



Scott Shanley
General Manager

Town of Manchester

General Manager's Report

December 2007

Holiday Closings

Town offices and Libraries will be closed on Tuesday, December 25 and Tuesday, January 1 in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays. There will be no trash collection on these holidays; collection will be a day late for the remainder of the week.

Board of Directors - Community Open House at Town Hall

Board members will receive the public in the lobby of Town Hall on Monday, December 17, 2007 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

The Customer Service and Information Center will be open and the community is invited to purchase holiday gifts or sign up for Manchester Matters.

A table will be set up for citizens to enroll in the next session of Manchester Government Academy.

Canned food items and new unwrapped toys will be welcomed as donations for MACC Charities.

United Way

This year's campaign set a new record for contributions by Town of Manchester employees: \$15,279. MACC Charities will be a direct recipient of \$1,318 of these funds. Thank you to Co-Coordinator, Tim O'Neil and Doreen Petrozza, for their efforts in leading such a successful campaign!

Customer Service and Information Center

Holiday Shopping

For those in search of "Manchester" gifts, please visit the Customer Service and Information Center *Gift Shoppe* in Town Hall for calendars, T-shirts, tote bags, mugs, historical books, cookbooks, note cards and much more. Or consider making a donation to the Memorial Tree Planting Program by calling 647-5235.

<http://www.townofmanchester.org/Citizen Service/Merchandise.cfm>

Manchester Government Academy

The 11th session of Manchester Government Academy ended recently. Congratulations to the following graduates:

Valerie Atanasio	Raysheda Lockett
Adele Bell	Art Ostergren
Andrew Cavazza	Amy Syme
Kate Deasy	Carole Quish
Emilie and Frank Della Rocco	Keith Shaner
Lyle Donovan	Ann and Leo Siebert
Bert Gay	Linda Snyder
James Wallin	Scott Somes
Mary Jarvis Smith and Charles Smith	Kenneth Sullivan
Marilu Joslin	Sue and Joe Tyler
Patricia Ladd	Egils Vigants

The next session of Manchester Government Academy will be offered in March. More information can be found on the home page of the Town's website, www.ci.manchester.ct.us.

Finance Department

Assessment and Collection

Work continues on the Motor Vehicle Supplemental Grand List of October 1, 2006. Processing of the records on this list began a little later than last year due to the annual delay in obtaining the registration data from the Department of Motor Vehicles. However, pricing, adjusting, and reviewing of the data is nearing completion and supplemental tax bills will be mailed on a timely basis in December of 2007.

The Motor Vehicle Supplemental Grand List is the process by which the Office of Assessment and Collection assesses and taxes vehicles that were registered after October 1, 2006, but within the October 1, 2006 – September 30, 2007 Grand List year. Connecticut General Statutes require that these vehicles be assessed and taxed on the supplemental Grand List, since the owners of these vehicles did not receive a tax bill on these vehicles in July 2007.

Arrival of the Motor Vehicle Registration data for the Motor Vehicle Regular Grand List of October 1, 2007 is expected to occur in early December of 2007. CT General Statutes mandate that the information be sent by the DMV to towns by December 1 of each year but it routinely arrives late.

Work continues on the Personal Property Grand Lists of October 1, 2007 as well.

Businesses and some individuals are required to file their Declaration of Personal Property by November 1st each year. There are approximately 3,200 personal property accounts in Manchester. The Office of Assessment and Collection has been reviewing the declarations that were sent by taxpayers since the forms were sent to the taxpayers in mid-November, as CT General Statutes mandate a penalty for late filing. The Office of Assessment and

Collection encourages everyone who was sent a declaration to respond and file their declaration if they have not already done so, since this will avoid having to estimate assessments as is required to do for all taxpayers who do not respond to the declarations or notices that are sent.

Work continues on the Real Estate Grand List of October 1, 2007. The 2007 Grand List will be billed in June 2008. Manchester did a revaluation for the Grand List of October 1, 2006, so the 2007 Grand List will be the second year after the revaluation and, unless modified by the Board of Directors, the second year of the approved three-year phase-in of the revaluation.

Work continues on assessment appeals filed in early 2007. To date, roughly 80% of these appeals have been settled, mostly during pretrial conference at the New Britain courthouse. The Town has performed quite well in these pretrials, and the settlements obtained to date have been quite reasonable and favorable to the Town. Work is progressing as planned on the total Grand List (Real Estate, Motor Vehicle, and Personal Property) and is expected to be signed in January of 2008.

Manchester Fire-Rescue-EMS

Activity Report for October 2007

Medical/Rescue	482
Fire Related	18
Hazardous Conditions	28
Public Service	30
Good Intent	51
False	41
Mutual Aid	6
TOTAL	656

History Lesson #11 – Manchester's Most Disastrous Fire

(PART II) People who had been watching the fire were now scurrying to protect their property or assist others. The number of hose lines needed were overtaxing the water system. Fire streams were only reaching 50 feet and were totally ineffective. Firefighting efforts were no longer directed at the school buildings, but towards other buildings that might possibly be saved. Chief Atwood realized that the fire had grown beyond the capability of Manchester's department. At 2:40 p.m. he put in a call to the Hartford Fire Department for assistance. Hartford dispatched Tractor Engine No. 1 and that company's auto hose wagon to Manchester. The wooden, three story Watkins building at the corner of Main and School Streets caught fire again and again. The building was kept wetted down and was eventually saved. The fire had spread to the South Manchester Library building at the corner of Main and Wells Streets. It was soon engulfed in flames, but not before its contents of 13,000 books were carried to safety. Meanwhile, embers were being carried by the wind and landing on buildings as far north as Oak Street, three blocks away. Men with garden hoses extinguished small fires on roofs and awnings. At 3:05 p.m. the auto hose wagon arrived from Hartford and was positioned at a hydrant at the corner of Main and

Eldridge Streets. This location was chosen to get ahead of the fire and check its northerly progress. In addition, this hydrant was on a large diameter water main that ran up Main Street. Hartford's tractor-drawn steamer arrived about 10 minutes later and was immediately connected to the hydrant. Soon, two heavy fire streams were operating with a third added soon after. By this time the walls of the school building had fallen in. Hose House No. 4 and the library were burned to the ground. On School Street, the Rogers Block, Benson's Boarding House and the homes of William McCormick, Alexander Trotter and Robert Campbell were burning. It was determined that these buildings were beyond saving, with the exception of the Rogers Block. Firefighting efforts centered around the Rogers Block, Watkins Building, Stenburg home and its stable on Eldridge Street. The horses and carriages were removed from the stable and bucket brigades were formed to stop frequent attempts by these buildings to ignite. John Kletzel and Ray Goslee fastened clothesline rope around their waists and descended the steep Stenburg house roof to extinguish burning embers. At one point, Goslee's clothes were ignited by embers rolling down the valley of the roof.

FIRE ACT Grant

Congressman John B. Larson, in a press conference held at fire headquarters on November 19th, announced that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) had awarded the fire department a federal *Assistance to Firefighters* grant (FIRE ACT) in the amount of \$185,744. The grant will be used to replace the department's inventory of self-contained breathing apparatus. The 2007 grant award is the third FIRE ACT grant the department has received since the grants program inception. In 2003 the department was awarded \$263,000 to replace a single channel, single frequency conventional radio system. In 2004 the department received \$40,000 to replace a 25 year old air-filling system for self-contained breathing apparatus.

Alternative Heating Methods

There's no doubt the winter of 2007-08 will be cold. Will the cold coupled with the anticipated high cost of energy (fuel oil, natural gas, electricity) force citizens to look at alternative heating methods to stay warm without breaking the bank? It may and that is concerning to the fire department. The fire department is beginning a public relations campaign to advise citizens on how to remain safe when using alternate heating sources this winter. For example, the department warns that indoor fireplace use should only occur if the fireplace has been built and maintained to burn hard woods for long durations. Many fireplaces in newer housing may be able to burn a nice artificial log or two, but may not be intended to burn hard wood 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Any fireplace should be inspected prior to use, by a fireplace/chimney service, to assure it is in good repair and clean. And, no fireplace should have burning material inside it without a good fireplace screen to keep embers and sparks from shooting out into the room. While a fireplace is in operation assure that room contents are not too close to the fireplace where radiated heat and start a fire. Don't dispose of spent ashes inside the house or in a non-metal container (with tight fitting lid) outside and away from the house. Citizen's thinking of using alternative heating methods are advised that the Fire Marshal's office can offer good advice on use of

fireplaces, space heaters, wood or pellet stoves, etc. The Fire Marshal's telephone number is 647-3267.

Information Systems

The Town received notice that it ranked in the top 10 in the Digital Cities Survey for the fourth year in a row.

Manchester Public Library

Programming

Special programs for children will be offered during school vacation week, including "Winter Wonderland Magic" on December 26 at 11:00 a.m. at the Whiton Branch Library building and repeated at 2:00 p.m. at the Mary Cheney building. There will also be a summer-themed "Reading Luau" at 10:30 a.m. on December 29 at Mary Cheney. Earlier in the month, on December 8 at 2:00 p.m., there will be another session of "READ to the Dogs" in the Mary Cheney building's Howroyd Room.

Teen Nights continue on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at Mary Cheney.

The adult reading and discussion program for the month will be reviewing the book, "The Parrot's Lament" by Eugene Linden and will be held on December 17 at 7:00 p.m.

Manchester Police Department

The Manchester Police Department received two awards presented by the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association at the 2006 Connecticut Law Enforcement Challenge Summit held at the Water's Edge in Westbrook, CT on 11/14/07.

The Law Enforcement Challenge is a friendly competition between Connecticut agencies of presentations of each agency's traffic and safety programs. The presentations are judged by the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association. **First Place for Municipal 6 Category – 2006 Connecticut Law Enforcement Challenge** (based on a police agency with 100-200 members) and **Best Overall Occupant Protection Enforcement Program 2006 Connecticut Law Enforcement Challenge**. The Traffic Division Officers include Sergeant Howard Beeler, Sergeant David Brzezinski (who compiled the actual documentation and developed the 2006 Law Enforcement Challenge Booklet that was submitted by Manchester Police Department), and Officer Donald Poist, Officer Guy Beck and Officer Paul Gilligan.

Manchester Police Department is pleased to announce the promotion of two outstanding Police Officers; Officer Jonathan Laughlin has been promoted to Detective and Officer David Brzezinski has been promoted to Sergeant. Both Officers came on to the Department in July 2002. Det. Laughlin has a BA Degree from the University of Connecticut and is currently working on his Master's Degree in Criminal Justice from Boston University and is a POST (Police Officer Standards and Training) Council certified polygraph examiner. Det. Laughlin has received the Meritorious Service Unit Citation Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, "Possible Club" Marksmanship Award, Letter for Outstanding Performance and

Letter of Commendation. Sergeant Brzezinski received is BA Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Connecticut and is a member of C.R.E.S.T. (Capitol Region Emergency Services Team). Sgt. Brzezinski has received the "Possible Club" Marksmanship Award, Distinguished Service Medal, Letter for Outstanding Performance, Letter of Commendation, and Certificate of Appreciation from M.A.D.D. A departmental promotional ceremony was conducted on 11/16/07 at the Manchester Police Department.

Public Works Department

Winter Parking Ban

Residents are reminded that overnight parking is not allowed on public streets or municipal parking lots between the hours of 2:00 AM and 6:00 from December 1st to April 1st.

Removal of Snow from Sidewalks

Town ordinance requires that owners and occupants of buildings and vacant lots are responsible to remove snow, sleet, and ice from the public sidewalk abutting their property within 24 hours after the conclusion of a storm. Failure to comply with this ordinance may result in a fine.

Please cooperate so that school children and other pedestrians will be able to use the public sidewalks and avoid having to walk in the street.

Catch Basins and Storm Inlets

Help minimize street flooding by keeping leaves and other debris off the catch basin grate nearest your house. This includes removing snow and ice form the front of storm inlets during the winter. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Building Inspection

Building Inspection Activity for October 1 – October 31

Building Permits	October	September
Total Applications received	291	237
Total Permits issued	305	202
Total Revenue	\$58,790.72	\$41,139.08
Construction Value*	\$4,093,650	\$3,143,090.31
Inspections conducted	660	647

Code Enforcement

Cases opened	55	66
Cases closed	84	46
Inspections conducted	173	129

Comparison of fiscal years July – October

Building Permits	FY2008	FY2007
Total Applications received	1105	1257
Total permits issued	1076	1189
Total revenue	\$234,776.88	\$312,707.55
Total Construction Value*	\$18,963,326.39	\$45,173,9632.73
Inspections conducted	2829	2948

Code Enforcement

Cases opened	230	265
Cases closed	274	242
Inspections conducted	588	477

Water/Sewer Department

The Water Department is now in the final design phase for the renovation and modification of the Globe Hollow Water Treatment Plant. A new process of ozonation will be added for improving taste and odor while serving as additional microbial barrier. The present mechanical processes are 25 years old and are in need of either upgrade or replacement. Many changes will be made for the purpose of safety such as the elimination of chlorine gas. Security issues will be addressed as recommended in the required Federal EPA vulnerability assessment. The project is scheduled to break ground in June of 2008 and be completed by September of 2009.

Despite some recent rainfall events, there has not been enough to sufficiently replenish the Town's water supply. The current level of the reservoirs is 67.4%, thus we remain at the Advisory Stage of our Water Contingency Plan.

Although no mandatory restrictions are in place at this time, the Advisory strongly recommends that all residential, commercial and industrial users of the potable water supply voluntarily conserve water. This includes 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 recommends that any leaky plumbing fixtures be repaired or replaced with low-flow devices.

The Water Department would like to thank all those citizens, businesses and users of the Town's water supply for their continued conservation efforts. Since August, water usage has declined significantly. While some of this reduction is due to normal seasonal variations, a significant portion is due to your conservation efforts. While not yet fully recovered, we remain optimistic that through the continued cooperation of our community, the reservoirs will reach a level status where the Advisory can be lifted.

Employee News

Recently Promoted

- Barbara Quigley – Community Health Nurse, Health Department
- David Brzezinski – Sergeant, Police Department
- Jonathan Laughlin – Detective, Police Department

Newly Hired

- Patti LaForest – Senior Administrative Secretary, Health Department
- Angelo Sorvillo – Neighborhood Inspection Officer (part time)