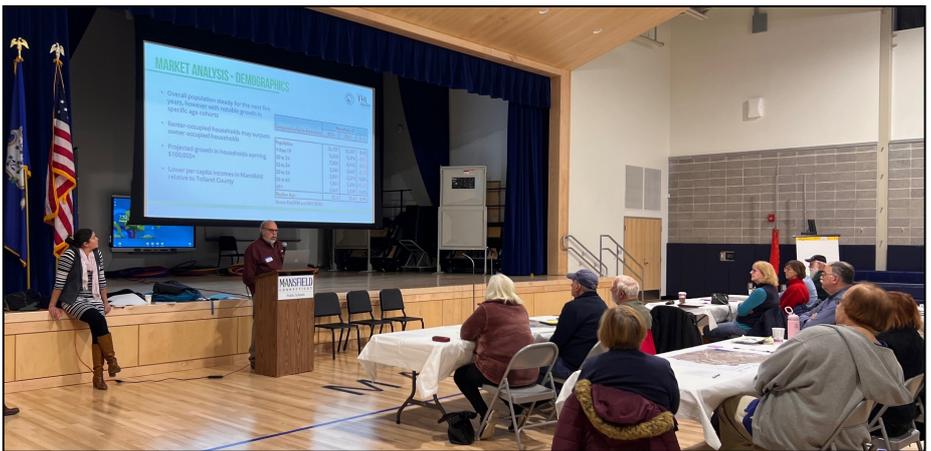
Mansfield Hosts Northwest Mansfield Neighborhood Session



More than 60 Mansfield residents attended a public workshop in November to provide input to the planning process for the Northwest Mansfield Neighborhoods. The session, held at the Mansfield Elementary School, was facilitated by FHI Studio which is coordinating this plan for the Town.

The group reviewed demographics and assets located in that portion of Town. In small groups, the attendees discussed attributes that would make these neighborhoods more livable.

All residents are asked to complete an online survey about this region through the www.mansfieldtomorrow.org website. Updates on the progress of this plan will also be posted there.



Closing Soon! The Northwest Mansfield Vision and Strategy Plan online survey is still open!



There is still time to provide your input - we want to hear from you! The survey will be closed on December 20th, 2023. Take the survey to help shape the future of Mansfield! Please Scan the QR Code to the right or use the link below to access the survey.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NWMansfield

20 Residents Complete 2023 Mansfield Local Government Academy



Congratulations to 20 Mansfield citizens who completed the 2023 Mansfield Local Government Academy.

Since September 6, Town staff, along with the Town Manager's office, have coordinated 12 two-hour sessions representing the various departments of the Town of Mansfield.

Congratulations to all of these residents who devoted time to learning about local government in Mansfield: Anne Newmyer, Betsy Mortensen, Brenda Barney, Brenda Totortitis, Brooke Grant, Caroline Kelly, Chad Burns, Colby Miller, Dwight Codr, Heidi Paradis, James M Findley, Jennifer Allen, John Bane, Kelly Chicoine, Linda Skinner, Maidie Cohen, Paula Patterson, Theresa Denaro, Veronica Helgans, and Philby Fisher.



These participants experienced a wide variety of tours and demonstrations, in addition to presentations from department leaders. For example, at the Department of Public Works headquarters, the group toured the garage with one of the mechanics, learned about tree-cutting, saw what is involved with Town landscape and fields maintenance, the snow-removal equipment, and learned about recycling initiatives. The Mansfield Fire Department cut open a car with the Jaws of Life, toured the participants through an

ambulance, and offered the chance to operate a fire hose. After hearing from Superintendents Cournoyer and Dart along with Board of Education members about Region 19 and Mansfield Public Schools, participants toured the new Mansfield Elementary School.

What is involved in maintenance of the Mansfield Community Center pools? The participants toured these backroom spaces, as well as the Town Hall vault and the public library.



With the Resident State Troopers, participants experienced goggles that replicate various intoxication levels and tried to steer a pedal-driven cart or walk a straight line. The Mansfield Local Government Academy also offered presentations from Information Technology about operating the Town's networks securely, and discussed Parks and Recreation and Open Space, Planning and Development, Public Health, Building and Housing Regulations, and much more.

At the closing session, the Academy heard personal stories from Economic



Development Chair Steve Ferrigno and Planning and Zoning Commission Chair Paul Aho about the commitment of private citizens on the Town's many boards and commissions. Local political party Chairs Charles Ausburger and Ben Shaiken also outlined how to become involved in the Town's political committees to run for office. Mayor

Toni Moran also attended and thanked the group for their commitment to their community, encouraging them to find a way to continue their engagement with Mansfield's local government.

If you are interested in being added to a list of potential participants when the next Mansfield Local Government Academy is held, please email the Town Manager's office at TownMngr@mansfieldct.org



Right of Way and Property Lines



When buying or renting a home or even growing up in one, something that one never or rarely learns about is the Town right of way. What is a Town right of way? From the Town of Mansfield Charter, it's defined as any street, avenue, boulevard, highway, sidewalk, alley, park, waterway, railroad or similar place, which is owned or controlled by a governmental entity. In other words, a portion of the land between your home and the street's paved (or unpaved driving surface for our gravel roads) is Town property, or Town right of way.

Most people understand that the road is town property, but the Town right of way usually includes more than just the road. The paved (or unpaved driving surface for our gravel roads) driving surface of a roadway does not define the limit of Town property. In the Town of Mansfield, the right of way in most every situation is wider than the actual driving portion, paved or unpaved, of the road, street, etc. The Town-owned road layout includes the driving surface and adjacent, usually vegetated, areas with varying width based on the property line location on either side of the paved or unpaved driving surface.

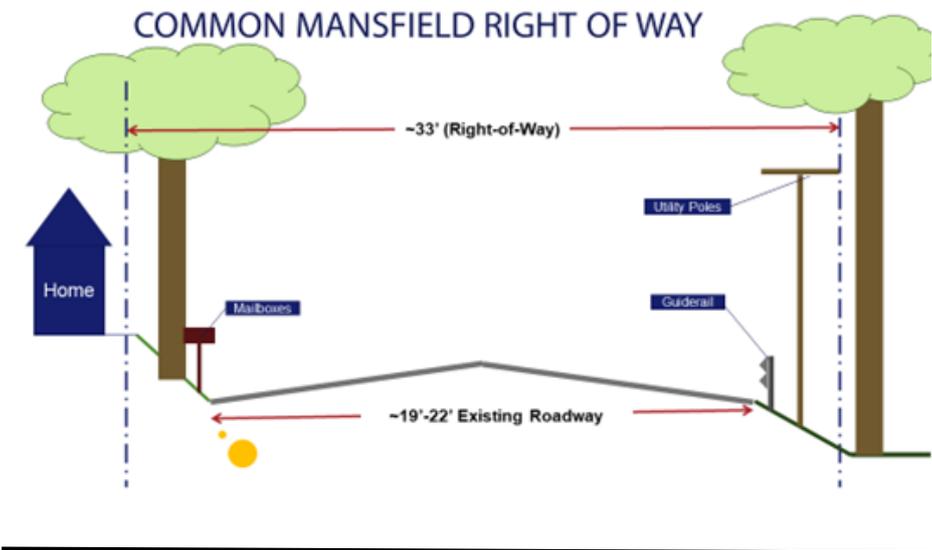
In most cases, private lawns extend onto the Town right of way or Town property. Most people maintain this area like it is their own and the Town encourages such practice. Do not expect the Town to maintain it in the same manner. Our roadside mowing program usually only cuts an area twice a year. Typically all mailboxes and some stonewalls are in the Town's right of way. Trees in the right of way are the Town's responsibility, so please cease from planting trees in the right away.

If you own property on a State Road (in Mansfield Routes 195, 89, 32, 31, 44, 320, 275, 6), the State of Connecticut has the right of way up to your property line.

What is a property line?

A property line is that real or imaginary line along the ground surface and its vertical extension which separates real property owned or controlled by any person from continuous real property owned or controlled by another person and separates real property from the public right-of-way.

Quite often, the Department of Public Works is working within the right of way especially if we are resurfacing the road or plowing snow. The Town cannot be responsible for any damage to plantings, bulbs, flowers, shrubbery, sprinkler systems, fencing to include invisible fencing wire, basement or perimeter drains etc., located on Town property. You may wish to verify the extent of your property line



Protect Your Pets from Wintry Extremes



Living in New England we know that winter is coming, whether we like it or not. As we prepare ourselves, yards and our homes for the upcoming colder weather we also need to take into consideration the safety of our pets. Here are a few helpful tips from Mansfield Animal Control about getting your furry family members ready for winter;

Protect their paws: Salt, that is often used to melt ice during the winter, can be very harmful to pets paw pads. Use pet friendly salt at home, and be cautious when you are walking your dog elsewhere. Wipe their paws with a damp towel as soon as they come indoors, or protect their paws with a layer of Vaseline, paw protection products or even booties.

Protect their skin and coat: Drying dogs off when they come inside from the winter rain and snow will not only help keep your home clean but also help protect their skin and fur. Always look between their toes, as this is often where snow can accumulate and cause small balls of ice. For dogs with shorter fur, or dogs who have been closely groomed, think about investing in a coat. Dog coats come in a variety of colors and styles, some are even waterproof which can keep your pet dry during a winter outing and cut down on dry time when you get home.



Bring your pets inside! Just like us, pets like to spend more time indoors during the winter season. Leaving pets outside during extremely cold temperatures can put them at risk for becoming lost, disorientated or even freezing. Certain dog breeds are more than happy to spend a little bit of extra time outside in the cold, but even those dogs can be at risk during extreme cold.

Connecticut law prohibits tethering dogs outside during extreme weather. Dogs of all breeds are susceptible to frostbite, especially on the nose and footpads. Per Connecticut General Statutes 22-350a, "dogs cannot be tethered outside during extreme weather for a duration longer than 15 minutes."

Cats living outside can be effected by freezing temperatures as well. Outdoor cats should be provided with a warm dry place to take shelter, if you do not have a barn, shed or other space for a cat you could build an easy one at home.

Warm car engines are an enticing refuge spot for feral and outdoor cats. Always make sure to bang on your hood or even beep your horn before starting your engine.

Following these tips can keep all your furry family members safe and warm for the upcoming winter season.



Firefighters Teach Youngsters about Safety



Members of the Mansfield Fire Department invested time and smiles at local schools to teach Mansfield's youngest citizens about fire safety and avoiding danger.

In October, department staff spent two full days at Mansfield Elementary School as all the classes toured the firetrucks, saw the apparatus and gear in action, and learned about how to react during emergencies.

Later, staff also visited Oak Grove Montessori School. Deputy Fire Marshal Andrew Franklin demonstrated the science of fire and practiced with students on how to report an emergency to 911. These important lessons stick with these students, and could help them save lives at home when an emergency occurs.



Mansfield Library: Learn, Join in, Explore What's Happening



Children's Weekly Events:

Toddler Time: Tuesdays at 10:30AM in MPL's Program Room

Learn, dance and play through stories and songs! After storytime, families are invited to stay and play with friends. This program is best for toddlers ages 1-3, but all families are welcome.

Wonder Workshop: Thursdays from 3-5PM (Drop-in!) in MPL's Buchanan Auditorium

Families are invited to drop in between 3-5PM for STEAM activities, crafts, and tactile play. This program is best for preschool and elementary-school age children, but all families are welcome.

Music and Movement: Fridays at 10:30AM in MPL's Buchanan Auditorium

Let's move! Sing, dance and move your bodies in this interactive, music-based program, followed by group playtime. This program is best for ages 0-4, but all families are welcome.

Saturday Storytime: Saturdays at 10:30AM in MPL's Program Room

Join us for Saturday morning stories & songs at the library! After storytime, families are invited to stay and play with friends. This program is best for ages 0-7, but all families are welcome.

Special Events Coming Up:

Sugarplum Fairy Storytime & Ballet: Saturday 12/16 @ 10:30AM in Buchanan Auditorium

Thread City Classical Dance returns for a special Winter ballet storytime & dance demonstration!

Winter Break Programming coming soon! Visit the library's calendar online for updated information.

As always, all library programs are FREE and no registration is necessary.

Adult Programs

Holiday Stress Reduction Through Meditation—Virtual Workshop

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 @ 6:00 pm

Register for the Zoom link here: <https://mansfieldct.jotform.com/library/holiday-stress-reduction>

The scientific community has recently been exploring the use of meditation as a healing modality. Join John Bednarik, long time meditator, as he discusses the extraordinary effect of meditation. It can reduce stress-related responses, improve concentration, enhance clarity of thought, and promote mental equilibrium. He will also present a simple, yet powerful meditation technique that will be explained and practiced during the session. Meditation can enrich one's life personally, professionally, spiritually, and help with seasonal stress.

Film Viewing and Discussion: Oppenheimer (2023)

Length 3h Rated R Thursday, December 14 @ 6:00 pm

Location: Mansfield Public Library, Program Room

Christopher Nolan's biography of American scientist, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and his role in the development of the atomic bomb. The film was adapted from the Pulitzer Prize winning book American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer.

Free Popcorn and filtered water will be available.

Virtual Film Discussion: The Last Black Man in San Francisco

Length 2 hrs Rated R Wednesday, December 20 from 8:00 pm-9:00 pm

Jimmie Falls dreams of reclaiming the Victorian home his grandfather built in the heart of San Francisco. Joined on his quest by his best friend Mont, Jimmie searches for belonging in a rapidly changing city that seems to have left them behind.

The film is currently streaming on Netflix, and there are copies on DVD at the circulation desk to borrow with a library card.

To get a Zoom invitation to the program, please email ockmondmj@mansfieldct.org

(Continued)



(Mansfield Public Library Events cont.)

Meditation: A New Year Resolution Worth Keeping—Virtual Workshop

Tuesday, January 2, 2024 @ 6:00 pm

Register for the Zoom link by clicking on this event on the Mansfield Public Library website calendar: <https://mansfieldpubliclibraryct.org/>

In this busy, fast-paced world, peace seems like an elusive commodity. Arlene Samsel, long-time meditator, will share a simple, effective meditation technique that can help us experience inner peace. In this program you will have the chance try out this time tested technique which can positively affect your life. Join us for this inspirational meditation workshop and start the New Year on the right track!

Adult Valentine Shadow Box Craft

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 @ 6:00 pm

Location: Mansfield Public Library, Buchanan Auditorium

Registration is required because space is very limited and spots fill up quickly. Beginning at 9:00 am on Wednesday, 1/3/24, register by calling the library at: 860-423-2501 or stop by the library circulation desk.

Come join us for a fun night of crafting! We will roll paper flowers and arrange them into the shape of a heart inside a shadow box frame.

NEW! Adults 18+ Only Monthly Game Night

Tuesday, 1/16/2024, 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Mansfield Public Library, Buchanan Auditorium

No registration required.

Want to start the New Year off trying something fun and new? Join us at the Mansfield Public Library for our first monthly Game Night for adults 18+! Drop in to the auditorium for Magic: The Gathering Casual Commander play or try one of our specially selected board games!

Bring your favorite Magic the Gathering commander deck, or learn to play with one of our guest decks. The library will provide board games, or feel free to bring your own to share. We will be happy to help with rules and instructions! All experience levels welcome.

New Year, Fresh Start Through Meditation

Tuesday, 1/23/2024 @ 6:00 pm

Location: Mansfield Public Library

No registration required for this in-person workshop.

The New Year is a time to create a clean slate. Join Clare Vidich for this powerful in-person workshop. Learn a simple meditation technique to bring joy, peace, positivity and relaxation in your daily life. There will even be a chance to try this out. Begin the New Year with a fresh start!

Current Events & Politics Discussion Group

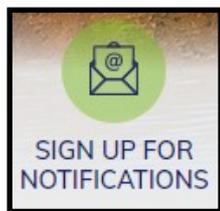
Date/Time: Every Wednesday @ 1:00 pm

Location: Mansfield Public Library, Program Room

No registration required.

Do we live in a democracy? How does the election system work? What is next for our country? How is our government structured? How can we work together? We will be talking about all of this and more at this drop-in, weekly adult discussion led by Warren Murphy, retired teacher of Government and Macroeconomics. All are welcome to attend these discussions as your schedule allows.

Sign Up for Emergency Notifications



Residents are encouraged to sign up for emergency notifications from the Town of Mansfield. The Town uses the system to notify residents of important information during an active emergency, as well as for disaster recovery information.

The Town also gives residents the option to opt-in to receive other urgent information pertaining to local

government operations. We encourage everyone who lives or works in Mansfield to sign up for this important notification system through [our website](#)



Monthly Interviews on WILI-AM Offers Updates on Mansfield News



Local broadcast legend Wayne Norman has a regular morning chat with Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth every month on WILI-AM. The show is a great way to catch up on what's current in Mansfield.

The next shows will be Friday, December 8 and Friday, January 12 live at 7:40 AM.

Mansfield Explores Establishing a Cultural District



The Town of Mansfield, in partnership with the Cultural Coalition, is wrapping up a three-session exploration to gather input about potentially establishing a cultural district in Mansfield.

The final session, *Establishing a Cultural District in Mansfield*, will be held on Wednesday, January 17, 2024 from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. The in-person workshop will take place in the Council

Chambers at the Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building, 4 South Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT. It will focus on stakeholders that might be interested in helping to plan and establish a district here. Participants are asked to register to attend at www.CultureSECT.org



Earlier sessions in November and December have focused on the process and benefits to forming a Cultural District, gathering input and sharing information with the general community as well as the creative arts community

The Cultural Coalition is the Designated Regional

Service Organization for the Northeastern region of CT, and now serves 42 towns in eastern CT. According to the Cultural Coalition, "a Cultural District is a specific area of a city or town identified by the municipality that has a number of cultural facilities, activities and/or assets – both for profit and nonprofit. A walkable, compact area is easy for visitors to recognize. It is a center of cultural activities – artistic and economic. It is a place in your city/town where community members congregate, and visitors may enjoy those places that make a community special." Mansfield Town officials have been meeting with the non-profit Cultural Coalition to discuss the benefits and attributes of a potential cultural district within the community.

More information on cultural districts and the role of the Cultural Coalition in eastern Connecticut can also be found at that website. Program partners with the Cultural Coalition include Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development, CT Humanities, Congressman Joe Courtney's Office (Second Congressional District), and the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut.

Holiday Home Safety: Be Careful of Holiday Decorations and Cooking



The facts* can be sobering in this joyous season of the year.

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 790 home structure fires per year that began with decorations, excluding Christmas trees. These fires caused an annual average of 4 civilian fire deaths, 33 civilian fire injuries and \$14 million in direct property damage.

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in more than two in five home Christmas tree fires. Nearly one in five Christmas tree fires were started by lamps or bulbs. Eight percent were started by candles.

Roughly two of every five home Christmas tree fires started in the living room.

Candle fires peak in December and January with 11 percent of candle fires in each of these months. Year round, one-third (33%) of home decoration fires were started by candles. This jumped to almost half in December when candles started 46% of such fires. Cooking started one-fifth (19%) of decoration fires.



The Mansfield Fire Department urges you to keep your family and home safe this winter. While decorations and Christmas trees help fire to spread quickly, especially in January after trees have become dry, kitchen fires during holiday cooking are also common. In 2021, the three leading dates for home structure fires caused by cooking were: Thanksgiving, Christmas day and Christmas Eve. That's why it's important to know what you can do to help keep your friends and family safe while entertaining for the holidays.

What’s Happening in Town? Don’t miss these *EVENTS!*

Watch for postings on the Town of Mansfield [website](#) . Watch for updates from [the Mansfield Senior Center](#) which hosts many online and in-person activities each month along with the [Mansfield Public Library](#) and the [Mansfield Community Center](#).

Upcoming Municipal Meetings

For the most up-to-date schedule of Town meetings, go to our website at <https://www.mansfieldct.gov/calendar.aspx?CID=32>

We encourage residents to participate in Mansfield’s governance. Many municipal meetings are still being held virtually, but some are fully in-person. Hybrid meeting options (a combination of virtual attendees from remote locations and in-person at a central location) are offered for the Town Council and The Board of Education

Regardless of the meeting format, residents may still submit Public Comment prior to meetings. You may view some meetings as they occur via Live Video Stream on our YouTube channel. Other meetings are recorded so you may review minutes and recordings after the fact.



To find the log-in information for each of these meetings, go to the [Agendas/Minutes](#) page on the town’s website. Look up the name of the committee, and click on the arrow to the left of the title. The agenda for the upcoming meeting will appear. Click on it to open, and it will list who to contact to receive call-in information.

Minutes of past meetings are also posted there.

Please Contact Our Department Leaders for What You Need



Our staff is ready to help answer any questions you have about how to access the services of your community. Please reach out to them by phone or by email for anything you need.

Department	Department Leader	Contact
Animal Control	Noranne Nielsen, Animal Control Officer	860-487-0137 ACO@mansfieldct.org
Assessor	Rochelle Lambert, Assessor	860-429-3311 Assessor@mansfieldct.org
Building and Housing Inspection	Michael Ninteau, Building & Housing Director	860-429-3324 BldgDept@mansfieldct.org
Downtown Partnership	Cynthia van Zelm, Executive Director	860-429-2740 MDP@mansfieldct.org
Eastern Highlands Health District	Robert Miller, M.P.H., R.S., Director of Health	860-429-3325 ehhd@ehhd.org
Emergency Management	Adam Libros, Emergency Management Director	860-429-3328 OEM@MansfieldCT.org
Facilities	Allen Corson, Facilities Director	860-429-3320 facilities@mansfieldct.org
Finance	Amanda Backhaus, Finance Director	860-429-3345 FinanceDept@mansfieldct.org
Fire Marshal	Adam Libros, Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal	860-429-3328 FireMarshal@mansfieldct.org
Fire & Emergency Services	Fred Mitchell, Fire Chief	860-429-3323 firedept@mansfieldct.org EMERGENCY: 911
Housing Authority	Rebecca Fields, Housing Authority Executive Director	860-487-0693 rfields@mansfieldhousingct.org
Shared Services	Maria Capriola, Chief of Shared Services	860-429-3380 HR@MansfieldCT.org
Human Services	Allison Maynard, Director of Human Services	860-429-3315 HumanServ@MansfieldCT.org
Information Technology	Jaime Russell, Information Technology Director	860-429-3384 technology@mansfieldct.org
Mansfield Discovery Depot	Debbie Plourde, Director	(860) 487-0062 MDD@mansfieldct.org
Parks & Recreation/ Mansfield Community Center	Jay O'Keefe, Director	860-429-3015 parks&rec@mansfieldct.org



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Department	Department Leader	Contact
Planning & Development	Jennifer Kaufman, AICP Director	860-429-3330 PlanZoneDept@mansfieldct.org
Public Library	Devon Andrews, Library Director	860-423-2501 MansfieldLibrary@MansfieldCT.org
Public Works	John Carrington, Public Works Director	860-429-3331 PublicWorks@mansfieldct.org
Registrars of Voters	Anne Greineder, Democratic Registrar Vera Ward, Republican Registrar	860-429-3368 860-429-3369 VoterRegistrars@mansfieldct.org
Senior Center	Sarah Taylor, Senior Center Supervisor	860-429-0262 TaylorS@mansfieldct.org
State Police (Resident State Trooper)	Sergeant Tim Merrill, Resident State Trooper Sergeant	860-429-6024 Police@mansfieldct.org
Tax/Revenue Collections	Jerl Casey, Collector of Revenue	860-429-3307 Taxes@mansfieldct.org
Trash and Recycling	Virginia Walton, Recycling Coordinator	860-429-3333 waltonvd@mansfieldct.org
Town Clerk	Sara-Ann Chaine, Town Clerk	860-429-3302 TownClerk@MansfieldCT.org
Town Manager	Ryan Aylesworth, Town Manager	860-429-3336 TownMngr@mansfieldct.org
Youth Services	Katherine J. Bell, Psy.D Youth Services Supervisor	860-429-3319 BellKJ@mansfieldct.org