

MEMO

To: Town Council
CC: Town Employees
From: Ryan J. Aylesworth, Town Manager
Date: July 14, 2025
Subject: **Town Manager's Report**

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

- **FY2025 Year-End Surplus/Fund Balance Estimates:** The Town Council recently requested a brief summary regarding the amount of year-end surplus (i.e., possible contribution to fund balance) that is being estimated for the fiscal year that just ended June 30, 2025 (FY2025). The beginning fund balance (total FY2024) in the General Fund in FY2024 was roughly \$12.95 million. At present, before any anticipated year-end transfers/uses are included in the accounting, the Town's Finance Department estimates that the net change in fund balance (estimated actual revenues less estimated actual expenditures) is approximately \$1.78 million, which results in a fund balance of roughly \$14.73 million at the conclusion of FY2025. After known encumbrances and other committed funds are included in the fiscal projections, the estimated unassigned fund balance in the General Fund is approximately \$14.06 or 19.9% of GAAP basis expenditures (FY2026 budget). As the Council is aware, the intent was to replenish \$993,000 in funding from the Town's Capital Non-recurring (CNR) Fund that was used to supplement the budget for the South Eagleville Road pedestrian safety improvement project. If these funds are transferred to CNR, the revised estimated unassigned fund balance becomes \$13.07 million or 18.2% of the approved FY2026 budget. I want to emphasize that these are preliminary numbers, and the Finance Department continues to work towards finalizing the closeout of FY2025.
- **Mansfield Elementary School Project Costs:** The Town Council recently requested a brief summary regarding the amount of unencumbered funds associated with the Mansfield Elementary School project. The approved bond authorization for this project was approximately \$50.5 million, inclusive of all expenses (i.e., design, engineering, permitting, construction, project management, etc.). The total contracted project cost was approximately \$47.64 million and there are currently roughly \$1.16 million in additional planned costs that were not previously contracted. As such, the total anticipated project cost is approximately \$48.8 million (\$47.64 million + \$1.16 million), which leaves the Town with roughly \$1.7 million in unencumbered contingency funds. This amount accounts for ongoing/pending projects associated with the project (i.e., playground modifications and improvements to the cafeteria acoustics). Active final resolution of unused budgeted funds between the Town's Finance Department and Colliers Project Leaders (Owner's Project Manager) will likely further increase the amount of remaining funds (i.e., if a budget line is confirmed to be complete and all purchase orders are closed, those funds would be released to further increase anticipated final project savings).
- Betsy Gara, Executive Director of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), will provide the Town Council with an update from the most recent legislative session regarding items of interest to small towns/municipalities in the State of Connecticut during the Council's July 14 business meeting. COST's 2025 legislative wrap-up is separately enclosed, and includes a summary of recently adopted legislation impacting municipalities. The most recent session included a wide array of legislative developments spanning numerous topical areas (i.e., education, environment, energy, housing and development, municipal revenues, public safety, and of course the state budget).

- As was previously reported, management is beginning negotiations for a successor collective bargaining agreement with the firefighter's union this month. A non-noticed meeting with the Council will be held at the conclusion of the Council's regular business meeting on July 14 to discuss strategy for collective bargaining with the union.
- During its July 14 business meeting, the Director of the Department of Building and Housing will provide the Council with an overview of the Department's statutory responsibilities and operations, as well as an update on ongoing trends, activities, and priorities of the Department.
- During its July 14 business meeting, the Town Council will be presented with a successor contract (renewal) for the Resident State Trooper program between the Town and State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP). The contract runs from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027 and provides services of nine resident troopers and one resident trooper sergeant for a total of 10 personnel. The state has been unable to fulfill the Town's request for an additional trooper, which would bring us to 11 personnel total. The renewal contract from DESPP is a standard agreement for resident trooper programs statewide. The Town has been advised that the attached contract is a standardized contract utilized with all participating Resident Trooper towns; in the past, the state has indicated that it is not amenable to customizing any provisions of the standard contract. It is expected that the reimbursement rate for participating municipalities in the Resident Trooper Program will be 85% for the two highest paid troopers, and a reimbursement rate of 100% for all remaining assigned troopers. The fringe rate for FY 2025/26 is estimated at 37.24%; we anticipate receiving this percentage from the state on or after July 1, 2025. The Town has budgeted \$1,696,320 for FY 2025/26. This includes our current service levels (10), plus the eleventh funded resident trooper that the state has not been able to provide to Mansfield due to their staffing shortage.
- The Downtown Storrs parking garage located at 33 Royce Circle will be undergoing daily sweeping and pressure washing maintenance Monday, July 21– Wednesday, July 23, 2025 between the hours of 4:00 PM and midnight. The parking garage will remain open while this routine maintenance is underway. However, customers may be redirected within the garage while the work is occurring. We appreciate the understanding and cooperation of garage users during this time.
- *Mansfield Tomorrow Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Update:* The Community Survey has closed and we want to express appreciation to all who assisted in getting the word out. The Town received 1433 responses! The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the POCD is scheduled for July 17, 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. Stay informed and follow the plan's progress at www.mansfieldtomorrow.org.
- *Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) Public Hearings:* At its regular meeting on Monday, July 21, 2025, the PZC will hold a public hearing to receive comments on the application of Ryan McDonald (King Hill Properties, LLC) for modification to approved Special Use Permit with associated Site Plan modifications on property owned by King Hill Properties, LLC and located at 16 King Hill Rd, Assessor Parcel ID# 15.33.6 (PZC File #1384-1). King Hill Properties, LLC (the "Applicant"), owner and operator of Ted's Restaurant and Bar, recently obtained building permits for the installation of a large seasonal tent and a zoning permit to allow temporary outdoor dining. The Applicant now proposes to replace the tent and seasonal dining setup with a permanent addition to the property, providing outdoor patron space that can be used year-round.
- *The Mark Mansfield (formerly "The Hub"):* A formal blasting plan has not yet been submitted to the Town. Once submitted, the Town's Fire Marshal will review it within the context of the office's regulatory scope. In the meantime, UConn and its consultant are assessing the Developer's preliminary blasting plan to identify any issues or concerns related to environmental health and quality. Those findings and any requests for mitigation or monitoring will be shared with the Town.
- *Mansfield Public Library (MPL) Updates:*
 - Stemming from a suggestion from one of our young patrons, MPL recently launched a brand-new program, Big Kids Book Club! At Big Kids Summer Book Club, kids are invited to bring

their own books to talk about with friends, hear recommendations from other kids and librarians, and enjoy healthy snacks (fresh fruit) every Tuesday night from 5:15-6:00 PM.

- On Saturday, July 19, MPL will host a Daylily Dig! The daylilies at the library are plentiful, and we would like to share them! Assorted colors ranging from lemon yellow through deep reds are available, and you can choose the colors and forms you want for your garden, but we need your help to dig them out. Wear your comfy gardening clothes and shoes, and please bring buckets or bags to bring home your new plants.
- Also on Saturday, July 19, MPL will hold a Game and Puzzle Swap from 2:00-4:00 PM in Buchanan Auditorium (and we will be accepting donations of games and puzzles for all ages and abilities that are complete and in good condition during normal library hours from Monday, July 14 - Friday, July 18).
- MPL's Summer Reading Program is in full swing, and patrons of all ages still have plenty of time to sign up and earn prizes for reading! There are many great programs coming up over the next couple of weeks, including Children's programs that feature magicians, puppet shows, and science experiments, weekly Tween/Teen Nights with activities like screening the new Minecraft movie and making "Shark Week Summer Snow Globes," and Adult programs that celebrate 250 years of Jane Austen and Americana Melodies: Patriotic Tunes and Broadway Hits!
- MPL's July Art Wall features a wonderful exhibit called, "Fragments of Identity" by recent E.O. Smith grad, Sylvia Halbrooks! Members of the public are invited to come view the beautiful paintings anytime that the library is open.
- MPL recently added several new museum passes! Passes for the Carousel Museum, Mark Twain House & Museum, Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, and Springfield Museums can now be reserved through the Library's website, or stop in the branch and staff can help reserve the desired pass.
- MPL has a new Library Page, Jackson Garrett, and a new Information Desk Attendant for the Library Express location, Richelle Strimple. Welcome to the team, Jackson and Richelle!
- *Mansfield Parks and Recreation Updates:*
 - Following the Town Council's authorization to adjust membership fees and options at its June 23 meeting, staff have disseminated pertinent information via multiple methods (i.e., email, stamped mail, at the community center, and [online](#)) to Mansfield Community Center (MCC) members regarding changes to membership rates, daily fees (as of August 1), and insurance supported memberships changes (as of January 1, 2026). Feedback from members, users, and residents is being carefully considered during this time, and staff continue to evaluate alternative approaches for ensuring that the facility remains affordable to all regardless of one's financial situation.
 - As we approach the mid-point of summer, 374 children have participated in Camp Mansfield and Specialty Camps over the first three weeks of the [summer camp program](#).
 - General use of [Bicentennial Pond](#) and pavilion rentals has experienced very active use, and rentals of kayaks and lawn games have once again been popular this summer.
 - A month-long celebration of [National Parks and Recreation Month](#) continues with activities and an awareness campaign of our valuable local parks and recreation resources.
 - Planning is actively underway for the Fall 2025 brochure, and staff anticipate fall registration to open on August 14.
 - Staff have been working closely with the Department's registration software provider, RecTrac, regarding use of a new registration app intended to make the registration process faster and more convenient for users. The app has a tentative live date in October.
 - Staff is making progress on the implementation of the master plan, including operations, capital improvement, ADA improvements, and financial sustainability.
 - The next Family Fun Night is July 25, 4:30–7:30 PM. In celebration of National Ice Cream Sundae Day, the Department is partnering with Taste of Mansfield to sponsor this event.

- A Family Fun Day – August 9, 12:00–3:30 PM will be held at Bicentennial Pond.
- The MCC annual maintenance week is August 18-24 and will require closing the facility during this timeframe.
- *Human Services Updates:*
 - On July 2, the annual [request for proposals \(RFP\)](#) regarding funding available to area nonprofits was published by the Town of Mansfield. The Department of Human Services also surface mailed over 40 applications, emailed another 15 to previous recipients, and has updated materials online. There was also a newsflash that was released to inform as many people as possible about the availability of this RFP. Applications are due by end of the business day on July 30.
 - The Summer Fun Bus is off to a strong start! As of July 2, the program – which is a collaboration between the Department of Human Services, Mansfield Public Library, and Mansfield Public Schools – has reached 25 families and more than 100 individuals. Each week, the team brings books, treats, and fun activities to encourage summer reading and community engagement.
 - Every July, the Department recognizes Disability Pride Month. It commemorates the signing of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 1990. This month celebrates the achievements, experiences and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. It also raises awareness about disability rights and promotes inclusion for all. Look on the Mansfield Human Services Facebook page or Instagram for some resources and ways to recognize this month.
 - The Mansfield Senior Center will be temporarily closed for its annual maintenance and cleaning from July 21 – July 25. It will reopen for our normal hours on Monday July 28.
 - A special Senior Summer Camp is planned for Monday, July 21 from 3:30–5:30 PM at Bicentennial Pond. The event will include games, food, and summer fun! To participate, sign up at the Senior Center or call 860-429-0262.
 - Throughout June, the Early Childhood coordinator hosted an Early Childhood Playgroup on Wednesday afternoons at the MCC playground. This program helped connect families with young children to each other and local resources. It provided a welcoming space for parents and caregivers to build community and access supports if needed.
 - Summer youth programs are well underway and running through July and August. These programs aim to promote positive youth development, build peer connections and provide safe and engaging opportunities for Mansfield youth throughout the summer. The Youth Services Division is offering the following programs this year:
 - Mustangs (Middle & High School): A community service program where youth contribute to local businesses and organizations, gaining valuable work experience while giving back to the community.
 - GOAL – Great Outdoor Adventure Learning: Designed to help rising high school freshmen transition successfully into high school. This year, we partnered with Willington and Ashford to foster new connections among incoming Region 19 students.
 - Teen Center Thursdays: A mix of on-site activities and off-site excursions for registered participants, providing teens with structured, engaging experiences each week.
 - Teen Center Drop-in Fridays: A casual, supervised environment where teens can socialize, unwind, and enjoy planned activities with peers.
- *Mansfield Elementary School Water Treatment Project:* ConnecticutWater has indicated to the Department of Facilities Management that installation of the remaining component needed to complete the water treatment system will take place the week of July 21. ConnecticutWater has informed the Town that it expects to receive the outstanding control panel (the fabrication of which has been the primary source for delay in enabling operation of the system that was installed in April) on July 21, and installation of the panel will begin immediately upon receipt. The panel installation will

be followed by a CT Department of Public Health (DPH) inspection by the end of this month. The system will be put into service at the end of July pending a successful inspection by DPH.

- Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services Updates:
 - Unfortunately, the new Quint aerial apparatus (Truck 207) has been experiencing issues with one of its components. More specifically, the ladder tends to “drift”, where it will slowly move off target when extended. The apparatus has now been to the local service center three times, and been out of service for roughly one month each time. This past week, with concurrence from the manufacturer, a third party testing company evaluated the apparatus and was able to fully recreate/document the issue, which they believe is isolated to what is referred to as the “rotation brake.” This has now provided a more definitive component for the service team to examine and ultimately achieve a permanent solution. Although the repair work has all been covered under warranty (no cost to Mansfield), it is of course unacceptable to have the vehicle spend so much time out of service. It is worth noting that when Truck 207 is out of service, a reserve fire engine has been relocated to Station 207. This ensures that the Department can continue to respond effectively to emergencies in our community.
 - Summary of recent Department calls for service (June 29 – July 11, 2025)

Incident Type Group	Incident Type	Count of Incidents
100 - Fire	Building fire	2
300 - Rescue & EMS	Emergency medical service incident, other	1
	EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	46
	Medical Alarm	2
	Medical assist, assist EMS crew	1
	Motor vehicle accident with injuries	3
300 - Rescue & EMS Total		53
400 - Hazardous Condition	Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	1
	Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	1
	Power line down	1
400 - Hazardous Condition Total		3
500 - Service Call	Assist invalid	5
	Lock-out	1
500 - Service Call Total		6
600 - Good Intent Call	Cancelled en route EMS	3
	Good intent call, other	1
600 - Good Intent Call Total		4
700 - False Alarm	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	2
	Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	1
	False alarm or false call, other	1
	Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	1
	Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional	1
700 - False Alarm Total		6
Count of Incidents		74

- *Public Works Updates*
 - The reclamation component of the Bassetts Bridge Road paving project started on June 17 and recently finished with “Section 3” (State Park to Mansfield Hollow Road). The road is being reclaimed and paved in four different sections to allow access to the park and boat ramp. Road closures to through traffic will occur during this time. Final paving is expected by mid-August.
 - A drainage crew started work on Mulberry Road with 17 basins needing to be built and three pipe crossings installed. This project will continue throughout the summer.
 - The drainage crew on Spring Hill Road is 95% complete with planned drainage improvements, and only two pipe road crossings remain to be replaced.
 - The roadside mowing program is in full swing.
 - Personnel continue to replace missing signs, address miscellaneous citizen requests, patch potholes and pick up wood from trees that are the responsibility of the Town.
- The Town Manager’s most recent monthly appearance on WILI-AM with Wayne Norman took place on July 10 and the segment can be accessed here: <https://share.transistor.fm/s/443b446b>
- The August/September issue of the Town’s e-newsletter is presently in production with an anticipated publication date of August 1.