

MEMO

To: Town Council
CC: Town Employees
From: Ryan J. Aylesworth, Town Manager
Date: October 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:

- Fortunately, the Nor'easter storm event that impacted the Mid-Atlantic and southern New England regions this holiday weekend caused relatively limited property damage and/or loss of power in Mansfield. The high wind gusts caused trees to come down on power lines in several locations, leading to many customers temporarily losing power and the need for the Town to close a small number of roads for a short duration of time until the road could be made safely passable. At its worst, there were roughly 250 Eversource customers without power, but power was able to be restored to these customers relatively swiftly.
- The Town Manager and Chief of Shared Services and Administration will be in Tampa, FL, from October 26 (Sunday) through October 29 (Wednesday) attending the ICMA annual conference. An Acting Town Manager will not be named during this time period, however, John Carrington (Director of Public Works) will serve as the Town Manager's proxy during the Town Council's regular business meeting on October 27.
- We are very proud that the Town of Mansfield has been awarded Gold Level Certification from SustainableCT, a statewide initiative that recognizes Connecticut municipalities for implementing practices that make communities more resilient, inclusive, and environmentally responsible. This recognition is a significant milestone in Mansfield's longstanding commitment to sustainability. Over the years, the Town has advanced a wide range of initiatives focused on environmental stewardship, energy efficiency, and community well-being. One of the most notable accomplishments is the opening of the state's first-ever "net zero" new construction public school, Mansfield Elementary School, which produces as much energy as it consumes through innovative design and renewable energy technologies. This achievement reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and community members who have consistently championed sustainable practices and bold ideas. We hope residents will not only be proud of this recognition, but, more importantly, proud of the meaningful impact these efforts will continue to have for generations to come. With Gold Certification, Mansfield joins a select group of leading communities across the state that have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to building a more sustainable and resilient future. The Town will be officially recognized for this achievement at the SustainableCT Annual Awards Ceremony on October 28, 2025. The Town looks forward to continuing this work and identifying new opportunities to further enhance quality of life for all who live, work, and learn in Mansfield.
- The Town Manager's office is in production planning on a series of informational and engaging short videos, designed for social media and website use. The goal is to bring attention to key projects around Town, and to feature the valuable work being performed by our employees in the process.
- This past week, the Town Manager and Chief of Shared Services attended an information session hosted by CT State Police (CSP) on the campus of Eastern Connecticut State University relative to the Resident Trooper Program. Municipal officials from across eastern CT were invited to take part in this forum, which was intended to share information about new resources CSP is in the process of

- making available (including a new comprehensive searchable/user-friendly database with call response data) as well as provide municipal officials an opportunity to pose questions and concerns directly to CT State Police leadership about the Resident Trooper Program in their communities.
- On June 9, 2025, at the request and recommendation of Town management, the Mansfield Town Council authorized staff to submit a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants (SAFER) grant application for the purpose of hiring four (4) additional Firefighters/EMTs. If four additional Firefighter/EMTs were hired, this would ultimately increase present full-time Firefighter/EMT staffing to 28 (presently funded for 24 full-time Firefighter/EMT positions in the adopted FY 2025/26 budget). On September 24, 2025, the Town was notified that it has been awarded the grant. The deadline to accept the grant award is 30 days from receipt of award notification. The goal of SAFER, which is a FEMA-funded grant program, is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response, and operational standards established by the NFPA (NFPA 1710 and/or NFPA 1720). This is a three-year grant award. The grant award begins with the employee dates of hire, and is not based on a fiscal or calendar year. This program has a local match requirement. In years one and two of the grant program, the municipality must contribute 25% of the employee wage and benefits costs. Year three, this increases to 65% of wages and benefits. By year four, the municipality is required to pay 100% of the cost for salaries and benefits associated with the four added staff positions. Following conclusion of Year three, municipalities are expected to retain these positions for at least two additional years. This topic is on the agenda for Council consideration and action at its business meeting this evening.
 - The Town's Finance Department once again received the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2024.
 - Maria Capriola, Chief of Shared Services and Administration, will be joined by Department Heads from Finance, Facilities Management, and IT, to provide the Council with an overview and annual update relative to the operations and priorities of the Shared Services Division.
 - We are now five sessions into this year's installation of the Mansfield Local Government Academy. The last two sessions focused on Shared Services (Finance, IT, Facilities, and Human Resources) and Fire & Emergency Services, respectively. The sixth session, which will be held this Thursday, October 16, will provide a detailed introduction to land use planning and economic development.
 - As the Council is aware, over the last few months, the Town's administration has been actively negotiating the terms of potential successor agreements with two vendors – Optum (RenewActive) and Tivity (Silver Sneakers) – regarding their respective insurance-supported membership (ISM) programs that the Town has participated in for some years. Although the Town Council voted back in June to discontinue these programs effective January 1, 2026 at the recommendation of staff, efforts have been made in the ensuing months to negotiate new terms that would be in the Town's best interest to enable continued participation in the respective ISM programs. As the Council will recall, we fully completed negotiations with Optum (RenewActive) last month and the Council subsequently took action on recommendations provided by staff at its September 22 business meeting. More specifically, based on the newly negotiated terms that were advantageous both with respect to financial sustainability as well as being able to continue offering this benefit to area residents who possess it, the Town Council rescinded its earlier vote to discontinue participation in that particular ISM effective the end of the present calendar year. Over the course of the last few weeks, staff continued negotiations with Tivity (Silver Sneakers) and have subsequently arrived at new terms in a successor agreement (Attachment 1) that we believe are advantageous both in terms of financial sustainability as well as being able to continue offering this benefit to area residents who possess it. This topic is on the agenda for Council consideration and action at its business meeting this evening.
 - Operations and Hiring/Appointment Updates:
 - Beginning Tuesday, November 4, 2025, the hours at the Transfer Station will be changing back to Tuesdays and Saturdays 8:30 am to 4:00 pm and Thursdays noon to 4:00 pm. Swap

Shop hours will be Tuesdays and Saturdays 8:30 am to 3:45 pm and Thursdays noon to 3:45 pm, as long as volunteers are available.

- Jared Schillinger has been hired as a laborer for the DPW grounds crew. His first day is today, October 14. Jared comes to us with private sector experience in stone masonry, landscaping, and snow removal. Welcome Jared!
- *Elections November 4:* The Registrars have been conducting training sessions to prepare for the 2025 election season. The deadline for mail-in and in-person registration is Friday, October 17. Early Voting, held this year in Town Council Chamber and on the second floor of the UConn Bookstore, begins October 20 and continues through November 2. The complete schedule, including weekend and extended hours, is available on the [Registrars' website](#). Communications about Early Voting, the candidates on the ballot, and other elections-related information is being made available to voters.
- *Mansfield Tomorrow Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Update:* Work continues on the Draft Goals, Strategies, and Actions and Plan Narrative. A meeting of the POCD Ad Hoc Committee has been scheduled for this Thursday (October 16) at 9:00 AM. Stay informed and follow the plan's progress at www.mansfieldtomorrow.org.
- *Development Activity:* Staff continue to meet with several property owners across town interested in developing housing. It is anticipated that there will be applications received by the Inland Wetlands Agency and the Planning and Zoning Commission in the near future.
- *Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) Housing Conversations/Regional Housing Strategy:* In an effort to gain insights to help address the critical housing issues facing our region, CRCOG is inviting leaders from the 38-town region to participate in two "Housing Conversations", the second of which is taking place this Thursday, October 16, from 7:00-8:00 PM in the Community Room at Goodwin University (Riverside Drive, East Hartford, CT). Those wishing to attend this week's session can register [online](#). CRCOG has launched a multi-year [Regional Housing Strategy](#) to support municipalities in implementing their Affordable Housing Plans, provide training and resources, and explore regional approaches to housing creation. This is a multi-year endeavor to produce a number of products and tools that can be used by CRCOG and its member communities to tackle housing challenges and tangibly increase housing options in the region.
- *CDBG/Small Cities Grant Administrator Training:* After attending two weeks of training, Jillene Woodmansee, Planner II, and Sandy Forand, Administrative Services Specialist, are officially now Certified Grant Administrators for HUD's CDBG Small Cities Program. Starting January 2025, the Department will oversee this program, which funds housing, infrastructure, economic development, and community services.
- *Mansfield Public Library (MPL) Updates:*
 - MPL recently launched a Design Our Next Library Card contest and will select winning art designs from three age groups (children, teens, and adults). The cards will be available in 2026 and will be one of the many ways that the Library participates in the America 250 and CT 250 celebration. The contest is open to anyone with a Mansfield Public Library card and the library would appreciate any help in spreading the word!
 - Library patrons now have in-library or [remote access](#) to the NYTimes, including News, Cooking, Games, and more!
 - MPL's popular, monthly Tech Savvy class returns on October 17 with an intro to Google Suite!
 - The library will hold its annual Halloween party on Saturday, October 25 and its special Teen Halloween Party on October 16!
 - Devon Andrews has been serving as the Conference Committee Co-chair for the New England Library Association (NELA) and will attend its annual conference in Newport, RI from October 26-28.
- *Mansfield Parks and Recreation Updates:*
 - Park Improvement Projects: Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for planning and design services related to improvements at Southeast Park, Sunny Acres Park, and the Mansfield

Dog Park – including ADA compliance and accessibility upgrades – have been posted. Submissions are due November 13, with follow-up interviews scheduled for December.

- Sunny Acres Tennis/Pickleball Court: Reconditioning work – including cleaning, crack repair, sanding, patching, painting, and relining – was completed by Hinding Courts, Inc. in late-September. The facility has since reopened to the public.
 - Bicentennial Pond Bathhouse: Mansfield Parks and Recreation continues to work collaboratively with multiple Town departments, the Town’s architecture and design firm (PFA Architecture), and pertinent vendors/contractors to develop detailed plans for a new bathhouse at Bicentennial Pond. Related detailed information has been provided to the Town Council for its review and consideration
 - Employee Health and Wellness Fair: In partnership with Human Resources personnel, Mansfield Parks and Recreation successfully hosted the annual Town Employee Health and Wellness Fair on October 9 at the Community Center.
 - Operations and Maintenance Coordination: Staff continues to coordinate closely with the Departments of Public Works and Facilities Management to ensure efficient scheduling and maintenance of parks, athletic fields, and trail systems.
 - Community Events: Mansfield Parks and Recreation is once again organizing a Trick-a-Trunk event as part of the annual Downtown Boo Bash scheduled for October 25, supported by local business sponsors and community volunteers.
 - Mansfield Community Center: The next Free Mansfield Day at the Community Center will be held on November 8.
 - The Nutcracker Production: Approximately 75 children are now participating in rehearsals for the annual Nutcracker performances, scheduled for early-December in the Mansfield Middle School auditorium. Tickets will soon be available.
 - Recreation Software Update: Staff continues to work with the Town’s registration software provider, RecTrac, on development of a new mobile app, expected to launch for public use in late-November or early-December 2025.
 - Matt Barcus Memorial BMX/Skate Park: Arrow Fence has completed installation of new wire fencing, horizontal supports, and anchoring improvements. These upgrades are part of a broader project that also includes installation of a shade structure, addition of a new park element, and resurfacing of existing features. Project completion is anticipated in spring 2026.
- *Human Services Updates:*
 - The Energy Assistance Program officially opened for applications on October 1. As colder weather approaches, we encourage residents in need of support to apply early to ensure timely processing. Appointments can be scheduled by contacting the Human Services Office (860-429-3315).
 - Medicare Open Enrollment begins October 15 and continues through December 7. Staff are available to assist residents in reviewing plan options and making informed decisions. To support this effort, a “Medicare 101” informational session will be held on Tuesday, October 21 at the Mansfield Senior Center. Additionally, enrollment events are scheduled for Wednesday, October 29; Monday, November 17; and Thursday, December 4. Residents interested in attending the presentation or scheduling an enrollment appointment should contact the Senior Center at 860-429-0262.
 - Mansfield Human Service’s *Season of Giving* campaign has officially launched, providing multiple avenues for residents to support local families in need. This includes the well-loved “Sponsor a Family” program and other meaningful opportunities to contribute to households facing financial hardship. To kick off the campaign, the Department is hosting a Comedy Fundraiser this Friday, October 17 at the Elks Lodge in Willimantic. For more details or to purchase tickets, visit the Mansfield Human Services website at: <https://www.mansfieldct.gov/2716/Giving-Donations> and click on the Fundraisers tab. All

proceeds will benefit our financial assistance programs, helping ensure that every Mansfield family has access to essential resources during the holiday season.

- Mansfield Senior Center will host its annual Veterans Day event on Thursday, November 7 to honor veterans. The celebration will include a delicious brunch followed by live entertainment. Veterans and veteran spouses who did not receive an invitation and would like to attend are asked to reach out to the Mansfield Senior Center by October 30 by calling 860-429-0262.
- On Tuesday, November 12, at 6:00 pm, Mansfield Youth Services – in collaboration with Mansfield Middle School (MMS) – will host a special screening of *Screenagers*, a nationally acclaimed documentary exploring the impact of screen time and social media on youth mental health and development. This collaborative event includes participation from surrounding towns and will feature complimentary pizza and childcare for attendees. The evening aims to spark meaningful dialogue among parents, caregivers, and teens. Event details and registration information can be found on the [Youth Services](#) section of the Town website
- Youth Services is working in collaboration with Mansfield Public Schools to plan and implement a school-year community service initiative for students at MMS. The program will connect students with various local service sites, offering hands-on opportunities to give back, build leadership skills, and foster civic engagement. More information will be shared with families and posted online as the program launches.
- On Wednesday, October 23, nationally recognized youth speaker Nathan Harmon will visit MMS for a dynamic assembly focused on resilience, personal responsibility, and making positive choices. Harmon’s message has inspired students across the country, and we’re excited to bring his energy and insight to our community. Families can learn more about his work and the upcoming event through the school and Youth services. Reach out to Youth Services with any questions by email at YSB@mansfieldct.org or phone at 860-429-3319.
- *Mansfield Resident Trooper’s Office (RTO) Updates:* As Council members are aware, during a recent Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services boat training taking place at Mansfield Hollow Lake, firefighter personnel unexpectedly discovered a submerged body, and this event understandably attracted a fair amount of local and regional media attention. There continues to be an ongoing investigation led by CT State Police into both the identity of the deceased as well as the cause of death. There is no related threat to the public. There have been no noteworthy law enforcement matters to report to Council in the time since the last TMR was issued. Personnel in the RTO continue to operate weekend party patrols and the Town’s nuisance ordinance continues to be enforced with citations being issued as appropriate.
- *Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services Updates:*
 - Last week was Fire Prevention Week, and the engaging presentations made by Department personnel received very positive feedback from participants throughout our community.
 - The Town has been accepting applications for both full and part-time Firefighter/EMTs, with the most recent application period closing today (Tuesday, October 14).
 - The newest fire truck, Truck 207 (Quint/aerial pumper apparatus) is currently at the dealership (Greenwood Emergency Vehicles, LLC) being outfitted with new components to replace faulty components from the manufacturer. This work is being covered by warranty, and the manufacturer has agreed to extend the initial one-year warranty for an additional year to provide sufficient time to ensure that the repairs achieve the intended result.
 - Unfortunately, due to ongoing planned changes in reporting software, it is not possible to provide a summary of recent Department calls for service over the last two-week time period (September 27 – October 10, 2025). That said, there were approximately 150 total calls and roughly 75% of these calls were emergency medical calls (generally consistent with what is expected for any given time period).

Facilities Management Updates:

- *Mansfield Middle School (MMS) Main Entrance/Security Improvement Project.* The main entrance project work is progressing with the canopy construction, which is expected to be

completed over the course of the next two weeks. Following the canopy construction, paver installation and additional exterior work will take place throughout the remainder of October into early-November. The arrival of the new/replacement elevator car is still anticipated for mid-December.

- *MMS HVAC Construction Project.* The grant-funded HVAC project at MMS is proceeding in accordance with the previously revised schedule (estimated early-January completion).
- *Mansfield Elementary School (MES) Water Treatment System:* Water system test results continue on a positive trend with all observed concentrations of copper being below actionable limits as set by U.S. EPA. Additional testing and further demonstrating consistent compliance are necessary before rendering an opinion or requesting any revision to the water monitoring plan as set by the CT Department of Public Health.
- *MES Playground:* Completion of the new shade structure to complement MES playground was scheduled for late-September and experienced a delay. The Department is actively working to get the contractor back on site to complete this important aspect of the project.
- *Mansfield Public Library:* The Department is currently working with MPL leadership to schedule installation of new carpeting in Buchanan Auditorium this month. New furniture is also being procured for the library to provide additional seating and movable/nesting tables that can be arranged as desired to support various programs in the auditorium as well.
- *Flag Procedures:* As they are delivered, Department personnel have been installing new lockboxes to secure the flags at all flag pole locations and we anticipate this work to be completed by the end of the week. The flags will be managed by the head custodians in each municipal building, who will have the keys for their respective lockboxes and flags will be flown in accordance with the [Governor's flag status advisory](#).

- *Public Works Updates:*

- The South Eagleville Road (Route 275) Pedestrian Improvements Project has now been underway for just over three months. Over the next two weeks, the sidewalk ramps, concrete sidewalk, and final grading of the new 10' wide multi-use trail is anticipated. A base course of asphalt for the trail is scheduled for the week of October 27. The Contractor will also be completing installation of the underground conduits and foundations that will power decorative sidewalk lights and Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) to improve lighting and safety within the corridor during this same timeframe. Milling and final paving of South Eagleville Road will be completed the week of October 20 with line striping and decorative crosswalks following quickly behind that. The RRFBs are scheduled for delivery and installation on October 27. The largest delay, at this time, is the utility relocations which began in April. Eversource and Frontier have placed new poles within the snow shelf area (between the road and trail) to allow for removal of the old poles that are too close to the multi-use trail. Once all the wires have been restrung on new poles, the old poles can be removed and final pavement of the multi-use trail installed. Over the winter the multi-use trail will be open for the traveling public if the relocations do not occur while weather is conducive for paving.
- The signalization project at the intersection of South Eagleville Road (Route 275) and Separatist Road is under the direction of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT). The project had an original completion date of December 2024, however, CTDOT has informed the Town that State and its contractor encountered procurement issues with the signal mast arms and equipment. The current anticipated date for completion is January 2026, representing a roughly one-year delay in implementation.
- Resurfacing of Spring Hill Road between Storrs Road and Maple Road is 100% complete with all the curb, driveway aprons, and lawns restored.
- Drainage work on Mulberry Road is now complete and paving will be applied this week. Installation of curb and driveway aprons will follow over the next couple weeks as well as backfilling the road edges.

- The Mansfield Center sidewalks resurfacing project is in progress. The eastern side of Storrs Road (Route 195) is ready for paving. The base work on the western side of the road is in progress. Paving should commence in a couple weeks.
- A Department crew is clearing and removing material on the old landfill getting that area ready for the upcoming solar project.
- The October/November issue of the Town's bi-monthly electronic newsletter was published on October 1 and can be accessed [here](#).
- The Town Manager's most recent monthly appearance on WILI-AM with Wayne Norman took place on Friday, October 3 and can be accessed [here](#).