

MEMO

To: Town Council
CC: Town Employees
From: Ryan J. Aylesworth, Town Manager
Date: April 12, 2021
Subject: **Town Manager's Report**

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

Departmental Reports

• ***Town Manager & Human Resources:***

- The second installment of the recently launched bimonthly town e-newsletter was published on April 5. A copy of the issue can be found here:
<http://www.mansfieldct.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=701>
- The Town Manager made his most recent guest appearance on the WILI-AM radio program hosted by Wayne Norman on April 8. The segment can be found here:
<https://www.mixcloud.com/wili1400/4821-mansfield-town-manager-ryan-aylesworth/>
- The Town Manager wishes to extend his thanks to Department Heads and members of the Finance Department team for their hard work and dedication in assisting with the preparation of the FY2022 proposed budget. Likewise, the thoughtful exchange of ideas that has taken place thus far during the initial two budget meetings with the Town Council is proving to provide beneficial feedback that staff can in turn incorporate to help strengthen this year's operating and capital budgets. The overarching goal is of course to finalize an appropriations plan that maintains the highest quality municipal services and needed projects at a cost that is fiscally prudent for taxpayers.
- This past week the Town Manager engaged in a follow-up meeting with the Executive Director of the RiseUP Group to discuss next steps with the MLK Mural project. At this time, we believe that the Mansfield Human Rights Commission is going to take a leading role on facilitating this project, with support from pertinent stakeholders from within and outside our community. The goal is to have the mural fully complete by early-fall 2021 so that a grand opening ceremony can be organized in concert with Indigenous Peoples' Day 2021.
- In late-March, Town officials received a mass communications from Congressman Courtney's Office encouraging local government entities and nongovernmental organizations to take advantage of congressional earmark funding opportunities. The Town subsequently submitted two requests for funding, which are detailed in a separately enclosed agenda item summary included in the information packet for the Council's April 12 business meeting.
- On April 6, 2021, Governor Lamont issued a new executive order (EO 10E) that has implications for both the annual Town Meeting and the budget adoption process more broadly. More specifically, subsection (h) permits municipalities, through the Town Council, to modify/alter budget dates to extend the process through June 30. A vote to modify any dates (not all have to be modified) has to be taken by May 20. The EO does not change the requirement for a town meeting. The Town Manager has prepared formal recommendations relative to a potential amended schedule for Town Council adoption of the FY 2021/22 budget

as well as Town Meeting. These recommendations have been included in the information packet for the Council's April 12 business meeting.

- **Mansfield Public Schools (MPS) & Region 19:**
 - Thanks to the efforts of Eastern Highlands Health District, the second dose COVID-19 vaccine clinic for MPS staff was held this past Friday with more than 220 people receiving vaccination.
 - As was previously reported, the Town officially issued the invitation to bid for the construction of the new elementary school on March 2. General contractors interested in bidding were asked to take part in a “pre-bid” meeting on March 16. Bids are due to be submitted by tomorrow (April 13) and will be revealed in a public virtual session at 3:00 PM. Additional information can be found here: <http://www.mansfieldct.gov/bids.aspx?bidID=130>

- **Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD):**
 - The EHHD conducted four vaccination clinics this past week, which resulted in 670 doses being administered. To date, the EHHD has hosted 75 clinics with a total of 7,500 doses being administered. Approximately 40% of the EHHD population has received first dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
 - UConn Health Mass Vax site on the Storrs Campus is open. The public can schedule appointments for this clinic at <https://mychart.uconn.edu/mychart/Signup>
 - Follow this link for more information on the Phases of the vaccine rollout: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Vaccination---Phases>
 - The weekly case count on the chart below indicates a two-week upward trend. Follow this link for more town level data: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Data-Tracker>

TOWN LEVEL DATA

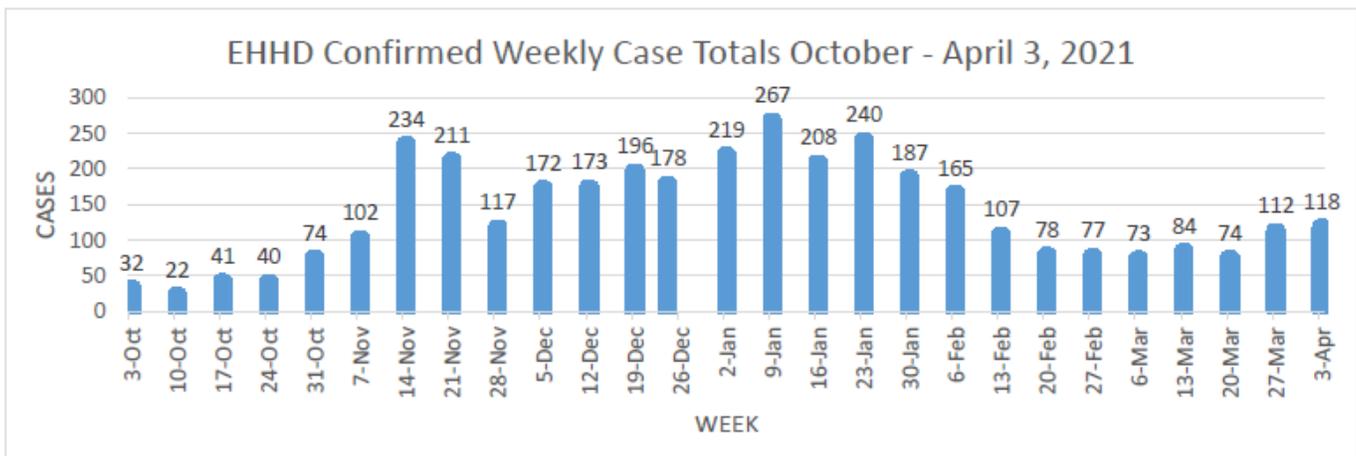
TOWN	Andover	Ashford	Bolton	Chaplin	Columbia	Coventry	Mansfield	Non-student	Scotland ++	Tolland	Willington	EHHD Totals
Cumulative Cases	170	231	260	113	320	683	1,415		40	895	249	4,376
Change from last week	4	2	9	7	14	17	42	(8)	0	22	1	118
Two week change	7	4	14	7	17	37	78	(22)	0	59	7	230
Deaths	3	4	5	0	5	8	27	(27)	2	18	3	75

CONNECTICUT TOTALS (April 8, 2021)

Number of cumulative cases	Change from last week	Change from two weeks	Current hospitalizations	Two week change in hospitalizations	Deaths
319,779	7,311	16,268	515	81	7,940

EHHD residents who received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine											
TOWN	Andover	Ashford	Bolton	Chaplin	Columbia	Coventry	Mansfield	Scotland ++	Tolland	Willington	EHHD Totals
Estimated pop	3,236	4,255	4,884	2,239	5,379	12,407	25,487	1,672	14,618	5,864	80,041
Received 1 st dose COVID vaccine	1,456	1,803	2,259	906	2,622	5,398	5,845	631	6,945	2,206	30,071

*The Town of Mansfield's population is comprised roughly 55%-60% of UConn students, which will substantially reduce the overall percentage of Town residents who have received a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.



- **Planning & Development**

- **Affordable Housing Plan.** If you haven't already, please take five minutes to complete the survey on Mansfield's affordable housing needs. The survey data will be used to inform the development of an Affordable Housing Plan for the Town. Survey responses must be received by Wednesday, April 14th to be considered. The survey is available on-line at <https://MansfieldCT.gov/AffordableHousingPlan>.
- **CTDEEP Grant Award.** The Towns of Mansfield and Coventry have received a \$6,940 grant from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to develop a long-term strategy and educational campaign for Fanwort management in Eagleville Lake.
- **Helping Hand.** Applications are currently being accepted for childcare and food assistance for residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please call 860.429.3330 or email HelpingHand@MansfieldCT.org with any questions.
- **Pending Special Permit Applications.** Information on pending special permit applications is now available on the Planning Department's webpage at: <https://www.mansfieldct.gov/2123/Proposed-Projects>. Upcoming projects include a 358-unit multi-family residential development on Middle Turnpike between CVS and Key Bank at the Four Corners (public hearing scheduled for April 19, 2021) and an Agbotic greenhouse project at 438 Browns Road (public hearing scheduled for May 3, 2021).

- **Downtown Partnership, Economic Development & Marketing:**
Mansfield Downtown Partnership

- April showers bring....poetry to Downtown Storrs! We invite you to celebrate National Poetry Month with a *Poem Stroll*, *Sidewalk Stanzas*, and *Pop-Up Poetry*. While this is Mansfield's first time participating, it's the 25th year for celebrating poetry in April. The Academy of American

Poets began National Poetry Month in 1996 to bring attention to the role poets and poetry have played in our culture. Please visit downtownstorrs.org/poetry for more information.

- The Mansfield Downtown Partnership continues to support all Mansfield businesses by communicating guidance from the state for safe operations, funding and business development opportunities, and federal news and updates – including updated information on capacity limits and operating guidelines that went into effect March 19 - through email blasts and our website (please see mansfieldmdp.org/reopen).

- **Human Services:**

- We have 10 households signed up for CSA shares through our Mansfield Farms to Families Program, a collaboration between Human Services and a Taste of Mansfield grant-funded by the Department of Agriculture, We have five more incentivized CSA shares to offer families who are eligible. Applications are still being accepted, and are available through [the website](#). Interviews will be conducted for a project coordinator for this program to continue with the next phase of offering food assistance to qualified families.
- With a donation from Stix ‘n Stones and volunteer labor from Senior Center members and University of Connecticut students, gardens at the Senior Center were enhanced on April 3. The work session was coordinated by staff member and Master Gardener Jessica Duers.
- The Senior Center will begin to offer weekly drive-through meals in May.
- Mansfield Youth Services is taking applications for summer camperships and staff is in the process of developing summer programming in coordination with the Mansfield Board of Education, Mansfield Public Library and Mansfield Parks & Recreation.

- **Parks & Recreation:**

- The Mansfield Community Center has a two-week free trial this spring thru June 30. Designed to try to engage new and past members, the two-week free trial is for anyone who has not participated in a free trial or active membership since June 22, 2020.
- The Mansfield Community Center continues to serve as a host location for CT COVID-19 vaccines (presently eligible residents 16 years of age and older) three days per week (Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday) and will continue to do so until at least early-June. Clinics are provided by the Eastern Highlands Health District.

- **Library:**

- Over the past year, library staff has been updating its preschool story kit collection. Now completed, these 60 kits have been refreshed with a particular emphasis on adding diversity to the titles. Librarians have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content by diverse authors that meets the needs, interests, and abilities of all the people the library serves. Each story kit consists of eight or more picture books along with toys, puzzles, and puppets on topics that kids love, including the alphabet, bedtime, cookies, owls, seasons, trucks, and more.
- The Library opened to the public (albeit under modified operations) April 5 with its hours being as follows: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday 10 - 3; Tuesday, Thursday 2 – 7. For more details on services the Library continues to offer, please contact us them at 860-423-2501 or MansfieldLibrary@MansfieldCT.org

- **Town Clerk:**

- No formal updates at this time.

- **Facilities:**

- Over the past few weeks, the Facilities Department has been working diligently to remediate issues identified by CT-OSHA during the agency’s late-2020 unannounced site visit. This includes items such as installing new “EXIT” lights, adding power outlets, and installing a new eye wash station. Additionally, the Department is in the process of scheduling an OSHA training for staff next week and working safety data sheet (SDS) updates.
- Facilities Department personnel will be replacing two air handlers for the Mansfield Middle School auditorium during the school’s April break.
- The Town recently published a request for qualifications (RFQ) relative to a facilities use and program study to address present/future needs. A copy of the RFQ can be found here: <http://www.mansfieldct.gov/bids.aspx?bidID=136>
- The Facilities Department is currently working with appropriate parties to finalize and publish a request for proposals (RFP) relative to bids on Middle School roof replacement and roof-mounted solar array. It is presently anticipated that this project will officially go out to bid on April 14 with a submission deadline of May 6.

- **Police**

- The Mansfield Resident Trooper’s Office (RTO) reports that there has not been any noteworthy law enforcement activity over the past week. On April 2, Troopers from the RTO responded to a large party complaint at 485 Storrs Road at approximately midnight. Over 125+ students were observed inside the house with no precautions in place for mask-wearing and/or social distancing. The renters were issued Executive Order tickets and two guests were also issued Executive Order violations for attending. There was one underage severely intoxicated guest who was transported by ambulance to Windham Hospital. It took Troopers over 90 minutes to clear out the house and ensure the guests left the area with safe rides.

- **Fire Department:**

- Below is a brief synopsis of Fire Dept. responses for the period March 22 – April 11, 2021.

Type		# Mutual Aid Out of Town
ALS	19	2
BLS	51	6
Total Medical	70	8
Tree on Wires Down/Burning	4	
Structure Fire	2	1
Fire Alarm	3	
Brush Fire	4	
CO Detector Activation	1	
Chimney Fire	1	
Outside Fire	4	
HAZ MAT Gas Leak	1	1
Service Call	6	
Vehicle Accident	5	
Total Other	31	2
Grand Total	101	10

- **Public Works:**

- Since the last report, the Department in-house crew removed 26 trees and pruned two.

- Among the members of the Operations Division, 15 staff members received and were certified in first aid training. The Human Resource Department coordinated the training. Members of the Parks and Recreation Department performed the instruction.
- Annual street sweeping of all Town-owned paved roads is underway and is currently 35% complete.
- Drainage work has begun on Chaffeeville Road between Mulberry and Gurleyville Roads. For the next 6-7 weeks, expect daily road closures 7:00am-2:00pm. DPW has publicized this closure each week through social media, the website and email.
- Gravel road maintenance (grading) is in progress for the next couple of weeks. Once completed, that work crew will transition to drainage work on the portion of Mount Hope Road that is west of CT-89.
- The Swap Shop at the Transfer Station is slated to reopen Saturday, April 17, 2021. The swap shop will resume its Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hours. Please mask up and practice social distancing when visiting the swap shop. In order not to overwhelm the space, the Town asks residents to limit their donations to two boxes per visit. The Town is also asking residents to limit their visit to 15 minutes.
- A Pollinator Pathway collaboration between the Mansfield Sustainability Committee and groups from Chaplin and Windham is working to promote the health of pollinators. This spring the Committee is distributing sunflower and zinnia seeds along with information about the peril facing pollinators and actions that can be taken to reverse this. A teacher at Oak Grove Montessori School will be teaching students about pollinators by starting the flowers to give to families. They also plan on planting these seeds in their school garden. The Mansfield Public Library will be making these seeds and the brochures available through their seed swap. Seeds will be distributed through the Mansfield Public Schools' resource fairs and Youth Services' Earth Day Book Buddies program. The local Girl Scouts will be learning about pollinators and plants seeds.
- The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) is working on various ways to increase participation in residential composting through a compost communication campaign. There is a pre-order compost bin/rain barrel sale happening now until June 3. On June 12, the ordered items will be available for pickup at the transfer station from 9 am to 1 pm. Testimonials from residents who benefit by composting are being posted on the Mansfield composting webpage and sent out through social media. Staff will participate in the school resource fairs offered at Holinko Estates and Meadowbrook Park. SWAC members are in the process of collecting used chicken wire and posts dropped at the transfer station in order to assemble free compost kits for residents. Staff is in discussion with the Mansfield Housing Authority about starting a compost pilot program at Holinko Estates.