



TOWN MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

As we begin February, we are experiencing cold temperatures, snow, and icy roads. I caution everyone to be careful when driving on our roadways. Car accidents are up! Keep a safe distance from the car ahead of you and drive the speed limit. Though you should always do this, it is more important to do this now. State and Town Public Works crews have been

busy preparing roads and keeping our streets cleared from snow and ice over the last few weeks. However, with the continued sunshine and then nightly low freezing temperatures ice can form on the roads that may not easily be visible.

I know Revaluation is still a hot topic in Coventry this month and some residents still are confused. State law requires towns and cities to update the value of properties every 5 years. Coventry last updated our values in 2019, so that brought us to having to do it again for 2024. The Town hired Vision Solutions, a firm used by the majority of municipalities in Connecticut to conduct the study and to perform the sample inspections. Mailers were sent out to residents in March 2024 to verify property information. We were pleased to have over 80% returned verifying property conditions. The results have shown property values increased by category for residential properties at 58%, condo residential commercial properties at 55%, commercial properties at 13%, and undeveloped land 23%. The overall average town wide is 53%. This large increase in value is surprising to some, but it shouldn't be, because of the sky-rocketing jump in the cost of buying a home the last few years. For those of you that haven't moved in long time it may not be as obvious, but here is a housing shortage. Today people are bidding \$65,000 over an extra high asking price when a house is for sale, and they are still not getting the contract, because they have been out-bid. It took me 10 months to buy a home in Coventry. It is this post-covid market that has created the increased value in our homes. Many people are wanting to leave the cities, and they are willing to pay to live in nice suburban and rural communities like Coventry. For most Americans, their home is their largest investment. So, if you think about it, this increase in value is good for the homeowner. Sadly, I have heard that some people think this increase in value means we are all paying 58% more in property taxes, which is not so. An increase of 58% in property value does not equal a 58% increase in taxes. Town Council will absolutely be setting a lower tax rate this spring after the

adoption of the Budget. The tax rate set will be lower and will be used to calculate the taxes with the new higher values. Some Tax bills will be lower, and some will be higher depending where your assessment came in compared to the average assessment. The tax rate set (the actual number) will only need to be at a level needed to bring in the funding necessary to operate the Town and the Coventry Public Schools. We will know that number later in spring. This is the same procedure that Town Council followed 5 years ago and what towns and cities across the State, that are going through revaluation, are following.

Also in February your Town management team is working through our budget expenses to see where we can save money and to see how we can keep up our current levels of service that everyone has come to expect. We are looking through budget requests and reviewing our capital equipment needs. Our Town has been very frugal in years past and I can say I have been impressed with how many years of service the Town has had from some pieces of equipment and vehicles. We have Fire/EMS vehicles and Public Works vehicles that are at near 25 years old. It is time for some to be replaced. One item needing replaced is our Quint Fire ladder truck. It serves as a regular fire engine and additionally it has a ladder spray mechanism that allows it to go to higher elevations. Though we do not have tall buildings, it does allow us to fight fires over large structures or complexes such as Coventry High School, a plaza or high-density commercial areas like Coventry Village. Another item needing replacement is our 18-year-old street sweeper. Though still running, it has seen better days and frequently breaks down. The sweeper removes pollutants from the roads from reaching storm drains and ultimately the lake and river. We are also looking at replacing older infrastructure in our schools. There are many worn items, but we are looking at some security issues this year. We are realizing that the well-made 43-year-old fire alarm systems in our elementary schools are getting harder to fix and the used parts are getting almost impossible to find on eBay. I commend the BOE staff for keeping them going. Though that equipment is closer to 30 years old, we have found similar issues with the intercom systems in all our schools. In a day where school security is so important, communication has elevated the need to address this concern by updating our equipment. Additionally, we need to replace tractor/mowers to keep our parks and roadways mowed and dump trucks/plows as they reach the end of life. As I said earlier, we need to keep our roads clear and safe in February, and to do so we will need reliable equipment to do this. These are just a few of the capital items in the Capital Improvement Plan. Some of the equipment needs have been in the CIP for several years, but sometimes to lower our budget expenses and to lower the taxes, scheduled equipment purchases get cut and they get pushed out to future years. Town staff will continue to prioritize capital equipment and projects and prepare a balanced operating budget for presentation to Town Council by the end of the month. There will be public hearing on the proposed Town and Board of Education budgets on Tuesday March 4th at 7:00 PM at Coventry High School.

I am sure as we continue winter 2025 there will be more to say about the budget. This cold February, I encourage everyone to get a good book at Booth and Dimock Memorial Library and relax at home by the fire, the woodstove, or with a warm blanket. I will likely be inside too but working on the computer on budget. 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, 2/3: **Town Council Meeting**, 7:00 PM. Town Hall Annex. **Note earlier start time for Council meetings in 2025.**
- Mon, 2/10: **Planning & Zoning Commission** meeting, 7:00 PM, Town Hall Annex.
- Thurs, 2/13: **Board of Education Meeting**, 7:00 PM, School Admin. Building
- Tues, 2/18: **Town Council Meeting**, 7:00 PM , Town Hall Annex.
- Weds, 2/26: **Inland Wetlands Agency Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Town Hall Annex.
- Mon, 2/24: **Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Town Hall Annex.
- Thurs 2/27: **Board of Education Meeting**, 7:00 PM, School Admin Building.
- Thurs 2/27: **Town Council Special Budget Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Town Hall Annex.

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

HOLIDAYS:

- Mon 2/17: **Presidents' Day**. Town offices and Senior Center closed Trash and recycling collection on normal schedule.



[Get a beautiful bouquet of a dozen fresh roses for \\$35. Flowers will be delivered in Coventry on Friday, February 14th. Deadline for orders is February 7, 2025. Proceeds support Lions Club programs.](#)

COMING EVENTS:

Sat 2/1: **\$10 Stuff-a-Bag Sale**, 9 AM - 1 PM, Noah's Closet, 1746 Boston Turnpike. Noah's Closet sells gently-used children's clothing, toys, shoes, and baby equipment. Donations of gently-used children's items are welcome on Tuesdays 9 AM - 11 AM and Saturdays 9 AM - 1 PM. Info: 860-742-1616 or visit [website](#).

Sun 2/2: **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 2/4-2/25: **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 2/7 & 2/21: **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 2/7: **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 2/9: **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 2/12: **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](#).

Sat 2/15: **Italian Family Dinner**, 5-6:30 PM, St. Mary Church Hall, 1600 Main Street. Presented by St. Jude Council/Knights of Columbus. Stuffed shells, meatballs, sausage and peppers, salad, garlic bread, dessert, and coffee, tea, hot chocolate, or lemonade. \$15 per plate, tickets will be sold at the door, take-out available. Questions to Jim Rivers at 860-539-2975 or email KofC4313@outlook.com.

Sat 2/15: **Drive-thru/Take Out Dinner**, Second Congregational Church of Coventry, 1746 Boston Turnpike. Pot roast, potato, carrots, and dessert. \$15. Place orders by calling 860-742-1616 or email secondchurch@sbcglobal.net 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.

Sun 2/16: **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.

Sun 2/23: **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 2/26: **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](#).

Weds 2/26: **Office hours with Town Council Chair Lisa Thomas**, 7:00 PM, Booth & Dimock Memorial Library. Ask a question or share a concern with Lisa at this monthly opportunity for conversation with Town Council members.

Thurs 2/27: **Office hours with Town Council Vice Chair Marty Milkovic**, 11:00 AM, Senior Center, 172 Lake Street. Ask a question or share a concern with Marty at this monthly opportunity for conversation with Town Council Members.



COVENTRY PARKS & RECREATION:

Someone Special Valentine's Dance: Kids and their adult "someone special" will not want to miss this special, semi-formal event where lasting memories are made!

A professional DJ provides the music for dancing and refreshments will be sold. Friday February 21st at CNHS Gym. The event is open to boys and girls in grades K – 5 (Coventry residents only). Sensory friendly hour is 6-7 pm and all are welcome to join from 7-9 pm. **Preregistration is REQUIRED!** Registration will close on February 14 or when full capacity is reached. No day-of-event registration. Space is limited. Register at <https://secure.rec1.com/CT/coventry-ct/catalog>.

Summer Jobs: Applications available NOW. Apply online <https://www.coventry-ct.gov/Jobs.aspx> or send resume to myanez@coventry-ct.gov

- Camp Counselors
 - Camp Specialists/ Trailblazer Coordinator
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ATTENTION!

TOWN OF COVENTRY HUMAN SERVICES FOOD BANK

Donations will **NO LONGER** be accepted in the vestibule on the side of town hall!

Starting on January 30th, donations can be dropped off at the community center on Thursdays from 4:00-6:00pm, and Fridays from 9:00am-12:00pm.

Community Center:
120 Lake Street
(blue building at Patriots Park)



Banner photo: Aerial view of Coventry Lake. Photo by Konrad Mroczek.

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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