



Bring your Christmas trees to the Transfer Station They will be chipped and used in landscaping in the spring.

TOWN MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

January is here and the beginning of 2025! It's time for us to look back on the first six months of this budget year and to today start to think about the next budget year that will begin July 1st. Much has been done, but there is still much to do.

Looking back, we see that our plans to fund the in-house staffing of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has been a success financially and in practice. The Town has seamlessly transferred service from our contractor over to Town EMS staff and has saved money eliminating the contractor's fees who was literally the "middleman". In our budget review we also see that our Coventry Resource Recovery Authority (COVRRRA) fund is steadily recovering from the significant deficit that it experienced two years ago which was caused by the unexpected increase in disposal rates of recyclables and solid waste due to the drop in demand for recyclable materials and then the closure of regional waste to energy plants. We see overall after six months that our 2024-25 Town Budget is experiencing more revenue than expenditures, which is all good news for the Town and all of us as Coventry taxpayers.

Today and looking forward, It's 2025-26 budget preparation time at the Town of Coventry. Our departments and agencies actually began in November measuring increased costs to the Town associated to our programs and services. Like everyone else our utilities costs have gone up. Especially electric. Our heating fuel and gasoline costs have not been too bad, and we have been able to stabilize this through bulk purchasing contracts with other local governments. We do this mostly through our association with the Capitol Region Council of Governments.

While preparing for projects within our budget, we will continue to look for grant funds that match our community needs and goals. Leveraging these funds makes our local dollars go further. We have several grant-funded infrastructure projects in design that will go into construction next summer. We have others ready for engineering in fiscal year

2025-26. You can learn about these projects in greater detail by reviewing my project update list. Our staff is also actively developing new infrastructure improvement projects for the new budget year. New U.S. government grant opportunities are being reviewed, so we can bring home some of those federal tax dollars we pay to Washington. We are looking at culvert replacement projects to address aged and failing infrastructure. We are seeking new solutions to solid waste disposal, such as grant funding for a voluntary food waste diversion program. We are looking at grant funds for programs that prevent the growing problem of vaping and substance abuse with teenagers in rural suburban towns like Coventry.

In looking ahead to developing our 2025-26 budget, we do see some challenges. Some costs we are experiencing this year are exceeding the level of inflation. All of us continue to see the significant increase in cost of labor and building materials. We use these factors in determining the repair and maintenance of our schools and park facilities. These increases have raised the cost of projects that have already been planned. We will likely have to scale these projects back or increase revenues to complete them.

Additionally, we are seeing the costs in solid waste disposal fluctuate, and occasionally spike. Recyclable materials in the waste stream, such as glass and plastic, that were once bringing in revenue are now costing us money to dispose of. The market for these recycled materials has crashed as there is an overabundance of these materials stockpiled around the country. Additionally in our State, the regular solid waste (non-recyclable garbage) disposal costs have climbed. Though the market is not stable, the good news with COVRRRA today is that the rates have appeared to have flattened out. Another challenge to our budget will be shortages in the labor market, as there are fewer people entering careers in law enforcement, fire service and emergency medical services. This will cause vacancies as people retire and will likely lead to competition for those remaining and to increased costs as salaries increase. We have seen the increase of minimum wage pushing up salaries, which is good for the employee, but that pushes up costs for goods and services. That quickly drives up affordable Town program costs for services like before/after school childcare, summer camp, and lifeguards at the beach.

I am sure as we move ahead into winter 2025 there will be more budget discussion to be had. As our weather gets colder and icier, I encourage everyone to get a good book at Booth and Dimock Library and relax at home by the fire, the stove, or with a warm blanket. I will likely be inside too, but my book will be a budget book. Perhaps on a January weekend I may see you at the Winter Farmer's Market, at Husky Pizza, the Panda Garden or elsewhere around Town. Should you wish to contact me, please email JDrumm@coventry-ct.gov or call the office at 860-742-6324. Frequent updates are also posted to the Town Manager's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CoventryCTTownManager>.

Sincerely,
James Drumm

UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS:

- Mon, 1/6: [Town Council Meeting](#), 7:00 PM. Town Hall Annex. **Note earlier start time for Council meetings in 2025.**
- Thurs, 1/9: [Board of Education Meeting](#), 7:00 PM, School Admin. Building
- Mon, 1/13: [Planning & Zoning Commission meeting](#), 7 PM, Town Hall Annex
- Tues, 1/21: **Town Council Meeting**, 7:30 PM , Town Hall Annex.
- Weds, 1/22: [Inland Wetlands Agency Meeting](#), 7:30 PM, Town Hall Annex
- Mon, 1/27: **Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting**, 7 PM, Town Hall Annex
- Thurs 1/30: **Board of Education Meeting**, 7:00 PM, School Admin Building.



For a monthly calendar of other Board & Commission events, click [here](#).

HOLIDAYS:

- Weds 1/1: **New Year's Day holiday**. Town offices closed. Trash and recycling collection on holiday [schedule](#) from Wednesday through remainder of the week.
- Mon 1/20: **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**. Town offices closed Trash and recycling collection on normal schedule.



COMING EVENTS:

Fri 1/3 & 1/17: **BINGO Night**, first and third Fridays of the month, doors open at 5 PM, BINGO starts at 6 PM. First Congregational Church, 1171 Main Street. Presented by the American Legion Post 52. 50¢ entry fee, must be 18 or older to play. Raffles, prizes and refreshments available. [Email](#) for info.

Fri 1/3: **Quiet Corner Contra Dance**, 7:30-10:30 PM, Patriots Park Lodge, 172 Lake Street. 1st Friday of every month September-June. Patriots Park Lodge, 172 Lake Street. Dance 7:30 – 10:30, beginner workshop at 7:15. Live Caller and band. All dances are taught. Partner not necessary. Soft soled shoes, Light layered clothes & a water bottle. Snacks welcome .For more information see [website](#) or contact Dennis at 860-742-9498 or knowdj@frontier.com.

Sun 1/5: **Coventry Winter Farmers' Market**, 10 AM - 12:30 PM, indoors at Coventry High School, 78 Ripley Hill Road. Celebrating its 10th year, the CWFM offers everything from locally-grown produce, hand-crafted soaps, and freshly-baked bread. Check out their [website](#) for more information.

Tues 1/7-1/28: **T.O.P.S. - Take Off Pounds Sensibly**, 5:15-6:45 PM, Second Congregational Church, 1746 Boston Turnpike (Rt. 44). A non-profit weight loss support group. See [website](#) or call 860-944-4945 for info concerning weekly dues (determined by each chapter) and yearly membership fee set by the TOPS organization.

Fri 1/10: **Famous Baked Fish Dinner**, 6 PM, First Congregational Church, 1171 Main Street. Presented by First Congregational Church & American Legion Post 52. Baked cod, baked potato, coleslaw, Italian bread, drink & dessert. \$15 per plate, take-out available. Questions to 860-742-8487 or email firstchurchcoventryct@gmail.com.

Sun 1/12: **Coventry Winter Farmers' Market**, 10 AM - 12:30 PM, indoors at Coventry High School, 78 Ripley Hill Road. Celebrating its 10th year, the CWFM offers everything from locally-grown produce, hand-crafted soaps, and freshly-baked bread. Check out their [website](#) for more information.

Mon 1/13: **American Red Cross Blood Drive**, 9 AM - 3 PM, Mill Brook Place, 1267 Main Street. Schedule an appointment to donate at this [link](#).

Weds 1/15: **Mobile Foodshare**, 10-10:30 AM, First Congregational Church @ St. Mary's, 1600 Main Street. An outdoor food distribution service for persons of low income. Text FOODSHARE to 85511 to receive the mobile schedule and cancellations directly on your phone. More [info](#).

Thurs 1/16: **Coventry Historical Society Presents - Historic Coventry Coombs Images**, 7 PM, Second Congregational Church Community House, 1746 Boston Turnpike. Please join the CHS to learn about Charles G. Coombs, carriage maker and photographer, and his family. Be among the first to see some of the glass plate images that were stored in his Coventry basement and attic at Melody Farm on South Street for 100 years that were recently acquired by CHS. Free program. [CHS Facebook page](#).

Sat 1/18: **Drive-Thru/Take Out Dinner**, Second Congregational Church of Coventry, 1746 Boston Turnpike. Roast turkey, dressing, potato, carrots, and dessert. \$15. Place orders by calling 860-742-1616 or email and indicate pick up time of 5 or 5:30 PM. Correct amount of cash or check is required. Drive down from church parking lot to the Community House located across from Highland Park.
Info: secondchurch@sbcglobal.net.

Sun 1/19: **Coventry Winter Farmers' Market**, 10 AM - 12:30 PM, indoors at Coventry High School, 78 Ripley Hill Road. Celebrating its 10th year, the CWFM offers everything from locally-grown produce, hand-crafted soaps, and freshly-baked bread. Check out their [website](#) for more information.

Thurs 1/23: **Office hours with Town Council Chairwoman Lisa Thomas**, 11 AM - 12:00 PM, Senior Center, 172 Lake Street; and 5-6 PM, Booth & Dimock Memorial Library, 1134 Main Street. Ask a question or share a concern with Lisa at this monthly opportunity for conversation.

Sun 1/26: **Coventry Winter Farmers' Market**, 10 AM - 12:30 PM, indoors at Coventry High School, 78 Ripley Hill Road. Celebrating its 10th year, the CWFM offers everything from locally-grown produce, hand-crafted soaps, and freshly-baked bread. Check out their [website](#) for more information.

Weds 1/29: **Mobile Foodshare**, 10-10:30 AM, First Congregational Church @ St. Mary's, 1600 Main Street. An outdoor food distribution service for persons of low income. Text FOODSHARE to 85511 to receive the mobile schedule and cancellations directly on your phone. More [info](#).



[Sign up for our Winter Reading Challenge!](#)

BOOTH & DIMOCK MEMORIAL LIBRARY:

Booth & Dimock Memorial Library is open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10-8, Friday from 10-6, and Saturday 10-3. Closings and adjusted hours due to winter weather will be posted on our website www.coventrypl.org, our Facebook @BDLibrary, and WFSB News.

Sign up for our Third Annual Winter Reading Challenge! Log the books you read now through February 28 to help us beat our record of 579 books! Books can be logged online or on paper!

A calendar of all the library's programs and events can be found online at www.coventrypl.org/events or in print at the library.

Booth & Dimock Memorial Library
1134 Main Street
Coventry, CT 06238
860-742-7606
www.coventrypl.org
bdlibrary@coventry-ct.gov



*Banner photo: Patriots Park play area on a winter day.
Photo by Laura Stone.*

To list your non-profit organization's event in this bulletin, contact Laura Stone by [email](#) by the 15th of the previous month.

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