

## **Manager's project update: Oct 17, 2022 meeting**

Below please find a brief summary and update of ongoing projects. (As of 10/13/22)

### **Highlights:**

We received the paperwork for the \$500,000 STEAP grant for the second softball field and are working on completing and returning in hopes of an early November bid.

Our new ambulance is in service and we are trading in the old one.

We have put together a timeline for the School HVAC grant application due in very early December. We will need public authorization via a referendum...but will not need to actually borrow any more money.

Timothy Brennan started as our new Building Official this week.

The girls' softball field construction has started and will have top soil by end of month.

The new transfer station is open and electricity being installed. Completion of full project expected by end of month. New shed delivered yesterday.

The Lakewood region project is finishing up drainage on Edgemere and Midlands and is scheduled for pavement in November.

Swamp/44 Lotcip project is scheduled for substantial completion October 14th.

South St/Homestead Lotcip project major culvert installed which will allow sidewalk to proceed. Will finish this month.

Hop River Road Bridge replacement bid is now out for an October 27<sup>th</sup> bid opening.

Depot Road Dam water gate is repaired and pond is refilling.

### Public Works/Engineering

LOTICIP grants: The Swamp Rd/Rt. 44 project is in the final paving process with an October 14<sup>th</sup> substantial completion anticipated. A new Town of Coventry sign installed which we received free from our sign vendor...only had to buy the lettering.

Loomis and Carver Lane road work is complete. Good progress continues on Lakewood area roads and we hope the prep work will be done by end of October for November paving by outside paving contactors.

The Depot Rd dam water gate has been repaired and the pond is refilling.

Major tree work continues. After many outages in the Silver Street area affecting 124 homes, we got the attention of Eversource again and a tree crew continues work on South Street. They also are upgrading and relocating a lot of poles too.

Todd Penney continues to work toward getting the plans and specs for the Community Connectivity grant for sidewalks on Main Street from Hemlock Point Lane to approximately Cheney Lane. Starting to seek the required easements from the State and neighbors. A fall 2022 construction project is not feasible, but we asked for and received an extension until June 30, 2023.

We are trying to select an engineer for the LOTCIP grant for the intersection of Swamp and South, including the South Street curves, and a dip in Swamp Road. Construction was hoped for the fall of 2022, but more likely will be in 2023. Still waiting for engineering proposals. The balance of the engineering expense will come from the savings from the Hop River Bridge match or CNREF.

The South Street road reconstruction and sidewalk project near the Homestead is approaching completion with the installation of a major culvert. We are extending the sidewalk to the Strong Porter museum with some savings in the local match for Hop River Bridge. Base paving is completed and final paving expected over the next several weeks. Todd found an alternative sidewalk treatment which is more historically appropriate and is less expensive than the option we were looking at, and it falls within the State-set maximums.... so no local funds will be required.

The methane venting project for the Miller Richardson football field was hydro-seeded, and grass is finally growing but due to the lack of rain this summer it will need to be over seeded.

The State-designed Hop River Road Bridge replacement is out to bid with an Oct 27<sup>th</sup> opening date. After bid award the project will start with utility work in the fall and materials ordered for a spring construction. GM2 will be our construction inspectors. The State will be using Federal funds to pay 100% of the project costs including inspection.

We still need to replace two culverts, one located on Bunker Hill Road and the other on Parker Bridge Road. We have submitted two grant applications for this year's Local Bridge grant round and are still waiting for a response - promised in September, but likely in October. The grants, if we are awarded one or both, require a 50% match. Our share is included in the proposed bonding. We also have to fully replace the Broadway culvert, which is not currently eligible for State funds. We will need money for this design and future funding in 4 years or so. The State announced a new rural minor collector road grant program which we will learn more about in a few weeks.

We received a report from Jacobson Engineering on a study of the 16 larger Town bridges. Two appear to qualify for the 100% funding level; Depot Road and Brigham Hill (both over the Willimantic River). The Council gave us funds to proceed with applications. We expect them to be prepared over the next several months.

We continue to have productive meetings with the company considering acquiring the Microgrid project (\$4,000,000 grant). They met with CT DEEP last Friday to discuss modifying the project to include the solar now anticipated on the CHS roof, right sizing the CHP units and extending the deadline. We are now exploring some Federal FEMA BRIC money and have started discussions with the cognizant State agency and Sen. Murphy's office.

The new transfer station is open. Not everything will be completed, but the new office shed was delivered yesterday. Electricity is being installed. Some adjustments will be made as we settle in. Construction of the first girls' softball field has started and we expect it will be significantly complete by the end of this month. The STEAP grant application for the second field paperwork arrived and we are processing it to get approval to bid in November. We also need to plan the best uses for the \$500,000 of anticipated State bonding for Miller Richardson park, ADA and equity projects.

Carver Lane and Loomis Drive paving is now complete. Lakewood Road drainage work is complete and work will start on Edgewater Drive will start with hopes of paving in November.

Public Safety - Police: The Chief will start working on Sergeant promotions, and a swearing in ceremony is scheduled for the Captain's position during the Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. We hired one part time dispatcher and are still looking for more. The CALEA evaluation process was submitted and with a few clarifications we believe we are set for now.

Fire EMS: The replacement fire truck ordered last year is expected in December. An inspection visit is planned for next month. Our ambulance replacement is complete and in service. Work continues to develop cost reductions or revenue enhancements to make the ambulance service more financially sustainable. A strategic plan for the development conducted by the department was adopted and is being worked on by the Fire Department.

Finance: The school roof work planned for this summer was substantially completed. The school fire alarm work is complete. The high school roof is now ready for solar which may merge into Microgrid. The possible middle school renovate-as-new concept discussion was postponed to allow the State to provide guidance on the new HVAC grants. The new grants were announced with a December 1 application deadline. We are in good shape since our plans are pretty much done. We need to discuss the funding requirements to submit this grant. We will be able to get them out to bid next summer. Some school walls work was squeezed in this summer with the balance planned for Christmas break. We continue to work with the Finance Committee and Town Council on the complicated American Rescue Plan funding planning. The annual audit started.

Development Group: We are following up on meeting with the Town of Manchester on the local agreements required to allow an extension to the Bolton Lakes sewer system. A community funding request for this project was selected by Congressman Courtney and passed by the House. It is now up for consideration in reconciliation with the Senate budget. We are also paying attention to the treatment plant in hopes of getting Federal Rescue Act funds for a connection to Windham, with a positive first meeting held. We have hired Tighe and Bond to update a sewer facilities plan. The first meeting with DEEP was held to further detail the scope of work for the plan. We believe we will get State funding of 50% of the cost of the study. This study could lead to future Federal Infrastructure funding. We continue to meet with developers and finance groups interested in the Bolton town line area. Construction for the Hytone Farm anaerobic digester project is underway. We have held several meetings to discuss a second stage to assist in food waste management and talks will continue. PZC's moratorium on cannabis retail sales was extended to allow the Commission to review our attorney's draft regulations. The four-town Economic Vitality group is meeting to work out a regional events calendar and submitted an ARP grant for economic development consulting. We held a meeting to fine tune a proposed logo and the public is being asked for input via Survey Monkey. Cassidy Hill Vineyards was granted a special permit for events with restrictions and routine compliance evaluations. Demolition has started at the site of the new dentist office next to Dollar General. The Economic Development Commission created a subcommittee to focus on the future development at the Bolton town line. New regulations by both towns will be required. We are trying to assist the relocation of Caprilands...a buyer for the house has been found for reconstruction in New York.

#### HR issues:

We have conducted several negotiations sessions for all Town and School AFSCME groups for pension and now have revised cost estimates which will allow us to re-engage. We started negotiations with the Public Works union. We are advertising for a Planning Assistant/Zoning Enforcement Agent, Lead Mechanic, a temporary Project Manager and part time Engineering Tech. My UCONN MPA intern started and is helping on several personnel issues (evaluations, salary study, and job descriptions),

programs/events, and special projects such as a community orientation guide, web site proofing, BRIC grants and assisting on a crowdfunding project through the Sustainability program to make some improvements to the band shell and nearby area. The Lion's Club will assist in getting the number of donors to match the \$7,500 grant.

Other projects:

Work is underway for the housing unit renovations at Orchard Hills under the CDBG grant. A persistent issue of lead in the water re-emerged and is being dealt with.

We received DEEP permission for work at Creaser Park. The back cabin work is underway. It will be gutted and converted to a storage building with a large entry door. We are seeking pricing from multiple vendors for demo of the front two cabins. The cabin nearest to the pavilion can be converted into public bathrooms and a small meeting space, and can be rented out with the pavilion to have a better level of service for events like weddings. It may be something to consider if ARPA money is available. The final building will be stabilized while the condition is further assessed, options discussed, and funding allocated.

The Microgrid project continues to be analyzed for financial viability and discussions are underway with a new financing partner. We held several very productive meetings, and are looking to propose ways to reduce the upfront capital expense and try to coordinate the CHS solar into the project to reduce the amount of natural gas used. CT DEEP is still supportive of the project and suggested seeking a BRIC grant ...which we did last year through Community funding programs....but now with DEEP backing we may be more successful.....they are very tough grant applications.

We are scheduling DPW for some work on the Trails grant on the Bear Swamp section of road (not the stream crossing) for this fall. Seeking outside engineering on the stream crossing.