

# Town of West Hartford

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50 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107-2431

FOR April 17, 2017 RELEASE

## **Matthew Hart named West Hartford's new Town Manager**

WEST HARTFORD, CONN. (April 17, 2017) – At its April 17, 2017 meeting, the West Hartford Town Council appointed Matthew Hart, 52, of Mansfield, CT, as its next Town Manager.

West Hartford is a strong suburban community that is home to 63,396 residents. West Hartford is well regarded for its overall attractiveness, safe neighborhoods, top-rated schools, award-winning recreational facilities, dynamic shopping and dining districts, and the strength of its business and service community.

Mr. Hart will succeed Ron Van Winkle upon his retirement in July, 2017. Ron has been with the Town of West Hartford since 1987 and has served as Town Manager since 2008.

"The Town Council is delighted to appoint Matt Hart as West Hartford's new Town Manager," said Shari Cantor, Mayor of West Hartford.

"Matt Hart was by far the most qualified candidate and the best fit for this position. The search committee was very impressed with his financial knowledge, management style, and approachable personality that will serve him well in our community," she continued.

Mr. Hart presently serves as Town Manager of Mansfield, Connecticut. He is an accomplished leader with broad experience in local government. He began his tenure in Mansfield as Assistant to the Town Manager in 2000, and was promoted to Assistant Town Manager in 2002. In October 2006, Mr. Hart was appointed as Mansfield's third Town Manager. He values open government and democratic processes, and is a team-oriented manager with a passion for leadership and public service.

As Mansfield's Town Manager, Mr. Hart played a critical role in the development of Storrs Center, a mixed-use, New Urbanism project located adjacent to UCONN's main campus, and in strengthening the Town's financial position through sound budgeting, capital planning, and debt management

Prior to his tenure in Mansfield, Mr. Hart served as Assistant to Town Manager in Windsor, CT, from 1997 to 2000. Mr. Hart also has experience working in the private sector and is a veteran of the US Army (1987-90) and US Army National Guard (1990-94).

The search for a new Town Manager drew 25 candidates from coast-to-coast. Following a thorough review of applicants' backgrounds and professional experiences, the Search Committee invited the five best-qualified candidates to interview. A subsequent finalist interview process included meetings with members of the Search Committee, the Superintendent of Schools, Police Chief, Director of Financial Services, the Executive Director of Human Resources and a group of community and business leaders.

"Our Town's present and future challenges abound," said Rick Liftig, dentist, and president of Elmwood Business Association. "The greatest strength that I saw in Matt, was his familiarity with the financial hurdles facing West Hartford and the State of Connecticut. He knows what lies ahead and is confident in his ability to find solutions."

"While Mansfield and West Hartford may seem to be two diverse communities, they share the same values: education, public safety, economic development and community engagement," said Barbara Lerner, executive director of the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce. "Matt will preserve those values while bringing a fresh perspective to the position of Town Manager."

Mr. Hart is viewed as a leader in town management and was recently nominated to serve as a vice president of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), representing the Northeast Region.

In addition, Mr. Hart is an ICMA credentialed manager, one of only 12 in the state of Connecticut. He was past president of the Connecticut Town and City Management Association (CTCMA).

The UCONN Master of Public Affairs Program has recognized Mr. Hart for his contributions to the field of public administration and the school. During his tenure, Mansfield has received awards from the Capitol Region Council of Governments, the Connecticut Main Street Center, and the Government Finance Officers Association. Additionally, the Storrs Center project was an Urban Land Institute Global Awards for Excellence Finalist in 2015 and Mansfield was named one of American City & County's Crown Communities for 2016.

His education includes a Juris Doctor (JD) degree and Master's in Public Affairs (MPA) from the University of Connecticut, and a Bachelor's degree in political science from the State University of New York at Potsdam.

Matt and his wife Kara and their two daughters will be moving to West Hartford in the near future. Matt enjoys coaching his daughters' sports teams, spending time outdoors, and cheering for his beloved Red Sox and UCONN Huskies.

The Town will be planning a community reception to welcome Mr. Hart to West Hartford. Details on the event will be forthcoming.

The resolution and terms of employment are posted on the Town's web site, [www.westhartfordct.gov](http://www.westhartfordct.gov).

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