



# TOWN OF TOLLAND

## REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

*Steven R. Werbner*  
Town Manager

August 9, 2011

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### Town Manager's Office

#### Baxter Street Issue

At the Inlands Wetlands Commission meeting of July 21, 2011 a concern was expressed by a resident about activities of the Town at 287 Baxter Street. This site was purchased by the Town in early 2000 with the intent of using a portion of the property for cemetery purposes and the other portion for recreation use. For over five years Public Works has been on a time available basis bringing clean fill to the area and grading the recreation portion for use as a practice field primarily for the Town's lacrosse program. Allegations made by the complainant included filling of wetlands area, dumping of construction debris, dumping by Town workers off hours and material dumped from a gas station which may be contaminated. The Commission upon questioning and discussion with the complainant inferred that work was continuing at the site after the Town was told to hold off on any further activity and that "it appears the Town Employees have blatantly disregarded the IWC regulations as well as the Commission and Agents instructions." It was suggested that a referral should be made to DEP related to the nature of the fill. Prior to this meeting the Wetlands Agent informed Town staff that the complainant was coming to the meeting and it was recommended that Town staff not appear at that time. Thus, all actions and statements made by the Commission were made as a result of input or lack thereof of the Wetlands Agent and the Complainant.

Following receipt of a cease and desist order issued by the Commission, I engaged a soil scientist to establish the extent of fill in the wetlands and an environmental engineer to determine if hazardous material had been deposited at the site. The allegations were serious in nature and in my opinion warranted complete follow up. In addition, we engaged outside council due to a potential conflict on the part of the Town Attorney if he had to represent the interests of the Town and the IWC.

The summary of the results of the experts work is that there was no filling of the wetlands, some disturbance of the upland review area and no hazardous material deposited at the site. Work being performed is no where near the brook in question and no grading had been done at the site since the Wetlands agent had told Town staff to stop work. The Town employee who was depositing concrete block at the site from a garage in Town that had collapsed during the winter had permission since the Town was looking for clean fill to complete the work. The material from a gas station came from the Town's highway garage and the material had been previously approved by the environmental engineer.

The Town Administration understands that in the past there have been some concerns in terms of coordinating town work with the requirements of the Wetlands Commission. This aspect needs to continue to be addressed and assurances have been made to the Commission that Town staff want to develop standard operating procedures to ensure compliance with wetlands regulations, but also allow us to do our work in a timely fashion, some of which is done on an emergency basis. Saying all that it is unfair for anyone to accuse another of inappropriate actions publicly without taking the time to gather all the facts and evidence related to the alleged incident. Hopefully in discussions with the Commission the facts of the particular case can be discussed and concerns minimized and that procedures can be developed for future actions that will help to build trust in current staff's commitment to the goals of the IWC.

#### Position Vacancies

Assistant Revenue Collector Carrie Zahner recently left service with the Town and we thank her for her service and wish her the best in her future endeavors. Also, Director of Library Services Barbara Butler announced her retirement effective September 9, 2011 after almost eight years in that position. We thank her for her commitment and service to the Town and wish her well in the future and with her move to Florida. Recruitments to fill both these positions are currently underway.

#### Engineering

##### Hicks Memorial Municipal Center & Library Parking Lot Expansion & Associated Site Improvements

- The bid opening was rescheduled to Tuesday, August 9, 2011. It is expected that construction will begin at the end of August/beginning of September.
- The Town Engineer, along with other town staff will assist in the administration of this project and inspection of the parking lot, drainage improvements and utility installations.

##### Surface Transportation Program (STP) – Route 195 Corridor Study

- Upon inquiry from CRCOG, the Town Planner and Town Engineer have been working with CRCOG and Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. to determine if portion(s) of the recommendations in the study would be eligible to receive funds through the STP.

#### Miscellaneous

- The Town Engineer has been assisting the Town Planner in regards to reviewing several development plans and Planning and Zoning applications.
- The Town Engineer has been working with Public Works and the Town Manager to develop solutions to several drainage issues in Town. Additionally, they have just begun reviewing the need to clean out an intermediate sized retention basin in Town.

- Engineering has also worked with several staff members to come to a resolution regarding the design and construction of a stormwater management system at 94-96 Tolland Green Road.

#### Tolland Water Commission

- Diversion Permit Status: A response letter was sent to CT DEP on March 29, 2011 and we are awaiting their final decision.
- The Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission and the Town Engineer met recently with CT DPH to discuss the unapproved Water Supply Plan as well as the response that they have drafted. The draft was received favorably by CT DPH.
- The TWC has been developing their 2011-2012 budget and determining the need for a rate adjustment.
- The TWC has also been discussing long-term planning needs and goals.
- The next regular Tolland Water Commission meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, September 7, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

#### Water Pollution Control Authority

- John Konrad, Chair of the WPCA recently resigned for personal reasons. The WPCA and the Town Engineer would like to thank Mr. Konrad for his willingness to fill the Chair position during a difficult time and his efforts in assisting the WPCA with numerous tasks. We wish him the best and continued success.
- The Town Manager, Town Engineer and staff from EHHD met this past month to discuss the Apple Road and Willie Circle areas. It was determined that additional research could prove helpful in understanding the perceived issues in these two areas. EHHD is in the process of compiling information in regards to variances, reports of septic repairs and other pertinent information. Once this report is developed, the Town Manager and Town Engineer will review the information with EHHD and the WPCA.
- The WPCA has been developing their 2011-2012 budget and determining the need for a rate adjustment.
- The next regular meeting is scheduled for August 16, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.
- The next workshop meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room C.

#### **Finance & Records**

##### Sale of Town-Owned Property

On July 22<sup>nd</sup> the Town completed the sale of Town owned property at 227 Hartford Turnpike. According to the Town's Financial Policies, Procedures & Guidelines the proceeds from the sale will be invested into the CNRE Fund which serves as a reserve fund as a future source of financing for projects. The actual financing contributions will be determinate through the annual

capital budget process. The market value of the CNRE fund on June 30, 2011 was \$1,004,612.42.

See the attached Quarterly Investment Status – for the period April 2011 to June 2011.

### **Human Services**

Residents may call any of the following Tolland Human Services personnel for more information about state programs and local initiatives:

Beverly Bellody, M.S., Human Services Director (860) 871-3611  
Nancy Taylor Dunn, L.P.C., Youth Services Coordinator (860) 871-3612  
Jennifer Therian, L.M.F.T., Counseling Services (860) 871-3615  
Rebecca Ellert, Elderly Outreach Case Worker/Food Pantry (860) 870-3726  
Fran Weigand, Senior Center Director (860) 870-3725  
Donna Francis, Human Services Secretary (860) 871-3648

### **Youth Services**

TYSCCT's (Tolland Youth Services Community Theater) performances of *Doctor Dolittle* were held on Friday and Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. at Tolland High School. Youth Services is grateful for the continuing support of the Town, local businesses and organizations and the community.

### **Human Services**

#### **Operation Fuel Emergency Utility (Gas or Electric Only) Assistance Program (August 1 – October 31, 2011)**

An Operation Fuel energy grant (a one-time grant, up to \$200 per household) is *not* an entitlement to all Connecticut residents who fall within the income guidelines.

Households which fall within the income guidelines below *must also* be faced with a *financial crisis and demonstrate need*.

- *Financial crisis* is defined as the inability of a family to pay for an outstanding gas or electric bill. -- household is faced with the decision to choose between paying for their energy needs, buying food, paying the rent or mortgage, or paying medical bills as a result of unemployment, limited or fixed income, illness, death, or other emergencies.
- Some examples of *need* can include but are not limited to the following:
  - Client health is threatened (i.e. needs utility to refrigerate medications or baby formula)
  - Client needs utility to keep medical equipment operational
  - Client needs grant to prevent shut off or reinstate service

| <b>Operation Fuel Household Size – Gross Income Guidelines</b> |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>          | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>          | <b>5</b>          | <b>6</b>          | <b>7</b>          |
| Under<br>\$21,780  | Under<br>\$29,420 | Under<br>\$37,060 | Under<br>\$44,700 | Under<br>\$52,340 | Under<br>\$59,980 | Under<br>\$67,670 |

Tolland residents may call Nancy Dunn, (860) 871-3612 for information or to schedule an appointment to apply for an Operation Fuel Utility Assistance Grant.

Renters' Rebate Program

The Town of Tolland Human Services Office is accepting applications for the Renters' Rebate Program. This program runs from May 15, 2011 through September 15, 2011. To be eligible, the applicant must have resided in Connecticut for one year prior to filing. Who is eligible:

- Applicant and/or spouse age 65 years or over by the end of December 2010, or
- Age 50 years old or over and the surviving spouse of a renter, who at the time of their death had qualified and was entitled to tax relief, or
- Persons under 65 years of age who are receiving Social Security disability benefits determined comparable by the Office of Policy and Management.

Applicants' 2010 gross income must not exceed \$32,300 if single or \$39,500 if married/civil union. Gross income must include all sources of income, including Social Security. Applicants must provide proof of all gross income (including Social Security received) and rent and utility receipts for 2010.

Tolland residents may call the following Human Services staff for information or to schedule an appointment to apply for the Renters' Rebate Program: Nancy Dunn, (860) 871-3612, located in Town Hall; Rebecca Ellert, (860) 870-3726, located at the Senior Center. If for any reason you cannot make a scheduled appointment, please contact the provider to reschedule your appointment. We are unable to process walk-in applications.

Counseling Services Available

The Human Services Department provides counseling services and clinical assessments to town residents. Common concerns are school issues, depression, anxiety, job loss, divorce, adjustment issues, family conflict, medical illness and chronic mental illness. Human Services staff collaborates closely with the schools and other providers and provides referrals as needed. Services are offered to residents of all ages on a sliding fee scale. For more information residents may contact Jennifer Therian, L.M.F.T. at (860) 871-3615.

Food Bank

Tolland residents may contact the following Human Services personnel for more information about the Food Bank or to schedule an appointment to complete an application: seniors, contact

Rebecca Ellert, (860) 870-3726; all others individuals and households, contact Nancy Dunn, (860) 871-3612.

The Food Bank gratefully appreciates donations received from individuals, schools, organizations and businesses. Anyone wishing to donate is asked to contact Rebecca or Nancy; these individuals will let donors know if there are specific items that the Food Bank needs.

### Grants

#### Update on Geothermal Project

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting was held on July 19, 2011 for the Hicks Memorial Municipal Center & Library Geothermal HVAC Replacement, Library Roof and Skylight Replacement and Parking Lot Improvements. There were sixteen contractors in attendance. In order to give adequate time for the second addendum to be reviewed by all contractors, the Bid Opening date had been changed from August 2, 2011 to August 9, 2011. The closing date for questions is Thursday, August 4, 2011. The project consists of replacement of existing ducted HVAC mechanical system throughout the Hicks Memorial Municipal Center & Library with a new mechanical/geothermal heat pump system. The Project shall also include the roof and skylight replacement over the Library portion of the building and parking lot improvements.

#### STEAP Grant 2012

A STEAP application has been submitted to the Office of Policy and Management for the construction of a multi-use concession facility with ADA restrooms at the Cross Farms Recreation Complex in the amount of \$394,350. Notification of awards is still pending.

#### Small Cities Community Block Grant ADA Elevator

The specs for this project have been completed and the Town and will be ready to go out to bid.

#### Dial-A-Ride Grant

The Town had been notified by the Department of Transportation that the State Matching Grant Program for Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation for State Fiscal Year 2012 has been reduced by 25%. The matching grant award has been reduced from \$26,471 to \$19,853. Staff will have recommendation for the funding options by the next Town Council meeting.

### Planning & Community Development Department

#### Planning & Zoning Commission

- **Tolland Village Area**
  - The revised "Town Center" portion of Chapter 5 in the Plan of Conservation and Development that was approved by the PZC effective July 1, 2011 is attached.

- All updated information, including the approved POCD, Zoning Regulations and Design Guidelines are available on the PZC website at [www.tolland.org/pzc](http://www.tolland.org/pzc).
- An appeal of the approved amendments and revisions was filed with Rockville Superior Court by the attorney representing Steve Williams, a property owner. Planning staff are currently compiling and copying the required record documents.
- **Current applications, actions and agenda items**
  - A Public Hearing was held on June 25, 2011 regarding an application for a 2 lot subdivision (1 rear lot) on Goose Lane. The application was approved.
  - A Site Plan request to operate a storage business for landscape materials and construct a fabric building at 39 Kingsbury Avenue was denied without prejudice due to an incomplete application and expiration of the statutory time frame for review. The application has been resubmitted.
  - Discussion continued on a Conceptual Plan on land of Arthur Gottier – proposed 100± multi-family units off of Route 195 and Anthony Road.
  - A Site Analysis Plan for a new subdivision on land of the Estate of Helen Wanat – Kozley Road was discussed.
- The PZC meeting of August 8, 2011 has been cancelled.

#### Planning & Community Development

- Staff continues to work with the other communities in CRCOG to implement the new Planning and Zoning module of the View Permit Program that will track land use applications.
- The Planner is working with a traffic consultant to review the functioning and safety of the Old Post Road/Mountain Spring Road intersection.
- Staff continue to work with the Town Attorney and DEP Property Management Bureau to finalize documents for the closing on the 83-acre Luce property, which was held on June 2, 2011. It is anticipated the grant funds (\$270,000) will be received shortly.
- Staff continue to work with the Tolland Agricultural Center and their farmland and agricultural consultants regarding a potential expansion of the site on Hartford Turnpike in Tolland and Vernon.
- Staff are working with Town Attorney and ZBA on an appeal to Superior Court of a ZBA decision.
- Staff are completing research, working with abutting property owners and coordinating with Rick Conti on the discontinuance of a small roadway stub off of Laurel Ridge.
- Staff is working with the new owner of the Moose Lodge at 31 Kingsbury Avenue in preparation for the opening of the Adult Day Care center, "Senior Moments."

- Steve Lowrey, Zoning/Wetlands Agent, has been busy creating and modifying maps and data layers for the town's computer based GIS mapping to meet the needs of emergency services and staff:
  - Continues to attend monthly meetings of the Connecticut GIS Council as the representative of towns with populations of less than 30,000.
  - Continues to work on developing a GIS layer of all Town Drainage Easements, which will be able to show the easements on maps, reference the document (and filed map where possible) that transferred the easement to the Town and help the Public Works Department quickly find the location and dimensions of the Town's drainage easements.
  - Continued updating GIS layers based upon new aerial photography.
  - Aided residents with zoning questions, resolutions to problems and helping with variance applications.
  - Created mapping for the Water Commission for use in the Diversion Permit Application. The map is in its final editing stage.
  - Created new road maps for the Fire Department, these maps are also in their final editing stage.
  - Provided the Fire Marshal with a table of properties indicating which residents are responsible for clearing snow away from fire hydrants.
  - Worked with Town Attorney and ZBA on an appeal to Superior court of a ZBA decision.
- Continued to pursue zoning compliance at 81 Virginia Lane, 148 Mile Hill Road and 12 Cedar Swamp Road.
- Researched the status of Pamela Court and worked with the Town Attorney's Office and the Town Planner to get the road accepted.

#### Inland Wetlands Commission

- The Wetlands Commission continues to pursue clean up of Gages Brook; they have sent letters to property owners who have lawn close to the Brook and have asked for their help. Within the next month the Commission plans to walk the Brook to identify areas that need work. They are also looking for state & federal grants to help commercial property owners in the Industrial Park redesign parking lots to improve water quality.
- Town staff are working to resolve a town project near a wetland and watercourse on Baxter Street where there was a complaint about fill.

#### Conservation Commission

- The following hike has been planned for Tolland Open Space
  - Walktober - King Conservation Area – Walk the entire Property with Charlie King – October 16, 2011 (rain date October 23<sup>rd</sup>) at 1:00 p.m.

### Building Department

The Building Official has completed his review of the plans for rebuilding of the Town's Pavilion at Crandall Park. Work will commence in the beginning of August. Work on the elevator at the Tolland Intermediate School has already started.

Permit applications are still being received for repairs to roofs damaged by this past winter's extraordinary snowfall. Permit application volume is holding steady.

### Recreation

The Summer has been going well despite the erratic weather. The summer play camp program running for the first time at the old Parker School has been doing well. There are three weeks left to run. Many of the other specialty camps have been completed successfully. The beach at Crandall Park will be open through the 4<sup>th</sup> week of August. We have sold a record number of season passes to residents this year.

We are currently putting together the fall programs and activities schedule including the new online programs we are offering in conjunction with the ED2GO program. In addition to our regular programs we can offer residents a choice of over 300 instructional programs covering a wide range of subject areas and disciplines. We are very excited to be able to use the wonderful space at the old Parker School. We hope to move our office down there the beginning of September. We have been working on policies for the use of the building and will put complete information online once it's done and approved. The State is requiring us to submit information for a brand new license application for the Tolland Tykes pre-school program even though we've been running the program for 20+ years. This will delay the moving of the pre-school to Parker until we get the new license.

The Lodge continues to be a popular summer rental and is completely booked on weekends through the end of September. Work continues on the Pavilion with the slab scheduled to be poured the first week of August, then the actual structure which is being created off site will be brought in and erected.

Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> is the date for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Celebrate Tolland Festival. It will run from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the High School. The festival will consist of: indoor art show, outdoor craft fair, plant sale, book sale, non-profit booths, good food, kid games, dessert baking contest, and some good musical entertainment. We always need volunteers to help.

### Resident Trooper Update

*Statistical Report* – Sgt. Smith has provided the attached Tolland Resident Trooper's Statistical Report for June & July 2011. The report represents statistics on criminal investigations, accident investigations, motor vehicle enforcement and miscellaneous services.

**Other Business**

- (a) Meetings Calendar: Attached is a calendar of upcoming town meetings and events.
- (b) Monthly Reports: Animal Control and Highway Department Reports for June.

OTHER BUSINESS TO BE ANNOUNCED AS WARRANTED

SRW/hms  
Attachments

*Attachments to this report may be found on the Town of Tolland website at  
[www.tolland.org/government/town-manager/town-manager-reports](http://www.tolland.org/government/town-manager/town-manager-reports)  
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