



Keith Chapman
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

200 GARFIELD STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

MEMORANDUM

To: Newington Town Council
From: Keith Chapman, Town Manager
Date: August 4, 2021
Re: Monthly Report – March 2021

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

As the result of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing Declaration of Civil Preparedness Emergency filed on March 12th in the Town Clerk's office, the Town Hall remains closed, non-essential meetings have been cancelled and essential meetings are being held remotely.

On March 3rd, I attended the Economic Development Commission meeting to discuss the Beautification Committee, a committee that would serve as an advisory committee to the Town Council to improve the appearance of Main Street and the surrounding areas. This would include, planting in public areas, seasonal decorations, and planting receptacles. I provided an update of some of the things that are going on in Town; developers and potential opportunities in the pipeline. As we know, there is a lack of land in Newington, we need to focus some of our efforts on redevelopment.

On March 5th and 19th, I met with Mike Frisbee, owner of the property located at the top of Cedar Mountain for an update on the property.

The Town Manager's Proposed Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 was presented to the public and Town Council on March 9th via ZOOM. I proposed a mill rate of 39.10, a decrease of .18 from the previous year. My main objective is to modify the Long-Range Capital Improvement Plan because we have deviated away from our current plan. I partnered with our Public Works and Finance staff to create a plan that meets our needs, which will help eliminate the issues we are currently facing. Meanwhile, I am proposing to reduce our spending by a reduction in health insurance and staffing through attrition and realigning departments. I will continue to look for shared services opportunities between the Board of Education and surrounding Towns. To help reduce future costs, I introduced solar panels as an alternative energy source, as we are currently moving forward with a selected company and hoping to introduce alternative fuel vehicles back into the Town's fleet.

On March 10th, I met with Gary Fuerstenberg, Town Engineer to discuss the property located on 392 Main Street and the issue of Mill Brook Blockage.

On March 11th, Janet Murphy, Stephen Clark, Paul Boutot, Gary Fuerstenberg, James Krupinski and I interviewed students from Bulkeley High School for our pilot mentorship program. Constance Coles, College and Career Readiness Counselor from Bulkeley High School observed the interviews, I am anticipating the program to kick off in July.

As mentioned during the budget meetings, my goal is to economize our operations, and expand our service levels through blending our resources by the four surrounding Towns; Berlin, Wethersfield, Rocky

Hill, and Cromwell. The Town Manager's met again this month on March 11th, we will be meeting on the second Thursday of each month.

On March 12th, I met with members from our internal Economic Development team to discuss the former Cedar Crest Hospital and the potential opportunities that may exist.

On March 15th, I attended a meeting with our internal Community Leisure Services Departments and the Emergency Management Department for an update on COVID-19, we discussed the logistics of reopening these facilities. We will continue to monitor the positivity rate and make modifications as needed.

As we recently concluded interviews with students from Bulkeley High School, I met with the participating department heads on March 17th to finalize the selected students and discuss the logistics of orientation.

I met periodically throughout the month with the developer regarding 690 Cedar Street.

At the Town Council meeting scheduled March 20th, we reviewed department budgets and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

On March 22nd, I scheduled a meeting with all of our Department heads to discuss reopening plans. It's my priority to ensure a safe environment for the staff and residents of Newington.

On March 31st, I met with Renata Bertotti, Town Planner, to discuss opportunities on 3333 Berlin Turnpike and the progress review.

The Joint Shared Services Subcommittee met throughout the month of March, I discussed areas of where the Town and Board of Education could share or merge departments to help with communication and impose a potential cost savings.

To realign and collaborate together internally, we have scheduled meetings every Tuesday with our Economic Development team. Renata Bertotti, Town Planner, schedules and leads this meeting. We focus on our pipeline and current projects, we want to avoid as much hurdles as possible and improve the communication between the departments.

I met with the Town Council leadership biweekly via zoom to keep them abreast of new information, updates on current projects and anticipated items for the future. It seems to be more effective way of communicating than submitting weekly reports, it provides the opportunity to ask questions and receive feedback immediately.

Department head one-on-ones have been postponed and will be scheduled as-needed.

Overtime

Paid overtime during the month of March 2021 was as follows: Note that overtime costs include all instances and may be charged to non-operating budgets (i.e. road projects).

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT	Overtime Hours	Cost
VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	65.8	\$ 3,553.72
WEEKEND STAND-BY AND CALL-IN	16.0	\$ 900.48
ROAD MAINTENANCE	8.0	\$ 417.60
ICE	8.0	\$ 417.60
BEACON PARK PATHWAY	35.7	\$ 1,808.37
TOTALS	133.5	\$ 7,097.77
PARKS AND GROUNDS DIVISION	Overtime Hours	Cost
General Grounds	118.0	\$ 5,310.00
TOTALS	118.0	\$ 5,310.00

	20-21 Budget Overtime Appr.	Overtime Expended 20-21 YTD	19-20 Budget Overtime Appr.	Overtime Expended 19-20 YTD
POLICE DEPARTMENT				
Administration	\$ 8,175.00	\$ 1,572.12	\$ 7,927.00	\$ 1,219.44
Patrol	685,889.00	538,760.35	655,308.00	578,584.04
Investigation	90,645.00	34,372.13	89,232.00	40,708.29
Communication	173,748.00	135,703.89	169,820.00	108,288.11
Education/Training	143,085.00	52,938.89	138,826.00	102,783.97
Support Services	60,413.00	-4,809.58	59,255.00	13,485.27
Animal Control	<u>1,511.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>1,511.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total	\$ 1,163,466.00	\$ 758,537.60	\$ 1,121,879.00	\$ 845,069.12
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT				
Highway Operations	\$ 28,085.00	\$ 49,582.69	\$ 28,085.00	\$ 14,143.25
Snow and Ice Control	165,297.00	119,665.79	165,297.00	66,349.79
Traffic	4,057.00	3,822.57	4,057.00	2,210.94
Vehicles and Equipment	32,822.00	31,748.32	32,822.00	18,609.26
Leaf Collection	<u>33,898.00</u>	<u>33,259.54</u>	<u>33,898.00</u>	<u>28,151.17</u>
Total	\$ 264,159.00	\$ 238,078.91	\$ 264,159.00	\$ 129,464.41
PARKS AND GROUNDS				
Parks and Grounds	\$ 84,839.00	\$ 99,895.59	\$ 84,839.00	\$ 70,826.13
Cemeteries	<u>16,445.00</u>	<u>4,824.49</u>	<u>16,445.00</u>	<u>9,042.29</u>
Total	\$ 101,284.00	\$ 104,720.08	\$ 101,284.00	\$ 79,868.42

PERSONNEL

- The vacant Librarian III (T-5), Head of the Reference Department position was posted internally on March 19th, with a closing date of March 26th.
- Interviews took place on March 3rd for the vacant Recruit Police Officer, the position was offered to Matheus Larangeira, he will begin his position in April 2021.
- Interviews took place on March 5th for the vacant Highway Equipment Operator I (HLT-9), the position was offered to Steven Alarmani, he will begin his position in April 2021.
- Interviews took place on March 24th for the vacant Revenue Clerk (C-6), a conditional offer was made to the top candidate.
- Interviews took place throughout the month to fill the four (4) vacant Part-Time Library Technician positions, they should be filled by the first week in April.

RISK MANAGEMENT

2020-21 Blue Cross/Blue Shield Plan Year

The eighth month of the 2020-21 plan year produced a combined paid claim total that was lower than those estimates that were developed at renewal. The monthly claims for the 2020-21 plan year were estimated at \$963,049. The total paid claims from the Health Benefits Fund for February 2021 were \$544,524. It should be noted that the claims for retired participants are charged to the OPEB. The breakdown for the active participants for the Town and Board of Education is as follows.

Cumulative Claims through February, 2021

	Town	Board of Education	Total
Estimated Claims	2,106,576	5,597,816	7,704,392
Actual Claims	730,016	4,194,460	4,924,476

Accounting and Administration

- Janet Murphy, Director of Finance, continued doing budget analysis for the proposed 2021-2022 fiscal year budget. Included in these tasks was attending budget meetings during the month.
- Janet Murphy, Finance Director continues working with the shared services committee and sub-committees regarding the analysis of shared services for Facilities and Finance.
- Tasks associated with the 2021-22 budget were continued to be undertaken by Janet Murphy and Lisa Rydecki during the month leading up to the approval of our budget scheduled for April 20th.
- FEMA meetings for both the COVID reimbursement and the storm on August 4th were taken attended thru-out the month.
- Lisa Rydecki completed the CIP budget book for the Council including meetings to revise the equipment reserve information.

The Town received from the State of Connecticut the second payment on the Pequot Grant in the amount of \$54,975 during this month. The Town received the following interest rates on investments. This list includes outstanding investments that are under the control of the Finance Department and includes the General Fund and other Town Funds.

INVESTMENTS, BY ACCOUNTING TYPE

(Unaudited)
03/31/2021

	<u>Interest Earnings</u>		<u>\$ Invested</u>
	<u>Budget FY2020-21</u>	<u>Actual Year to Date</u>	
General Fund	\$300,000	\$50,700	\$40,079,610
Special Revenue Funds	48,000	1,091	742,191
Capital Projects Funds		918	1,094,616
Internal Service Fund	35,000	4,725	6,285,116
Trust and Agency Funds		1,624	1,110,394
TOTAL ESTIMATED BY FUND			\$49,311,927

INVESTMENTS, BY INSTITUTION TYPE

(Unaudited)
03/31/2021

	<u>Interest %</u>		<u>Interest \$</u>		<u>\$ Invested</u>
	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Last Month</u>	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Last Month</u>	
STIF	.13	.14	2,316	2,115	\$21,227,317
Bank North	.25	.25	119	108	561,442
TDBank (new)	.25	.25	2,299	2,077	10,831,985
Farmington Bank	.15	.15	1,146	973	8,453,508
Webster Bank	.10	.10	324	292	3,177,197
Liberty Bank	.15	.15	645	582	5,060,478
Total Outstanding Investments					\$49,311,927

Rates reflect avg. monthly yield, annualized

Assessor

- The Board of Assessment Appeals held meetings on March 8, 9, 15, 16, and 18, 2021 to listen to assessment appeals on the October 1st, 2020 Grand List. Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the Town Hall remained closed to the public so all meetings were conducted remotely either by zoom meeting or telephone conversation. All members of the Board were in attendance for the meetings. Notices of their actions were sent out by U.S. mail on April 1st, 2021. The following table summarizes the financial implications of their deliberations:

Assessment Reductions on 2020 Grand List	\$10,149,620
Proposed Mill Rate	0.03910
Tax Loss @39.10 Mills Due to BAA Actions	\$396,850
Number of Appeals	145
Number Withdrawn/Failed to Show	3
Accounts with Changes	79
Accounts with No Changes	63

- Re-filing for the elderly tax relief benefits program offered by the State of Connecticut continued during the month. This program was suspended for the remaining filing period as a result of an Executive Order issued by the Governor in response to the COVID-19 health crisis. All participants on the program from last year will receive the same benefit without the requirement to re-file.
- Real Estate deeds were read and entered in the computer assisted mass appraisal system through the end of March.

Revenue Collector

- March revenue collections for Real Estate, Personal Property and Motor Vehicles amounted to \$1,992,352.16. The Supplemental Motor Vehicles collected were \$140,339.78 and \$43,233.35 was collected for prior year taxes. Included in that amount was \$8,403.93 for suspended accounts.
- This year's March collections on the current Grand List are 98.1% which is a little lower than the same time last year which was 98.8%. This is due to the extension granted for the Real Estate, Personal Property and Supplemental Motor Vehicle tax bills until April 1st with Governor Lamont's Executive Order.
- Delinquent Notices will be sent out the second week in April which will bring in more tax revenue.
- Daily assistance is being provided to taxpayers who need to locate their IRS information or have difficulty using a computer.
- Even though the Town Hall is closed to the public due to COVID-19, taxpayers enter daily to make tax payments.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Patrol Calls for March are as follows:

Abandoned MV 1	Fire Task Force Activation 0	MV Evading 14
Administrative 0	Fire Training 0	MV Fatal 0
Alarm Commercial Burg Alarm 90	Fire Trouble Alarm 1	MV Injury 10
Alarm Hold Up Alarm 5	Fire Veh Maintenance 0	MV Property Only 64
Alarm Residential Burg Alarm 31	Fire Vehicle Fire 0	Neighbor 14
ALTERED MENTAL STATUS 1	Fire Water Problem 0	Noise 11
Animal Complaint 12	Fireworks 0	Non-Collect Person 0
Arson/Fire Invest 0	Follow Up 32	Notification 0
Assault 2	Found Property 9	Open Door/Window 18
Assault in Progress 0	Gun 0	Other Archive 0
Assist Motorist 2	Harassment 8	Parking Violation 3
Assist Notification 0	Hazard 33	PD ASSIST FIRE DEPT 32
Assist Other Agency 26	Hazmat 0	Personal Relief 0
Bad Check Insufficient Funds 0	Hold Up Alarm 0	Pistol Permit 66
Blighted Property 0	HOPE PROJECT 1	Prisoner Care 2
Bomb Threat 0	Illegal Dumping 3	Private Duty 0
Breach of Peace/Disorderly 3	Impersonating Police 0	Property Found 4
Burglar Alarm 0	Indecent Exposure 0	Property Lost 0
Burglary 3	Intoxicated 5	Prostitution 0

Car Seat 3	Juvenile Complaint 10	Recovered Stolen MV 0
Check Welfare 30	K9 Assist 0	Rescue Call 0
Check Welfare 911 44	Kidnapping 0	Residential Lockout 2
Check Welfare Other 9	Landlord/Tenant Dispute 7	Robbery 1
Clear Lot 4	Larceny 34	Roll Call 2
Construction 0	Larceny from MV 68	Serve Subpoena 0
Court Detail 11	Lift Assist Only 12	Serve Warrant 29
Criminal Mischief 7	Liquor 0	Sexual Assault 4
CSO 0	Local Traffic Authority 0	Shots Fired 0
Customer Dispute 24	Location Check 341	Specific Detail 67
Dog Complaint 23	Location General 0	State Pistol Permit – Tempo 0
Domestic 27	Location School 0	Stolen MV 3
Door Check 0	Lockout Building 3	Sudden Death 4
Drug 5	Lockout MV 1	Suicide 0
DUI 7	Lost Property 3	Suicide Attempt 0
EDP 20	LTA 0	Suspicious MV Unoccupied 5
Escort/Transport 3	Meal 0	Suspicious Report 170
Escort/Funeral 3	Medical Alarm 11	TEST 0
Escort Other 0	Medical Cardiac 5	Threatening 2
ESCORT RETRIEVAL 1	Medical Complaint 161	Tobacco 0
Escort Tax 0	Medical Diabetic 1	Tow 9
Fingerprint 0	Medical Fall 18	Town Ordinance Violation 0
Fire Alarm Commercial Bldg 1	Medical Mutual 0	Traffic Stop 129
Fire Alarm Residential 0	Medical Other 0	TRAFFIC STOP ATTEMPT 6
Fire CO Detector no sympt 0	Medical Respiratory 2	Traffic Survey 0
Fire CO Detector with sympt 0	Medical Stand By 2	Training 0
Fire Extrication 0	Medical Trauma 0	Trespass 10
Fire Hazmat 0	Medical Unresponsive 4	Unknown 127
Fire Mutual Aid Request 0	Missing 2	Water problem 0
Fire Other 0	MV Abandoned 0	
Fire Rescue 0	MV Assist 28	
Fire Special Detail 0	MV Complaint 45	
Fire Stand By 0	MV Fire 0	
Fire Structure Fire 0		Total: 2,056

- In March, the Detective Division Report:
 - Handled 55 investigations, 55 remain ongoing.
 - Served 36 warrants; 31 by Patrol officers, 5 by Detective Division.
- In March, the Animal Control Officers had the following activity:
 - 34 Total Calls: 22 Dog, 12 Animal, 0 Specific Detail, 1 Follow-ups, 0 Car Seat
 - 0 Total Bites: 0 Dog vs. Dog Bites, 1 Dog vs. Human, 0 Feral Cat vs. Human
 - 2 Total Impounds: 1 Redeemed, 0 Sold as Pet, 0 Euthanized, 0 Quarantine, 1 Carry Over, 0 DOA
 - 64 Incoming Phone Calls
 - 0 Letters (No License/Barking/Littering)
 - 0 Written Warnings
 - 22 Outbound calls for Delinquent License
 - 0 Infractions

- 0 Wethersfield Mutual Aid Calls (not all these calls are easily identified in CAD)
- Other:
 - 24 Police Assisted Animal/Dog Complaints
- Notable Cases/Events:
 - Continue making outbound phone calls to dog owners with delinquent dog licenses vs sending out a third letter or sending out written warnings.
 - Staying in touch with River Run with negative results. WPD pound can be used on a case per case basis. WHPD would like to engage in an arrangement. We have options.
 - Safe Homes meeting on 3/10/2021.
 - 79 Thornton Road – hoarding/animal neglect – actively working this case with Ofc. Tancreti, Health Department and DCF. Site visit planned for April 6th with DCF.
 - Deb starts Full Time effective 4/4/2021.
 - New Monthly format will start April that will include both WPD and NPD numbers with both Departments on copy.
- In March, the School Resource Officer had the following activity:
 - During the month of March, SRO Abbassi had 14 student contacts and five parent contacts.
 - During the month of March, SRO Abbassi investigated a sexual assault incident, a suspicious complaint and 2 medical complaints. SRO Abbassi assisted security and nursing staff in coordinating COVID-19 vaccination of NPS district staff on 3 separate dates. SRO Abbassi assistant Principal Laura Blanchard regarding a possible scheduled fight between two students. SRO Abbassi assisted school social worker Shannon Robles with a student who was upset yelling and swearing in her office.
 - During the month of March, SRO Abbassi participated in the School Review Board. During this review board, students who were not performing well academically were identified by teachers and forwarded to the Assistant Principals. During the review, students and parents had a chance to talk about how to get back on the right track.
 - During the month of March, SRO Abbassi took part in a school fire drill. SRO Abbassi checked the south end of the school and staff parking lot.
 - SRO Abbassi also assisted staff with 2 check welfare complaints.
- In March, the Patrol Division had the following activity:
 - During the month of March, the Town continued to suffer an increase in larcenies involving items taken from within motor vehicles or mechanical parts stolen off of the vehicles themselves. Officers responded to sixty-eight (68) larceny from motor vehicle complaints. This is an increase from forty (40) last month. Thirty-two (32) of those incidents occurred in one night in the apartment and condominium complexes located at the south end of Willard Avenue. Windows were smashed to access the vehicles. The State of Connecticut, as a whole, continues to battle the epidemic of car burglaries. Our Patrol Division is making a concerted effort to saturate their respective patrol areas and conduct traffic enforcement on suspicious vehicles during the evening and midnight hours.
 - On 3/08/21, units responded to the Newington Liquor Shoppe for a burglary alarm. Upon arrival, officers located the glass front door had been smashed and cash was observed scattered around the parking lot outside of the front of the business. The building was cleared and no suspects were located at the scene. CCTV video depicts two suspects smashed the front glass door and entered the business. They stole several bottles of Hennessy and Remy Cognac alcohol, along with approximately \$150 dollars in cash, for a total loss of over \$1,700.00. This doesn't include the approximately \$1,200.00 to repair the damaged door and cash register. The Detective Division was called out to process the scene. Detectives attended a liquor store burglary information-sharing meeting with surrounding towns and suspects have been identified. The case remains under investigation.
 - On 3/22/21, officers responded to a medical complaint at 148 Cambria Avenue for a report of an unresponsive juvenile female. NPD has an extensive history at this residence due to medical issues involving two mentally challenged teen-agers who reside at this address. Upon arrival, officers located a semi-conscious 16-year-old female and her parents. The parents informed officers that they located empty prescription bottles but stated they had no reason to believe the female was suicidal. The female was transported to the hospital for a possible overdose. The family later located a suicide note and additional empty prescription bottles. Follow up investigation was conducted and it was learned that the female was on life support at the hospital and wasn't expected to survive. She passed away on 3/25/21. DCF was involved from the onset of the incident.

- On 3/26/21, at approximately 1500 hours, units were summoned to the Aldi's store located at 2640 Berlin Turnpike for a reported robbery. Dispatch received information from the manager that the incident happened approximately ten minutes prior to calling the police. Upon arrival, officers discovered that although a robbery had just occurred, Aldi's staff did very little to preserve the scene, and continued business as usual. CCTV video depicts a heavy-set male enter the store wearing a hooded sweatshirt, dark clothing, and a face mask and select a bottle of juice. The suspect waits until the customers finish at the register and then approaches the cashier and places the bottle of juice on the counter. As the cashier opens the drawer to make change, the suspect pulls a black handgun out of his waistband and points it at the clerk. The clerk raises her hands and backs away from the register as the suspect grabs cash from the open drawer. The suspect then flees the store on foot and is last seen running north towards Galaxy Carpet through the west parking lot. The cause for the delay was the clerk initially locked herself in the bathroom out of fear and when she did come out and report what had happened, the manager wasn't familiar with the robbery protocol. Officers professionally instructed the employees on the proper steps to notify police and preserve evidence at the scene should they experience a robbery in the future. A canvas revealed Galaxy carpet had CCTV footage of the suspect entering a vehicle that was parked in their lot and fleeing northbound on the turnpike. The case is currently under investigation by the Detective Division.
- On 3/30/21, at approximately 1430 hours, a resident from Hartt Lane reported to NPD dispatch that he received a Ring Camera notification of someone on his property. The resident stated he looked outside and saw someone attempting to enter the shed of the house next door. The resident stated the neighboring house is currently vacant and is owned by a bank. Officers responded to Hartt lane where they located a 15-year-old male hiding in the shed. Evidence on scene revealed the juvenile male had removed items from the shed that he planned on stealing. It was discovered that the juvenile lived locally and his mother was contacted. The juvenile was arrested for larceny charges and released to his mother.

Property Report March 2021

<u>Category</u>	<u># of Counts</u>	<u>Property Value (\$)</u>
Burned	0	\$ 0
Counterfeited/Forged	0	\$ 0
Damaged/Destroyed	35	\$ 22,571
Vehicle Inventory	0	\$ 0
Stolen	78	\$ 79,248
Abandoned	1	\$ 0
Evidence	78	\$ 25
Found	10	\$ 31
Lost	9	\$ 520
Seized	15	\$ 3,020
Recovered	12	\$ 3,975
Impounded	0	\$ 0
Informational	2	\$ 50
Towed	0	\$ 0
Total	240	\$ 109,440

- Police Department Overtime March 2021

- OT February \$ 84,853 2 pay periods (one holiday)
- OT February \$ 58,671 2 pay periods (no holidays)
- \$ 26,182 decrease
- During March 2021, one officer from the Patrol Division has remained temporarily assigned to the Detective Division serving as the property officer since the civilian property officer remains unfilled and a second officer has continued on light duty assisting in the Detective Division resulting in two vacancies in the Patrol Division. Additionally, there are two officer openings in the Patrol Division. These vacancies have an impact on patrol overtime since some patrol districts are left unstaffed

which could be used to reduce overtime by covering officers who may take time off. Also, if the 105 (midnight) district officer's days off fall on Thursday, Friday or Saturday that shift is covered with patrol overtime as well.

- **Administrative overtime** of \$0, a decrease of \$629 from previous month.
- **Patrol overtime** of \$46,160, a decrease of \$13,722 from the previous month. Overtime included the filling of shifts for time off (vacation, sick, earned time), 105 district days off (Thurs, Fri, Sat) and holdovers for officers involved in casework related to a sudden death, serving a firearms risk warrant, attempted stolen car, traffic detail involving a road closure, arrestee transport to the hospital, road hazard (tree down), check welfare, motor vehicle accident (rollover), responding to subpoenas from court, domestic arrests, Midstate Accident Reconstruction Squad callout, PRAWN service and Patrol sergeants staying after shift to complete arrest paperwork.
- **Detective Division overtime** of \$909, a decrease of \$4,179 from the previous month. Overtime included the investigation of a "SWATTING" incident and an internal affairs investigation.
- **Communications overtime** of \$10,433, a decrease of \$3,631 from the previous month. Overtime included the filling of shifts for time off (vacation, sick, earned time) and filling of shifts on days and evenings when only one dispatcher is scheduled to ensure two dispatchers are present on all day/evening shifts. Additionally, a second dispatcher is staffed on overtime from 0000 hours to 0400 hours on the midnight shift on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.
- **Educational overtime** of \$1,169, a decrease of \$2,164 from the previous month. Overtime included coverage of shifts for an officer and a sergeant conducting Midstate Accident Reconstruction Squad training.
- **Support Services overtime** of \$0, a decrease of \$1,857 from the previous month.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The following is a report of the activities of the Newington Fire Department for the month of March, 2021. During this period, fire department members responded to alarms or emergencies. A summary of these alarms and a manpower response break down is detailed below:

	March	9 Months Total
<i>FIRES</i>		
Structure Fire	3	21
Vehicle Fire	1	14
Exterior Fires	4	28
Other Fires	2	3
<i>RESCUE CALLS</i>		
Pressure Ruptures Explosion Overheat	1	7
Extrication	3	14
Other Rescue Calls	3	18
<i>SERVICE CALLS</i>		
Hazardous Condition Calls	5	106
Water Problem	1	29
Other Service Calls	5	55
<i>OTHER</i>		
Good Intent Calls	5	25
False Alarm/False Call	9	247
Severe Weather/Natural Disaster	0	7
Special Incident Calls	0	2
Mutual Aid/Standby	1	14
Totals	43	590

Training Summary for the month of March: Please be advised that due to the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 Virus some training is being completed through various online training platforms. Social distancing protocols are in effect for all hands-on sessions.

Category	Classes	Attendees	Hours
AP20 - Pump Operations	1	8	16.5
BC01 - General Building Construction	1	1	1.5
Classes	Classes	Classes	Classes
CORE – SCBA Competency	3	58	109
DT03 – Driver Training Orientation	1	6	6
DT04 – Driver Training Road Time	1	2	1
FC21 – Ladders	1	23	69
IH02 – Officer Training	1	25	50
IH10 – Department Drill	1	52	104
RQ06 – Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT)	2	39	348
Totals	13	217	711

Progress

March 15th, 2021

- The final session of our officer development program from Northeast Squad Concepts was held at Fire Headquarters. This was the last of 3 sessions conducted by New Haven Battalion Chief Miguel Rosado. The first two sessions in January and February, due to COVID-19 restrictions, were held as Zoom meetings.
- Captain Collin Whalen, Captain Erik Lundin and I participated in the Cromwell Fire Department's "Live Burn" training at their Coles Road fire station. Assistant Chief Stacy conducted the classroom training on commercial building fires. In addition to the live burn and classroom session, Cromwell's new digital radio system was reviewed and utilized during the drill.

March 17th, March 22nd and March 25th, 2021

- SCBA Core Competency training was conducted for all companies in preparation for the Connecticut Fire Academy's maze trailer confidence training to be held on Saturday, April 17th, 2021.

Plans

- Rollout of Lexipol FireRescue1 online training program will take place in April. We have 124 members that have completed the online registration. TargetSolutions, our current online training provider, will be notified by April 10th, 2021 of our intent to no longer use their program.
- Multi-Company drills will be moved from the 3rd Wednesday and 4th Monday of every month to the 3rd and 4th Monday starting in April.
- An online calendar, in conjunction with the Lexipol FireRescue1 online training program, is being developed for training. In addition to dates, the proposed lesson plan and location will be available to all members.
 - Lexipol will be releasing an online application in the coming months. This will greatly improve our ability to post training dates and notify members of upcoming and overdue assignments.
- Regionalized training with our Taskforce 51-member towns has been proposed to Berlin, Rocky Hill, Wethersfield, and Cromwell. Our first interdepartmental drill was held in Cromwell.
- Plans are being developed to conduct a Rescue/Truck Operations training and knowledge awareness drill at the CT DOT Headquarters on the Berlin Turnpike this summer.

FIRE CHIEF

Fire Response: **20** Incidents

- Chiefs Meeting
- Command Staff Meeting via Zoom
- Commissioners Meeting
- Safety Division Interviews
- Meet with Safety Division
- Discussions with Chief Regina about training division reorganization
- Discussions with Chief Lapierre on Budget weekly

- Discussions with Chief Stegmaier on personnel recruitment and retention ideas being discussed in weekly meetings with his staff
- Discussion with Chief Nesklada on apparatus and building projects
- Executive session with Board of Fire Commissioners about Personnel Issues
- Meeting with Commissioners, Mike Chapman, and Chiefs on Truck 2
- Communication Meetings
- Put Packet together for staff on Communication Radio Replacement plan
- Bi-Weekly Meeting with Public Safety
- Work on Reorganizing upstairs
- Meeting with Town Manager on Reopening Plan

FIRE MARSHAL

The Fire Marshal's Office completed the following activities during the month of March, 2021.

INSPECTIONS	14
INSPECTION FOLLOW-UPS	36
PLAN REVIEWS	7
JOB SITE INSPECTIONS	6
FIRE INVESTIGATIONS	3
FIRE ALARM TROUBLE	3
COMPLAINTS	1
TANK REMOVALS	0
SAFE HOME INSPECTIONS	7
SAFE HOME FOLLOW-UPS	13
HAZ-MAT/HAZARDOUS CONDITION	0
BLASTINGS	0

Fire Marshal Activity for March 2021

March 2	Attended Economic Development Zoom Meeting
March 3	Meeting with Al Bongiovanni on Zoom
March 4	State Career Development Training on Zoom
March 8	State Career Development Training on Zoom
March 9	Attended Economic Development Zoom Meeting
March 10	Attended IAAI Development Training on Zoom
March 11	State Career Development Training on Zoom
March 15	State Career Development Training on Zoom
March 16	Attended Economic Development Zoom Meeting
March 18	State Career Development Training Zoom Meeting
March 19	OpenGov Training on new Building Program on Zoom
March 22	Staff Meeting with Keith Chapman on Zoom
March 23	Attended Economic Development Training on Zoom
March 25	Attended Career Development conference with CAHCEO
March 30	Attended Economic Development Zoom Meeting
March 31	Meeting with Dennis Goderre concerning 3333 Berlin Turnpike

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Administration:

- Continued to meet with residents to discuss various issues and concerns
- Continued with Landfill closure project tasks
- Attended CIP review with Town Council
- Continued with all project planning and scheduling
- Completed hiring process for Equipment Operator I position
- Attended Environmental Quality Commission meeting
- Attended meeting with MDC regarding Sewer Backup Prevention and Reporting Program
- Attended MDC meeting for Town paving schedule

Roadway Maintenance:

- Continued with litter pickup/graffiti removal Town wide

- Highway operators continued with Landfill material processing
- Continued with Town wide pot hole patching
- Continued with damaged curb pickup/removal and also began the replacement of curb and topsoil
- Began Town wide street sweeping
- Crews cleared branches in several locations
- Assisted Traffic Division with replacement/repair of signs
- Excavated and patched an extensive frost heave on Day St
- One (1) eviction scheduled for the month requiring no storage
- Responded to two (2) after hour call ins – one (1) for salting icy areas and removal of tree across roadway on Memorial Road
- Assisted Board of Education with the setup of concrete barriers for outside classroom learning
- Started the reconstruction of Beacon Park Pathway
- Repaired catch basin on Kimberley Road in preparation of spring overlay program
- Delivered and placed concrete blocks to various Town restaurants for outdoor dining due to the continued pandemic
- Personnel assisted Engineering Department with surveying of several locations

Traffic Division:

- Replaced and/or repaired missing/damaged street name and regulatory signs
- Continued to assist with Food Share setup
- Responded to one (1) after hour call in for cones/signs for motor vehicle accident

Fleet Maintenance:

- Mechanics continued with preventive, scheduled maintenance and emergency repairs to all Town vehicles
- Began Fire Department spring services
- One (1) new police patrol vehicle was completed and put into service
- Street sweeper services were completed
- Responded to one (1) after hour call in for the Newington Volunteer Ambulance

Sanitation/Recycling/Landfill

- Scheduled 471 residential bulk items for collection for the month
- Scheduled 33 condominium bulk items for collection for the month
- Scheduled 49 condo/residential scrap metal items for collection for the month
- 5803 tons of cumulative Municipal Solid Waste were collected from July through February
- 1663 tons of cumulative recyclables were collected from July through February
- 1394 mattresses/box springs were collected from July through February
- 235 televisions were collected from July through February
- Issued permanent 38 landfill permits and 7 temporary permits for the month

TOWN ENGINEER

Permits:

- Reviewed contractor license applications (bond/insurance/agreement)
- Reviewed and approved 18 excavation permits:
 - Excavation = 1
 - Driveways = 11
- Reviewed utility clearance notifications:
 - Routine: 93
 - Emergency: 1

Meetings: Represented the Town:

- CROG transportation committee meeting
- TON public works meeting (engineering, planning, highway, parks, facilities)
- TON public safety meeting (engineering, fire, police, EMS, IT)
- TON economic development meeting (engineering, planning, building, fire marshal, assessor)

- Town Council Meeting(s), as requested
- TON CIP/budget, Conservation Commission, Planning and Zoning meeting(s), as requested
- Eversource/CL&P planning/construction meeting(s), as requested
- MDC planning/construction meeting(s), as requested
- CNG planning/construction meeting(s), as requested
- DOT planning/coordination meeting(s), as requested
- Project meetings with developers and engineers/architects, as requested
- Town Hall and Community Center Construction Project
- Meetings with residents/businesses

Site Plan Review: Reviewed plans and calculations for conformance with the Town of Newington Planning & Zoning Commission and Conservation Commission Regulations.

Reviewed site plans:

- 94 Holmes Road – Site plan review
- 80 Fenn Road – Site plan modification review
- 890 Willard Avenue – Subdivision plan review
- 2414 Berlin Turnpike – Site plan review
- 324 Alumni Road – As Built survey review
- 2897 Berlin Turnpike (Firestone) – Site plan review
- 14 Fenn Road – Site plan review
- 16 Fenn Road – Site plan review
- 712 Cedar Street – Site plan review
- 2530 Berlin Turnpike – Site plan review
- 50 Mill Street Ext – Site plan review
- Deming Street – Peckham Farm subdivision – site plan and easement review
- 187 Costello Road – Site plan review
- 359 Church Street – Preliminary subdivision concept review

Public Works: Assessed, investigated and inspected roads, parking lots, bridges, curb, sidewalks, traffic signals, dams, drainage, stone wall and other infrastructure issues throughout Town.

Engineering:

- Assisted public (residents, developers, contractors, realtors, title searchers, etc.) with Town engineering data (GIS, maps, etc.), ordinances, engineering procedures, building/property addresses, etc.
- Assisted public (residence and businesses) with drainage/flooding concerns and inspected portions of drainage system.
- Coordinated with Hartford and West Hartford in follow up to annual CTDEEP and NRCS inspection of portions of Piper/Mill Brook (South Branch Park River Flood Control System).
- Coordinated with MDC/CNG/ Eversource (CL&P) regarding utility projects in Newington
- Coordinated with CDOT regarding state projects in Newington
- Coordinated with CDOT regarding local road initiatives: RRFB, crosswalks, horizontal curve signage, 2021 paving)
- Coordinated with MDC regarding updating Town Ordinance 267 (hydrants), sewage backups, and road restoration

Engineering for Town Project: Assisted Town Departments with in-house projects:

- Town Manager/Facilities: TON facilities evaluation by Owens - project coordination
- Town Manager: Pheasant Run – Drainage improvements – design and public outreach
- Town Manager – Library Parking Lot - Site improvement plan
- Facilities: New municipal building (library parking lot) – project coordination
- Facilities: New municipal building – Eversource Energy Incentive
- Facilities: Solar Energy Projects - project coordination
- Facilities: Senior Center Window replacement – grant/project management

- Facilities: Senior Center – HVAC Replacement – project management
- Highway (LOTICIP 2018) – Complete Street Project - Robbins Avenue and Maple Hill Avenue – CRCOG coordination, oversee design and public agency review
- Highway (LOTICIP 2020) – Complete Street Project - Maple Hill Avenue – grant application
- Highway: Kelsey Street & Christian Lane traffic signal – surveying and design services
- Highway: Design services - town facility paving preparation (FD5, Garfield Street parking lot)
- Planning: Garfield Street 2018 Community Connectivity Project – design services
- Planning: Main Street 2020 Community Connectivity Project – preliminary design services
- Planning: Elm Hill Business District Streetscape plan – New Britain Ave – conceptual design services
- Planning: Streetscape (phase 6A) – Lowery / Constance Leigh Drive – conceptual design services
- BOE: Former Bus Garage - engineering/environmental services for redeveloping remediated site
- BOE: Beacon-Church crosswalk
- Parks: Vivian Street – project coordination
- Parks: Beacon Park – project coordination
- Public Works - Styles Avenue – Plan and profile
- Public Works – John Stewart Drive – sidewalk plan
- Highway: East Cedar Street and Ellsworth Street – Detention pond boundary

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

- A Building Permit was issued to install tents at Ruth Chris Steak House at 2513 Berlin Turnpike.
- An Application was submitted for a commercial remodel of existing vacant tenant space into a Dicks Sporting Goods retail store at 1603 Southeast Road. It used to be Bed Bath & Beyond.
- A Permit was issued to open a new retail business in a space with a previous retail tenant. It will be new business completely unrelated to the previous tenant. There will not be any construction. If so, minimal at best. This will be a toy store and the location are 32B Fenn Road.
- TGI Fridays, located at 3025 Berlin Turnpike, was issued a Permit for a 20 x 60 tent for temporary out dining.
- An Electrical Permit was issued for the Board of Ed to install 2 new plugs for the copier.
- A Plumbing Permit was issued for the apartments at 65 Constance Leigh Drive for alterations to 11 ADA units and various spaces in building.
- All indoor Seminars our Inspectors attend for their continuing education credit were cancelled due to COVID-19. There are online classes.
- Building Department activity for the month of March was as follows: The Inspectors completed a total of 172 Inspections. They were: Above Ceiling (2), Boiler (1), CO (4) Electrical (14), Final (85), Footings (5), Foundation (1), Gas Line (7), Insulation (4), Mechanical (1), Plumbing (2), Roofing (4), Rough (42).
- The total number of Building/Renovation Permits issued / applied for the month of March was 229 producing a total permit value of \$4,739,272.00
- They are categorized as follows:

<u>TYPE OF PERMIT</u>	<u># OF PERMITS</u>	<u>VALUE OF PERMITS</u>
ADDITIONS /ALTERATIONS	28	2,494,205.00
DECK	6	62,000.00
DEMOLITION	1	10,000.00
ELECTRICAL	54	727,552.00
FENCE	0	0.00
FIRE SUPPRESSION / SPRINKLER	0	0.00
FOOTING / FOUNDATION	0	0.00
FUEL TANK	2	6,764.00
GARAGE / SHED	0	0.00
MECHANICAL	44	417,219.00
NEW COMMERCIAL	0	0.00
NEW MUNICIPAL	0	0.00
NEW RESIDENTIAL	0	0.00
PLUMBING	24	215,832.00
POOL	17	218,320.00
ROOFING / SIDING	38	426,601.00
SIGN	4	55,458.00
SOLAR	7	91,301.00
TENT	4	14,020.00
TOTAL	229	\$4,739,272.00

The total Building income fees received in the month of March was **\$51,309.00**

The total fees for other income were as follows: Town Planning and Zoning (Applications/Publications) \$2445.00 Environmental \$780.00 Conservation \$1300.00, Zoning Board of Appeals \$260.00, Copies, Books and Maps \$0.00 Driveway / Excavation \$925.00 Engineering copies \$30.00. The other total income is \$5790.00.

Below is a comparison of the Permit Values for March 2021 and March 2020

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Value of Permits issued for March:	\$4,739,272.00	\$1,132,471.00
Fees for Permits issued for March	\$51,309.00	\$13,724.00
Other income Fees for March:	\$5,740.0	\$5,868.50
Building Permits Issued for March:	229	126

Total Value of Permits and Permit Fees for the Fiscal Year:

<u>2020-2021</u>		<u>2019-2020</u>	
<u>Value</u>	<u>Permit Fee</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Permit Fee</u>
\$25,081,498.00	\$278,514.00	\$18,775,902.00	\$211,519.00

HUMAN SERVICES

- Spring 2021 SCORE program brochures were distributed via the Middle Schools Principal's e-Newsletter and parent email list. We have completely filled our Spring program schedule. We have begun preparations at the challenge course for an active Spring schedule with Newington Youth.
- We began meeting with JWMS Adventure Builds Bridges program on March 19th, 2021. With the early onset of warm weather, we are able to facilitate these days outside on school grounds.
- High School Vocational Prep program and the 5th grade Health classes have been scheduled to resume in April.
- Small outside youth services and school groups have been contacting Newington Challenge Course and scheduling programs for April, May and June. We look forward to working with groups again at the challenge course. All COVID-19 safety protocols will be followed.

- Juvenile Review Board did not meet. 4 cases that remained open were dismissed via letter as they had gotten in no further trouble; exception was made due to COVID-19.
- Coordinator Meskill retired after close to eight years of service. She will be missed. We are looking forward to filling this position as soon as possible.
- Food Bank continued to meet the need of the community providing services: Grab & Go, Delivery and wellness checks to 131 households and 185 received food from Foodshare Mobile. We received assistance with 171.75 volunteer hours. Additionally, all staff assists with the ongoing operation of the food bank. This is all coordinated by Pam Wassik.
- Lisa Delude, continues fine tuning administrative functions: updating forms, files, spreadsheets, thank-you acknowledgement to donors, group contact lists, volunteer database & organization of storage etc.
- Karen Smith continued to review case files, pulling those cases that were eligible for destruction less than 6 years since last activity and updating computer data on ongoing cases and closed clinical cases.
- All financial casework services were completed by Pam Wassik, Janine Pierson, Karen Smith & Carol LaBrecque. We heard from many households regarding not receiving the stimulus check, as there was a delay in processing stimulus checks for households receiving Social Security that had not recently filed income tax returns. Caseworkers assisted with numerous housing issues including inability to pay rent, upcoming evictions, and homelessness. A state/federal program: Unite-CT started in March and will hopefully help to address some of the back-rent debt that folks have incurred due to COVID-19. Non-COVID-19 related issues presented as well, such as referrals for home health services, need for conservators, and Medicare D selection. Park & Recreation Subsidy applications-certification of limited income households for discount with many P&R programs also resumed in March.
- Director LaBrecque and Emergency Manager Manke followed up on several Safe Homes households, participated in vaccine protocol meetings. Director Labrecque, Lisa Masten & Diane Stone completed a newsletter mailed to over 6500 households under 65 in our community who may be isolated and disconnected as a result of ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

March 2021 Statistics

	FY 20-21 Total This Month	FY 20-21 Total Last Month	FY 20-21 Cumulative Total YTD	FY 19-20 Cumulative Total YTD
Selected Programs				
Youth and Family Counseling Cases	10	9	85	119
Clinical presentations	0	0	0	0
Youth & Family Service Hours	29	27.5	307.5	322
JRB cases hearings/pending hearing JRB Service hours:	4 1	4 1	9 9	8 34
Positive Youth Development	8	0	296	1629
Community Service # of hours completed	1 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	6 30 12 0	10 168 88 321
Challenge Course: Adult youth(outside)				
Information and Referral	350	327	5484	6322

Social Casework Cases	88	83	750	616
Under 55 =	29	21	207	213
Under 55 disabled =	9	11	96	109
Over 55 =	50	51	666	328
Social Casework Service Hours	157.5	182.5	1282	888.5
Under 55=	44.25	48.5	348.25	164
Over 55 disabled and/or disabled	113.25	134	932.75	697.25
Food Bank Household visits	135	127	1626	1306
# bags of groceries distributed	1625	1421	14633	5635
Mobile truck	185	197	1628	918
Special Needs	7	6	89	96

SENIOR AND DISABLED CENTER

- In accordance with CCHD recommendations, the Center remained closed to in-person programs and activities in March 2021 (with the exception of COVID-19 vaccine clinics and income tax appointments). During the month, the Center offered virtual and remote programming to keep members active and engaged through high tech, low tech and no tech programs and communications.
- COVID-19 vaccinations continued to dominate time and attention at the Center this month. There were three first shot clinics on March 4th, 12th and 19th with a total of 500 first shots given. This included direct outreach to Dial-A-Ride passengers, senior housing residents, meals-on-wheels recipients, Senior and Disabled Center members (by age) and residents who are clients of the CT Homecare Program for Elders. Residents who were able to get into a car but not manage the clinic were provided shots at the car. Second shot clinics followed 4 weeks after the first shot. CCHD and CERT volunteers did a tremendous job in executing these clinics.
- The State of CT established a Homebound Vaccination Intak form online. People who are unable to get to a clinic (even with transportation provided) are eligible to apply. CCHD and the Senior and Disabled Center are screening those applications and CCHD will be delivering shots to people at home.
- The Center continued to implement its, "Moving Forward Together" campaign with high tech, low tech and no tech opportunities for people to stay safe, stay active and stay engaged.
- The At-home program kits, funded through CARES Act, were launched with great success. There were 75 of each kit purchased and assembled and the Organic Seed Starting Kits, Terrarium Kits and Paint by Number Kits sold out quickly. Bird Feeder Kits, Cookie Decorating Kits and, Journaling Kits were also popular.
- A new session of Tai Chi Quan: Moving for Better Balance started this month via Zoom, overlapping with the previous session that is wrapping up. This is a 24-week, evidence based, strength and balance class offered through the CT Healthy Living Collective.
- Part time Program Coordinator Barb Womer expanded the at home Move to Improve exercise program by recording classes that will air on NCTV. Move to Improve has close to 50 participants.
- The popular WISE program was held via Zoom on March 15th, 22nd and 30th. Developed by CCSU Professor Carrie Andreoletti, this program provides opportunities for older and younger adults to discuss topics of mutual interest through structured discussions.
- The Statewide Virtual Senior Center presented, "Let the Shenanigans Begin" an Irish themed event with music, dancing and storytelling on March 26th. Newington is a lead agency in this program that had more than 300 participants.
- The Center held a St. Patrick's Day drive through event on March 17th with the wearing of the green

and treats distributed to participants as they drove through. Many had decorated cars.

- The Tax-Aide program continued through the month. Although challenging (especially on rainy days) the volunteers made the program work.
- The Daily Call sheet, with trained volunteers matched with residents for friendly phone conversations, continues strong.
- The American History Lecture Series, presented by Professor Jared Day, featured, "Freedom's Moment: World War II parts two and three" via Zoom on March 9th and 30th.
- Hartford Healthcare provided two virtual programs this month. Understanding Arthritis was presented on March 17th and Let's Talk About the Brain on March 18th.
- Stay Home. Stay Safe Bingo, offered each Tuesday and Thursday, Meditation Monday and, Boggle on Wednesdays were enjoyed by conference line. Game sheets are sent out ahead of time and participants call in to play.
- The Volunteer Shopper program continued through the month of March. Volunteers purchased \$733 in groceries in 19 trips. These groceries are purchased by the volunteers with gift cards provided by the Center and recipients are billed following delivery (by Dial-A-Ride) in a contactless and anonymous system. To date a total of \$18,967 worth of groceries have been purchased through the program.
- Food services continues to be a priority. 55 individuals received a total of approximately 1,050 hot meals in the month of March. While several volunteers have returned, staff continue to deliver meals regularly. Additionally, staff sort and pack all meals to reduce the exposure in the kitchen.
- "Grab and go" meals are distributed every Wednesday to 50-60 people, replacing the daily congregate meal. Each week staff add puzzles, information, masks or other treats in the bags.
- Dial-A-Ride provided a total of 161 trips this month for 38 passengers. Service is still limited to non-urgent medical transportation but the number of passengers is increasing as people catch up on missed routine appointments. In addition, Dial-A-Ride delivered 99 congregate meals, 168 meals on wheels, 19 grocery orders, 56 food pantry orders and 25 program deliveries.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Recreation Division

- Spring programs scheduled to start in mid-March have been suspended due to COVID-19. Programs will reconvene if and when local and federal government deem it safe.
- The Department began accepting Churchill Park Picnic Reservations on February 26th.
- Spring program registration for residents began on March 4th and for non-residents on March 11th.
- Registration for new gardeners interested in participating in our Community Gardens program will begin on April 1st. Returning gardeners had until March 26th to renew their gardening spot from last year. There is a total of 110 garden spots available to residents.
- Interviews are being conducted to hire new Summer Camp counselors. Nina and Christa, the supervising staff, will be returning for the 2021 Summer.
- Event planning for the 2021 "Life Be In It Extravaganza" is underway.
- Planning for the Summer Camp RECreate (children entering Kindergarten through grade 8) has begun. Camp RECreate is scheduled to run from June 21st through August 6th.

Parks and Grounds and Cemeteries

- "Welcome to Newington" flags are beginning to be installed.
- Began cleaning behind shop to remove old junk and make room for portable storage (connex) boxes to be relocated from Cross Street.
- Numerous stumps ground around town.
- Dugouts at Wallace little league fields had new roofs installed.
- Connex boxes reorganized in anticipation of new Recreation train that was delivered.
- Cemetery clean up began on March 22nd.
- Ballfield maintenance began ahead of schedule.
- Rebuilt practice pitching mounds at Alumni.
- Installed new batting cage nets at Volunteer.
- Pool maintenance including crack repair, filter cleaning, and power washing has begun.
- Picnic table repairing and repainting was completed.
- Town Hall/Library spring cleanup complete.

- Field marking for spring sports has begun.
- Greenhouse completed. New plantings/pots are off to a great start!
- Finished work on safety nets at Clem Lemire synthetic field when weather permitted.
- Cemetery expansion completed in Section F with new foundations installed by Laviero

LIBRARY

- Staff is continuing to work hard and offer the best service possible while the library building is closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual programming, same day curbside pickup, assistance by phone and email as well as printing of tax forms and other documentation is being offered. The big push is to provide fast and efficient service and to deliver materials and information to our patrons as quickly as possible.
- Same day pick up for library curbside service *Lucy-to-Go* continues to be extremely popular and very much appreciated. Staff are constantly pulling items for patrons throughout the day in order to get them into our patrons' hands as quickly as possible. Staff also used the curbside service to deliver *Grab n' Go* craft kits, new library cards and tax forms. For the month of March there were 1,861 curbside pickups that allowed the library to check out 8,921 physical items to our patrons.
- The library staff is finishing the preparation of the "History of the Library" StoryWalk® that will be displayed in Mill Pond Park as part of the Town of Newington 150th Anniversary Committee History Walk on April 24th. The story slides are being printed and mounted on poster board. The story boards will be installed a few days before the event and will stay up for several weeks. The Friends of the Library will be on the front steps of the library the day of the event, answering questions about the history of the library and handing out snacks that originated in 1939, the year the library opened.
- Head of Community Services Michelle Royer hosted another Friends of the Library Facebook Live book sale with Deanna Reney from Karma's Closet. The Friends continued with a new book sale service where people email the Friends authors or genres they like and the Friends prepared a bag of books for \$10 based on the request for them to pick up at the library on Fridays. They are also preparing for the upcoming outdoor book sale by appointment on April 17th.
- Library Director Lisa Masten, Director of the Senior and Disabled Center Dianne Stone and Direct of Human Services Carol Labreque completed a project that was assigned to them by the Town Manager to provide relevant information for older adults about keeping safe, keeping healthy and keeping connected during this difficult time. A newsletter titled *Living Strong: Be Safe, Be Active, Be Connected, Be Secure* that offers helpful information about programs, services and activities provided by the Town that helps them do this was created and mailed to more than 6,500 seniors in town.
- Two new services offered by the children's department are taking off. The Children's *Book Bundle* service has parents or caregivers fill out an online form about special interests or types of books the child likes and the librarians pick out up to 10 customized titles to be checked out for this individual. The second service is *Pop-Up Picks*. Each week (you never know when!) a curated batch of Children's books & a small prize will pop up on the library's Facebook page. If you're interested, you have to act fast and call the Children's Department to reserve the books for checkout and you get to keep the prize. These are two fun and innovative ways to get books in the hands of children.
- The Children's staff offered 18 programs to 337 children and their caregivers. In addition to regular digital Storytime's and live Zoom together story times, weekly Grab n' Go kits were offered for children Pre-K – Grade 1 and Grade 2 – Grade 5 and recorded book talks were made available from the children's website. One of the highlights of the month was the new StoryWalk that went up in Mill Pond Park. Ms. DePaolis' John Paterson Elementary School Pre-School classes wrote a story titled *Animals from A to Z* and added some adorable artwork for everyone to enjoy as they walked through the park. The children's staff worked with Ms. DePaolis to get everything printed and mounted on to the signs. In addition, if you click on the QR code with your phone you could hear some of the children talk about the animals. This was such a great collaboration between the library and Newington Schools. The children's winter reading program, "Reading Rules" ended on March 13th. 78 children participated in this 5-week reading program.
- Teens were offered 4 programs during the month of March with 43 teens participating. Programs highlights included Teen Stress Relief Grab n' Go, Teen Spring Grab n' Go and a virtual book discussion with the Newington High School Book Club to discuss the book *Neanderthal Opens the Door to the Universe*.
- Adults were presented 17 virtual programs to 499 participants. Virtual program selection this month included *Disney Trivia Night with Jeanette And Carolyn* with 50 people vying for the top prize, *Gentle Yoga with StrongHouse Yoga*, *Ocean Farming in Connecticut* with the owners of Stonington Kelp CO., Another CUT the Cord Program, Culinary Delights: Chocolate Snowstorm Cookies and *Thursday Page*

Turners, a book discussion on the book *Songs for the Missing* by Stuart O'Nan. Author Stuart O'Nan graciously joined the virtual book discussion much to the delight of the participants. The *Finding Your Roots Genealogy Series*, a multi-town collaboration, kicked off with two programs, *Genealogy Basics: FamilySearch* and *Trace Your Revolutionary Roots*. And adult winter reading program "Reading Rules" concluded on March 12th with 226 adults registered who read 1,137 books during this 5-week program. The grand prize drawing was held and the winner won a gift card to Lowe's.

- Total circulation was 12,036. Circulation of digital materials was 3,115. 1,861 curbside service transactions were processed. Staff processed and pulled 3,502 holds on shelf to be processed for curbside pickups and interlibrary loans. Staff answered 3,658 reference questions during the month. Online databases that were popular this month included *Consumer Reports*, *Valueline* and *Ancestry.com*. The children's online databases *PebbleGo* continue to see very high usage with over 6,000 logins to the Animal database this past month alone. The Biography and Science *PebbleGo* databases continue to be popular as well. These databases are purchased to support elementary and middle school curriculums.
- In technology news, the library added a new online database called *Newsbank*. The service provides archives of local and national newspapers in the US, including access to the Herald of New Britain, Bristol Press, Journal Inquirer, New Haven Register and West Hartford. Staff continues to record programs for patrons of all ages that are uploaded to the library's YouTube channel and made available from the library's website. Head of Reference Diane Durette had the NHS yearbooks from the past few years digitized. Links for the digital copies of these yearbooks are available from the library's website. The high school has been given digital copies as well.
- In personnel news, Assistant Director Karen Benner working with Business Manager Jennifer Hebert, Circulation Supervisor Katie Gontarz and Head of Children's Bailey Francis interviewed and hired 5 new employees for the open positions in the Circulation and Children's departments. They all did a great job working through this process. Bailey Francis and Teen Librarian Jennifer Bassett were guest speakers at a virtual Young Adult Roundtable meeting. The topic was gentrifying your collection. Staff is continuing to attend both external and internal meetings via Zoom. Staff is working hard to provide the best service possible.
- In facilities news, the problem with the rubber roof that caused the leak over the adult fiction stacks on the first-floor last month was repaired. Dave Brown, the library's part-time Maintenance Technician has been monitoring the building each morning to check for any additional problems. The cleaning service continues to be average.