

## MEMO

**To:** Town Council  
**CC:** Town Employees  
**From:** Ryan J. Aylesworth, Town Manager  
**Date:** May 24, 2021  
**Subject:** **Town Manager's Report**

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

### **Departmental Reports**

- ***Town Manager, Human Resources & Communications:***
  - Plans for the next phase of reopening Town Hall and other municipal facilities were officially implemented this past week and went into effect today, May 24. After previously only being open to the public by appointment, Town Hall is now will fully open for service to the public (with appropriate use of face masks, social distancing, and other public health practices firmly in place). Additional details relative to reopening were articulated in a memo previously circulated to Town employees and the Council.
  - Following the most recent Town Council budget review workshop (April 22) that focused on "flagged items," the Town Manager and staff developed a revised set of FY 2021/22 budget recommendations that reflect adjustments both to revenue and expenditures needed to achieve a level mill rate (\$31.38 per \$1,000 in assessed value) as well as other objectives the Council conveyed during last month's budget workshops. A revised budget was presented to the Council during a budget workshop on May 17, with the goal of the Council formally adopting the FY 2021/22 budget on May 24.
  - After a number of internal discussions and meeting with stakeholders from E.O. Smith Regional High School regarding preparations for the June 15 annual Town Meeting, staff have furnished recommendations to shift the venue from the high school to Mansfield Middle School (see separately enclosed agenda item summary).
  - Plans are in place for the Town of Mansfield to host the Memorial Day Ceremony at the New Mansfield Center Cemetery on Monday, May 31 at 9:30 AM. Invitations have been extended to local veterans. It was determined that the traditional Memorial Day Parade not be held since our school bands would not be available to perform due to COVID-19 restrictions. (see attached flyer) We hope that the community will join us to honor our fallen service members.
  - The Town recently was informed that U.S. Senator Blumenthal's office is soliciting proposals for federal earmark funding, much in the same way that Congressman Courtney's office made such solicitations in March/April. The Council will recall that the Town recently received word from Congressman Courtney's office that it's request for federal earmark funding to construct new sidewalks that would allow pedestrians to safely navigate CT-195 (Storrs Road) from the Four Corners to Towers Road was selected to move on for consideration at the national level. Staff are now making plans to resubmit the other earmark funding application (\$800,000) that pertains to intersection improvements at CT-195 and CT-89 (Warrenville Road) as that project did not get selected by Congressman Courtney's office but might be favorably reviewed by

Senator Blumenthal's office. Earmark funding requests must be submitted to Senator Blumenthal's office by early-June.

- The third installment of the recently launched bimonthly town e-newsletter is in the process of being developed with an anticipated publication date of June 1.
- In an effort to improve the town's website content and design for users, departments have evaluated the website and their own pages as input to the Town Manager's Office. A committee from several departments has made a recommendation for how to enhance the municipal events calendar portion of the website. The intent is that residents and local organizations will be able to input their local events into the Town's calendar as a way to serve the community and promote activities for visitors.
- June 1 marks the start of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month (LGBT Pride Month), celebrated annually each June to mark the occurrence of the 1969 Stonewall Riots incident in New York City. Pride Month focuses local and national efforts to achieve equal justice and equal opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) Americans. The Youth Service Bureau, Senior Center, and the Mansfield Public Library will have free miniature Progress Pride flags available for residents to pick and display to celebrate Pride and inclusivity in the Town of Mansfield. Flags will be available at Town Hall (Little Lending Library/E.O. Smith side entrance), the Senior Center, and the library's curbside pick-up area starting June first while supplies last. The Senior Center and Mansfield Public Library will also be flying the Progress Pride flag during the month of June.

- ***Mansfield Public Schools (MPS) & Region 19:***

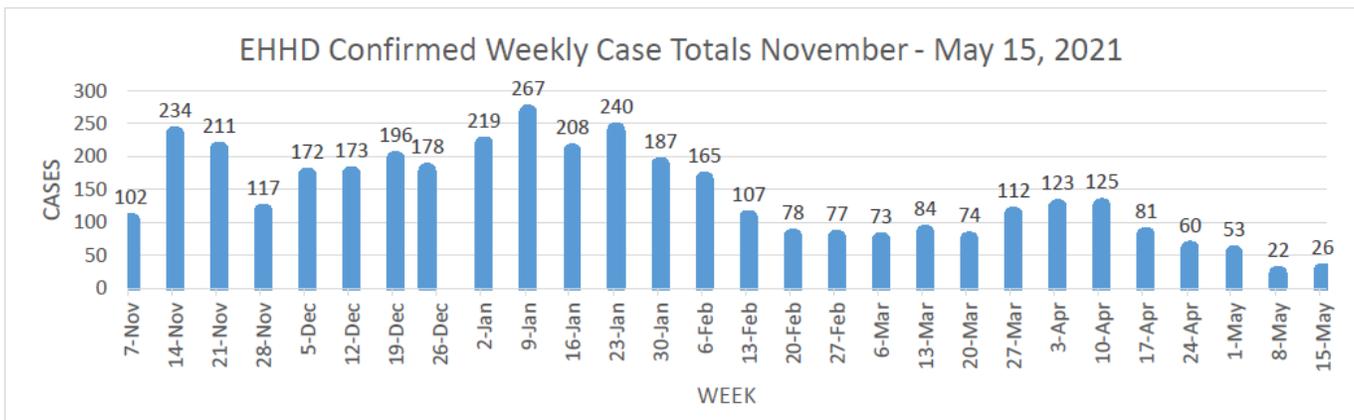
- The School Building Committee is making plans for a groundbreaking ceremony for the new elementary school. Outreach to key state dignitaries will help determine a date, targeted for mid-June, after which invitations will be issued. The State of Connecticut project sign has been posted in the front of Southeast School, and site preparations are beginning.

- ***Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD):***

- The EHHD conducted four vaccination clinics this week. 125 doses were administered for the week. To date, the EHHD has hosted 96 *clinics administering 9,810 doses*. It should be noted, however, that the Town of Mansfield is discontinuing the Mansfield Middle School Testing site at the end of this month based on steep declines in utilization of these services. *May 26<sup>th</sup> will be the last day of specimen collection.*
- In partnership with UConn Health, Pfizer vaccine clinics for 12 to 15 year olds have been scheduled for May 25 and June 1 at Tolland High School and Coventry High School, respectively.
- UConn Health Mass Vax site on the Storrs Campus is open. This site is now administering the Pfizer vaccine to youth who are 12+ years of age. They are now accepting walk-ins.
- The weekly case count on the below chart indicates downward trend in the past five weeks. Follow this link for 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	183	246	285	132	342	750	1,518		42	955	279	<b>4,732</b>
Change from last week	0	1	3	1	1	8	0	(0)	0	6	6	<b>26</b>
Two week change	1	2	5	3	3	12	5	(5)	0	8	9	<b>48</b>
Deaths	3	4	5	0	6	8	27	(27)	2	19	3	<b>77</b>



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 <sup>st</sup> dose COVID vaccine	1,767	2,153	2,787	1,028	3,033	6,633	7,707	750	8,455	2,823	37,136

\*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**

- **Planning & Zoning Commission/Inland Wetlands Agency:** There are presently a number of "higher profile" proposed new development projects at various stages of review by the Planning & Zoning Commission and/or the Inland Wetlands Agency within the Town of Mansfield. To help stakeholders and the general public access related information of interest, a "Story Map" of development activity is now available at [www.MansfieldCT.gov/DevelopmentActivity](http://www.MansfieldCT.gov/DevelopmentActivity).

- **Helping Hand Program:** With summer approaching, we know that many families are looking to summer camps to provide child care for school age children. The Helping Hand program can assist families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with registration costs for summer camps licensed by the State of Connecticut as a childcare provider, as well as those who are exempt from licensing. To determine whether a summer camp is eligible, please visit: [211childcare.org](http://211childcare.org). Families interested in applying for assistance are encouraged to contact the Department of Planning and Development at 860.429.3330 or email [HelpingHand@MansfieldCT.org](mailto:HelpingHand@MansfieldCT.org).
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** If your house is in need of repair, the Planning Department may be able to help. Mansfield's Housing Rehabilitation Program provides assistance with home repairs and improvements to low and moderate income households. We provide a 0% interest loan of up to \$35,000 with no monthly payments; the loan is repaid upon sale or refinancing. The Town will prepare a scope of work for your project, obtain construction bids, and manage the construction process and contractor payments. Residents can learn more by calling 860.429.3330.
- ***Downtown Partnership, Economic Development & Marketing:***
  - Along with the Community Center, the Partnership is getting ready to host the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual John E. Jackman Tour de Mansfield on Saturday, June 5. Riders will explore Mansfield's scenic roads and historic villages along their choice of two routes. A few changes are in place for health and safety this year: Pre-registration is required (deadline to register is Thursday, May 27), and participants will select a start time at registration. Find more information, preview the route, and register at [mansfieldct.gov/biketour](http://mansfieldct.gov/biketour).
  - In celebration of the state's reopening, several Mansfield restaurants are participating in "[CT Drinks on Us!](#)" Now through May 31, vaccinated individuals can receive a free drink with their purchase of food (limit one drink per person; proof of vaccination required) at these participating restaurants:
    - [Applebee's](#) - 93 Storrs Road (Route 195)
    - [Blaze Pizza](#) - In Downtown Storrs: 12 Royce Circle
    - [Hops 44](#) - At Four Corners: 695 Middle Turnpike (Route 44)
    - [Kathmandu Kitchen & Bar](#) - In Downtown Storrs: 33 Wilbur Cross Way
    - [Little Aladdin](#) - In Downtown Storrs: 1232 Storrs Road
    - [MOOYAH Burgers](#) - In Downtown Storrs: 1 Dog Lane
  - We continue 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 last week's announcement of the lifting of most business operating restrictions. The state lifted all remaining Sector Rules for Reopening, with certain exceptions related to mask-wearing:
    - Unvaccinated individuals must continue to wear masks indoors.
    - Masks are required by all in:
      - Healthcare facilities (hospitals, medical offices, etc.)
      - Public and private transit (airports, taxis, trains, buses, etc.)
      - Correctional facilities
      - Schools
      - Childcare
    - Businesses, state and local government offices, and events may choose to require universal masking.
    - Vaccinated individuals are not required to wear masks, unless otherwise noted above.
    - Masks are not required outdoors.

- Businesses may choose to continue to limit capacity or maintain social distancing. The Partnership encourages residents and visitors to be aware and respectful of the rules in place at businesses they visit.

- **Human Services:**

- Youth Services Bureau (YSB) staff participated in the second Spring Resource Fair with Mansfield BOE on May 17.
- YSB helped Parks and Recreation apply for the Summer Program Expansion Grant for Camp Mansfield. Award notifications are scheduled to go out on May 24 (today).
- YSB will partner with the Mansfield Public Library and Mansfield Senior Center to make 500 Progress Pride miniature flags available to residents starting June 1.
- Sarah Dufresne completed and submitted the School Readiness Grant application to the CT Office of Early Childhood – it includes an additional School Readiness site at Mount Hope Montessori School whose submission was approved by the School Readiness Council at the May Mansfield Advocates for Children meeting.
- The Senior Center re-opened as of May 3. The building is now open during their normal business hours, from 8:30am-4:30pm Monday through Friday. Throughout the month of May, the Center has been offering a variety of small, in-person groups, one-to-one services and fitness classes each week; they will continue to offer popular online programming as well to ensure that those who cannot or prefer not to come in-person yet are still able to remain connected. Center staff have increased the frequency of drive through pick-up luncheons to once per week, and have an incredible lineup of delicious meals this month. Staff also continue to provide essential services, including transportation for errands and medical appointments, outreach services, meal delivery and wellness calls. All of the pertinent details around Center services, programming, and COVID-safety procedures can be found on the Senior Center website and in the newsletter (*Senior Sparks*). Anyone with any questions should feel free to stop by or give them a call at 860-429-0262.
- As was previously reported, the Senior Center now has a Technology Loan program that was funded through a \$2,500 grant from the State Department on Aging. Two iPads and two Chromebooks are available for loan through the Center for seniors to access online resources from home. The Center is also offering technology assistance to anyone who is interested in using the devices, but isn't sure how. Just call the Center for more information or to make your appointment for one-to-one assistance with the Center's volunteer technology expert, Bob.
- CHOICES Medicare counseling is again available through the Center. Certified CHOICES volunteer Bob Bernstein is available by appointment to provide assistance and answer any questions you may have about Medicare. Please call the Senior Center (860-429-0262) to schedule an appointment for that as well.

- **Parks & Recreation:**

- Updated indoor and outdoor masking and other COVID-19 rules for all Parks and Recreation services were updated on May 21 with the guidance of the CDC, State, and local public health professionals. One significant change is that individuals who have been vaccinated for COVID-19 will be permitted not to wear a mask indoors. Social distancing practices are still in place at the center. We will continuously monitor the change and be in regular communication with EHHD.
- Closure of Southeast Park Field C (rear field bordering to Mansfield Hollow State Park property line) will be closed beginning Monday, May 24 throughout the new elementary school project period. Access to Mansfield Hollow State Park trail heads will be available, but parking will only be permitted along route 89 side of the park.
- The Mansfield Community Center continues to serve as a host site for CT COVID-19 vaccines through May 26. Clinics are provided by Eastern Highlands Health District.

- **Library:**
  - The Library Express branch of the Mansfield Public Library, located in the Nash Zimmer Transportation Center, will reopen to the public on June 21, 2021. Initial hours will be Monday through Friday, 10:00AM-2:00PM.
  
- **Town Clerk:**
  - *Dog Licensing* - Connecticut dog license renewal is due during the month of June. Residents are encouraged to use a contactless way to license dogs, if possible. See our [dog license webpage](#) for more information on contactless licensing! The State considers any dog license issued after June to be late and charges a \$1/month late fee. Late licensers can also receive a \$75 State ticket issued by the Animal Control Officer. The law requires license tags be worn on the dog's collar which is also very helpful should a dog go astray. Each year, the Clerks happily assist with reuniting licensed fur babies with their families by looking up the license tag number in the system.
  - *Records Preservation* - A specialty scanning vendor was on site last week and successfully collected digital images of our town's very oldest land records. We are relieved to have this important step completed in support of our preservation and accessibility efforts. The images will be enhanced for maximum clarity, properly organized and imported into our current land records system for online access by the end of this year.
  
- **Facilities:**
  - Recently completed projects/tasks by the Facilities Department include the following:
    - Replacement of a heater at the Public Works facility
    - Replacement hot water heater at the Animal Shelter
    - Fully executed commitment with roof contractor for Middle School roof
    - Review and analysis of responses to the Request for Qualifications submitted by numerous firms interested in completing a needs assessment and programmatic study of several municipal facilities during FY 2021/2022
    - Working on the installation of a job site camera to document construction of the new elementary school
    - Completed the exterior siding at the Public Library
  
- **Police**
  - A timeline for filling the Mansfield Resident Trooper Supervisor vacancy being created by Sergeant Timme's upcoming retirement is still being worked out by the leadership in Troop C (Tolland barracks). At this time it is expected that the recruitment process will be completed during the month of June and the Town Manager will be taking part in the screening process.
  
- **Fire Department:**
  - Below is a brief synopsis of Fire Dept. responses for the period May 10 – May 23, 2021.

Type	# In Town	# Mutual Aid Out of Town
ALS	26	4
BLS	50	5
Total Medical		
Structure Fire	1	
Brush Fire	5	
Outside Fire	1	

Appliance Fire	1	
Fire Alarm	5	
Natural Gas Leak	1	
CO Detector Activation	2	
Smoke Investigation	2	
Tree on Wires	1	
Service Call	1	
Cover Assignment	2	2
Vehicle Accident	6	3
Total Other	29	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>14</b>

- **Public Works:**

- In the last two weeks, the Town had 15 street signs, two advisory signs and five stop signs stolen.
- Since the last report, the Department in-house crew removed 12 trees and pruned four. The crew is removing dead and diseased trees daily.
- The Department continues to work on drainage improvements on Mount Hope Road between Wormwood Hill Road and Warrenville Road (Route 89) and on Chaffeeville Road between Mulberry Road and Gurleyville Road. There may be times when the Department will close these roads. School bus service, trash service, and local traffic will have access.
- A contractor began sealing cracks on selected Town roads on May 21 (Friday) and will be back on May 27 to complete the work.
- Annual street sweeping of all Town-owned paved roads is approximately 90% complete.
- Crews have commenced with roadside mowing.
- The Department is collecting used fencing and posts at the transfer station for the Solid Waste Advisory Committee in order to create free compost bin kits for residents. Volunteers from the committee have been teaching about composting at the Storrs Farmers' Market each Saturday this month.
- CT DOT completed the milling on Route 195 from Route 275 to Route 44. They will pave that area beginning on the night of June 6.
- CT DOT began milling on Route 44 (Four Corners to the Coventry line) on May 21 and is scheduled to finish it today (May 24).