

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Honorable Town Council Members

FROM: Karl F. Kilduff, Town Manager

DATE: September 21, 2022

Please find my report concerning various items of interest to the Town Council and community.

1. Council Business:

- ARPA Funding Update – As was reported to the Council previously, the Town received the “municipal” part of our ARPA funding allocation. The amount did not reflect the full amount of funds. The “county” portion of our award had not been released. It appears as if the county allocation payment will be released in early October. The Council should plan on setting aside some time to discuss potential uses and possible changes in how we have structured programs. For example, the art and non-profits quickly oversubscribed our available funding. It would make sense to put some limits to funding that will be made available per applicant. Given the anticipated timing of the final federal allotment, November or December would be a good timeframe for discussions.
- Charter Revision Commission – The Charter Revision is working through the Town Council’s recommendations. I am preparing a “redline” version of the charter to track the changes being discussed by the Commission. The aside from agreement on concepts by the Commission, the Town Attorney will have to weigh in on the substance of the possible language changes. At this early date it looks like the Commission will be able to stay on track and reach the other milestones in the draft schedule that was previously circulated to the Council.
- Financial Forecast – I have finished the financial planning model to describe future revenues and expenditures that will support the Council during its financial forecasting workshop to be held on September 29.

2. River COG:

The Council of Governments will meet again on September 28, 2022.

3. River Valley Transit (Estuary Transit):

The transit district board of directors met on September 9. As is noted in the heading for this part of my report, a new name has been selected for the new transit district formed by the merger of Estuary and Middletown Area Transit. New branding is in process which will likely use the colors from Estuary as they were more easily identifiable than MAT’s color scheme. The Park Connect program ended on September 5. The outward appearances of the merger are in process. We are still waiting on formal documentation from the DOT as a signatory to the merger agreement and funding still needs to be released for merger related expenses/projects.

4. Miscellaneous:

- Solid Waste – The handling of municipal solid waste remains in a state of flux. MIRA is currently handles our waste is positioning itself to close its operations. Even though we have a 5-year agreement with them, there are not enough participating communities state-wide to make their services viable. Additionally, the funding reserves that were buying down the cost of tip fees and no-cost recycling will not likely be available into the future given the needs to close the Hartford burn plant and remediate the site.

The MIRA Board decided in August to help towns with the transition to private haulers to truck waste out of Connecticut directly rather than through MIRA. The Towns, like Clinton, that send their waste to the Essex Transfer Station are in a different (slightly better) situation than the rest of the MIRA project towns. The COG may also pay a role in organizing a cooperative bid for the Essex towns. A number of operational and possibly regional decisions will have to be made during the balance of the fiscal year. Where our waste is ultimately direction remains to be determined. How much the tip fee will be and other policy impacts will mean changes to residents and likely the budget.

- Town Planner Hiring – I will discuss this vacancy during the Executive Session portion of the meeting.
- Public Works Hiring – The Town advertised to fill a Truck Driver vacancy in Public Works. We will conduct interviews soon to backfill this vacancy.