



Memorandum

4/8/2016

To: Town Council
Department Heads
Town Residents

From: Graham Waters, Town Manager

Re: TM Report - week of April 4 – April 8, 2016

The following is a report of events and projects that have taken place over the past week. Some of them involved town staff collaboration; other items listed are updates to the Council on ongoing Town matters.

- The Coventry Animal Control Department, in conjunction with Salmon River Veterinarian LLC, and assisted by the Coventry CERT Team and members of the Coventry High School Jr. ROTC, conducted a Rabies Clinic on Sunday April 10, 2016, at the Coventry Department of Public Works Garage on Flat River Road. A total of 264 dogs and cats received Rabies vaccinations at the reduced cost of \$10.00 per animal.
The Coventry Town Clerks' office was also open during the event, and staffed by **Debbie Lavoie** and **Darlene Brown** to allow for licensing of dogs. The Clerk's office licensed 158 dogs during the 3 hours that they were open. Many residents commented that without the Clerk's Office being open on Sunday, they would not have been able to license their dogs because they work during the normal hours of Town Hall operations.
This was the first time in six (6) years that Town Hall has been open during the annual Rabies Clinic Event. A special thanks to **IT Director Ed Warzycha** for facilitating this item.
- The Town Manager met with Assistant School Superintendent, Craig Levis, this monthly communication and coordination meeting involved discussion topics around budget presentation graphics, personnel, debt service, school system needs for capital funding, as well as other matters.
- The Town Manager met with Norma Smith, Deb Bacon, and Sandy Lukowitz of the Celebrate Coventry ad-hoc committee; staff from the Parks and Recreation Department was also present. The discussion included Celebrates presentation to the Council as well as how the Art Park will be reserved and used, and the process for converting the park from the T-Ball field to an Art Park.
- The Town Manager attended the April 12th meeting of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns. Governor Raimondo stopped by to discuss local issues with the Managers and Mayors who were present at the meeting. This discussion included the Governor talking about her "Working Cities Challenge", the \$40 million she inserted in her budget for school buildings and she asked the Cities and Towns to support her \$5 million budget request for the English language proficiency program: English Language Learners; the Governor also asked the Cities and Towns to support the Rebuild RI tax credits she has in her budget as well. In addition to the Governor speaking, the Executive Board received information on possible bills being passed to allow municipalities to tax renewable energy sources; and a briefing on how the state is trying to keep the solid waste tipping fee increase to a minimum.

- The Town Manager met with representatives of the Walker Ridge Association to discuss the water tower and pumping station that serve their neighborhood. They would like Town assistance in facilitating KCWA to take over maintenance. They are willing to meet whatever reasonable demands KCWA has in order for KCWA to take over. They are tired of maintaining a water system they have no expertise in maintaining. I have added this to my "To Do" list.
- The Director of Planning, Cheryl Wilcox (HR) and I continued interviews for the Assistant Planning Director position. We have advertised in neighboring states to attract a wider pool of candidates.
- The Town Manager has tasked the Public Works Director and Director of planning with inventorying all of the Town's real estate. We have seen an increase in the demand and cost of maintenance for properties the Town has inherited. The Town cannot sustain this financial and labor burden. A proposal will be coming before the Council in the future with various recommendations on how to handle this issue.
- The Town Manager has tasked the Director of Planning and Planning Board with developing a holistic proposal to manage all of the Town's Right-of-ways. This item will be brought before the Council in the future for discussion and guidance.
- The Town Manager, Cheryl Wilcox in her HR capacity, Pat Shurtleff Director of Human Services and Bob Thibeault Finance Director met to discuss benefits and licensing matters and how they fit into Department of Human Services' budget.
- The Director of Public Works, Kevin McGee, and the Town Manager met with concerned residents Bob and Kathleen McLaughlin of Camp Westwood Rd., to discuss road maintenance and private property issues from snow plowing.

Planning Department

No report this week.

Finance Department

- Continued to work on further updates to the FY17 Budget
- Completed work on the Town's insurance renewals with the RI Interlocal Trust
- Participated in Sewer Subcommittee Meeting on 4/13 for discussion regarding the Sampson & Weston proposed options for the next sewer project
- Continued to work with Direct Energy, the League of Cities & Towns, and Town employees to correct ongoing billing issues with Direct Energy
- The Waterman-Fiske Loan Committee (Karen Carlson, Pat Shurtleff, and myself) met with Julie Leddy (representing the Coventry Housing Associates) on 4/13 to finalize the terms of the Waterman-Fiske \$40,000 loan to the Coventry Housing Associates. Solicitor Gorham is drawing up the agreement.

Police Department

The previous Town Manager, Mr. Hoover, suggested having an independent fire service consultant come in to examine the fire district challenges and do a study. He estimated that it could possibly cost the Town 30K-60K to have one done. While the idea has a lot of merit, the Chief feels that the town should devote these funds to the Assistant EMA director position and look to write the job description/advertisement with a slant toward an EMA professional with a strong fire services

background. There are many EMA professionals in state which would fit this description and would understand the unique challenges of the fire district system and its accompanying issues. This EMA Assistant would already be expected to work closely with our fire districts and to develop cooperative influence within the fire district community. This individual could work on this study/project under the umbrella of the Assistant EMA position duties working for the Town of Coventry. This could be one of the projects assigned to this person along with other important long-term projects like Hazard Mitigation and Dam EAPs. This individual would work for the town and take a long term approach to helping to understand and develop a plan to address this complex fire district issue which pre-dates the Town Charter.

Department of Public Works

- New London Turnpike paving is completed as of 4/14/16
- Gay Street, Grandview Street and a portion of Acorn Street will be paved on 4/15/16
- On Monday 4/18/16, Hopkins Hill Road milling will commence and asphalt pavement will follow
- On Monday 4/18/16, Hopkins Hollow Bridge will be closed by RIDOT starting this date for approximately (3) three weeks for maintenance
- The old generator and enclosure was removed and the slab prepped for the new generator at Human Services
- The bridge on Island Drive has been completed
- The locker room at the Police Department will be completed on 4/15/16 by the DPW employees, flooring, painting and electrical will be by others.
- The Oak Haven Building has been cleaned and the floors washed in preparation for any suitors to the building

Information Technology Department

No report this week.

Parks and Recreation Department

No report this week.

Department of Human Services (DHS)

The Director met with the DHS Advisory Board about the department's proposed building plan and it was extremely well received. They are anxious to see some drawings which the department is in the process of arranging. The board suggested that the Department set up a table at the FTM to answer questions of residents who are attending. Kasim Yarn from the Rhode Island Department of Veterans Affairs and some of his staff are meeting on May 23 at DHS. The Director will extend an invitation to Police, Housing and Cheryl Wilcox – in her HR capacity.