



Memo

To: Town Council
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager
CC: Town Employees
Date: February 11, 2020
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 & Meetings

- Special Town Council Meeting – At 5:30PM on February 13, we will hold a Special Town Council in the Legislative Chambers (Rm 314) at Town Hall to receive a presentation from the MDC regarding its proposed integrated plan. The MDC will also be available to take any questions that Council may have regarding water rates.
- Finance & Administration Committee – The next meeting is scheduled for 6:00PM on February 18 in Rm 312 at Town Hall.
- Town Council – The next Town Council meeting is scheduled for 7:30PM on February 23 in the Legislative Chambers (Rm 314) at Town Hall.
- Public Works & Facilities Committee – The next meeting is scheduled for 8:00AM on February 27 in Rm 312.

Staff Reports

- *Grand List growth doubles* – The growth in the Town of West Hartford's October 1, 2019 Grand List of taxable and exempt property is double the increase of the previous year. Overall the Grand List increased by \$52M (0.82%) over the previous year, for a new total of \$6,368,328,344. The largest percentage increases were for personal property and motor vehicles. Personal property increased by 2.9% or \$5,866,459 for a total of \$205,201,271, and motor vehicles increased by 3.5% or \$15,001,212 for a total of \$448,168,209.

West Hartford continues to see new commercial/residential construction and remodeling projects all around town. The real property list grew 0.55% or \$31,168,568 for a total of \$5,714,958,864. This year's growth results from the conversion of the UConn campus from exempt to taxable adding \$11,007,360, as well as the additions of the Delamar hotel, Target at Bishops Corner, Ringgold Estates (as units are declared, their incremental value is added), Gledhill Estates (incremental value, still incomplete), 16 new residential homes, and ongoing residential remodeling projects.

- *Ten pollinator gardens* - West Hartford Leisure Services is asking the community to support its vision to plant ten native plant and pollinator gardens in ten parks across town in the year 2020. The department is seeking donations through West Hartford's new Sustainable CT grant program to fund this program. As native plant and pollinator gardens take off, residents of all ages will have the opportunity to enjoy exploring a natural habitat close to their homes. These gardens will provide a place for people to rest, enjoy nature, and learn about local habitats. Staff plans to include educational signage with each garden to help visitors interpret the garden landscape. For more info please visit <https://ioby.org/project/10-gardens-10-parks>
- *Recycle Beyond the Bag* - The West Hartford Land Trust and the Rotary Club of West Hartford are partnering with Public Works to sponsor a new plastic film recycling program that will enable residents to recycle plastic items that cannot be accepted for single stream recycling. Typical film plastics include produce and bread bags, ice bags, newspaper sleeves, dry cleaning bags, bubble wrap, and case wrap.

Starting this month and continuing through July 31, 2020, collection bins will be placed at four locations in Town with a goal of collecting 500 pounds of soft plastic that is used by the Trex company for manufacturing building products. If the town reaches that goal in a six-month period, Trex will donate a bench to West Hartford.

Collection bins are located at:

- Town Hall lobby, 50 South Main Street
 - Recycling Center Office Trailer, 25 Brixton Road
 - Elmwood Community Center, 1106 New Britain Avenue
 - Bishops Corner Library, 15 Starkel Road
- *New Recycling Coordinator hired* – The Department of Public Works welcomes Katherine Bruns as the new part-time Recycling Coordinator. In her new role, she will be responsible for developing and implementing recycling and diversion programs, assisting in the promotion of the West Hartford's recycling efforts, and educating the public on recycling.
 - *North Main Street bridge* – Work on the North Main Street bridge is slated to begin late March. During the 18-month construction project the Town will reduce North Main St. by one lane in each direction. Motorists should seek alternate routes. The North Main Street bridge was built in 1901 and is one of the first concrete bridges in Connecticut.

- *2020 Feast on the Farm* – Save the date! The 2020 Feast on the Farm at Westmoor Park will be held on Friday, September 25, 2020. The event features a gourmet meal with locally-grown produce and products from the DORO restaurant group. Proceeds help support Westmoor Park's ecology education infrastructure.
- *New Golf POS comes on line* – Our golf team installed Club Prophet, a new point-of-sale system, at Rockledge Golf Club last week. The software integrates transactions in real time, including sales, inventory, customer management, and reporting. It also has a marketing component. Members log on and create a user profile that tracks their purchases.

Announcements

- *Playhouse Theatre Group Internship Program* - The Playhouse Theatre Group Internship Program is a great way for young theatre professionals to learn and grow both professionally and personally. The program allows college students and graduates to have a hands-on experience. We are currently taking applications for the 2020 Intern Company in multiple areas including Business Office, Marketing, Development, Literary, Education, Front of House, Stage Management, Costumes, and Production.
- *Registration is Open for Girls Softball's 38th Season* - Calling all girls ages 4 through 9th grade to sign-up now for another exciting season of softball. The league emphasizes skill development while having fun and making new friends. Register online by March 8, 2020 at www.whsoftball.com.
- *West HartFOOD Cookbook supports WeHa Unified Business Club* - Hall and Conard's Unified Business Club have compiled a cookbook with recipes from some of our favorite community leaders and friends in West Hartford. It is beautifully illustrated and contains some quirky facts about West Hartford. Get yours today for \$24 (use promo code "crookshanks" for 15% off). To order go to www.WeHaUnified.com. Free delivery in West Hartford! Unified Business Club comprises students both with and without disabilities who work to create businesses for students with disabilities.

Events

- *Population Explosion: A Look At West Hartford Between the World Wars* - The public is invited to a lecture at the Noah Webster House on February 12 at 6PM for an in-depth look at the demographic change in West Hartford from 1920-1941 when the population of West Hartford nearly quadrupled from 9,000 to 34,000 residents. Jeff Murray, long-time museum researcher and volunteer, will share his detailed work with voter registration records during this period of extreme population growth and some of the interesting tales he learned along the way. The lecture is free.

- *Pride and Prejudice* - Playhouse on Park's season continues with Kate Hamill's *Pride and Prejudice*, running February 19 to March 8, 2020. Tickets for performances February 19 – March 8 are now on sale, and range from \$30-\$40.
- *Romance de la Guitarra* - Romance de la Guitarra is a captivating concert lovingly conceived around the theme of Valentine's Day. The program features Spanish classical guitarist Daniel Salazar and his ensemble of international musicians. The special Valentine's Day program will be held on Friday, Feb. 14, at 8PM at the Hoffman Auditorium at the University of Saint Joseph. Purchase tickets in person or online at tickets.usj.edu.
- *Moms' Voices: Celebrating Diversity & Empowerment* - Join Community of Concern for "Moms' Voices: Celebrating Diversity & Empowerment" panel discussion on Thursday, February 20, 7:00 p.m. at Conard High School, Room 169. Seven West Hartford Public School moms from diverse backgrounds will share their experiences and thoughts about our community. Moderated by retired WHPS administrator Nancy DePalma. Drinks and light Syrian refreshments will be provided.
- *The 1619 Project: A Conversation* - Join the West Hartford African American Social & Cultural Organization and the Noah Webster House on Wednesday, February 26 at 6:00PM, for a conversation about *The 1619 Project*. Led by Dr. Benjamin Foster, Jr., the event includes a panel discussion with historians on The 1619 Project.