

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Honorable Town Council Members

FROM: Karl F. Kilduff, Town Manager

DATE: May 17, 2023

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

1. Council Business:

- Pierson RFP – Heading into the mandatory site walk for interested developers on May 15, I was contacted by several developers expressing potential interest in the Pierson site. Each one had different questions to be answered. I will have more to report after the site walk. The mandatory site walk was meant to confirm the pool of potential bids as well as to acquaint them with the site.
- Pickle Ball Coordination – Following the Town Council meeting and ARPA workshop, I did have further discussions with Bo Potter on pickle ball and the Park & Recreation Commission's decision. The Commission's intent was to not replace the full basketball court from IRRC to Clinton beach. The intent is to move the current free throw area in the front beach parking lot to the site where the bocce ball pit is located. This would not be a regulation court – just an area to practice making shots at the hoop or a casual use. The Town Planner was asked to review this re-location for its feasibility and compliance with land use regulations.

The Engineer who completed the site survey has been asked to develop a cost estimate to convert the basketball court at IRRC and abutting parking areas (if needed) into multiple pickle ball courts. This work is covered in the approved funding amount for the pickle ball study.

2. CCM Legislative Committee:

The Legislative Committee of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities met on May 9 to review the status of bills under consideration and development of the state budget. Highlights of the meeting of relevance to Clinton included:

- Early Voting – The House approved a bill for 14 days of early voting. The Secretary of State was push a bill for 10 days. It would not go into effect until the Presidential Primary in 2024. If approved, early voting would be 14 days for a general election, 7 days for a primary, 4 days for a special election and no early voting for a local referendum. The funding to implement the program remains undefined.
- Motor Vehicle Assessments – The process to calculate motor vehicle assessments was changed in the last session. A bill is moving this session to delay implementation as the technology to keep up with the change is not ready. Additionally, as initially written it would create a big drop in the Town's Grand List shifting the tax burden back onto real estate.

- Online Publication of Legal Notices – A bill is still moving forward which would allow municipalities to public legal notices on their websites instead of local newspapers. This has been a regular ask for a number of years. COVID reinforced the fact that local newspapers do not have the reach they used to have and websites are becoming a larger source of town information. The ability to stop paying for legal notices would also be a small budget savings.
- Housing – A number of housing bills are still in motion which would impact local zoning to support the creation of more affordable housing. Some bills are more problematic than others in terms of the legal liability and fiscal impact to towns.

All legislation is still being closely monitored by CCM as the session moves into its final days. The budget and state aid in particular are of importance. We continue to get updates from CCM and COST (the Council of Small Towns) on developments in Hartford.

3. River Valley Transit District:

The Board of the Transit District met on May 12, 2023. The largest item of note pertains to the district's budget. The budget was accepted as a draft and referred to a public hearing. Final action on the budget won't be until June.

In other news, the roll out of the new branding for the merged transit district is slowly rolling out with buses being wrapped with new colors. Signage is also slowly being changed. It was also noted that the Clinton bus shelter was one of two shelters to pilot solar lighting. Clinton and Chester were selected. Clinton's has been operational where Chester's is still being worked on to be operational.

4. Miscellaneous:

- Union Contract Negotiations – The Town has reached the end of the negotiations stage where proposals are exchanged between the Town and the Union. More significant work will follow in negotiating specific proposals and fiscal impacts. The easier negotiation is simple wage adjustments for those contracts with only a wage re-open. Those should move faster. Any tentative agreement will have to come to the Council for approval after a Union has voted to accept the tentative agreement.