

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Honorable Town Council Members

FROM: Karl F. Kilduff, Town Manager

DATE: March 17, 2021

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

1. Council Business:

- a) American Rescue Plan: Congress has reconciled and passed a pandemic stimulus package. Included in the American Rescue Plan was direct funding to states as well as vital aid to cities and towns. The funding to municipalities is supposed to flow directly to each town from the state. CCM hosted a federal briefing to review the municipal funding component.

The details of eligible expenses are to be issued by the Treasury Department. The intent is to help build an economy to bounce back and recover. Funding can be used through 2024 which allows for long-term projects to be considered. Some of the funds can be used to cover pandemic-related expenses (our expenses to date have been covered by FEMA and CARES Act funding), revenue losses attributable to the pandemic (but it cannot be used to cut taxes) and infrastructure projects.

Additional funding in the Act is supposed to provide for food assistance, child care and business (restaurant) assistance which is separate and distinct from local government funding.

More to come on this one as details start to be released.

- b) Re-opening: The Governor has announced next steps in re-opening the state's economy which will change the rules for many businesses later in March. Of note, as it relates to the Town Hall, these re-opening rule changes did not change the rules for theaters (like the Town Hall Auditorium). The availability of the Auditorium is still limited to 50% capacity and social distancing. Additionally, Clinton remains a "Red" town as classified by the Department of Public Health which indicates continued community spread of COVID which complicates any local re-opening of Town Hall to outside groups.

The Governor's re-opening strategy is now messaging a change from mandates to guidelines. As a result, should the Governor's emergency powers not be extended beyond April 19 (or legislative action), the Town will have to make its own choices on using the guidelines for direction.

- c) FY21-22 Budget: The next step in the budget process is the public hearing on the Town Council's Proposed Budget set for April 7 at 6:00 p.m. Given the pandemic meeting rules, the public hearing will be held electronically as it was last year. An email address is also being offered to receive public comments in addition to those wishing to speak.

2. CCM:

CCM will held its Legislative Committee meeting on March 4, 2021. The meeting focused on updates to bills working their way through the legislative process and the timing of concept bills being voted out of committee.

One item of note was a discussion on the three-tiered PILOT proposal that was passed by the House and Senate. The bill establishes a system to increase payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) to municipalities that house state property or a college/university. Most of the media attention on the bill has focused on the potential additional funding that would be provided to larger cities.

For Clinton, much smaller sums of money are at play. Clinton should receive \$98,494 in PILOT payments under existing formulas. Instead, the Governor's budget provides \$16,949. The three-tiered PILOT proposal could potentially provide Clinton with \$39,398 (and increase of \$22,449 – a little over 0.01 mills).

Final numbers for the formula still need to be refined as some older numbers were in the mix. The single largest hurdle is providing funding for the program. It was passed without a revenue source tied to it. As a result, it requires continued monitoring as the State budget is developed.

3. River COG:

The Council of Governments will meet virtually on March 24, 2021.

4. Estuary Transit Board:

The Transit District Board will meet on April 16, 2021.

5. Miscellaneous:

- Clean-up Program – Attached is a flier from a group based in the Hammocks that are organizing to do some early spring clean-up by collecting litter which has accumulated in parts of town.

Community Service - Volunteer for 2 Hours

Join a fun community event to help keep Long Island Sound clean. We are asking for your participation to work near our historic town center, the beaches and marshes on Saturday morning April 17, 2021. We will meet at Clinton Town Hall (1st photo below) starting at 9:30 AM. Please come early to get an assigned area to focus on in town.

John Harrington, a licensed Professional Engineer with experience in environmental services and waterfront development projects will give a talk at 9:30 AM on the importance of environmental stewardship including;

- Storm Water Systems and how they work
- Modern Waste Water Systems
- What we can do to help keep Long Island Sound clean



Our architecturally significant Town Hall. Also shown is litter in front of our awesome police station, along our historic Post Road and near our marshes on Beach Park Road. B

Please bring trash bags to help facilitate the clean-up effort. Thank you!

