

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Honorable Town Council Members
FROM: Karl F. Kilduff, Town Manager
DATE: May 18, 2022

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

1. Council Business:

- ARPA Funding Applications – Grant agreements are in the process of being sent out and signed by non-profit and arts grant beneficiaries. Grant funds will be released after the agreements are executed. The process with the Finance Department was finalized earlier, so funds will start going out to organizations soon as agreements get signed.

2. Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM):

The CCM Legislative Committee met on May 10, 2022 to provide an overview of legislative actions taken during the recently concluded legislative session. Highlights of local interest included changes were approved to the Excess Cost Grant (ECS) which were meant to hold funding levels at a point different than the prior approved ECS formula. Formula changes could introduce some downside risk to the formula in out years which should be monitored. The car tax cap was discussed. While Clinton's mill rate is below the threshold for the program, the legislation changes that basis for valuing motor vehicles which could cause future problems at the local level. By lowering the value of motor vehicles, more pressure will be placed on real estate. The change in valuation does not go into effect for 2 years.

3. 9 Town Transit:

The Transit District held a meeting on May 13, 2022. The Transit District is in the midst of its budget process and will hold a public hearing on their budget soon. The budget now reflects the costs of the merger between Middletown and 9 Town. The District is also planning its annual outreach to legislators to educate them on the transit districts current state and progress made in the merger.

4. Miscellaneous:

- Moody's Bond Rating – As I reported earlier, the Town was able to secure an upgrade in our bond rating from Aa3 to Aa2. Importantly, the Town did not seek the upgrade. Rather the upgrade came following outreach from Moody's as part of their monitoring of communities. The upgrade reverses a decision made in 2018 to downgrade the town's rating. While the size of the fund balance might have triggered the phone call, weight was given to the formal policies adopted by the Town, financial reporting/forecasting, change in the form of government and growth in the Grand List.

This change is good news for the Town!

- Frontier Fiber Optic Upgrade – Frontier Communications is planning to start upgrading their service in Clinton by shifting to fiber optic. The plan is to bring fiber optic internet service to 5,800 single entities in Clinton which basically provides high speed broadband to everyone in town. Addresses with 5 units or more (apartment buildings, condos, etc...) will be brought on later as these sites can have more issues to resolve with connectivity than a single family home. Construction will be taking place in August and September, but some early work may begin sooner. A presentation will be provided that can be put online for public education on the work to be performed.
- Online Permitting – For some time now, efforts in Land Use and Building Departments have included bringing an online permitting platform up to improve customer service and staff efficiency. The forms and processes have been mapped and built into the system. Additionally, a number of data integrations have been built in to help drive the process. We have also built in coordination with CRAHD for some of their activities which allows for a one-stop shop. The vendor believes we are very close to going live. Right now we are tracking early June as a start date for the public. Once we get closer to June and iron out the last issues, I will give the Council a firmer launch date for the system.