



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: November 20, 2020
Re: Monthly Report – July 2020

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

As the result of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing Declaration of Civil Preparedness Emergency filed on July 15th in the Town Clerk's office, the Town Hall remains closed, non-essential meetings have been cancelled and essential meetings are being held remotely.

Department head one-on-ones have continued throughout the month.

At the staff leadership meeting scheduled on July 2nd, I reviewed items from the previous Town Council meeting, advised staff to prepare for Town Hall move, gave a health update on COVID-19, and announced the Municipal Administrative Training (MAT) program, which will be implemented August 26th. This program is offered to all Town of Newington employees, designed for them to gain a better understanding of Town operations, leadership and management to prepare for upward mobility within their careers.

With the recent retirement of Lieutenant Michael Morgan, I participated in promotional interviews for candidates within the Police Department.

On Monday, July 6th, our devoted day to economic development, the Town Assessor and I met with a developer regarding opportunities on Cedar Mountain. Also, we met with leadership from Keeney to walkthrough and tour the facility.

During the evening on July 6th, I appeared on Newington Community Television (NCTV) Channel 14 "Talk to the Mayor", hosted by Steve Parker.

At the staff leadership meeting scheduled on July 9th, I reviewed the latest data on COVID-19, advised staff to prepare for the Town Hall move by reviewing the move-in schedule, and announced the Police Department promotions. To help maintain the new building, I created an Administrative Letter 39-Workstation and Office Appearance Policy, to provide standards of a professional workstation and office atmosphere for staff. To conclude the meeting, we did an exercise to show the difference in perception amongst everyone in the room. The difference between the perception depends on which side of your brain you use more, left or right. As stated by Don Vaughn PhD neuroscientist at UCLA states "What these illusions make us realize is that we're as unique on the inside as we are on the outside."

On July 13th, I had an introduction meeting with AMR leadership.

On July 13th, I met with the Chairman of the Town Hall Renovations Building Committee and departmental staff to discuss safety concerns of the Town Hall project.

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On July 16th, Mayor DelBuono and I met with leadership from the Lions Club to learn more about their organization and how they are active in local communities near Newington.

On July 17th, I attended the celebration for Sergeant Christopher Perry promoted to Lieutenant and Officer Scott Amalfi promoted to Sergeant.

During the staff meeting on July 23rd, I discussed items from the Town Hall moving meeting, parking locations for employees, and distributed administrative letter 39 (Workplace and Office Appearance Policy).

To protect and preserve the wetlands in Newington, Erik Hinckley from our Engineering Department, and I toured the Town to assess the development and conservation of our natural resources.

On July 31st, I attended the retirement celebration for Carol Aregood, Deputy Assessor.

Throughout the month I had ongoing communications with AFSCME leadership to discuss COVID-19 and a possible one-year extension of the AFSCME collective bargaining agreement.

Overtime

Paid overtime during the month of July 2020 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	81.3	\$ 4,314.16
WEEKEND STAND-BY AND CALL-IN	16.0	\$ 732.56
ROAD MAINTENANCE	9.0	\$ 459.50
SWEEPING	16.0	\$ 795.08
MILLING	7.8	\$ 385.55
BOARD OF EDUCATION PAVING PROJECTS	384.6	\$ 16,710.45
TOTALS	514.7	\$ 23,397.30
PARKS AND GROUNDS DIVISION	Overtime Hours	Cost
General Grounds	281.0	\$ 13,488.00
TOTALS	281.0	\$ 13,488.00

	19-20 Budget Overtime Appr.	Overtime Expended 19-20 YTD	19-20 Budget Overtime Appr.	Overtime Expended 19-20 YTD
POLICE DEPARTMENT				
Administration	\$ 8,175.00	\$ 314.42	\$ 7,927.00	\$ 0.00
Patrol	685,889.00	52,005.46	655,308.00	45,883.61
Investigation	90,645.00	2,776.39	89,232.00	3,301.51
Communication	173,748.00	9,435.70	169,820.00	7,843.08
Education/Training	143,085.00	1,132.66	138,826.00	2,886.45
Support Services	60,413.00	898.47	59,255.00	662.82
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	\$ 66,563.10	\$ 1,121,879.00	\$ 60,577.47
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT				
Highway Operations	\$ 28,085.00	\$ 2,282.73	\$ 28,085.00	\$ 355.08
Snow and Ice Control	165,297.00	0.00	165,297.00	0.00
Traffic	4,057.00	18.87	4,057.00	0.00
Vehicles and Equipment	32,822.00	2,105.31	32,822.00	517.33
Leaf Collection	<u>33,898.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>33,898.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total	\$ 264,159.00	\$ 4,406.91	\$ 264,159.00	\$ 872.41

PARKS AND GROUNDS				
Parks and Grounds	\$ 84,839.00	\$ 11,725.40	\$ 84,839.00	\$ 5,525.50
Cemeteries	<u>16,445.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>16,445.00</u>	<u>724.50</u>
Total	\$ 101,284.00	\$ 11,725.40	\$ 101,284.00	\$ 6,250.00

PERSONNEL

- As the result of COVID-19 and the anticipated financial impact, we have decided to withhold from filling any current vacant positions during these uncertain times.

RISK MANAGEMENT

2019-20 Blue Cross/Blue Shield Plan Year

The 2019-20 plan year produced a combined paid claim total that was lower than those estimates that were developed at renewal. The total paid claims for active employees for the 2019-20 plan year were estimated at \$3,146,712 for the Town and 8,192,400 for the Board of Education. The total paid claims from the Health Benefits Fund for 2019-20 were \$1,832,333 for the Town and \$ 5,957,625 for the Board of Education. It should be noted that claims for retired participants are charged to the OPEB.

The actual claims total will be provided by Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield in September when the Town receives the 2019-20 Settlement Report.

Cumulative Claims through June, 2020

	Town	Board of Education	Total
Estimated Claims	3,146,712	8,192,400	11,339,112
Actual Claims	1,832,333	5,957,625	7,789,958

Accounting and Administration

- Janet Murphy, Director of Finance, assisted with Council questions and work for the cost of debt for the Anna Reynolds School Project.
- Lisa Rydecki, Deputy Finance Director submitted to FEMA for reimbursement of expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic paid by June 30th. We should have a final determination by the end of August relative to our amount of reimbursement.
- All during the month staff continued to work on the move to the new Town Hall by cleaning out filing cabinets, packing and marking items for shredding or storage. We started to move items over to our new offices on July 17 and as of July 20, 2020 the Finance Department has been working out of our office at the new Town Hall.
- Our Accounts Payable Clerk continued work on cleaning up our vendor listing. We will be sending out information to the remaining vendors on our new address and getting them to sign up for ACH payments with a mass mailing the week of August 17th.

The Town did not receive grant payments from the State of Connecticut 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)
7/31/2020

	Interest Earnings		
	Budget FY2020-21	Actual Year to Date	\$ Invested

General Fund	\$300,000	\$7,202	\$36,735,114
Special Revenue Funds	48,000	478	741,589
Capital Projects Funds		189	1,093,910
Internal Service Fund	35,000	866	5,201,439
Trust and Agency Funds		210	1,096,988
TOTAL, ESTIMATED BY FUND			\$44,869,040

INVESTMENTS, BY INSTITUTION TYPE

(Unaudited)

7/31/2020

	Interest %		Interest \$		\$ Invested
	Current Month	Last Month	Current Month	Last Month	
STIF	.20	.75	2,905	4,925	\$16,808,261
Bank North	.12	.50	119	115	560,510
TDBank (new)	.50	.50	2,292	2,218	10,827,490
Farmington Bank	.25	.30	1,430	1,900	8,444,209
Webster Bank	.10	.5	897	1,001	3,173,531
Liberty Bank	.29	.30	1,302	1,163	5,055,039
Total Outstanding Investments					\$44,869,040

Rates reflect avg. monthly yield, annualized

Assessor

- The month of July was spent packing most Assessor's records into moving boxes and physically moving into the new Town Hall building. Beginning on Wednesday, July 22, 2020, the Assessor and Assessment Technician II spent the next 10 days moving records and furniture into the new building. Additionally, in the new office was significantly smaller than the old one, much of the existing office furniture was not useable due to the space constraints. A search of all other abandoned furniture in the old Town Hall was done and several smaller but more efficient items were identified and moved into the new office. Additional assistance was given to the Finance, Town Manager, and Tax Collection offices with their move.
- Real estate deeds were read and entered in the computer assisted mass appraisal system through the end of July.
- Ten selected personal property audits were sent to our outside auditor to be reviewed. All audit results will be reviewed by the Assessor with final adjustments due to be processed in late September.
- Owners of income producing properties continued to file the annual Income and Expense forms as the due date for filing was extended from June 1, 2020 to August 15, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The reports were analyzed and inputted into the CAMA system to be used for valuation purposes during the 2020 Revaluation.
- Tax bills were mailed out on Friday July 3, 2020. Approximately 29,000 motor vehicle bills, 1,400 personal property bills and 3,900 real estate bills (9,100 were sent to banks for direct payment). All staff were occupied most of this month on the telephone, and on emails, answering billing questions from taxpayers.
- Finally, the Assessor's office said good-bye to Carol Aregood who after a 33 year career as the Deputy Assessor, retired on July 31, 2020.

Revenue Collector

- July Revenue Collections for Real Estate, Personal Property & Motor Vehicles amounted to \$41,124,822.56. Prior year taxes collected amounted to \$142,944.31 and included in that amount is \$6,056.83 for suspended accounts.
- This year's July collections on the current Grand List is 39.6% which is much lower than last year which was 49.3%. All categories were down, but this is due to granting taxpayers an extended grace period to October 1, 2020 to pay their taxes without penalty. This was the right thing to do due to the Corona

virus and as hardships are being experienced by many taxpayers. Taxpayers who called to confirm that the last day for payment was extended were very thankful.

- As we transition into the new Town Hall, a tax payment drop box was installed in the rear parking lot island near the Police Department for the convenience of the taxpayers.
- Legal Notices were placed in the Hartford Courant, and the Town's website was updated frequently with tax information.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Patrol Calls for July are as follows:

Abandoned MV	1	Fire Special Detail	0	MV Abandoned	0
Administrative	0	Fire Stand By	0	MV Assist	27
Alarm Commercial Burg Alarm	77	Fire Structure Fire	0	MV Complaint	51
Alarm Hold Up Alarm	4	Fire Task Force Activation	0	MV Fire	0
Alarm Residential Burg Alarm	30	Fire Training	0	MVA Evading	13
ALTERED MENTAL STATUS	0	Fire Trouble Alarm	1	MVA Fatal	0
Animal Complaint	49	Fire Water Problem	0	MVA Injury	8
Arson/Fire Invest	0	Fire Vehicle	0	MVA Property Only	70
Assault	2	Fireworks	19	Neighbor	12
Assault in Progress	00	Follow Up	42	Noise	28
Assist Motorist	0	Found Property	9	Non-Collect Person	2
Assist Notification	0	Gun	2	Notification	0
Assist Other Agency	28	Harassment	11	Open Door/Window	39
Bad Check Insufficient Funds	0	Hazard	34	Parking Violation	6
Blighted Property	0	Hazmat	0	PD ASSIST FIRE DEPT	34
Bomb Threat	0	Hold Up Alarm	1	Personal Relief	0
Breach of Peace/Disorderly	7	Homicide	0	Pistol Permit	14
Burglar Alarm	1	HOPE PROJECT	0	Prisoner Care	1
Burglary	8	Illegal Dumping	1	Private Duty	0
Car Seat	0	Impersonating Police	0	Property Found	6
Check Welfare	58	Intoxicated	2	Property Lost	2
Check Welfare 911	47	Juvenile Complaint	7	Prostitution	1
Check Welfare Other	6	K9 Assist	1	Recovered Stolen MV	4
Clear Lot	12	Kidnapping	0	Rescue Call	0
Construction	0	Landlord / Tenant Dispute	2	Residential Lockout	1
Court Detail	8	Larceny	42	Robbery	0
Criminal Mischief	9	Larceny from MV	18	Roll Call	1
CSO	1	Lift Assist Only	8	Serve Subpoena	0
Customer Dispute	14	Liquor	0	Serve Warrant	23
Dog Complaint	55	Local Traffic Authority	0	Sexual Assault	2
Domestic	39	Location Check	107	Shots fired	0
Door Check	1	Location General	0	Specific Detail	83
Drug	9	Lockout Building	1	State Pistol Permit	0
DUI	5	Lockout MV	2	Stolen MV	13
EDP	10	Lost Property	5	Sudden Death	3
Escort / Transport	5	LTA	0	Suicide	1
Escort Funeral	0	Meal	0	Suicide Attempt	1
Escort Other	0	Medical Alarm	13	Suspicious MV Unoccupied	11
Escort Retrieval	2	Medical Cardiac	8	Suspicious Report	166
Escort Tax	0	Medical Complaint	149	TEST	0
Fingerprint	0	Medical Diabetic	1	Threatening	4
Fire Alarm	1	Medical Fall	38	Training	0
Fire CO Detectors no sympt	0	Medical Mutual	0	Tow	10

Fire CO Detector with sympt	0	Medical Other	0	Town Ordinance Violation	1
Fire Extrication	0	Medical Respiratory	9	Traffic Stop	141
Fire Hazmat	0	Medical Stand by	0	Trespass	8
Fire Mutual Aid Request	0	Medical Trauma	2	Unknown	134
Fire Other	0	Medical Unresponsive	9	Water problem	0
Fire Rescue	0	Missing	4	Total	1,960

- In July, the Detective Division:
 - Handled 61 investigations, 61 remain ongoing.
 - Served 19 warrants; 18 by Patrol Officers, 1 by the Detective Division.
- In July, the Animal Control Officers had the following activity:
 - 105 Calls – 56 Dog, 49 Animal, 0 Specific Detail
 - 0 Dog vs Dog Bites/3 Dog Bite w/ Human/0 Feral Cat Bites w/human
 - 6 Impounds – 3 redeemed, 2 sold as pets, 0 euthanized, 1 quarantine, 1 carry over, 0 DOA
 - 0 Infraction written
 - 97 Incoming Phone Calls
 - 4 Wethersfield Mutual Aid Calls – not all these calls are easily identified in CAD
 - 0 Written Warnings
 - 0 Letters (No License/Barking/Littering)
- Breakdown of Calls
 - 510 –
 - 15 Combined Dog/Animal/Specific Detail/Check Welfare
 - 0 Delinquent Letters/Written Warnings/ No License/Barking/Littering
 - 0 Infractions
 - 0 Written Warning
 - 0 Dog bite- 0 dog vs human, 0 dog vs dog
 - 0 Dog/Cat Adoption
 - 511 –
 - 32 Combined Dog/Animal/Specific Detail/Check Welfare
 - 0 Delinquent Letters/Written Warnings/ No License/Barking/Littering
 - 0 Infractions
 - 0 Written Warning
 - 3 Dog bite- 3 dog vs human, 0 dog vs dog
 - 0 Dog/Cat Adoption
- Other:
 - 58 police assisted Animal/Dog Complaints.
- Notable Cases/Events:
 - N/A
- In July, the Patrol Division had the following activity:
 - Patrol Officers on the evening shift responded to a serious motor vehicle accident that occurred on the Berlin Turnpike in the area of Kitts Lane. Upon arrival, officers determined that a car and a motorcycle were travelling south bound. When the driver of the car began to make a right turn a collision resulted between the car and the motorcycle. The motorcycle operator was ejected and found unconscious suffering from serious life-threatening injuries. The operator was transported to a local hospital by ambulance for treatment. The Midstate Accident Reconstruction Squad was notified to handle the investigation due to the serious nature of the accident. The accident remains under investigation.
 - An alert Patrol Officer on the evening shift observed the driver of a vehicle commit a traffic violation on the Berlin Turnpike. The officer observed the vehicle pull into a parking lot and the passenger in the vehicle exited the moving vehicle. The officer attempted to stop the vehicle which fled at a high rate of speed. The officer didn't pursue the vehicle. The officer then approached the passenger from the vehicle and observed him throw something to the ground, which was determined to be a bundle of suspected Heroin. The person was handcuffed and searched. Additional drugs and a

handgun were found on the person. The person was charged with Possession of a Controlled Substance, Criminal Possession of a Firearm, and Interfering with a Police Officer.

- Another Black Lives Matter rally occurred on July 22nd at Mill Pond Park. A group of police supporters were also in attendance. The rally prompted the mobilization of the majority of the Police Department personnel. The protest rally was generally peaceful and no arrests were made.

Property Report July 2020

Category	# of Counts	Property Value (\$)
Burned	0	\$ 0
Counterfeited/Forged	0	\$ 0
Damaged/Destroyed	24	\$ 14,052
Vehicle Inventory	0	\$ 0
Stolen	136	\$ 260,567
Abandoned	1	\$ 0
Evidence	152	\$ 173
Found	15	\$ 200
Lost	8	\$ 400
Seized	35	\$ 84
Recovered	37	\$ 83,364
Impounded	2	\$ 2
Informational	15	\$ 2,876
Towed	1	\$ 0
Total	240	\$ 361,719

- Police Department Overtime July:

- Comparison
 - OT June \$ 70,490 2 pay periods (one holidays)
 - OT July \$ 103,443 3 pay periods (one holiday)
 - \$ 32,953 increase
- During July 2020, one officer was on light duty assigned to the Patrol division. Another officer from the Patrol Division has remained temporarily assigned to the Detective Division serving as the property officer and another officer has continued on light duty assisting in the Detective Division resulting in three vacancies in the Patrol Division. Additionally, there are two officer openings. These vacancies have an impact on overtime since some patrol districts are left unstaffed which could be used to reduce overtime by covering officers who may take time off. Additionally, an officer hired in May 2020 for a previous opening was in the field training officer program for the first pay period of this month, thereby having no impact on overtime during that time.
- Admin overtime \$314, a decrease of \$69 from the previous month. Overtime included administrative personnel working a public protest on 7/22/20.
- Patrol overtime. \$74,398, an increase of \$ \$25,837 from the previous month. Overtime included holiday pay of \$13,990, filling of shifts for time off (vacation, sick, earned time), entire patrol division staffing of a public protest on 7/22/20, holdovers for officers involved in casework including working as an interpreter, investigations related to burglaries, domestic disputes, a home invasion, motor vehicle accidents, driving under the influence, road rage incident, sexual assaults, missing person, breach of peace, booking prisoners and a Parks and Recreation Veterans parade.
- Detective Division overtime. \$4,237, an increase of \$980. Overtime included Detective Division staffing of a public protest on 7/22/20, after hour call outs to process a robbery, home invasion, burglaries, suicide, drug overdose, a sudden death and investigation of a suicidal person.
- Communications overtime. \$16,920, an increase of \$ 6,256. Overtime included \$3,012 in holiday pay, filling of shifts for time off, and filling of shifts on days and evenings when only one dispatcher is scheduled to insure two dispatchers are present on all day/ evening shifts. Additionally, a second dispatcher is staffed on overtime from 0000hrs to 0400hrs on the midnight shift on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

- Education overtime. \$6,676, an increase of \$1,332. Overtime included COLLECT training, filling of shifts for police officer recertification, ERT training, and for two dispatchers receiving training as Communications Training Officers (CTO).
- Support Services overtime. \$898, a decrease of \$1,383. Overtime included staffing of Support Services personnel at a public protest on 7/22/20.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The following is a report of the activities of the Newington Fire Department for the month of July, 2020. 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:

	July	12 Months Total
<i>FIRES</i>		
Structure Fire	1	1
Vehicle Fire	3	3
Exterior Fires	4	4
Other Fires	0	0
<i>RESCUE CALLS</i>		
Pressure Ruptures Explosion Overheat	1	1
Extrication	1	1
Other Rescue Calls	2	2
<i>SERVICE CALLS</i>		
Hazardous Condition Calls	10	10
Water Problem	4	4
Other Service Calls	6	6
<i>OTHER</i>		
Good Intent Calls	2	2
False Alarm/False Call	38	38
Severe Weather/Natural Disaster	0	0
Special Incident Calls	0	0
Mutual Aid/Standby	4	4
Totals	76	76

Training Summary for the month of July: 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.

CO-1 Training	Engine Company Operations	38.0 hours
Driver Training	Road	2.0 hours
CO-4 Training	Engine Company Operations	120.0 hours
CO-3 Training	Radio/Technology	8.0 hours
Cadet Training	Ladders	63.0 hours
Driver Training	Orientation Program	38.5 hours
CO-1 Training	Rescue Jacks/Structs and Cribbing	8.0 hours
Multi Company Training		19.5 hours
Multi Company Training 2&4	Ladders	20.0 hours
Rehab Training		8.0 hours
SOP/SOG Review		12.5 hours
Fire Service Instructor 1		8.0 hours
CO-3 Training	Utility/Service Operations	17.5 hours

Total Training	363.0 hours
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FIRE CHIEF

Fire Response: **22** Incidents

- Participated in a DEMHS conference call to prepare for an approaching tropical storm and coordinated the Departments readiness planning.
- Responded to a mutual aid call in Wethersfield to provide station coverage during a natural gas emergency and responded to a tree and wires down call on Mapleside Drive along with Engine #1.
- Conducted the monthly chief officers meeting at Fire Headquarters.
- Conducted tours of the firehouses with the consultants that are assessing Town owned buildings.
- Established an emergency action plan and in station standby crews for the Defund Police/Pro-Police rallies at Mill Pond Park.
- Conducted a tour of the communications facilities and radio towers with the consultant studying the Town's public safety radio system.
- Attended the monthly drill at the training tower, Ground Ladders.
- Conducted the monthly command staff meeting at Fire Headquarters.
- Participated in a DEMHS conference call to prepare for the possible impact of Hurricane Isaias.

Mutual Aid Response:

- Assistant Chief Lapierre responded to a task force activation in Berlin along with a crew from Engine #2, Truck #2 and CP-8 to assist Berlin firefighters at the scene of an overturned fuel tanker.

FIRE MARSHAL

- The Fire Marshal's Office completed the following activities during the month of July, 2020.

INSPECTIONS	39
INSPECTION FOLLOW-UPS	22
PLAN REVIEWS	9
JOB SITE INSPECTIONS	21
FIRE INVESTIGATIONS	0
FIRE ALARM TROUBLE	18
COMPLAINTS	8
TANK REMOVALS	0
SAFE HOME INSPECTIONS	0
SAFE HOME FOLLOW-UPS	0
HAZ-MAT/HAZARDOUS CONDITION	2
BLASTINGS	2

Fire Marshal's Activities:

- 7/2/2020 Leadership Staff Meeting with Town Manager
- 7/9/2020 Leadership Staff Meeting with Town Manager
- 7/13/2020 New Town Hall Building Meeting with Town Manager
- 7/15/2020 Meeting with Doug Jourdan, Chuck Smith, and Joseph Bracale from the State Elevator Office
- 7/16/2020 Leadership Meeting with Town Manager
- 7/23/2020 Leadership Meeting with Town Manager
- 7/29/2020 Meeting with School Committee and Building
- 7/31/2020 Meeting with State Fire Marshal and Town Manager

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Administration

- Continued to meet with residents to discuss various issues and concerns
- Continued with Landfill closure project tasks
- Submitted annual Landfill Stewardship Progress Report to DEEP
- Met with Eversource paving contractors to discuss pavement restoration projects

- Met with MDC to discuss upcoming pavement restoration projects
- Attended Department Head meetings
- Attended Environmental Quality Commission meeting
- Continued to oversee Senior and Disabled Center parking lot upgrade project
- Continued with all construction project planning and scheduling

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 drainage improvements prior to milling and paving
- Continued with Early Friday morning business district road sweeping
- Began milling and paving of various Town roads
- Completed the reconstruction of pedestrian pathway at John Paterson School
- Replaced broken catch basin at Pane Road and Berlin Turnpike intersection
- Continued with Senior and Disabled Center parking lot upgrades
- Assisted Traffic Division with line striping/painting
- No evictions scheduled for the month
- Responded to one (1) after hours call in for tree in road

Traffic Division

- Replaced and/or repaired missing/damaged street name and regulatory signs
- Continued to assist with Food Share setup
- Assisted Police Department with speed detection device relocation
- Assisted Sanitation Department with the replacement/repair of recycling containers
- Painted pavement markings on various Town roads

Fleet Maintenance

- Performed routine preventative maintenance/emergency repairs for all Town vehicles and equipment
- Responded to two (2) after hours call for service
- Assisted road crews with John Paterson paving project as needed

Sanitation/Recycling/Landfill

- Scheduled 1290 residential bulk items for collection for the month
- Scheduled 135 condominium bulk items for collection for the month
- Scheduled 85 condo/residential scrap metal items for collection for the month
- 7793 tons of cumulative Municipal Solid Waste were collected from July through June
- 2520 tons of cumulative recyclables were collected from July through June
- 1853 mattresses/box springs were collected from July through June
- 341 televisions were collected from July through June
- Issued permanent 41 landfill permits and 12 temporary permits for the month

TOWN PLANNER

Town Plan and Zoning Commission Actions:

TPZ Meeting on July 8, 2020:

- Approved, effective upon publication, Petition #10-20: Zoning Text Amendment (Sec. 3.11; 3.15; 3.16; 3.17; 6.6 and 9.2) regarding Brewery and Brew Pubs. Town Plan and Zoning Commission, applicant.
- Approved, with conditions, Petition #20-20: Zoning Text Amendment (Sec. 6.2.1.E and 9.2) regarding Digital Menu Board Signs. The McDonald's Real Estate Company, owner/applicant; Chris Russo, 2507 Post Road, Southport CT, contact.
- Approved, with conditions, Petition #23-20: Special Permit (Sec. 3.17.7: Children's Theatre Organization) at 136 Day Street. 136 Day Street LLC, owner; Newington Children's Theatre Company, applicant; Chris DeFrancisco, 255 Beacon Street, contact.
- Approved, with conditions, Petition #25-20: Renewal of Special Permit #34-17 (Sec. 3.4.4: Home Business) at 172 Indian Hill Road. Amy Berube, owner/applicant.

TPZ Meeting on July 22, 2020:

- No final actions taken.

Town Planner Activities:

TPZ Applications (approved, pending, and potential:

- July: Prepared TPZ review memo's for Petition #19-19, #10-20, #20-20, #23-20 and #24-20.
- July: Approved 4 requests for outdoor restaurant or other commercial activity seating.

Economic Development-Related Project Activities:

- July 15: Met with planning consultant to discuss possible uses of Keeney Manufacturing property.
- July: Several phone calls and emails with potential buyer of National Welding property.

Grant-Related Project Activities

- July: Several phone and email conversations with planning consultant for municipal Affordable Housing Plan.
- July: Continued administration of Residential Rehab ("Small Cities") Program.
- July: Coordinated State-approval of funding for New Britain Avenue Business District Streetscape program with State officials.

Board and Commission Meetings:

- July 8: Town Plan and Zoning Commission
- July 13: Housing Needs Study Committee (Affordable Housing Plan)
- July 22: Town Plan and Zoning Commission

CRCOG/Professional Development/Training:

- July 8: Historic Preservation webinar.
- July 28: "Missing Middle" affordable housing webinar.

Miscellaneous

- July 9: Attended weekly Department Head ("Leadership") meeting.
- July 23: Attended weekly Leadership meeting.
- July: Responded to approximately 33 phone messages from citizens, local businesses, applicants, staff and elected/appointed officials.
- July: Received and sent approximately 318 emails from citizens, local business, applicants, town staff, state staff and elected/appointed officials.

TOWN ENGINEER

Permits:

- Reviewed contractor license applications (bond/insurance/agreement)
- Reviewed and approved 26 excavation permits:
 - Excavation = 6 (for 30 locations)
 - Driveways = 20

Meetings: Represented the Town:

- CRCOG transportation committee meeting
- TON Public Works meeting
- TON department head staff meeting
- TON Inter-Department coordination meeting (engineering, planning, building)
- Town Council Meeting(s), as requested
- TON CIP, 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
- Town Hall Construction Project

- Meetings with residents/businesses

Conservation (Inland Wetland) Commission:

- Inland Wetland Applications received:
 - Two
- Commission Administered applications:
 - None
- Agent Administered Applications:
 - Two
- Provided guidance to residents/applicants for preparing applications.
- Assisted residents/applicants with preparing applications for presentation/review at Commission meetings.
- Met with residents/applicants and performed field inspections to facilitate Agent Administered applications.
- Reviewed 27 zoning applications to determine the presence of wetlands and/or Conservation easements.

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
- 135 Fenn Road – Site plan review
- 890 Willard Avenue – Subdivision plan review
- 68 Deming Street (Peckham Subdivision) – Subdivision plan review
- 2414 Berlin Turnpike – Site plan review
- 324 Alumni Road – As Built survey review
- 55 East Robbins Avenue – Subdivision plan review
- 2897 Berlin Turnpike (Firestone) – Site plan review
- 4 Hartford Avenue – Site plan review
- 550 Cedar Street – Site plan review
- Fenn Road – Tilson/MCI/Verizon – Fiber optic layout 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 CTDEEP and NRCS inspection of portions of Piper Brook and 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 projects in Newington
- Coordinated with MDC regarding updating Town Ordinance 267 (hydrants)
- Coordinated with CDOT regarding flooding on SR176 (Main Street) near Dowd (requested CDOT re-design culvert beneath Main Street)
- Coordinated road/drainage restoration with Eversource for GHCCRP
- Cambria-Garfield – Coordinated with Frontier to resolve damaged storm pipe (via utility pole)
- Pheasant Run – Drainage improvement along Pheasant Run; drainage study

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

- Facilities: New municipal building (library parking lot) – project coordination
- Facilities: TON facilities evaluation by Owens - project coordination

- Facilities: Eversource Energy Incentive Project (PD, SC, LIB) - project coordination
- Facilities: Senior Center Parking Lot Improvements - surveying and design services
- 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: Firehouse 4 – design services
- Highway: Design services - CIP town facility paving preparation (senior center, FD4, Garfield Street parking lot)
- Planning: Garfield Street Community Connectivity Project – design services
- Planning: New Britain Avenue Streetscape plan – conceptual design services
- Planning: Hartford Avenue and Stoddard Avenue Streetscape plan – conceptual design services
- Planning: Main Street sidewalk (south of landfill) – conceptual design services
- Planning: Cedar Street and Constance Leigh Drive (pedestrian/bicycle overpass) - conceptual design service
- Planning: Cedar Street and Maple Hill Avenue – pedestrian/bicycle overpass – conceptual design services
- Planning: Cedar Street and Mill Street Extension (pedestrian/bicycle overpass) – conceptual design services
- Parks & Recreation: Garfield Street – evaluate new sidewalk ramp to play enclosure
- Parks & Recreation: Garfield Street – design services (Mill Pond Park Pool base drawing)
- BOE: Former Bus Garage - engineering/environmental services for redeveloping remediated site
- BOE: Newington High School (parking lot expansion) – survey and design services
- BOE: Kellogg Middle School (drainage) – consulting services
- BOE: Paterson Elementary School (pavement resurfacing) – survey and design services
- BOE: Kellogg Middle School – Fiber optic locations
- BOE: 1170 Main Street – Bus garage parking layouts

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

- Town employees moved into the new Town Hall the week of July 20th. Different departments were moved in on different days. At this time, the Town Hall is still closed to the public because of the coronavirus. Permit applications can be submitted online or mailed in. This can be done on the Newington website and going to the Building Dept. There you will see on-line permitting or permit forms. With on-line permitting, you can fill out the application and pay online. Or you can print out the permit forms, fill them out and mail them in with a check.
- There were eight swimming pool applications in July. One is under review and seven were already approved.
- A permit was issued for the Newington High School to renovate the front entrance and create a man trap secure entrance to the school. Also, an Electrical Permit was issued to install a man trap control visitor entry system.
- The tower cellular site at 605 Willard Avenue was issued an Electrical Permit for a T-Mobile 200A service upgrade and up size conductors with a new main breaker.
- A Mechanical Permit was issued for the Town Hall to hook up a UL-300 approved wet chemical fire suppression system.
- There were 3 permits for new residential homes applied for and are under review. They are to be built at 765 Willard Avenue, 51 East Robbins Avenue, and 880 Willard Avenue.
- A Partial Certificate of Occupancy issued for the Town Hall excluding the gym and community kitchen.
- A Certificate of Occupancy was issued for a new single family residence located at 900 Willard Avenue.
- All indoor Seminars our Inspectors attend for their continuing education credit were cancelled due to the Coronavirus. There are online classes.
- Building Department activity for the month of July was as follows: The Inspectors completed a total of 152 Inspections. They were: CO (5), Decks (1), Electrical (7), Final (81), Footings (5), Framing (3), Gas Line (7), Insulation (2), Mechanical (5), Pools (7), Rebar (1), Roofing (1), Rough (27).
- The total number of Building/Renovation Permits issued / applied for the month of July was 184 producing a total permit value of \$2,747,505.00
- They are categorized as follows:

<u>TYPE OF PERMIT</u>	<u># OF PERMITS</u>	<u>VALUE OF PERMITS</u>
ADDITIONS /ALTERATIONS	25	532,295.00
DECK	8	49,597.00
DEMOLITION	0	0.00
ELECTRICAL	50	275,054.00
FENCE	0	0.00
FIRE SUPPRESSION / SPRINKLER	0	0.00
FOOTING / FOUNDATION	0	0.00
FUEL TANK	1	2,500.00
GARAGE / SHED	1	28,500.00
MECHANICAL	40	346,163.00
NEW COMMERCIAL	0	0.00
NEW MUNICIPAL	0	0.00
NEW RESIDENTIAL	3	695,000.00
PLUMBING	11	27,225.00
POOL	8	84,501.00
ROOFING / SIDING	27	594,986.00
SIGN	1	4,130.00
SOLAR	9	107,554.00
TENT	0	0.00
TOTAL	184	\$2,747,505.00

The total Building income fees received in the month of July was **\$30,067.00**

The total fees for other income were as follows: Town Planning and Zoning (Applications/Publications) \$510.00 Environmental \$60.00 Conservation \$300.00, Zoning Board of Appeals \$0.00, Copies, Books and Maps \$1.00 Driveway / Excavation \$4450.00 Engineering copies \$122.00. The other total income is \$5443.00

Below is a comparison of the Permit Values for July 2020 and July 2019:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Value of Permits issued for July:	\$2,747,505.00	\$1,750,571.00
Fees for Permits issued for July:	\$30,067.00	\$20,274.00
Other income Fees for July:	\$5,443.00	\$2,971.50
Building Permits Issued for July:	184	156

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>
\$2,747,505.00	\$30,067.00	\$1,750,571.00	\$20,274.00

HUMAN SERVICES

- A modified 2020 Summer Youth Adventure program was offered, it started on July 14, 2020, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am – 1pm. 41 Youth participated in supervised Kayaking and days at the Newington Outdoor Center/Challenge Course: including a variety of physically distanced “low ropes” activities, problem solving initiatives, games and crafts.
- Given the “hybrid” structure of the Newington school schedule, we are working with the Middle Schools to develop a modified experience for the 5th grade Adventure Learning Program that is offered to all 5th grade students as part of the Health & Wellness curriculum.

- Fall SCORE programs are being planned with a very similar design as this year's Summer Youth Adventures. The school schedule looks like Wednesday after the academic day. We are also looking at offering Saturday activities and family day programs.
- In her role as Volunteer Coordinator Meskill maintained contact with older or compromised volunteers that are not currently volunteering in an abundance of caution due to the Coronavirus. One of our long-time volunteers: Norm Kastner passed away.
- Juvenile Review Board conducted phone intake, Board meeting, and closed one case.
- Food Bank continued to meet the need of the community by providing services: Grab & Go, Delivery and wellness checks to 128 households (down slightly as we closed for a week due to the move into the Town Hall building).
- All financial casework services continued doing phone interviews, referrals and receiving necessary documentation by email, text, or snail mail. We heard from many households whose income was reduced as a result of this health crisis and the closing down of many non-essential businesses. Clients continued to have difficulty initiating unemployment benefits.
- Existing and new volunteers stepped forward and fulfilled many tasks involved with pre-packing food for households to supplement their food supply for the month. All best practices for social distancing were followed. We received over 154.5 hours of volunteer assistance in July.
- USDA's What We Eat in America estimates that an average meal is 1.2 lbs. of food. We distributed 1613 bags of food estimated at 8 pounds each for 12,904 pounds of food or 10753 meals during the month of July. We have had much positive feedback regarding the food that families are provided with. We additionally provided those households that have children with an end of school/summer gift (left over from last year's Christmas gift distribution)
- Director LaBrecque continued to serve as the Liaison for Central CT Health District and the Town - meeting with the CCHD director and providing the Town Manager with weekly updates. LaBrecque also serves as the Town's contact person to receive any complaints or questions regarding the implementation of Health & Safety requirements as recommended by the state.
- Director LaBrecque coordinated with Intercommunity to offer Covid testing to 96 residents on 7-29-20.

June 2020 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		148	13
Clinical presentations	0	0 <small>presentations/attendees</small>	0	
Youth & Family Service Hours	30	0	384.5	50.5
JRB cases hearings/pending hearing	1	0	10	2
JRB Service hours:	4	0	42	4
Positive Youth Development	41	0	1653	
Community Service	1	0	11	1
# of hours completed	0	0	208	10
Challenge Course: Adult youth(outside)	0	0	88 321	0 0
Information and Referral	580	0	7818	550
Social Casework Cases	60	0	60	82
Under 55 =	16	0	12	48
Under 55 disabled =	12	0	12	22
Over 55 =	32	0	32	12
Social Casework Service Hours	115.5	0	115.5	131
Under 55=	26.75	0	26.75	29.5
Over 55 disabled and/or disabled	88.25	0	88.25	101.5

Food Bank Household visits	128	0	128	153
# bags of groceries distributed	1613	0	1613	661
Mobile truck	277	0	277	193
Clothing household visits	0	0	0	60
# bags of clothes given	0* clothing closet ended	0	0	76
Special Needs	5	0	5	5

*Clothing closet ended

SENIOR AND DISABLED CENTER

- The Senior Center remained closed to the public through the month of July. All in-person regularly scheduled and special programs were cancelled.
- There was collective sadness among staff and Center members at the news of the passing of long-time member Rose Burns. At 101 ¾, Rose was active at the Center, attending lunch almost every day (only staying home when she didn't like the menu) until the March 13 closure.
- Administrative Coordinator Denise Haas retired on July 31 after serving the Town for 18 years. Jaime Trevethan will assume some of the administrative functions and Barbara Womer was hired as a part-time Program Coordinator.
- The Center's weekly robocall check in continued each Friday to resident members. In addition to the food service programs, masks are offered to anyone who needs one. Most of the masks are donated by the community.
- A new session of the Aging Mastery Program started in July via Zoom. With program materials delivered by staff, the participants can follow along, participate in activities and discussions, and learn from expert speakers from their homes.
- Telephone Bingo continued through the month of June. This program started in March using the Town's conference bridge. With the transition to a new system, the bridge is no longer available. Serendipitously, MySeniorCenter provided access to an unlimited phone conference service at an affordable rate. This allows more participants and is available throughout the day.
- Planning began for a new social telephone call program. Developed by the Motion Picture Television Fund (MPTF) this program matches trained volunteers with older adults in the community for regular social calls. MPTF provided all training materials and access to a CallHub system that will allow tracking and obviate the need to share contact information between callers and callees.
- The Center is continuing to develop virtual program options to its members while the doors remain closed. Several virtual programs were scheduled this month but not held due to lack of enrollment. Center staff are working with senior centers across the state to develop options and facilitate access to a shared calendar of program options.
- The American History Lecture Series was offered on July 10 and July 24 with 12 people attending via zoom. Professor Jared Day presented "World War I Parts 1&2". Fees were waived for this program.
- Other successful Zoom programs included a summer trivia contest on July 20th and a program on storm preparedness presented by Kaitlyn Cuas, Transitional Care Nurse from the Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging.
- Crafts with Karen, a new monthly program featuring Center staff Karen Halpert was held via Zoom on July 31st. Materials were delivered to 11 participants who engaged in creating cards and art through monoprinting with tea bags.
- Dial-A-Ride provided a total of 59 trips this month for 16 passengers. Service is limited to critical, non-urgent medical transportation, largely dialysis, for passengers with no other options. In addition, Dial-A-Ride delivered 96 congregate meals, 589 meals on wheels, 37 grocery orders, 57 food pantry orders and 33 program deliveries.
- The Volunteer Shopper program continued through the month of July. Six volunteers purchased \$1,578 in groceries in 35 trips. These groceries are purchased by the volunteers with gift cards provided by

the Center and recipients are billed following delivery. To date a total of \$8,128 worth of groceries have been purchased through the program.

- The Center's Giving Garden continued to harvest crops for donation to the Food Pantry. The work of the garden, usually done by a team of volunteers, is essentially being done by four dedicated people who work mostly alone.
- The Center continued to see attention with work beginning on the parking lot replacement. This will include ADA compliant sidewalks and improve mobility around the Center.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Recreation Division

- Churchill Pool had 6,511 visits during the month of July.
- Preschool Staff worked to prepare the classroom for operation during the COVID-19 pandemic. All Office of Early Childhood protocols and guidelines are being followed to ensure safety and compliance.
- Parks & Recreation Summer Concert Series completed a successful 28th season sponsored by Data-Mail, Inc. Five of the 14 concerts were held on July 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th.
- Additionally, the Parks and Recreation Department joined forces with Century 21 Stamm Realty and the Newington Masson's to provide 7 downtown concerts at the municipal parking lot on July 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th, 24th, 25th and 31st.
- Staff worked to put together a comprehensive variety of programs and events for the fall season, and the Parks and Recreation Fall 2020 Program Guide is being created.
- A new program was started to accommodate music students that didn't get to do Summer Music or Summer Band Academy. The program was titled "Online Band Lessons with Mr. Kelly." Brian Kelly, the Music Program Administrator in the school system, offered 24 lessons a week for five weeks. He accepted up to 12 students per week, each student getting 2 lessons in the week. Of the 60 slots available, 45 of them were filled.
- Various programs were run both in-person and virtually. In-person classes followed strict guidelines to prevent transmission of COVID-19. Some of the programs running in person were Zumba, Low Impact Zumba, Zumba Gold, Ballroom Dancing, and Karate. Some of the virtual programs running were T'ai Chi for Older Adults, The Art of T'ai Chi, Gentle Yoga, American Sign Language, Total Barre, Tone Aerobics, and Tighten and Tone.
- Free Summer Fun Runs were held on Wednesdays, July 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th and August 12th and 19th. Despite COVID-19, the program attracted over 120 runners throughout the six weeks.

Parks and Grounds and Cemeteries

- Roadside mowing frequency increased.
- Preparations for opening Churchill pool; officially open.
- Town wide mowing continued; 2-3 mowers per day.
- Summer baseball in full swing; field prep and lining now a daily task.
- Small field modifications at Volunteer. Full renovation planned for September.
- Final work on Veterans trailer in anticipation of parade.
- Flowers around Town are fully installed and daily maintenance is underway.
- Concert set ups for Mill Pond and municipal lot.
- Assisted with Parks & Recreation move into the new Town Hall.
- Installed playground mulch at Littlebrook Park.
- Mulched at sensory garden.
- Pruned fence line on Halleran Drive.
- Senior Center pruning and bed maintenance
- There were 10 interments at West Meadow Cemetery – 5 ash, 2 single, 3 double and there were 6 sales.

LIBRARY

- The library building was closed to the public for the fourth month. Staff continued to offer phone and email assistance and the two book drops were open 24/7 and emptied 5 days a week. Staff are working staggered and rotating schedules to minimize the number of people in the building at the same

time. The library is continuing to have plexiglass installed, amassing the necessary PPE and related products and rearranging furniture in preparation of the reopening of the library building.

- The library curbside service Lucy-to-Go is going strong with 1,662 curbside pickups in the 22 days that it was offered in July. This is an average of 75 pickups per day. With this curbside service, the library was able to check out 11,281 physical items to our patrons. Curbside service is available Monday - Thursday 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. and Fridays 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Curbside hours will be increased in August to include an additional hour Monday – Thursday and Saturday morning 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Staff continued offering virtual library programming for all ages. Virtual programs for children included weekly digital storytimes, Pajama Yoga, Sewing with Miss Sarah, Virtual Cookbook Club, Simple Science @ Home, Dragons: Return of the Ice Sorceress with the Sciencetellers and a Virtual Magic Show with Matt the Balloon Man. The children's online summer reading program "Imagine Your Story" had 218 children registered by the end of July. They were working hard to complete activities from the summer reading activity log to win prizes. The weekly Grab & Go Kits for children have been extremely popular with 258 kits given out in July. Each week had different themed craft kits that children can make at home. During the month, 23 programs were offered to 432 children.
- Teen Virtual programming included several pre-recorded programs that were offered via a web link from the library's website. These programs are being made available throughout the summer for teens to view as many times as they like. Programs included Injury Prevention Strategies for Athletes, Teen Yoga for Anxiety and Teen Yoga for Changing Your Mood. The teen summer reading program had 58 teens signed up who had submitted 100 online book responses. These responses entered them into the drawings for prizes. Grab & Go kits are also available for teens. 58 kits were picked up. A total of 7 programs were offered to 153 teens.
- Adults were offered an eclectic selection of 13 virtual programs to 262 participants. Most of the programs were pre-recorded and made available as a web link from the library's website. Part-time Librarian Joan Quasnitchka interviewed her daughter Annie who is a Certified Nurse Anesthetist about her 5-week experience treating COVID-19 patients in ICU in a Brooklyn Hospital. Adults learned how to make rolled paper coasters from old book pages and were able to sign up for their own kits to do from home. A live virtual wine tasting of the world's three favorite wine grapes was held via Zoom. Highlights of other programs included a very popular two-part Self-Hypnosis program, Job Strategies for the New Normal, Digital Library at Home- Hoopla & Overdrive and Gentle Yoga and Intermediate Yoga. Adult summer reading had 225 participants who were actively reading and submitting tickets for each book read for a chance to win a weekly drawing.
- The library transitioned over to a new phone system at the end of July. Assistant Director Karen Benner has been in charge of this project from the library's end which included working with IT, helping staff learn the new system and troubleshooting any problems. Scott Hoagland from the Town IT Department did a good job preparing us for this transition.
- Total circulation was 14,889. Circulation of digital materials was 3,608, an increase of 44%. 1,662 curbside service transactions were processed. Staff answered 3,909 reference questions during the month. Usage of online databases remained high. Popular online databases included Ancestry.com, Valueline, and ProQuest.
- In personnel news, Zoom continues to be used for staff meetings and department meetings. Staff also attended consortium meetings via Zoom. Digital Services Librarian Jennifer Hebert and Children's Librarian Sarah Riordan are doing a great job editing and uploading videos to the library's YouTube page so links can be used on the library website. Karolyn McClain from the Circulation department has taken over posting on the library's Instagram account and has increased viewership with her creative, informative and fun posts. Lisa Masten and Karen Benner continued with the weekly leadership meetings held by the Town Manager. Staff continues to do a great job with services by phone and email, curbside service and taking on additional responsibilities with the reduced staffing situation. Everyone is working together to get things done and provide the best service to our patrons.
- In facilities news, Business Manager Lynn Caley is working to finish up refurbishment of the parent section in the children's department. New shelving, reupholstered seating, and a new bench have been completed. We are waiting for laminate work to be done to complete the project. This project was funded by proceeds from the 2019 Newington Library 5K Challenge road race, a Library Board of Trustees fundraiser. New carpet will be installed in the children's department in the coming months replacing the current carpet that is almost 30 years old. The replacement carpet project is a Town funded CIP project. The cleaning service just seems to be getting worse. Cleaning is spotty. Soap dispenser are not being refilled. Trash and recyclable materials are being thrown out together rather than put in the separate dumpsters.