

## TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Honorable Town Council Members

FROM: Karl F. Kilduff, Town Manager

DATE: September 20, 2023

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

### 1. Council Business:

- Fire Boat Follow-Up – Coming out of the last meeting where the Council consensus was to enter into a lease purchase for a new fire boat, we are moving forward with the necessary steps to amend our master lease agreement to include the boat. A formal resolution of the Council will be required to amend our lease agreement to include the boat on the schedule of leased vehicles. The price for the boat remains unchanged from when the bid was opened (\$644,685). The purchase agreement is currently under review.
- Sidewalk Follow-Up – I was able to connect with the engineers supporting the Department of Transportation to collect additional information on the potential sidewalk project. I will share that information at the meeting.
- Pickelball Update – The necessary planning and documenting work is in process for the development of Pickleball courts at the Indian River Complex. The anticipated site will require land use approvals. To that end, some of the work that is being completed is surveying the area and having a soil scientist flag the wetlands. An application to the Inland Wetland's Commission is the first step in the regulatory approval process. Inland Wetlands is anticipated for early October. Other land use applications would also follow later in October.
- Fishway Update – Discussions are on-going for the design and stewardship of the fish ladder to be installed at the dam near the Indian River Shops. For the Council's awareness, a few land transactions are involved in the project. Indian River Shops was supposed to convey back to the Town the area that includes the playground, but also the dam. Our intent is for the Water Company to assume the ownership of the dam as part of this project since the dam is essential infrastructure for their drinker water assets upstream. We are all working together to lay out the next steps and final property lines for the project. As originally envisioned, a walking trail was supposed to be part of the project too which needs to be determined at this point too. Ultimately, this will have to come back to the Council at a future date.
- Financial Forecast Workshop – I would like some direction from the Council on your interest to have another workshop focused on a financial forecast to help in budget preparation. We have done this over the past few years to flag areas of concern and as a forum for the Council to give some early budget input.

At my level, I am not looking for fixed percentages (even though that has been the focus of the conversation in the past). I would be looking for some policy direction that I can use to help craft the budget and make adjustments which reflect the direction the Council wants to head. Given the number of other items pending, I am not sure of the Council's availability for such a session.

## **2. River COG**

The River COG will have its next regular meeting on September 27, 2023.

## **3. CCM Legislative Committee**

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities held its Legislative Committee meeting on September 12, 2023. At this point in time, CCM is working on legislative concepts to address during the upcoming "short session". Policy ideas from the membership are being discussed for possible inclusion at this time.

## **4. Miscellaneous:**

- **Façade Program Update** – Final approval to start work on the Grand Apizza façade project is still pending approval from the State Historic Preservation Office. SHPO's review takes approximately 30+ days before approval is given for a project to proceed. The 30-day timeframe passed on September 1. I did reach out to SHPO staff for an update on releasing the project to go forward.
- **Union Contract Negotiations** – Negotiations remain on-going with the Police Union as the last union contract to be settled as well as negotiating the terms of their pension agreement which was left unresolved for several years.
- **Hiring** – The Town has re-advertised the department director for Human Services. An IT position remains unfilled and we are still recruiting candidates for interviews. Interviews have been scheduled for two other posted positions – the budgeted part-time Economic Development Coordinator to support the EDC's focus in a support role or conducting business outreach interviews and WPCC Clerk. Finally, a Public Works Truck Driver will also be advertised following the departure of a current employee. The Public Works job will be posted for the general public to apply after a required internal posting period.