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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth Eager to "Hit the Ground Learning" in Mansfield

December 3, 2020– Newly appointed Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth is on the job in Mansfield this week after completing a successful tenure as Town Manager in Enfield, New Hampshire.

"It is a tremendous honor to have the support of the Town Council and be given the opportunity to help lead such an exceptional community," Mr. Aylesworth says. "I believe in a collaborative leadership approach and building consensus."

"On behalf of the Town Council, I am very pleased to welcome Ryan Aylesworth to Mansfield," says Mayor Antonia Moran. "We believe we have found a person who will bring Mansfield the same quality of leadership that we have come to expect from our town managers over the years. He has big shoes to fill, but I am confident that he will do so."

Mr. Aylesworth expresses that he is eager to help guide and advance major projects in the community such as optimizing Mansfield's federally designated Opportunity Zone and building the new consolidated elementary school. "I plan to hit the ground learning," he says. "Naturally, I come into this position with my own initial thoughts and ideas about how to help move Mansfield forward, but, I look forward to visiting with as many stakeholders as possible to hear their perspectives on where our community should go from here. Mansfield is an important community in the region for a variety of reasons, and the University of Connecticut is obviously central to that. The Town of Mansfield and the University of Connecticut have the opportunity to partner in mutually beneficial ways, and I look forward to working with President Katsouleas and other members of the university's leadership team to identify shared challenges and develop strategies to achieve common goals."



"I recognize that significant challenges facing our community include declines in Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) funding and other forms of state aid, a recent slowdown in commercial growth due to COVID-19, and the challenge of making up revenue gaps from sources other than property taxes. As an example, the Mansfield Community Center, which is generally regarded as one of the most valued resources in Town, has experienced a marked reduction in revenue associated with COVID-19. We don't want to lose any time in developing and implementing strategies to tackle some of these issues, but, at the same time, local officials must ensure we are listening to the residents of the community and being responsive to their evolving needs and desires," he adds.



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Since the Town Council officially announced his hire on September 28, 2020, Mr. Aylesworth has been actively engaging in town affairs by attending many council meetings and other group discussions to expedite his understanding of Mansfield. Additionally, Mr. Aylesworth has been involved in the recruitment and selection processes for multiple key municipal position vacancies, including the position of Fire Chief, which is being vacated by Chief Fran Raiola who is retiring after more than 20 years of distinguished service to the department.

“Mansfield has cultivated a reputation in the region for delivering high quality municipal services through the hard work and dedication of its elected officials, employees and volunteers. I want to help build public trust and confidence in government, and one way to do that is improved outreach and communications,” Mr. Aylesworth stresses. “I believe the Town of Mansfield is fortunate to have a cadre of mission-driven department heads and staff. Along with leading this great team, it is my job to help ensure the Town Council’s vision, policies, priorities and key projects are pursued effectively, and to strengthen and maintain the trust of our residents, visitors, business owners and town leaders.”

Mr. Aylesworth and his wife, Laura, have three young children and are in the process of relocating their family to a new home Mansfield. Laura is a small animal veterinarian who is joining a practice in town.

“This is an ideal community in which to raise a family,” he adds, “particularly given the sterling reputation of the public schools and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities. We are eager to become part of the rural character that has defined Mansfield for generations, and utilize the many other resources and amenities the community has to offer.”

ABOUT RYAN AYLESWORTH

Mr. Aylesworth grew up in western Maine where he developed a deep love of open space, natural resource management, sustainable land use planning, and small-town living. He attended Cornell University where he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in natural resource management. Mr. Aylesworth’s interest in the public policy dimensions of environmental conservation led him to the University of Massachusetts Amherst to obtain a Master of Public Administration. While completing his master’s, he also worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in the agency’s Northeast Regional Office in Hadley, Massachusetts. Shortly after finishing his master’s degree, Mr. Aylesworth enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Minnesota where his studies focused on natural resources policy and governance. While in Minnesota, he continued to work for USFWS as the lead for governmental affairs in the External Affairs Division of the agency’s Midwest Region. There he worked on a wide range of important natural resource policy and outreach initiatives with federal and state lawmakers, agency leaders, conservation and recreational organizations, and many other stakeholders.

After returning to New England, Mr. Aylesworth served as the Executive Director of a small national environmental nonprofit organization before transitioning to a career in local government. He was appointed the first-ever Town Administrator in the Town of Hinsdale, Massachusetts. His service there resulted in substantial improvements in the town’s finances, enhanced municipal service delivery, completion of important public works projects, preparation of the Town’s first vision plan, and acquisition of grant funding. Mr. Aylesworth then served as Town Manager of Enfield, NH for three and a half years. During his time in Enfield, Mr. Aylesworth helped facilitate progress in many areas, including: dramatic improvement in the Town’s finances and capital planning, preparation of detailed strategic plans for all operating departments, completion of a multi-million dollar municipal sewer system extension project (largely funded through federal grants), development of asset management plans and elimination addressing a deferred maintenance backlog, overseeing the reorganization of the Town’s fire department, land acquisition and opening of a 3+ acre community park on the shores of



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Mascoma Lake, and a comprehensive analysis of municipal buildings that led to the redesign and expansion of Enfield's municipal offices and library, as well as the design of a new state-of-the-art public safety facility to house all emergency services functions.

Mr. Aylesworth is presently obtaining his designation as a credentialed Manager through the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

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ABOUT THE TOWN OF MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Mansfield is a vibrant, diverse, and caring community that offers its residents and visitors unique cultural, recreational, and educational opportunities. Known for its excellent public schools, community-wide events, inclusive and efficient government, parks and preserves, protected open spaces, and agriculture, the Town is home to the main campus of the University of Connecticut. Principles of sustainability guide zoning and development, preserving the Town's historic character and providing for economic vitality.

Come and enjoy the beauty and historic traditions that Mansfield has offered for more than 300 years and see why it's your place to grow.

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