



TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

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WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06107
(860) 561-7440
www.westhartfordct.gov

Memo

To: Town Council
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager
CC: Town Employees
Date: September 12, 2017
Re: Town Manager's Report

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

Council Business

- **Council Subcommittees** – Due to various conflicts, we've had to reschedule a few Council subcommittee meetings. The Community Planning & Physical Services Committee will meet at 8:00 AM on September 20, 2017; the main agenda item will be parking rates for West Hartford Center. Finance & Budget is scheduled for 8:00 AM on September 25 and the main agenda item is the FY18 budget. We are looking to schedule the Public Safety Committee for the morning of September 27 or September 28 in order to continue the discussion on various items related to our paramedic program, including an updated financial analysis, a grant for a transport vehicle, and the write-off policy for billing purposes. In addition, I would like to schedule one more meeting for the Administration & Technology Committee and the Human Services Committee prior to the end of the current Council term; please watch your email for proposed dates for both of those groups.
- **FY 2017/18 Operating Budget** – As you know, the General Assembly continues to work on adopting a state budget for the current year. This past Friday the Governor issued a proposed compromise budget that would cut less state revenue to West Hartford and scale back his proposed contribution to the Teacher's Retirement Board (TRB), for a net loss of approximately \$10.6 million. The Governor's second executive order, as you will recall, called for a net reduction of \$20 million in state aid to West Hartford. However, it is unclear whether the Governor's most recent proposal has significant support in the legislature. Meanwhile, the Director of Finance and I have met with each of the Town's directors to review 5% and 10% expenditure reduction scenarios and continue to monitor what transpires at the state. October 1st is a significant date as that is when the Town would receive its first quarterly payment for the education cost sharing grant (ECS), the most significant state grant for West Hartford and most municipalities. If we do not see a state budget within the next

few weeks the Finance Director and I will present the Council, through the Finance & Budget Committee, with a list of options to adjust the current year budget, including expenditure reductions and the strategic use of reserves. We will also discuss the status of motor vehicle tax bills at that time. I will continue to keep the Council apprised of developments in this area.

- **ICMA Board of Directors** – As you may recall during the recruitment process, I discussed my interest in serving on the board of directors for my professional organization, the International City & County Management Association (ICMA). I have now been elected by my colleagues and will serve a three year term beginning at our annual conference scheduled for October 21-25, 2017. I will be one of three representatives for the Northeast region covering New England and the Middle Atlantic states, and one of 21 directors representing approximately 12,000 members worldwide. The commitment does involve some travel, most of which ICMA will cover. I am honored by the opportunity to serve my colleagues in this capacity and believe that the experience will further strengthen my skill set and knowledge base to the benefit of the Town.
- **Metropolitan District Commission (MDC)** – Yesterday, the Director of Finance and I attended a meeting of the MDC Public Works Committee where the main agenda item concerned a change to the sewer use charge for certain municipal buildings. According to the MDC's analysis, West Hartford's *ad valorem* payment would decrease as a result of this change. Mr. Privitera and I are also tracking the progress of the MDC sewer user charge study. The RFQ for that study should be released within the next few weeks with submissions due later this fall. Once a contract is executed, the consultant will have 4 to 6 months to complete the project; depending on the final scope of work to be performed., Furthermore, we are monitoring Moody's downgrade of the MDC's bond rating (Aa2 to Aa3 w/negative outlook), which will likely negatively impact the *ad valorem* tax to member communities. Lastly, Mr. Privitera and I will attend MDC's September 21 presentation on its proposed operating budget for 2018 (the MDC's fiscal year runs according to the calendar year).

Departmental Reports

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Park Road/I-84 Public Meeting:** The Town will hold a public information meeting regarding the upcoming construction of the Park Road at Interstate 84 (Exit 43) interchange project on Monday, September 18, 2017 at 7:00 PM in Room 314 at Town Hall, 50 South Main Street. This meeting will provide an overview of the project, construction schedule, traffic impacts, and alternative routes. A new web page has been created to keep residents and businesses up-to-date on the project. Visit www.WestHartfordCT.gov/ParkRoad. Questions and comments can be email to the project team at ParkRd-I84@WestHartfordCT.gov.

LIBRARY

- **Memories of Migration Viewing Party:** Join the West Hartford Libraries in celebrating national Welcoming Week and the culmination of its Memories of Migration grant project with a special Viewing Party at the Faxon Branch Library on Tuesday, September 18 at 6:30 PM. The event will feature clips of residents' migration stories from Nepal, Portugal, and Russia to West Hartford. Attendees will sample food from these three countries. Interviews were recorded and edited by high school interns this past summer. Seating is limited and registration is required. Please RSVP to 860-561-6996.

SOCIAL SERVICES

- **New ADA coordinator:** The Town has reassigned the role of the Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator to Suzanne Oslander, Community Partnerships Coordinator. Anyone requiring an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a meeting, service, program or activity of the Town of West Hartford, should contact the ADA Coordinator.
- **Backpack Distribution:** Thanks to the generosity of the community, Social Services distributed backpacks and gift cards for schools supplies to 688 students during its Back-to-School program. Last year 651 students participated in the event. There are plenty of backpacks and gift cards to serve additional students in need. Call 860-561-7561.
- **Tutors needed:** The Hillcrest Neighborhood Outreach Center is looking for high school and adult tutors on Monday through Thursday, 3:45-5:30 PM, during the school year. Volunteers will work with K-8 students. HANOC asks for a commitment of at least one day a week for a minimum of three months. To apply, please call Candace Czajkowski, Volunteer Coordinator, at (860) 561-7564, or Candace.Czajkowski@westhartfordct.gov

HEALTH DISTRICT

- **Two Diabetes Workshops:** The West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District is offering two free workshops to help residents manage their Diabetes. The first is a Self-Management Workshop that meets every Thursday, 10:30 AM-12:30 PM for 7 weeks beginning September 28. The second workshop, Live Well with Diabetes, meets on Wednesdays for six weeks beginning September 27, 5:30-8:00 PM. For more information, call the Health District at 860-561-7900, extension 0. Pre-registration is required.
- **Flu Immunization Clinics in October:** Mark your calendar for the Health Districts' annual flu immunization clinics. The West Hartford clinics will be held on Wednesday, October 18 from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM at Town Hall; and on Wednesday, October 25 from 10:00 AM to 12 noon at Elmwood Community Center.

LEISURE SERVICES

- **Feast on the Farm:** Westmoor Park will hold its annual Feast on the Farm on Friday, September 15, 6:00-9:00 PM. Proceeds from the event will complete the funding for the restoration of the farm's historic barn. The outdoor BYOB dinner includes hors d'oeuvres and a candle-lit, four-course meal. Tickets are \$100/person and are available at Westmoor Park and the Leisure Services Office, Room 128, Town Hall.
- **Senior Housing Fair:** Elmwood Senior Center, a division of Leisure Services, will host its free Senior Housing Fair on Thursday, September 21, 2017, 9:30 AM-12:30 PM, in the auditorium of Elmwood Community Center. Over 20 different housing options are featured at this one-stop shopping event. For more information, contact Gilda Iaia at Gilda@WestHartfordCT.gov

TOWN CLERK

- **Credit/Debit cards now accepted:** Now you can pay with a MasterCard or VISA debit or credit card for more than 30 items ranging from dog licenses to birth certificates from the Town Clerk's Office. A convenience fee applies. This new service is applicable for in-person transactions only.

PUBLIC WORKS

- **Free Household Electronics Recycling Events:** The Town of West Hartford in cooperation with Take 2, Inc. will host free Residential Electronics Recycling Collection events on Thursdays and Saturdays in September at Town Hall. Residents are encouraged to bring their unwanted electronics to the drive up/drive through collection on these dates:
 - Thursdays, 4pm to 7pm on 9/14, 9/21, 9/28
 - Saturdays, 8am-12noon on 9/16, 9/23, 9/30
- **MDC Household Hazardous Waste Collection:** MDC's annual Fall Household Hazardous Waste Collection will take at the Public Works Garage at 17 Brixton Street on Saturday September 16, from 8:00 AM until 1:00 PM. For a list of items accepted at this collection, please visit the MDC website at www.TheMDC.org
- **Fall Leaf Collection:** Soon leaves will be falling and the Department of Public Works gearing up for their annual Fall Leaf Bag Collection. The ten-week collection will begin during the week of October 23 and will continue to December 29. Each week on your regular refuse collection day, crews will collect leaves bagged in 30-gallon biodegradable paper bags placed at the curb. Visit our website for more information, www.WestHartfordCT.gov/PublicWorks

POLICE

- **Like it? Then lock it and keep it!** With over 300 car burglaries since June, the West Hartford Police Department offers the following tips:
 - ✓ Begin with basic car protection: windows up, doors locked, alarm engaged.
 - ✓ Take your keys with you.
 - ✓ Don't leave valuables in your car.
 - ✓ Consider installing a motion-activated spot light on your driveway.
 - ✓ If you park your vehicle in a garage, lock the garage doors and windows.
 - ✓ If you see suspicious activity, report it, call 911.

Outside Agency News

- **Two-Way Text Option to report power outages:** Eversource customers can now report a power outage and get updates on that outage through text messaging. Customers who want to take advantage of this convenient two-way texting option must first register their mobile device either online at Eversource.com, or directly from their mobile phone by texting "REG" to 23129. Then, when a power outage occurs, text "OUT" to 23129 and "STAT" for status updates. Customers can also report outages online or by calling 1-800-286-2000. To learn more, visit Eversource.com.
- **#LoCoolGov contest:** The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities is launching a new contest and awards program that gives public middle and high school students in Connecticut the chance to tell us what they love about their local government. The question, **What is cool about local government?** is the central theme of the contest. Essays, photographs, poems, videos and multimedia projects are all welcome. Two winning entries will be selected for their originality and their creativity and will receive a \$500 scholarship. The deadline for entries is October 27, 2017. Go to www.CCM-CT.org.

Upcoming Events & Announcements

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Time to Sign-Up for the Park Road Parade

The Park Road Association invites the West Hartford community to sign-up now for the 19th Annual Park Road Parade on Saturday, October 7, 2017 at 10:30 AM. This zany and wildly popular parade draws over 7,000 people each year from West Hartford and beyond. You should be a part of it! Go to www.ParkRoadCT.com for the sign-up form.

Volunteers needed for the Park Road Parade, Saturday, October 7

The success of the Park Road Parade is completely dependent upon volunteers to assist over one thousand participants as they parade down Park Road. We hope we can count on your help. Please contact Rita Soovajian at rsoov@comcast.net.

Goldfarb Challenge

The organizers of Jonathan's Dream Reimagined are working hard to reach their fundraising goal and welcome the community to join them by making a donation of any size. Thanks to the generosity of the Goldfarb family, all new donations will be matched, dollar-for-dollar up to \$25,000! Every donation is greatly appreciated. The original Jonathan's Dream, which was inspired by the Barzach family and built in 1996, was the first Boundless Playground, an inclusive, accessible play space for families and children of all abilities. Over time, weather and heavy use eventually took its toll on Jonathan's Dream and the playground had to be closed due to safety concerns in the Spring of 2013. Today, the new Jonathan's Dream will extend the legacy with an engaging playground that keeps children of all abilities active and moving.

To make a donation to Jonathan's Dream, go to www.JonathansDreamReimagined.org or GoFundMe - Jonathan's Dream.' Checks payable to 'Jonathan's Dream Fund' may be mailed to Mandell JCC, 335 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT, 06117. If you are interested in sponsoring playground equipment or a play area, please contact Ronit at shokids@hotmail.com or 860-558-5313. The grand re-opening of Jonathan's Dream is scheduled for Sunday, October 22. (Time to be announced soon).

Tom Moore receives the Build No Fences Award

The Bridge Family Center presented Superintendent of Schools Tom Moore with the annual Build No Fences award at its 'Breakfast on the Bridge' event held today, September 12, recognizing his strong moral compass whose leadership goes above and beyond for our community. The award is presented annually to an individual who sees no boundaries while working collaboratively with child advocates in an effort to support young people and their families.

EVENTS

Mayor's State of the Town Address and Luncheon, September 13

Mayor Shari Cantor will discuss highlights from 2017 and share the Town's plans for the future at the West Hartford Senior Center. The presentation is both engaging and informative, and will be followed by a question and answer session and a kosher luncheon. Pre-registration required. Please call the West Hartford Senior Center at (860) 561-7583.

Musical Comedy *Avenue Q*, September 13-October 8

Playhouse on Park opens Season Nine Mainstage Series with the musical comedy, *Avenue Q*, which runs from September 13 to October 8. Winner of the Tony Triple Crown for Best Musical, Best Score, and Best Book, this puppet-filled comedy (fit for adults only) tells the timeless story of a recent college grad who moves into a shabby New York apartment all the way out on Avenue Q. Call the box office at 860-523-5900 or visit www.PlayhouseOnPark.org.

Feast on the Farm, Friday, September 15

Westmoor Park will hold its annual Feast on the Farm on Friday, September 15, 6:00-9:00 PM. Proceeds from the event will complete the funding for the restoration of the farm's historic barn. The outdoor BYOB dinner includes hors d'oeuvres and a candle-lit, four-course meal. Tickets are \$100/person and are available at Westmoor Park and the Leisure Services Office, Room 128, Town Hall.

Elizabeth Park Fun Run, September 16, 8:30-10:00 AM

Join Pond House Owner Louis Lista in raising money for Community Partners In Action's Culinary Training Program on Saturday, September 16, 8:30-10:00 AM. This event is family friendly and is sure to be a fun time for everyone! The route is along the Rose Garden Loop in Elizabeth Park. To register to go www.PondHouseCafe.com. Registration fee is \$25 for individuals, \$40 for a family.

Mum fundraiser for The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools, Sept. 16, 17

Atria Hamilton Heights is proud to partner with The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools for their annual mum sale on Saturday, September 16 and Sunday, September 17, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The cost is \$6.50 per plant. All proceeds benefit the charity.

Senior Housing Fair, Thursday, September 21

Elmwood Senior Center, a division of Leisure Services, will host its free Senior Housing Fair on Thursday, September 21, 2017, 9:30 AM-12:30 PM, in the auditorium of Elmwood Community Center. Over 20 different housing options are featured at this one-stop shopping event. For more information, contact Gilda Iaia at Gilda@WestHartfordCT.gov

50th Anniversary of the West Hartford Garden Club, September 24

Join the West Hartford Garden Club on Sunday, September 24 at 1:00 PM at the Noah Webster House & West Hartford Historical Society to celebrate the club's 50th Anniversary of becoming the sole caretaker of a museum's reproduction Colonial garden. Registration is not required. A brief ceremony will begin at 1:00 PM, followed by light refreshments.

31st Annual Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament, September 25

Enjoy a day of golf at the beautiful Tumble Brook Country Club on Monday, September 25 at the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce's 31st Annual Golf Tournament. The event begins at 9:30AM with a continental breakfast. Lunch will be on the course with lots of food and beverage choices available. For more information, call 860-521-2300.