



Scott Shanley
General Manager

Town of Manchester

General Manager's Report

November 2007

Veteran's Day Closing

All municipal offices will be closed on Monday, November 12 in observance of Veteran's Day.

Employee Mentoring Program

The Employee Mentoring Program is underway! Employees received training and orientation for the program and will be mentors to children at the Buckley, Nathan Hale and Verplanck Elementary Schools. The following employees are recognized for their commitment and dedication to serve in this program:

Jim Wren, Coordinator
Susan Alaimo
Heather Boudreaux
Pam Cowan
Linda Crockett
Laurie Dunlop
Julian Freund
Lynn Jacobs

Sharon Kozey
Dede Moore
Barbara Pettijohn
James Raboin
Karen Rich
Richard Staye
Marilyn Smith
Joan Ward

Customer Service and Information Center

Manchester Road Race

The 71st running of the Manchester Road Race takes place Thanksgiving Day, November 22 at 10:00 a.m. Information and on-line registration is available now at www.manchesterroadrace.com. Registration forms are also available at the Customer Service and Information Center in Town Hall, Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Leaf Vacuuming

The Town of Manchester is divided into two areas for vacuum leaf collection. For Area 1, all leaves must be raked to the curbside by November 5th. Collection is expected to begin in Area 2 approximately November 19. Crews will start in Area 1 south of Middle Turnpike, followed by working north of Middle Turnpike. For more information, or to search an area where a street is located, please consult the Town's website at <http://publicworks.townofmanchester.org/leafroutes/>.

Election Day

Tuesday, November 6, 2007, is Election Day with all polling places open from 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 30 was the deadline to register to vote. The *Voter Location* link is now available on the Town of Manchester Registrars of Voters page. Registered voters may click on the link and select their street name to identify their polling place. www.townofmanchester.org/registrar/default.cfm.

Finance Department

Assessment and Collection

The Office of Assessment and Collection continues to work on the Grand List of October 1, 2007. Taxpayers are reminded that the revaluation is being phased in over a period of three years. Thus, taxpayers will receive revised assessment notices to reflect year two of the phase-in. These notices are still several months away, as they will be mailed in late January or early February 2008.

Taxpayers are also reminded that regarding second half payments on the Grand List of 2006, the bills were mailed in June 2007 and will be due in January 2008. Since both payment coupons were included with the June 2007 bill, there is no second bill mailed for the January 2008 payment. Any taxpayers who are unsure of how much they owe in January 2008 or who do not have their payment coupons may call 860-647-3018 to double check the amount of their bill.

Work on the Personal Property Grand List of October 1, 2007, continues as well. Taxpayers who own tangible personal property were sent declarations in September 2007. Those declarations had a statutorily mandated due date of November 1, 2007. If any taxpayers missed that deadline, they are still encouraged to file their declarations as soon as possible. Although all late declarations must incur the statutorily mandated penalty (25%), it is still important that taxpayers file so that their assessment is accurately tabulated based on the information the taxpayers provide the Office of Assessment and Collection.

Human Services Department

Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) Training Program

The Town's 14th CNA training program commenced October 15 and will conclude on December 7, 2007. Eighteen students enrolled in this eight-week program through grants from Capital Workforce Partners, the Town of Manchester's CDBG program, the Bank of America/Foulds Family Foundation, and the Manchester Road Race Committee. Each participant had to successfully complete an interview, drug test, physical exam, and TB Test before being accepted into the program.

The graduation ceremony will be Friday, December 7 at 11:00 a.m. in the Fireside Commons area of Manchester Community College. The public is invited to attend.

Library

For the month of November, the Library will be hosting:

November 10th at 10:30 a.m. - a special Bi-Lingual Storytime to celebrate the discovery of Puerto Rico, with the help of the Association of Puerto Ricans and Latinos United of Manchester

November 17th at 10:30 a.m. - Reading with Storybook Characters, in celebration of National Children's Book Week, by a Manchester High Girl Scout troop

November 19th at 7:00 p.m. - Manchester Public Library Book Discussion Group, discussing *The Widows War*, by Sally Gunning

November 26th at 7:00 p.m.- the second installment of Pursue Personal Success at Your Library, subject Goals and Success

Recreation Department

Winter/Spring Brochure

The Parks and Recreation Winter/Spring Brochure is scheduled to be mailed to every household in Manchester the week of November 26. The Winter/Spring Season is January – May. Program registration begins December 10.

Public Works Department

Building Inspection

Activity for the month of September 1 – September 30, 2007

| <i>Building Permits</i> | <i>September</i> | <i>August</i> |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Total Applications received | 237 | 267 |
| Total Permits issued | 202 | 251 |
| Total Revenue | \$41,139.08 | \$63,456.64 |
| Construction Value* | \$3,143,090.31 | \$6,980,765 |
| Inspections conducted | 647 | 787 |

Code Enforcement

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| Cases opened | 66 | 60 |
| Cases closed | 46 | 99 |
| Inspections conducted | 129 | 176 |

Comparison of fiscal years July 1 – September 30

| <i>Building Permits</i> | <i>FY2008</i> | <i>FY2007</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Total Applications received | 814 | 906 |
| Total Permits issued | 771 | 866 |
| Total Revenue | \$173,139.16 | \$261,153.15 |
| Total Construction Value* | \$14,869,676.39 | \$40,229,808.73 |
| Inspections conducted | 2169 | 2240 |

Code Enforcement

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| Cases opened | 175 | 235 |
| Cases closed | 190 | 223 |
| Inspections conducted | 415 | 383 |

Manchester Fire-Rescue-EMS

Activity Report for September 2007

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Medical/Rescue | 464 |
| Fire Related | 21 |
| Hazardous Conditions | 26 |
| Public Service | 37 |
| Good Intent | 47 |
| False | 32 |
| Mutual Aid | 3 |
| Total Calls – September | 630 (21 per 24 hour period) |
| Total Calls – Year-to-date | 6166 (22.59 per 24 hour period) |

History Lesson #10 – Manchester's Most Disastrous Fire

(Part II) At the time of the fire, Mr. Verplanck was at the train depot at North Manchester awaiting a 2:20 p.m. train to Boston for some school business. Before leaving his office for the train, he had brought a new dictionary over to the Ninth District School building and left it on Miss Bennet's desk. This was the last time he ever saw the inside of the school. The fire whistle could be heard from the platform at the train station and Mr. Verplanck counted the blasts. He recognized the number immediately. He hailed a ride from William Foulds who was sitting in his car at the depot, and headed back to the school. As he traveled back to the school, he observed huge billows of smoke in the sky. He knew, right away, this was no false alarm. The safety of the children was Mr. Verplanck's first concern. Jumping out of the car he learned from LaMotte Russell that everyone was out safely. Verplanck said he found Miss Bennet soon thereafter and she confirmed the report. The evacuation system that had been practiced for 17 years had worked, even in Mr. Verplanck's absence. Once the children had exited the building, they were instructed to go straight home.

Fire companies from stations No. 1 and No. 4 arrived just as the last occupants were leaving the building. At the time of the fire, the South Manchester Fire Department did not have any pumping apparatus. Hoses were coupled directly to the hydrants and firefighters relied on the pressure in the municipal water system to produce their firefighting streams. The first line of hose was directed up the front stairs and through the large double doors. Firefighters and some of the older students manned the hose line. An attempt was made to advance the line into the interior of the building, but firefighters were forced back by the flames rolling down the large corridor toward them. Efforts were then directed to fighting the fire from the exterior.

By 2:30 p.m., it was impossible to get within 200 – 300 feet of the building. Firefighters covered with water soaked blankets took turns manning the nozzles. The cotton outer covering of the fire hoses frequently burned through causing the hoses to burst. Firefighters had to take turns opening and closing hydrants while sections of hose were replaced. A fire truck belonging to Co. 2, parked at the corner of Main and School Streets, had its entire paint blister before it could be moved to a safer location. At one point in the firefighting operation there were ten streams operating. The fire was being fanned by a wind from the south and the east. Sparks and heat were being swept across School Street. The Rogers business block, Hose House No. 4 and three other houses on School Street were now all burning in addition to the school.

Training Initiatives

An acquired two-family house on Russell Street served as the training ground for numerous firefighter confidence building exercises in October. The two-story structure, with full attic, was modified to present many different obstacles and hazards throughout the structure. Firefighters wearing self-contained breathing apparatus, with face masks blackened out, were required to find their way out of the structure (attic to front door on first floor), without use of sight, while overcoming such obstacles as vertical descends, blocked passage ways, wire entanglement, and narrow alternative exiting means. In order to successfully exit the structure, firefighters were forced to use unconventional exits such as wall breaches and to remove air-packs (while staying “on-air”) to travel through restricted openings. In addition to building confidences the exercises measured firefighters’ air usage during strenuous activities. Follow-up exercises required firefighters to control rate of breathing when cylinders were low on air and the firefighter is unable to exit the structure. Total cost to the department in setting up the course: \$97. Total value of training experience: priceless!

Confined space training was also completed in October: Firefighters reviewed rigging extrication mechanisms and rehearsed entering underground vaults to extricate injured parties. The practical training was accomplished within an underground vault on the property of the Water Department on Spring Street.

Firefighters continue to train under “live fire” conditions almost every Friday morning at the Hartford Fire Department training grounds. Manchester firefighters join firefighters from East Hartford, West Hartford, and South District Middletown to drill on search and rescue, ventilation, suppression and rapid intervention for “firefighter down” scenarios.

Water/Sewer Department

Due to the lack of precipitation, reservoir levels have dropped significantly over the last several months. Because of this, when the reservoirs dropped to 80% of capacity, the Water Department issued an Alert on 8/17/2007 to notify water customers of the situation and asked for voluntary conservation measures. It also warned that if significant rainfall didn't occur, more aggressive conservation measures may need to be implemented.

Rainfall continued to be well below normal historical levels in September, thus on 9/10/2007 a Water Advisory was issued because the reservoirs levels continued to drop and reached 70% of capacity. The Advisory reiterated the need for all residential, commercial

and industrial users of the potable water supply to voluntarily conserve water. This included taking shorter showers, running dishwashers and washing machines only with full loads, shutting off water while washing hands, shaving and brushing teeth, and minimizing the watering of lawns and gardens. Further voluntary conservation measures include avoiding the power washing of homes, sidewalks and driveways; reducing the frequency of washing vehicles, and decreasing the refilling of swimming pools. It also recommended that any leaky plumbing fixtures be repaired or replaced with low-flow devices.

October rainfall has been near normal, however unseasonably warm temperatures and dry, parched soil conditions has negated much of the benefit which would normally occur from cool, wet weather events. Because of this situation, there remains a possibility that the Town's Water Emergency Contingency Plan may need to be activated. There are three phases of this plan whereby the General Manager, with approval from the Board of Directors, is able to declare a Water Emergency and can impose mandatory restrictions to water use. The objective is to conserve water by restricting non-essential usage so there is an adequate supply for human consumption and fire protection. The first phase of mandatory restrictions would occur when the reservoirs drop to 60% capacity. If necessary, additional restrictions could be imposed if levels dropped to 40 percent or less.

The Water Department has formed a Task Force to ensure all our water resources are being optimized and to explore additional sources of supply. This includes re-development of dormant wells, the acquisition of new wells, and the possibility of intermunicipal agreements for water system interconnections which could prove mutually beneficial.

We urge all water users to continue their voluntary conservation measures which has helped in the rate of capacity decline. Shorter days and cooler weather has also helped to reduce usage. We hope that these factors, plus with some help from Mother Nature, we can avoid the implementation of mandatory water use restrictions.

Employees News

Newly Hired

Brian Wolverton – Management Analyst
David Roy – Police Officer
Heriberto Figueroa – Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator

Recently Promoted

Chris Holt – Working Master Mechanic
Elizabeth DeNardis – GIS Technician II