

MEMO

To: Town Council
CC: Town Employees
From: Ryan J. Aylesworth, Town Manager
Date: June 9, 2025
Subject: **Town Manager's Report**

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

- As the Council is aware, shortly after the conclusion of this year's Town Meeting, the Town Clerk received a petition for a budget referendum pursuant to Section C405(B) of the Charter. On June 2, 2025 the Town Clerk certified the petition; a sufficient number of signatures (2% of registered voters) were certified for a budget referendum to proceed as outlined in the Charter. To ensure timeline requirements were met as set forth in the Charter, the Council convened a special meeting on June 4 to set the referendum date for Tuesday, June 17, 2025. If the budget is rejected at the referendum, the Town Council will need to hold a special meeting following the referendum or discuss this matter at its June 23, 2025 regular meeting and adopt a substitute budget on or before June 30, 2025. The legal notice for the budget referendum ran in *The Chronicle* on June 6, 2025. Staff are also distributing notice of the referendum date via an every household surface mailing (postcard), social media, town-wide signage, and our email subscription service. As a reminder, the Town Council set a mill rate of 20.00 for FY 25/26 at its regular meeting on May 28, 2025. As outlined above, in the absence of Council action/direction to set a different mill rate following the referendum, tax bills will be issued for FY 25/26 with a mill rate of 20.00. It is important to note that if the Town Council modifies the FY 25/26 mill rate on or before June 23 – pending the outcome of the June 17 referendum – staff will be able to issue updated tax bills reflecting the correct mill rate without the need to issue refunds or supplemental tax bills.
- Thank you to those who joined Mayor Moran and Town Council members to help raise the flag on Pride month in Mansfield last Monday June 2 at Town Hall. There was strong turnout for the Pride celebration this past Friday evening, June 6. The event was moved inside the Mansfield Community Center (MCC) due to the threat of thunderstorms, but all of the planned programming and activities proceeded forward as planned for the Square. There was a live band from Waldron's Studio 88, a hula hooper who brought many hula hoops to engage the crowd, a face painter, the UConn Dairy Bar truck, a station to custom design your own tie-dye shirts (at no cost) with Mansfield Youth Services, and many folks came to table with an activity/giveaways/information on their organization including:
 - Natchaug Hospital
 - Mansfield Human Rights Commission
 - Q+ (LGBTQ support group)
 - Mansfield Community Center/Parks & Recreation
 - Mansfield Public Library
 - University of Connecticut Professional Employees Association (UCPEA)
 - Mobile Crisis Intervention Services (MCIS) from United Community and Family Services (UCFS)
 - Waldron's Studio 88 (free popcorn!)
 - Mama Bears

- This past Thursday, June 5, the Town Manager and Chief of Shared Services & Administration represented the Town of Mansfield at the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) annual meeting held at the New Britain Museum of American Art. A central focus of the meeting was recognizing and celebrating the longtime leadership of New Britain Mayor Erin Stewart (former Chair of the CRCOG Policy Board), who has served as mayor for 12 years and oversaw a significant local economic “renaissance” and redevelopment/investment in the City during her tenure. Mayor Stewart announced that she won’t be running for reelection this coming November.
- The Town Manager and Chief of Shared Services and Administration will attend the CT Town and City Management Association (CTCMA) annual meeting in Glastonbury on June 13. The Town Manager has served as the Vice President of CTCMA for the past two years and has been nominated to continue serving in this role (pending an affirmative vote on the proposed slate of officers at the upcoming annual meeting) for FY 2026. Areas of focus at the meeting will include use of social media to enhance community engagement, strategies for building staffing capacity, a recap of the most recent state legislative session, and practical considerations for use of artificial intelligence (AI) to foster innovation in municipal operations.
- At its May 12 business meeting, following an in-depth discussion related to the rate program and financial performance of the net-zero Mansfield Elementary School (MES), a member of the Council requested additional analysis to help better understand how much energy/expense was being saved on an annual basis with the new consolidated elementary school vs. if the district was still operating the three former “neighborhood” elementary schools. At the request of the Town Manager, the Director of Finance looked back at energy usage from FY 2021, which was the last year where all three schools were fully operational (i.e., demolition of the former Southeast School took place in FY 2022). Using the energy use from FY 2021, she then calculated the cost of operating the three schools at the Town’s current energy rates. Based on current rates, the cost of operating all three schools today would be estimated at \$315,810. In contrast, looking at the energy costs associated with the new MES building over the past 12 months, the annual expense is \$77,708. At the same time, it is understood that the Town does still have certain energy-related operating expenses associated with the former Goodwin and Vinton school buildings. The Director of Finance completed a calculation of the energy expenses inclusive of those two facilities over the past 12 months as well, and reports that the aggregate energy cost for MES, Goodwin and Vinton is \$146,935. This is approximately 47% of the estimated energy costs the Town would be absorbing if Goodwin, Vinton, and Southeast schools were all still being operated as elementary schools. Additionally, during the Council’s May 12 business meeting there was inquiry about what the Town would be paying if we did not have the Rate 980 at MES. In reviewing the payments the Town has received over the past 12 months, the Director of Finance estimates that we are receiving an annual credit of approximately \$10,000 by participating in the Rate 980 program.
- *Four Corners Pedestrian Safety (The Standard and The Villages):* As a reminder to the Council, with the developer (Landmark Properties) of The Standard at Four Corners expressing its commitment to open in August, and construction of another high-density multi-family housing project called The Villages set to begin soon after on an adjacent parcel, Town officials/staff have been meeting regularly with UConn staff and representatives from both developments to address pedestrian safety along a roughly 750-ft section of CT-195/Storrs Road. Key discussions have focused on ensuring safe pedestrian passage during the construction of the sidewalk along The Villages property. Items under consideration include installation of a temporary path connecting to the existing sidewalk in front of Dunkin’ Donuts to the Standard at Four Corners, and education and outreach to residents of The Standard regarding pedestrian safety. The Town continues to emphasize the importance of coordination between the two sites to minimize disruptions and ensure a safe, walkable environment for all.
- *Northwest Mansfield Vision and Strategy Plan:* The plan was endorsed by the Town Council on May 27, 2025 and officially adopted by the PZC on June 2, 2025. The recommendations from the plan will

be incorporated into the 2025 Mansfield Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The *Full Plan* is available for download [HERE](#).

- *Mansfield Tomorrow Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Update:* The Community Survey has closed! Thank you to all who assisted in getting the word out. We received 1377 responses, which is a robust response rate. The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the POCD is scheduled for June 26, 2025. FHI Studio/IMEG has begun drafting the plan. The Ad Hoc Committee will review chapters over the summer, with a public presentation anticipated in the fall. Residents can stay informed and follow the plan's progress at www.mansfieldtomorrow.org.
- *Mansfield Downtown Partnership Updates:* The Partnership kicked off its 2025 Summer Concerts on the Square season with a fantastic performance by "La Manga" this past Thursday. Strong crowds and beautiful weather made for a wonderful evening on the square with lots of energy and excitement for the rest of the summer concert series. . Next up in the Summer Concert Series:
 - This Thursday - 6/12 - Carrie Ashton – a powerhouse Modern Country/Rock singer
 - Next Thursday - 6/19 - The Vices – a high-energy Rock & Roll band with proud UConn rootsSummer Concerts happen every Thursday in June and July, 6:30–8:00 PM, on Betsy Paterson Square. Bring a chair, invite your friends, and enjoy live music under the summer sky

Friday's Pride celebration, co-sponsored between the Partnership and Mansfield Youth Services, brought people together in a colorful and inclusive event that was shifted to the Mansfield Community Center (MCC) due to the threat of severe weather but was still strongly attended. The weather theme continued as Saturday marked 15 consecutive Saturday's in CT with rain, forcing the postponement of the 20th Annual John Jackman Tour de Mansfield. The Bike Tour was held the following day with dampened yet enthusiastic participants touring through Mansfield on a scenic ride that showcases the natural beauty of our town and reflects the community's shared love of the outdoors. The ride culminated back at MCC with lunches from Gansett Wraps and UConn Dairy Bar Ice Cream!

- *Public Art Celebration:* In anticipation of the installation of the mural at Mansfield Elementary School and the sculpture garden completion at Mansfield Public Library in early June, plans for a celebration of the three Art Walk art pieces is underway. Details about the first of the three installations along Southeast Park, created by June Bisantz, is available on the Town's [Discover Mansfield web page](#).
- *End of School Year:* This is the last full week of school in Mansfield for 2024-25 with promotion ceremonies taking place at MES on June 10 for grade 4 students, on Friday, June 13 for Mansfield Middle School for grade 8 students, and graduation at E.O. Smith High School on Thursday, June 12. The Mansfield Board of Education will honor retirees at their meeting this Thursday, June 12.
- *Mansfield Public Library (MPL) Updates:*
 - MPL wants to invite community members on Saturday, June 21, to its Summer Reading Kickoff Party for adults, teens & kids! Bring your own picnic and have lunch on the library lawn while enjoying games, activities, face painting, music, and more! Register for Summer Reading and get a free book courtesy of the Friends of the Mansfield Library. All ages welcome. No registration required. In the event of rain or extreme temperatures, this event will be held in the Buchanan Auditorium.
 - MPL's June Art Wall exhibit features artwork from over 50 extremely talented students of MES! A reception was held this past Thursday, June 5, for the young artists and their families, serving pizza and snacks. The art can be viewed anytime the library is open, throughout the entire month of June!
 - The Friends of the Mansfield Library will hold a special one-day sale on Saturday, June 14, in the Buchanan Auditorium, featuring adult fiction and children's books, as well as CDs, DVDs, and puzzles & games!
- *Dog Licensing:* Connecticut dog license renewal is due during the month of June. Please go to www.MansfieldCT.gov/dogs for licensing information. Payments may be made online, by mail, or in person at the Town Clerk's Office.

- *Human Services Updates:*
 - The Mansfield Department of Human Services is launching the new Summer Food Distribution Program to support families with children during the summer months, when school meals are unavailable. Running from June 17 to August 21, the program provides free, kid-friendly breakfast and lunch items to families whose children qualify for free or reduced lunch. Food can be accessed weekly via the Summer Fun Bus at designated locations, pick-up at the Human Services office on Maple Road, or home delivery for those with transportation challenges. The department is expanding offerings to those in the community in need, such as seniors, to help improve their access to food as well. More than 120 individuals have signed up for food support over the summer.
 - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness – June 2025: June is PTSD Awareness Month. Over the past year, the Human Services Department has taken several steps to recognize, educate, and engage the community in conversations about PTSD. Below are a few highlights of our efforts:
 - Trauma Screening Integration: We have incorporated trauma-related questions and appropriate PTSD screeners into all department intake processes to better identify and support individuals in need.
 - Educational Pamphlet: Human Services developed an informational pamphlet on PTSD, distributed to offices in the town hall, the library, the senior center and the Human Services office. This pamphlet connects readers to both local resources on the town website and nationally recognized programs that offer research and educational materials online.
 - Staff Training – Trauma-Informed Care: All Human Services staff are participating in a training program titled “*Creating a Culture of Trauma-Informed Care.*” This training covers core concepts such as safety, trustworthiness, and collaboration. It also guides participants in evaluating the department’s culture and environment to align with trauma-informed practices.
 - Clinical Training – “Seeking Safety”: All clinical and case managers have either completed or are in the process of completing “*Seeking Safety*” training. This is a present-focused, evidence-based treatment model designed to help individuals achieve safety from trauma and/or substance use. It emphasizes coping skills and psychoeducation, and can be used with diverse populations including adults, adolescents, and individuals with varying needs.
 - Library Collaboration: In partnership with the library, we have set up a PTSD Awareness Month display featuring books and educational materials on trauma. The display also includes a list of ebooks and audiobooks for all age groups, as well as our new PTSD pamphlet.
 - Social Media Campaign: We launched a social media campaign to share PTSD-related resources and experiences, helping to spread awareness and reduce stigma.
 - Senior Center Discussion: The Senior Center will host a special session titled “*A Conversation on Trauma*” led by Director of Human Services Jessica St. Louis. This event will provide foundational education on trauma and offer an open space for discussion for all who wish to participate.
 - Parents and guardians can keep teens active and engaged this summer with a variety of fun programs being offered through the Teen Center! From adventure park outings and blueberry picking to bowling and more, there's something for everyone. Check out the Youth Services webpage for more information. <https://www.mansfieldct.gov/2231/Teen-Center>
- *Facilities Project Updates:*
 - Historic Town Hall and Administrative Building Repairs: Structural repairs to the historic town hall building have been completed. The work focus has shifted this week to abatement and demolition in order to make way, and make safe the areas where the new ADA-accessible

entrance will be located, and to accommodate a new ADA-compliant restroom. Additionally, some lead paint abatement was performed around the window openings this week to prepare them for receipt of our new windows.

- Air Conditioning (AC) Projects: The Town Hall Split AC system installations have been completed and the installation team has moved to the Mansfield Senior Center this week where AC installations are currently in progress.
- Mansfield Elementary School (MES) Fencing: Plans for proceeding with extended southeast property line fence installation have been finalized and scheduled to begin at the end of the school year (June 16).
- MES Playground: Facilities is also coordinating the fence work with the resurfacing of the rubberized playground surface which is also scheduled to begin following the last day of school (June 16). This work will consist of expanding the rubberized surface area for enhanced accessibility, the addition of an ADA-compliant and inclusive “We Go Round,” and installation of an additional shade structure with seating. The work is anticipated to take the playground out of use for the majority of the summer, and communications have been issued to ensure community members are aware of this and provide information on alternative playscape.
- MES Great Hall Acoustical Improvements: We are expecting to review a few design options for sound mitigation in the MES Great Hall at the School Building Committee’s meeting on Thursday, June 12. All three options are intended to meet the attenuation specifications selected by the SBC at its last meeting. This next selection will focus on appearance and aesthetics.
- Mansfield Middle School (MMS) Main Entrance/Security Improvements: Construction of the redesigned MMS main entrance is progressing as planned. Block wall construction in the front office space has been completed. Additional framed wall construction is in progress this week, and with that the space and layout are really starting to take shape. Exterior work will commence on or near June 19 with the demolition of the existing main entrance canopy.
- MMS HVAC Project: Savmor has placed the equipment order after an equipment submittal review was completed by our engineering team. The initial delivery schedules issued for the equipment are consistent with our expectations and allow Savmor to meet our intended schedule of having all interior work, and equipment installations completed prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year. At this time, there are no concerns with completing the project during the intended summer installation schedule.
- MMS Flooring: Plans have been finalized to recoat approximately 9,000 sq. ft. of flooring on the first floor of MMS with epoxy flooring identical to the work done on the third floor. This work is scheduled to begin on June 18 and conclude prior to the start of summer classes.
- Bicentennial Pond (BCP): Septic perk test pits will be dug at BCP this week as part of our planning and design work towards developing a new bathhouse to better support the site and community. Additionally, pavilion rentals at BCP pick up with the arrival of the warmer weather, so reservations should be placed well in advance.
- Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services Updates:
 - Department personnel continue to work with members of the Mansfield Resident Trooper Office as they conduct more tactical emergency casualty care (TECC) training scenarios. At present, it is anticipated that CT State Police will be running a series of hands-on training sessions on Mondays this summer at Goodwin school, and they are hoping to get upwards of 1,000 troopers through this program. Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services will also have members and an ambulance present for all of these sessions.
 - Members of Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services joined Mansfield Resident State Troopers, UConn Police, and members of the E.O. Smith Unified Sports teams to escort the Special Olympics Torch through Downtown Storrs to Four Corners last Thursday morning, June 5. This leg of the torch run advanced the torch toward opening ceremonies at Southern

Connecticut State University in New Haven for this past weekend's Summer Games competitions.

- Summary of recent Department calls for service (May 24 – June 6, 2025)

Incident Type

Incident Type Group	Incident Type	Count of Incidents
100 - Fire	Building fire	1
300 - Rescue & EMS	EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	61
	Medical Alarm	1
	Motor vehicle accident with injuries	2
	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	4
300 - Rescue & EMS Total		68
400 - Hazardous Condition	Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	1
	Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	1
	Power line down	2
400 - Hazardous Condition Total		4
500 - Service Call	Assist invalid	1
	Service Call, other	2
500 - Service Call Total		3
600 - Good Intent Call	Cancelled en route EMS	1
	Dispatched & canceled en route	1
600 - Good Intent Call Total		2
700 - False Alarm	Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional	1
	Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	1
	Detector activation, no fire - unintentional	1
	False alarm or false call, other	1
700 - False Alarm Total		4
Count of Incidents		82

- **Public Works Updates**
 - The Town's paving contractor paved Kaya Lane and Greenfield Lane on June 3rd. Final restoration of the roads will be completed this week.
 - Roads drainage projects continue to be actively underway. One Public Works crew is presently working on Spring Hill Road, and that project is approximately 80% complete. The crew on Bassetts Bridge Road has two (2) remaining catch basins and roughly 500 feet of drainage pipe to install on the CT-195 end to achieve completion. Reclamation of the road is scheduled to start on June 17
 - Road maintenance on gravel roads has been performed in a timely manner, as needed, following rain events that deteriorated their condition.
 - The roadside mowing program is in full swing.
- The June/July 2025 issue of the Town's e-newsletter, *News & Updates*, was published this past week and can be accessed [here](#).
- The Town Manager's most recent monthly appearance on WILI-AM with Wayne Norman took place on this past Friday, June 6, and can be listened to [here](#).