

## MEMO

**To:** Town Council  
**CC:** Town Employees  
**From:** Ryan J. Aylesworth, Town Manager  
**Date:** September 23, 2024  
**Subject:** **Town Manager's Report**

---

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

- The Town Manager and Chief of Shared Services and Administration (CoSSA) are presently attending the 2024 ICMA annual conference being held in Pittsburgh, PA. Mr. John Carrington, Director of Public Works, will attend the Town Council's regular business meeting this evening in the absence of the Town Manager and CoSSA.
- The 2024 Mansfield Local Government Academy is well underway with two of the 12 sessions having been completed over the last couple of weeks. Session #1 took place on September 12 and focused on Town governance, administration, municipal budgeting, records and elections. Session #2 was held this past Thursday, September 19, and focused on the divisions and functions of the Department of Public Works, including road operations, equipment maintenance, grounds maintenance, solid waste, tree crew, and engineering. Session #3 will take place on September 26 and focus on the operations of Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services. At present, 22 residents have registered for the program this year. Further details are available on the Town Manager's [webpage](#).
- We are happy to report that the large-scale solar field project planned for the Town landfill, which the Council is aware has experienced a number of delays outside our control, is moving forward. The developer, Verogy, has informed the Town that they anticipate Eversource will officially approve the interconnection agreement in the very near future. Additionally, Verogy's engineering firm, Weston & Sampson, has submitted the information needed for the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to complete its required environmental review. Verogy also anticipates finalizing its CT Siting Council (CSC) petition by the end of the month and submitting to CSC in early-October.
- Management continues to negotiate successor collective bargaining agreements with the Public Works and Professional and Technical Employee unions, which are both represented by CSEA.
- Hiring and appointment notes:
  - The Town has extended a conditional offer to the preferred candidate for the newly created Deputy Fire Chief of Operations post.
  - Kim Rontey will be joining the Senior Center team on September 30, 2024 as their program coordinator. Kim began her full-time employment with the Town in 2016, first as a Recreation Coordinator, and most recently as our Member Services Coordinator for the Parks and Recreation Department. Kim originally joined the Parks and Recreation team in 2003 and has over 20 years of experience with the Town. Congratulations to Kim on her new position!
  - Sarah DeLuca will begin work on October 15, 2024 as our new Youth Services Supervisor following the recent departure of Katie Bell. She has worked with children and families for her entire career, the majority of this working in the non-profit sector and is a nationally rostered Child Parent Psychotherapist. Sarah has almost 10 years of experience as a clinical supervisor and years of experience managing grants and community partnerships. She has a Bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies from UConn, and a Master's

degree in Clinical Development Psychology from Tufts University. She is a licensed professional counselor. Welcome Sarah!

- As the Council is aware, in late-August of this year, State Senator Looney (President Pro Tempore) and State Senator Duff (Majority Leader) issued a [public letter](#) to President Maric conveying their desire to see UConn increase its enrollment on the Storrs and Stamford campuses by approximately 15,000 students in the interest of helping the State of Connecticut retain high academic performing individuals that in turn have the potential to become part of the state's workforce upon graduation. Although such a potential expansion of the UConn student body is capable of generating a wide range of beneficial outcomes both locally and at state level, there is also no doubt that that this would impart significant new challenges/strains on both the affordability and availability of housing in Mansfield. To this end, members of the Mansfield's Affordable Housing Committee have been engaging in meetings with Town staff to explore the merits of the Town Council issuing a letter to State Senate leadership expressing these real concerns as well as asking our colleagues in the state legislature to concurrently actively support strategies that would enable the Town to proactively develop more affordable housing to meet anticipated future needs. A draft letter is presently being prepared for future Council consideration.
- *Mansfield Tomorrow POCD Update:* The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) update is underway. Staff is working closely with selected consultant FHI to finalize the scope of work. Planning and Development staff will be in attendance at the Celebrate Mansfield Festival on September 28 to introduce the POCD to the community at the Town of Mansfield exhibit. Additional updates relative to the planning process and ways to get involved will be shared out in the weeks ahead.
- *New Multi-Family Development Regulations:* The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) is making progress on new regulations for multi-family development within the Planned Housing Design District. Although the public hearing has been extended to October 7, 2024, it's expected that further discussion may be tabled until October 21. Significant strides have been made, and public comment on the draft will likely be heard at that meeting.
- *Northwest Mansfield Vision and Strategy Plan:* A Neighborhood Inventory and Existing Conditions Report is now available for review. Follow the progress and get involved by visiting [www.mansfieldtomorrow.org/nw-neighborhood-plan](http://www.mansfieldtomorrow.org/nw-neighborhood-plan).
- The Mansfield Public Library (MPL) Toy Library is now officially live! Following a well-attended ribbon-cutting ceremony this past week, library cardholders can now borrow dozens of toys that support developmental milestones through STEM learning and imaginative play, as well as board games, engineering and circuitry sets, and video games geared towards teens. This new collection is available thanks to the generosity of the Friends of Mansfield Library and Traveling Toys.
- Mansfield Public Library now offers access to digital magazines through "Flipster," a digital magazine platform that allows for easy browsing as well as on-the-go access to your favorite magazines. Whether you're finding a few free minutes between meetings or gearing up for your next family road trip, Flipster is the perfect companion for readers and interests of all ages. [Click here to learn more](#) about how you can access Flipster digital magazines with your Mansfield Library card. Flipster is an additional digital magazine option. Mansfield Library continues to offer digital magazines through Overdrive and the Libby app, as well as having a variety of full-text magazine and newspaper databases for back issues. See all your digital library options for magazines, e-books, and streaming audio and video at <https://mansfieldpubliclibraryct.org/261/Download>. For more information on Flipster, or to download the Android or iOS app, visit <https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/Flipster-Quick-Start-Guide>
- Mansfield Librarians will be visiting the UConn Library on September 24 and 26 to promote Library Card Sign-up Month (signing students up for MPL cards onsite), which has been ongoing throughout the month of September. Librarians will also address Banned Books Week.

- Energy Assistance applications will begin in October for individuals and families who qualify. Residents will be able to find updated application forms on our website as well as hard copies in the Human Services Office (co-located with Mansfield Senior Center).
- Individuals having difficulty paying their electric bills should reach out to our Human Services Department to discuss what options are available for assistance. The Department works year-round with individuals and families to try to find assistance with electric bills.
- With the continuation of the theme of Connection and Wellness, the AARP hosted a Safe Driving Class at the Mansfield Senior Center earlier today (Monday, September 23).
- In Celebration of the 49<sup>th</sup> Birthday for the Mansfield Senior Center, a variety show is being held this Thursday, September 26, beginning at 5:00 PM. A total of 14 Acts will be performing and showcasing their talents! The cost is \$5 and registration for attendance is still open to those who want to attend. Registration can be completed by calling the Senior Center or going [online](#).
- A Vaccination Clinic administered by Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) is being hosted at the Mansfield Senior Center on October 9 from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM. The clinic is open to people of all ages. Information about additional vaccine clinics being administered this season by EHHD can be found here: <http://ehhd.org/content/103/8058/9777/9781/default.aspx>
- The Fall programming administered by our Youth Services Bureau to youth and families is about to launch and fliers have been distributed digitally to Mansfield Public Schools students and families.
- Staff are wrapping up their efforts assimilating substantive comments provided by Town Boards and Committees relative to the draft Mansfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan that was presented to the Town Council earlier this summer. At this time, we anticipate that the final/updated version of the draft plan will be presented to the Council within the next few weeks with the intention of formal adoption taking place in October.
- A celebration and grand opening for the “The Michael Taylor & Family Pickleball Courts” was held this past Thursday, September 19, at the courts behind the Community Center. The weather was beautiful and the event was well-attended as many people joined with Town officials to convey their appreciation for the enormous generosity and support that Mr. Taylor and other key stakeholders in the community contributed to making this exciting recreational asset come to fruition.
- An Open House for the general public was held for the Community School of the Arts at Lenard Hall yesterday (Sunday, September 22).
- Mansfield Parks and Recreation participated in the three local school open houses over the past few weeks, as well as the UConn Wellness Fair, to promote fitness/wellness programs, services, and employment opportunities within the department.
- The next Free Mansfield Day at the Community Center is on Sunday, October 13.
- Mansfield Parks and Recreation welcomes local businesses, organizations, and families to participate in the annual [Trick-A-Trunk](#) at the Halloween Party in Downtown Storrs on Saturday, October 26 from 3:00-5:00 PM in the Downtown area.
- The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual *Celebrate Mansfield Festival* is being held on Saturday, September 28. The Mansfield Downtown Partnership strongly encourages residents and visitors to celebrate the best of Mansfield with music, food, and fun. The Festival will take place from 2:00 PM to 8:00 PM throughout Downtown Storrs. People will be able to try their hand at a variety [activities](#) for all ages, indulge in [tasty treats](#) from local businesses, support local creatives in our [juried craft show](#), and enjoy performances of puppetry, dance, magic, and music! At 6:00 PM, visitors will be able to pick up some dinner from one of our food booths or a Downtown Storrs restaurant and join us on Betsy Paterson Square for our closing concert by award-winning blues and rock artist [Jake Kulak and the Modern Vandals](#) (concert is 6:30-8:00 PM)! Thanks to the generous support of our [sponsors](#), the Celebrate Mansfield Festival is free and open to everyone to attend. Learn more at [downtownstorrsfestival.org](http://downtownstorrsfestival.org).
- *November 2024 Election*: The Town received confirmation that the Secretary of the State’s office formally approved the second early-voting location (UConn Bookstore) that the Town Council authorized during a special meeting held on August 26. Additionally, the Office of the Town Clerk has

been busy with November 2024 Election work. Overseas, 45-day, and 90-Day Military ballots have been issued (total 75 so far). Over 100 applications for absentee ballots have been received and those ballots will be mailed on October 4, 2024. As a reminder, the Office of the Town Clerk prepared a detailed [list of answers to frequently asked questions \(FAQs\) regarding voting options](#) for the November 5, 2024 Election (both early voting and Election Day voting).

- Mansfield Clerks attended the CT Town Clerks Association's (CTCA) Fall Conference last week. Legislative and process updates were provided by the CT Department of Public Health, Connecticut State Library, and Elections Division of the Secretary of the State's Office; addresses given by Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas; and a presentation given by the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA).
- Dog Licensing – the bulk of dog licensing is now complete with only a few renewals and any new dogs remaining until the start of next year's dog licensing season in June. A total of 1354 dogs have been licensed so far this fiscal year.
- *Facilities Management Updates*
  - The new sun shades at the Mansfield Elementary School playground, which represent a modification from the original design, are being installed this week.
  - The Town is continuing to work with Partners in Architecture to finalize the design for the main entrance redesign and security improvements at Mansfield Middle School (MMS).
  - The Town is working with Crosskey Architects to finalize the engineering work for the MMS HVAC upgrades that will be primarily funded via a competitive state grant in combination with local matching funds. Additionally, the Town is working to form the appropriate committee to oversee this project. Interested residents can apply to join this committee [here](#):
- *Public Works/Infrastructure Improvement Updates*
  - The Hunting Lodge Road culvert replacement project is very near completion. Genovesi Construction completed the relocation of the water line, footings for the remaining portion of the crossing, and is scheduled to have the box culvert delivered and installed by crane this Wednesday (weather dependent). When this is completed, the roadway will be brought to grade. Genovesi will then begin construction of the parapet walls for protection of pedestrians and bicyclists on the future multi-use trail and vehicles on the roadway.
  - The Elizabeth Road, Brookside Lane, Hickory Lane and Juniper Lane drainage project is near completion. Multiple crews have been working on Brookside Lane drainage with four basins remaining to be built. Garrity Asphalt Reclaiming, Inc. has reclaimed Brookside Lane, Hickory Lane and Elizabeth Road and are in the process of re-grading the roadway. The paving contractor, All States Material Group, is scheduled to install the binder (first) layer of asphalt later this week.
  - The Town's paving contractor, All States Material Group, installed the top and final layer of pavement on Browns Road (Chatham Drive to Crane Hill Road), and September Road. The Town has completed all the driveway aprons on September Road and crews have started the driveway aprons on Browns Road. When these steps are completed, the Department will backfill road edges with topsoil and will apply grass seed to these areas.
  - Department personnel continue to work with Eversource on the electrical connection and siting of a new utility pole that will enable lighting of the new pickleball courts adjacent to the Mansfield Community Center.
  - VMS Construction is actively installing the replacement water main for CT Water Company on South Eagleville Road.
  - The Grounds Division installed mum plants in the center islands in downtown in time for Celebrate Mansfield and the start of autumn.
- On September 10, personnel from Troop C responded to Dog Lane in the Downtown area for the report of motorcycles operating erratically. Trooper Martinez, who has been working out of the Mansfield Resident Trooper Office on temporary assignment, responded to the area where he located several street bikes, exited his vehicle, and approached one of the street bikes on foot when the

operator attempted to flee. When the motorcycle stalled out, Trooper Martinez and the operator subsequently engaged in a physical altercation as the operator resisted. During the course of the altercation the motorcycle fell over onto Trooper Martinez, enabling the operator to flee on foot. Troopers from Troop C, K-9 teams, and Officers from UConn Police Department immediately attempted to locate the operator with negative results. Fortunately, continued efforts to identify the operator were ultimately successful. Trooper Martinez was transported by Mansfield EMS and evaluated for minor injuries and was subsequently assigned to modified duty for a period to time while he recovers from his injuries. He is expected to return to full duty later this week.

- The Mansfield Resident Troopers Office continues to aggressively issue nuisance ordinance violation tickets –16 to date – with the goal of effectively discouraging disruptive and unruly behavior in residential neighborhoods with large numbers of student rental properties. Proactive patrols of parties and large private gatherings have been ongoing since mid-August. Sergeant King and John Armstrong, Associate Dean of Students & Interim Director, Student Care and Concern, are conducting in-person visits to problem houses.
- The additional Trooper requested in July has not yet been approved by the State Police. This additional staff would bring the office up to 10 Troopers commanded by one Sergeant, for a total of 11 uniformed personnel.
- Production of the new Quint apparatus (aerial pumper) is complete and is now receiving final outfitting by the dealer (North Attleborough, MA). The Town has taken title and received the Bill of Sale, and it is likely the apparatus will be delivered to the Town by late-October or early-November.
- Below is a breakdown of the calls for service the department responded during 9/9/24 to 9/22/24.

<b>Call Type</b>	<b># of calls</b>	<b># of calls which were responded as Mutual Aid</b>
ALS Medical	36	5
BLS Medical	44	6
<b>Total medical</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>11</b>
Fire Alarm	6	
Carbon Monoxide Alarm	3	
Smoke/Odor Investigation	5	
Smoke In Building	1	
Outside Fire	3	
Life Assist	4	
Vehicle Accident	5	
Tree/Wires Down	3	
Service Call	3	
Standby	1	
<b>Total Non medical</b>	<b>34</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>0</b>

