



# Town of Avon Newsletter

ISSUE LXXII

January 2024

## Save the Dates! FY 2024/2025 Budget Process

The process to prepare the FY 2024/2025 budget that takes effect on July 1, 2024 is well underway. All town departments have submitted their capital and operating budgets and **Town Council** will review the Town Manager's proposed budget at a hybrid (virtual and in-person) **Budget Workshop** scheduled for **Saturday, February 10th** beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending around 1:00 p.m. Details of the proposed budget will be presented and discussed with the Council at this time and the public is encouraged to attend.

The **Board of Finance** will hold a **Public Hearing** on the budget on **Monday, April 1st** at 7:00 p.m. Residents wishing to provide the Board of Finance with input about the budget are welcome to attend and offer comments. Information regarding the location and format of the public hearing will be posted on the Town's website in advance of the meeting. The **Board of Finance Budget Workshop** will be held on **Wednesday, April 3rd** at 7:00 p.m., (location and format are to be determined and will be posted on the Town's website in advance of the meeting). During the workshop, the Board will consider the comments from the public hearing and determine the budget that will be presented at the Annual Budget Meeting and appear on the ballot at the Budget Referendum in May. Following this determination, changes cannot be made to the budget before the Referendum. Please note there is no opportunity for public comment at the Board of Finance Budget Workshop, but residents are welcome to attend.

Please visit the Town's website, [www.avonct.gov](http://www.avonct.gov), to access documents related to the budget process. We expect that the budget document will be posted in late January, and will be updated in March and again in May as the budget process progresses. We also recommend that you "**Subscribe to Town News**" on the Town's website under **Citizen Action Center** to receive email notifications of Town Council, Board of Education and Board of Finance agendas, as these Boards have a direct role in the budget process. Finally, as always we encourage you to share your questions and comments with the Town Manager's Office at (860) 409-4300.

## Tax Relief for Elderly and Disabled Homeowners New Income Limits

Homeowners who are age 65 or older or totally disabled may be eligible for **up to \$2,390** in Property Tax Relief. To be eligible, you must have been 65 or older prior to 12/31/23, your adjusted gross income plus any non taxable Social Security has to be **\$69,000 or less**, and you must have owned your home on October 1, 2023. The application filing period is **February 1 through May 15, 2024**. If you have any questions or feel you might be eligible, please contact the Assessor's Office at (860) 409-4335 for further information.

### Real Estate & Supplemental Motor Vehicle Taxes

The second installment of real estate taxes as well as supplemental motor vehicle taxes (for vehicles purchased OR registered between October 2, 2022, thru July 31, 2023), is due January 1, 2024, and must be paid or US postmarked by February 1, 2024 to avoid interest and/or penalties. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of the Collector of Revenue at (860) 409-4306 or [Rev@avonct.gov](mailto:Rev@avonct.gov).

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## News from Social Services

- ♦ **CT Energy Assistance Program:** The State of Connecticut can help households pay for primary heating bills (i.e. oil, propane, electric, and gas). To be eligible, the gross annual household income must be at or below 60% of the state median income. If you have never applied and/or are interested in receiving more information on this program, please visit our website, [www.avonct.gov](http://www.avonct.gov), under the Social Services link ("Energy Assistance & Renters Rebate"), or call our office at (860) 409-4346 to see if you may qualify. **Applications are by appointment only! Program deadline is May 31st.**
- ♦ **Operation Fuel** may be able to provide one-time assistance with heating bills for those households who have applied for the CT Energy Assistance Program and were found to be slightly over income/asset limits. All those interested must apply for the CT Energy Assistance Program **before** contacting Operation Fuel. More information is available through Gifts of Love at (860) 676-2323.

## 2023 Holiday Food and Gift Programs

Avon Social Services, Avon Youth Services, and the Avon Food Pantry would like to thank all the incredible sponsors who helped provide for the Thanksgiving and the Winter Holiday food and gift programs! The generosity of our sponsors helped brighten so many families' holiday celebrations with presents, food and gift cards!

We also want to give a big thank you to all the Food Pantry volunteers for all their tireless, generous and fiercely dedicated efforts running the Avon Food Pantry.

## Shape the Future! Recreation & Parks Master Plan Update

In December, the Town and its consultant, Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc., officially kicked off the process to update the Town's Recreation & Parks Master Plan. The Town is looking to update the 2007 Master Plan to guide the Town's short, medium and long-term facility and infrastructure needs relative to parks and recreation. Public engagement will be a major focus of this planning effort and there will be opportunities for specific stakeholder groups and the general public to weigh in. Two upcoming opportunities for public input are as follows:

1. **An online survey will be available throughout the month of February.** Please **Subscribe to News** on the Town's website [www.avonct.gov/subscribe](http://www.avonct.gov/subscribe) and follow the Town (@townofavonct) and the Department of Recreation & Parks (@avonrecreationandparks) on **Facebook** to be alerted when the survey is launched. We encourage residents of all ages to submit survey responses. Parents, please feel free to complete the survey with your pre-teens and teens or encourage them to submit independent responses.
2. **An interactive public meeting will be held on Monday, February 5th from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.** (snow date February 12th) in the Community Room at the Avon Free Public Library. All ages are encouraged to attend and participate in this interactive meeting.

We encourage residents to participate in this process in a manner that works for them. Should you wish to provide feedback or commentary outside of the survey or the public meeting, please contact the Department of Recreation & Parks at (860) 409-4332 or [avonrec@avonct.gov](mailto:avonrec@avonct.gov).



### Avon Pet Pantry

Open the first Tuesday of each month 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Avon Animal Control • 11 Arch Road

**\*\*Offering Curbside Service\*\*** Donations always appreciated!

Contact us at: [avonpetpantry@gmail.com](mailto:avonpetpantry@gmail.com)

(860) 673-0297 Animal Control or (860) 409-4358 Social Services



## News & Notes from the Registrars - Early Voting & the April Primary

The **Presidential Preference Primary** will be held on **Tuesday, April 2, 2024**. Polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the three polling locations (Avon High School, Thompson Brook School and Roaring Brook School). Please visit [portaldir.ct.gov/sots/lookup.aspx](http://portaldir.ct.gov/sots/lookup.aspx) to find your polling location.

For the first time, the **Primary will include a 4-day Early Voting Period** which will begin on Tuesday, March 26th and end on Saturday, March 30th (note that there will be no early voting on Friday, March 29th due to the Good Friday holiday). Voting will be available each day from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. in the Avon Room at the Town Offices located at 60 West Main Street, Avon, CT (Building #1, Lower Level). Note that only voters registered with the parties that have candidates running in the Primary are eligible to vote. Voters that are registered as unaffiliated cannot vote in the primary. **Absentee Ballots** for the Primary will also be available in the Town Clerk's Office beginning March 12, 2024. A few other notes about voter registration for the Primary:

- **For Voters Changing their Party Enrollment** - the last day to change your party affiliation for the Primary and to be eligible to vote under the new enrollment party status was January 2, 2024.
- **Unaffiliated Voters that Wish to Register with a Party** - must file their application to enroll in a party with the Registrar of Voters no later than 12 noon on Monday, April 1st in order to vote in the Primary. To take advantage of the early voting period, the application to enroll in a party must be filed no later than 12 noon on Monday, March 25th.
- **Unregistered Voters** - may vote in the Primary if they register to vote and enroll with a party by 12 noon on Monday, April 1st. To take advantage of the early voting period, new registrants must register and enroll with a party no later than 12 noon on Monday, March 25th.

Contact the Registrar of Voters at (860) 409-4350 or [rov@avonct.gov](mailto:rov@avonct.gov) with questions about voting, early voting and voter registration. Contact the Town Clerk's Office at (860) 409-4310 or [nhogan@avonct.gov](mailto:nhogan@avonct.gov) or visit their website at [www.avonct.gov/town-clerk](http://www.avonct.gov/town-clerk) for questions about absentee ballots.

## FEMA Updates Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) generates flood maps as a tool to identify areas that have the highest risk of flooding. These maps are the basis of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations and flood insurance requirements. In 2018, FEMA hired a consultant, CDM Smith/Compass, to assist with a flood risk study of the Farmington River Watershed which includes the Town of Avon and 18 other Hartford County municipalities. The study utilized improved hydrologic and hydraulic analyses, new topographic and aerial imagery and revised modeling. Preliminary FIRMs were created using this information and are now available for public review.

In November, the Town sent letters to approximately 730 Avon property owners to inform them that their property might be impacted by proposed changes to the FIRMs. The letters were sent by the Town on FEMA's behalf to provide further information and recommend next steps. According to FEMA there will be a 90-day period during which impacted property owners may appeal the proposed map revisions. As of this writing, FEMA has not advised the Town as to when the 90 day period will begin. We recommend that interested residents **Subscribe to News** on the Town's website to receive updates on this topic. If you have any questions, please contact the Engineering Department at (860) 409-4322.

### AARP Foundation 2024 Tax-Aide

Free tax assistance to middle and low income taxpayers from February 7 through to April 10 (Wednesdays). Special attention is given to those 50 and older. Appointments are required. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call the **Avon Senior Center at (860) 675-4355**.



## Warm Welcomes, Well Wishes, and Fond Farewells

The Town would like to welcome some new faces, and offer congratulations to those employees that have been promoted, moved on to a new opportunity, or retired since October 2022 when we last ran this article. We'd also like to offer thanks to a few elected officials that stepped down at the end of 2023.

Please welcome our newest employees: **Lisa Garvey**, IT Specialist; **Angela Grano**, Animal Control Officer; **Matthew Greene**, Assistant Building Official; **Eric Hinderer**, Landfill Assistant; **Catherine Indomenico**, HR Generalist; **Matthew Jameson**, Police Officer; **Lisa Lavioie**, PT Reference Librarian; **Ashley Leary**, Police Officer; **Tanuja Miura**, Administrative Secretary - Recreation & Parks Department; **James Nicholson**, PT Library Technician; **Jordan Nolan**, Reference Librarian; **Steven Oatway**, Communications Dispatcher; and **Lauren Zarambo**, Administrative Secretary I - Fire Marshal's Office. A warm welcome to all!

Congratulations to all those who were reclassified, promoted or transferred: **Mark Arborgast**, Police Sergeant; **Jeffrey Dubien**, Police Sergeant; **Nicole Martinez**, Administrative Coordinator - PD; **Scott Normand**, Highway Foreman; **Alyssa Skorski**, Reference Librarian; **Usha Srivel**, Revenue Clerk; **Christopher Szylobryt**, Building Official; and **Paul Welsh**, Public Works Operations Manager. Best of luck to all in their new roles!

We would like to wish the following employees well as they begin retirement or a new role with another organization: **Barbara Greenleaf**, PT Reference Librarian; **Eric Lundell**, Police Sergeant; **Brigitte Miner**, Landfill Assistant; **Richie McKinnon**, Building Official; **John Patraw**, Mechanic III; **Sara Roccapriore**, Recreation Program Specialist; **Amy Stanis**, PT Administrative Secretary - Building Department; **Alex Trujillo**, Deputy Director of Public Works; and **Cynthia Zdanzukas**, Secretary to the Chief of Police. We thank you all for your service and commitment and we wish you well on your next adventures.

In closing, we would like to recognize a number of outgoing elected officials. Thank you to Town Council member **Heather Maguire** for her exemplary service. Heather served on the Town Council for ten years and was twice elected by her fellow Council members to serve as Chairperson for a total of four years. We would also like to thank **Ellen Retelle** and **Charles Harvell** for their four and two years of service, respectively, on the Board of Finance. Finally, kudos to **Margaret Bratton** for her 18 years of service on the Board of Finance. We will continue to see and hear from Margaret as she begins her first term with the Town Council in January 2024. Thank you to Heather, Ellen, Charles and Margaret for your volunteerism and your dedication to the community!

## Public Engagement for Old Farms Road - Phase II (East/West) Begins

Planning and design for the second phase of the Old Farms Road project is underway at this time. The project area for Phase II, also known as the East/West Section, begins at the intersection of Tillotson Road and heads west along Old Farms Road and Thompson Road, ending at the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail.

On January 3rd, the Town and its consultant, WMC, hosted the first public input and information session on Phase II. Attendees received a brief presentation on the project and the preliminary conceptual design work that has been completed to date. The audience was then invited to provide feedback on the design. The public input received will have an impact on future iterations of the project design. The slide deck and a recording of the January 3rd meeting will be made available on the homepage of the Town's website [www.avonct.gov](http://www.avonct.gov).

Looking ahead, we expect to hold multiple public meetings throughout the design process. Mark your calendar for the next one which has been tentatively scheduled for April 25th at the Library. More details will be posted on the Town's website (**Subscribe to News**) and Facebook page ([@townofavonct](https://www.facebook.com/townofavonct)) as they become available.

### Avon Recreation and Parks Department

The Recreation and Parks Department's Summer Programs and Pool Membership registrations will begin April 12, 2024. Watch for seasonal summer job opportunities beginning January 19, 2024.



## Reminders from the Public Works Department

**Mailbox Damage:** During the winter season, it is inevitable that some mailboxes and posts will be damaged during winter plowing operations. Avon's policy is to reimburse residents \$20.00 for mailboxes and \$65.00 for posts that are damaged as a result of direct contact with a Town snow plow. Mailboxes that are damaged from the force of snow thrown against them or mailboxes that are located closer than 9-inches to the roadway are not eligible for reimbursement.

To report damage to a mailbox, please visit [www.avonct.gov](http://www.avonct.gov), look under the **Citizen Action Center** and select **Report a Concern**. Or, you may call Public Works at (860) 673-6151.

**Public Sand/Salt Mix:** A sand and salt mix is available to residents at no charge at the Public Works Garage and at the Landfill. Please limit yourself to (1) five-gallon pail.

## From the Avon Volunteer Fire Department

The AVFD wishes everyone a safe and healthy 2024! We would like to thank the community for supporting the Department throughout the year. We are grateful for your generosity.

- ♦ During 2023, there were approximately 700 incidents to which the AVFD Members responded. Members participated in approximately 50,100 hours attending incidents, meetings, trainings, and events serving the Avon community.
- ♦ Many congratulations to former Chief and current Executive Board Member Jamie DiPace, and former Captain and current Member Jim Reber, each for 50 years of AVFD service! Congratulations also to the following AVFD award winners, FY 22-23: Legacy Award to Dennis Bianchi; Firefighter of the Year Award to Garrett Long, Co. 4; Outstanding Service Award to Ryan Wilson, Co. 4; Most Calls Awards for Interior Firefighter Award to Co. 3 Captain Dave Theriault with 323, Connor Goldie of Co. 3 with 255, and Tori Haskins of Co. 3 with 243; Most Calls Awards to Chip Carpenter of Fire Police with 438, Nick Mathein of Co. 3 with 334, and Fire Police Lieutenant Pete Tedone with 304; Most Training Hours Award to Garrett Long of Co. 4 with 276; Company Appreciation Awards to Sean Freiman of Co. 1, Nick Mathein of Co. 3, Mike Galliher of Co. 4, Sharon Levine-Shein of Fire Police, Kenna Daly of Headquarters Administration; the Company Award to Company 3; Explorer of the Year Award to Zoey Hatinen; Board President's Gift to Vice President Nancy Crozier; Appreciation Awards to Assistant Chief Tom Kline and Assistant Chief Joe Speich; and Honorary Member Awards to former Town of Avon Council Member Heather Maguire and former Town of Avon Deputy Director of Public Works Alex Trujillo.
- ♦ The AVFD Fire Station Expansion, Renovation & New Construction Building Committee is under way in carrying out its charge for the community. Ultimately, the goal of the Town and the AVFD is to continue to cultivate and maintain a fire service that is 100% volunteer. In order to adequately serve Avon's growing population with a volunteer force, the AVFD will require updated facilities in order to recruit and sustain its members, and to provide its volunteers with the facilities needed to serve the community efficiently, effectively, and safely.
- ♦ **Become a Volunteer Firefighter** – You can help make a difference! Training will be provided. Apply by phone, web, email, or social media: call (860) 677-2644; visit [www.avonvfd.org](http://www.avonvfd.org); search Facebook at AvonVFD; or stop by Headquarters office, 25 Darling Drive, for an application Monday 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Tuesday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### Christmas Tree Pick Up

The Public Works Department began picking up Christmas trees on Tuesday, January 2, 2024. There is no established schedule with this pick up. The last day for pick up will be January 31st.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING  
INFORMATION PRINTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER  
CALL THE TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE  
AVON TOWN HALL AT (860) 409-4300.

**ISSUE LXXII**  
**January 2024**

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## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**Town Council Budget Workshop**  
**Saturday, February 10, 2024, 8:00 a.m.**  
**Hybrid Format (via GoToMeeting & In-Person, Town Hall, Selectmen's Chamber)**

**FY 2024/2025**  
**Annual Budget Public Hearing**  
**Monday, April 1, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Location & Format TBD**  
**More details to come on [www.avonct.gov](http://www.avonct.gov)**