
**Mayor Shari Cantor Announces Special Advisory Committees
on Reopening and Recovery**

West Hartford Town Council to Hold Special Meeting Monday Evening

WEST HARTFORD, CONN. (May 18, 2020) -- West Hartford Mayor Shari G. Cantor announced today that she would convene a special meeting of the Town Council on Monday evening. At the meeting, the Council will first review current Town plans for the initial phase of reopening, including the results of recent community engagement efforts with local businesses, after which Mayor Cantor will outline two ‘Special Advisory Committees on Reopening and Recovery.’ Once established, these committees will make recommendations to the Town Council, planning ahead for reopening and recovery.

“In the midst of very difficult times, it has been remarkable watching the West Hartford community pull together and find new ways to help protect one another,” said Mayor Cantor. “Now, the Town needs to put in place a structure that is based on that spirit of community and resilience. These Special Advisory Committees will be a platform and venue for listening to our community members, for responding to their needs, and for supporting the incredible ongoing work of our Town employees, our health care workers, first responders, and others. Together, we can reopen in a way that is healthy and safe, and we can position West Hartford to come out of this crisis stronger than ever.”

Added Town Manager Matt Hart, “Our Town employees have been hard at work managing this crisis, and their efforts are an enormous part of why West Hartford has been able to help Connecticut bend the curve. Now, these Committees will work alongside them, helping to improve our online and virtual services and to facilitate a faster and more efficient return to normal operations, over time and when appropriate.”

These two Committees will be led by Town Council members. They will be bipartisan in nature, with a diversity of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives among members. Their goals will be as follows:

- **The Special Advisory Committee on Economic and Workforce Recovery** will be responsible for evaluating the needs of West Hartford’s businesses, nonprofits, and workforce as a result of the pandemic of COVID-19, and will make recommendations focused on reopening the Town’s economy and allowing businesses and nonprofits to operate in a way that is healthy and safe. Deputy Mayor Leon Davidoff will Chair this Committee, which will also include Councilors Lee Gold, Beth Kerrigan, Ben Wenograd, and Chris Williams.
- **The Special Advisory Committee on Social and Community Recovery** will be responsible for evaluating quality of life issues, including social needs with regard to physical health, mental well-being, food security, childcare and education, quality of life matters, and more. It will also be responsible for joint deliberation with the Board of Education to consider needs of West Hartford’s school age populations. Councilor Liam Sweeney will Chair this Committee, which will also include Councilors Carol Blanks and Mary Fay.

(more)

In the days and weeks ahead, these Committees will make direct outreach to key stakeholders groups to begin forming their recommendations. The Mayor will ask the Committees to communicate their expectations in regard to timing of their work and activity, their internal structure, and how they will solicit public input on an ongoing basis.

“It’s crucial that our community members feel invested and connected to all recovery efforts, and that’s why listening and understanding will be at the center of these committees’ work,” said Mayor Shari Cantor.

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