



Town of Avon Newsletter

ISSUE LVI

October 2018

FY 2019/2020 Budget Process

The process is already under way to begin planning for the FY 2019/2020 budget that takes effect on July 1, 2019. All town departments have submitted their capital budget requests, and operating budget requests are due in early November. Residents who would like to attend the meetings (during which the details of the budget are discussed) may be interested in the following announcements.

Capital Budget Presentations will be held in the Selectmen's Chamber at Avon Town Hall, 60 West Main Street, on the following dates and times:

- Wednesday, November 14th at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, December 6th at 7:00 p.m.

Operating Budget Workshop is traditionally a half-day meeting held on a Saturday in February in the Selectmen's Chamber at Town Hall. Please check the January 2019 issue of the Newsletter for the date. The complete budget calendar is available on-line at: www.avonct.gov.

Voters Approve Acquisition of 828 West Avon Road

On Monday June 4, 2018, the Town's acquisition of the property located at 828 West Avon Road was approved by voters during a Special Town Meeting held at the Avon Senior Center. The 38 acre parcel is noted as one of 21 properties in the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) that are a high priority for acquisition. The Town purchased the property for general municipal use, with no restrictions, at a total cost of \$2.1 million.



Closing procedures occurred on July 18th. At that time, the Town took title to the property outright and simultaneously leased back to the Seller a "buffer zone" of approximately 22 acres at the rear of the property for up to 18 years, to be used solely for agricultural and farming purposes. No portion of the property will be available for public access while the lease with the Seller is in effect. In the coming months the Town will conduct a public Request for Proposals (RFP) process to select a private party to lease the remaining 16 acres closest to West Avon Road for agricultural purposes.

Annual Report & Town Calendar

Residents are reminded that the Annual Report is not mailed to households. A limited number will be available at the Town Hall, the Library, Senior Center, and the Landfill. Reports will be ready for pick-up on Friday, November 30, 2018.

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Construction Update

Fisher Meadows Expansion—Work is underway on the project to add 7 additional multi-purpose fields at Fisher Meadows. Construction of the gravel parking lot and the storm water drainage systems has been completed and a new pavilion was installed. Currently, crews are grading the athletic fields and installing the irrigation system. Grass seed will be planted following the installation of the irrigation system. Work will continue through the fall. Most of the design and construction work has been completed in-house by the Engineering and Public Works Departments in an effort to reduce the costs.

Fire Company #4 Improvements—Renovations to the basement of Fire Company #4, including improvements to the restrooms, kitchen, and day room, were completed this summer. An appropriation of \$150,000 was included in the FY 2016/2017 capital budget for this work.

99 Thompson Road Improvements—Some changes have been made to the 99 Thompson Road property this summer thanks to an unexpected “gift” from the Fisher Meadows Expansion Project. The Fisher Meadows Project displaced about 12,700 cubic yards of topsoil from the project site. In May and June, the Town trucked this topsoil from Fisher Meadows to



Grass growing on the 99 Thompson Road site thanks to the wet weather in August!

Thompson Road, spread the soil, and planted grass. This project has greatly improved the aesthetics and potential future uses of the property at a nominal cost to the Town (approx. \$25,000 funded through the FY 2017/2018 operating budget).

Police Department Improvements—Improvements to the Police Department buildings began in spring 2017 with the construction of a storage building at the rear of the Town Hall property. This summer, the Town worked with a contractor to relocate the existing radio communications tower in order to accommodate an expansion to the Administration Building which will house an expanded Emergency Operations Center. Construction on the addition is expected to occur later this year and interior renovations to the Patrol Building will follow. About \$800,000 has been appropriated for these projects over several years.

School Security Upgrades—This summer a variety of security enhancement projects, including the installation of security cameras and an automatic door locking system, were completed district-wide. These projects were funded through an appropriation of \$667,412 that was repurposed from funding originally intended to fund renovations to the science labs at Avon Middle School. An additional \$265,000 was appropriated in the fiscal year 2018/2019 capital budget.

Sperry Park Improvements—You may have noticed that Sperry Park is looking a little different this summer! The Town accepted much of the fill that was removed from the Avon Village Center site as the result of a trail relocation project. The majority of the material was brought to Sperry Park to fill the low area that was left behind when the old Towpath School was removed from the property. The site will be graded level and grass will be planted this fall so that the area might be used for recreational fields in the future if needed.



Planning and Zoning Commission Approves Significant Village Center Development



At a special meeting on July 31, 2018, the Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved the first phase of a new village center development which, when fully developed, will be over one million square feet.

The first phase of the Avon Village Center development contains over 301,000 square feet across 13 buildings, including 170,000 square feet

of retail space, 17,000 square feet of office space and approximately 114,000 square feet of residential construction. Some of the buildings will be mixed use, with “some buildings even having vertically mixed uses,” according to Hiram Peck, Director of Planning and Community Development. “The Commission did a great job of working with the developer, Carpionato Associates of Johnston, RI, to get the design and building characteristics to fit the unique Village Center character that the Commission has been working to develop for several years,” Peck said. The entire development will follow a specific design template, or pattern guide, that was developed in concert with the Commission’s consultants and the developer’s design team. Additionally, the development will contain some unique outdoor features including a specially designed and sustainably based, waterfall park. The development will also make use of the unique location of the Farmington Valley Arts Center in the midst of the older buildings that will be included in the development. We anticipate that arts will continue to be a very significant focus of the development.



You may have noticed that construction on the development has already begun by moving a portion of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail to a safer and much more enjoyable location between the Town Offices and the Village Center development. The developer has worked well with the Town to get this project underway and we have seen that trail users have been taking advantage of the new segment and really seem to enjoy it! In addition to having the trail travel through the Village Center on a professionally designed bikeway, the area will feature both small gathering areas for entertainment and a large public park with walking trails to observe the natural features which will remain untouched and available to those looking for contemplative places to walk.

At this time, residents will begin to see more intensive work occurring on the site. The initial excavation for building and infrastructure development is scheduled to start in early fall 2018, with vertical development anticipated to begin in spring 2019. “It is an exciting time in this area of Town as we begin to see years of effort finally coming to fruition,” says Peck.

This is a long term project and this is just the first phase, but the result will be a truly unique pedestrian friendly experience for this area where folks can live, work and play all within the Village Center. This development will truly represent the best of both historic and modern New England: a small village development with all the conveniences of today, enhanced by unique attractions and features that will make the Village Center truly Avon. We think the residents and visitors alike will enjoy the area for years to come! For further information please contact Mr. Peck at (860) 409-4328 or visit the Planning & Community Development page of the Town’s website.



Dates to Remember for the November Election

October 5, 2018 - Absentee ballots became available in the Town Clerk's Office. If you need an absentee ballot, you may pick up an application and ballot at the Town Clerk's Office during normal business hours, or call (860) 409-4310 to request that an application be mailed to you.

October 30, 2018 - Last day to register to vote *in person or mail* to be eligible to vote on November 6, 2018. The Registrars of Voters will be in their office at 60 West Main Street, Building #1, Avon, from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. to register voters. Any questions regarding voter registration should be directed to the Registrars of Voters at (860) 409-4350.

November 5, 2018 - Last day to apply for an absentee ballot.

November 6, 2018 (Election Day) - The polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. See back page of this Newsletter for polling locations.

Election Day Registration will be held at the Avon Town Hall, Building #1, Registrars of Voters Office.

A Message From The Avon Clean Energy Commission (ACEC)

Looking for an autumn activity that is green, energy efficient, healthy, inexpensive and fun for the whole family? Spend an afternoon utilizing one of Avon's best kept secrets: its extensive trail network. Let's get moving!

Avon is home to a maintained trail network of nearly twenty miles, including 4.5 miles of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, an 81 mile linear park constructed on the former Farmington Canal and later the New Haven/Northampton rail line. In the early 1990s, the unused railroad tracks were gradually converted into bike paths stretching from New Haven to Northampton, MA. The "Rails-to-Trails" are now enjoyed by thousands of bicyclists, joggers, walkers, and roller bladers each year. Be sure to check out some of the Town's recent trail improvements, including the relocation of the trail segment behind the Town Hall, the replacement of the fencing from the Farmington Town line to just past the trail's intersection with Thompson Road, and the installation of two bicycle fixing stations, donated by the Farmington Valley Trails Council, at 99 Thompson Road and Sperry Park!



For more of a challenging route, look no further than the 28 mile loop trail that follows segments of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and the Farmington River Trail which passes through six towns, including Avon. Experience the historic sites of the Farmington Valley and the beauty of the Farmington River. For a detailed trail map head to the Farmington Valley Trails Council's website: www.fchtrail.org. For the more experienced cyclist, a favorite is the Huckleberry Hill/New Road loop which is 6.3 miles. The ride along New Road has little traffic and great views of the Farmington River. Of course road riding requires a higher skill level and the ability to safely share the road with vehicular traffic. As always, remember to wear a helmet whether riding on the road or the trail! It is one of the goals of the ACEC to reach out to Town residents regarding topics of sustainability. Stay tuned for more from the ACEC on sustainability and energy efficiency in future Town newsletters and visit the Commission's page on the Town's website, www.avonct.gov, for more information including meeting schedules, agendas and minutes. Our bimonthly meetings are open to the public. We'd love to see you there!

Household Hazardous Waste Collection • November 3, 2018

The Town of Avon, in conjunction with Canton, Farmington, Granby, and Simsbury, will be holding a household hazardous waste collection on Saturday, November 3, 2018 at the Simsbury Public Works Facility at 66 Town Forest Road (Town Forest Road is located off Stratton Brook Road). The collection will run from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and will be open to all residents from Avon, Canton, Farmington, Granby, and Simsbury. Please visit www.avonct.gov for more information.



Social Services Programs

- **CT Energy Assistance Programs:** The State of Connecticut can help certain households pay for primary heating bills (i.e. oil, propane, electric, and gas), if those households meet certain federal poverty income guidelines and limited asset tests. For the upcoming 2018-2019 winter season, you may call Avon Social Services to see if you qualify for an appointment (regardless of whether you are a new or returning applicant). PLEASE APPLY EARLY! The program for oil ends on March 15, 2019, and all others on April 30, 2019. If you would like more information on this program, please visit the Town's website, www.avonct.gov, and go to the Social Services link "[Energy Assistance](#)" or contact the Social Services Office at (860) 409-4346 with any questions and to make an appointment. **NOTE:** Avon Social Services Department is extremely limited this year in its ability to provide emergency fuel deliveries through the Avon Fuel Bank!
- **Holiday Baskets:** The Social Services Department would like to remind everyone in the community that they will be collecting donations for the upcoming holiday season in order to help Avon families in need. Please join us again! You may download, complete, and submit the **Donor forms**, and find information on the **Drop-Off** days and times, by visiting the Town's website, www.avonct.gov, and go to the Social Services link "[Holiday Basket Program](#)."

From the United Way of Connecticut—Healthy Lives Connecticut

Health goes beyond visits to the doctor. While these visits are important for preventing and treating health conditions and diseases, they do not offer a full picture of health and wellness. It is important to focus on wellness within everyday life.

Physical wellness extends to a healthy diet, exercise and other lifestyle factors that contribute to overall well-being. Wellness also includes different aspects of life, including financial, spiritual, social and emotional/mental wellness. Neglecting any of these areas can reduce overall health and wellness even when there is a large focus on other aspects of health. This is a holistic view, which focuses on the way different aspects of health and wellness work together to affect a person as a whole.

The need to take a more holistic approach shows itself with opioid use. Many people who became addicted started taking opioids with a prescription to provide physical pain relief. They then developed a problem with this highly addictive substance. Mental health problems, stress and other aspects of life can also contribute to addiction.

Because there are so many factors involved in opioid and other addictions, the treatment industry often recommends a holistic approach that addresses all of a person's needs. If treatment only addresses the person's physical response to addiction, mental and emotional factors may prevent the person from quitting or encourage relapse. It could be the same if a different area of health is neglected.

An addiction treatment program will often include different forms of therapy to address mental and emotional health, a detox program and medication management to address physical health, meditation to address spiritual health and peer programs to address social health, among other components. This approach focuses on treating the whole person. Nonetheless, the best treatment programs provide a personalized approach that is tailored to each person's specific needs.

The Healthy Lives Connecticut website educates and provides help related to different areas of wellness. It promotes a holistic outlook for a variety of concerns, including opioid use and addiction. Visit www.healthylivesct.org for access to the website's helpful resources. The site also includes anonymous and confidential self-screening tools for mental health and addiction.

AVON RECREATION DEPARTMENT

After school ski program registration ends on November 2nd or when all spots are filled. Avon High, Avon Middle and Thompson Brook Schools will all ski on **Tuesdays, from January 8th to February 5, 2019** (dates subject to change depending upon weather conditions). Log on to: www.avonrec.com to register.



Oak Bluff Pond Becomes an Additional Water Supply for AVFD

Based on feedback from area residents following a fire at a Vermillion Drive home in 2016, the Town of Avon, in partnership with the Avon Volunteer Fire Department, recently completed a project to install a dry hydrant at a pond located on Oak Bluff. The project transformed the pond into a more accessible, viable water supply and added to the AVFD's existing water sources that could be used to fight a fire in the area in the future. The project included the installation of a turn-out area for apparatus and a standpipe from which water may be drawn directly from the pond by the fire apparatus pumps at street level. This project could not have been completed without the partnership of the AVFD, and the support and interest of the Vermillion Drive/Oak Bluff neighborhood. We thank you for your efforts!

Town's Website Gets a Fresh New Look!

If you have recently browsed the Town of Avon's website, you probably noticed a big change. Over the summer, www.avonct.gov, got a complete makeover! The new site includes drop-down menus and tabbed content for news, meetings and calendar events, plus a "citizen action center" that collects many of the most visited pages into one menu on the homepage. The new site also works better on mobile devices, so give it a try on your smartphone or tablet. An improved contact form offers an easy way to report issues with roads, parks, and other Town property from around Avon to the appropriate municipal departments.

The new site should be easy and intuitive to use, but if you have any comments or suggestions on how it could get even better, please reach out using the "report a concern" link from the home page and let Town staff know.

Avon Free Public Library Expands Evening Hours

Avon Free Public Library is excited to announce expanded evening hours this fall. Starting in September, the Library will remain open until 8:30 P.M. on Wednesday evenings. For many years, Wednesday was the Library's "early" night, with the building closing at 6:00 P.M. The Library's new hours for the fall are Monday-Thursday, 10:00 A.M. to 8:30 P.M. and Friday-Saturday, 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Sunday hours, which run from December through April only, are 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A Message from the Avon Historical Society

Do you appreciate the charm and character of Avon? Like you, the Avon Historical Society is passionate about preserving the rich heritage of our unique town. We help celebrate a wealth of local stories by bringing history to life with exhibits, presentations, preservation of properties, and so much more.

Founded in 1974, the Society is continually evolving. We manage four properties: two of the Town's early schoolhouses and two properties belonging to the State Department of the Military. However, retaining and preserving these properties, mounting exhibits in the library and schools, hiring speakers for events, and working closely with local organizations requires constant funding. We appreciate the active support of Avon residents and invite you to share our mission.

The Society membership is open to anyone and you are invited to visit the new website at: www.avonhistoricalsociety.org to learn more. If you want to attend an event, join us or become more active with the Society, please send an email to: info@avonhistoricalsociety.org or leave a message at (860) 678-7621. Our local heritage is too important to lose and you can help to safeguard it for future generations.

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



DPW Snow Removal & Ice Control Operations and Guidelines

General: Avon Public Works is charged with the responsibility of responding to winter snow and ice events. Our goal is to keep streets passable and reasonably safe during the storm and to clear the streets, curb to curb, within 8 to 12 hours after the storm has ended. Our plow drivers work long hours in hazardous driving conditions, and we appreciate your patience during snow and ice events.

Snow Routes: The 112 miles of town roads (approximate) maintained by DPW are divided into 11 snow plow routes. One plow truck and driver is assigned to each plow route for the entire winter season.

Priorities: During snow events, the primary focus is to provide a safe travel way for cars and emergency vehicles on heavily traveled roadways. While snow is actively falling, plowing is generally limited to the center portion of the roadway to clear a path wide enough for one travel lane in each direction. As a winter storm subsides, more efforts can be directed to local roadways and cul-de-sacs. Depending on the severity of a storm, it can take up to 4 hours +/- to make passes on all streets in town. Snow removal often continues for 8 to 12 hours after snow has stopped falling.

Mail Box 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.



Frequently Asked Questions:

I live on a cul-de-sac and end up with significant amounts of snow in my driveway. Why? Plowing cul-de-sacs is one of the most challenging operations during a snow storm. Most properties on cul-de-sacs have frontages that are narrower than lots on a straight street. Therefore, snow must be pushed into a smaller space.

Why is snow pushed into my driveway by street plows? It is unavoidable and it is not done intentionally. Snow cast into driveways is an unfortunate byproduct of a very necessary service we provide. When we plow a street, we are simply moving the snow that is in the street off to the side of the street. The greater the amount of snow, the more snow that is deposited on the side.

Who is responsible for clearing snow in front of my mailbox? We plow the streets curb to curb, or as close as we can get. Whatever snow is left in front of mailboxes is the responsibility of the property owner to remove (or at least to move in order for the mailbox to be accessible to the mail carrier).

Can I, as a resident, push snow from my property onto the sidewalk or street? NO! Town Ordinance restricts the act of pushing snow back onto a street and doing so may result in a fine of \$50 and/or liability if an accident is caused by this dumping of snow. Please be respectful of passing motorists expecting a clear street by not putting snow back onto the street. Remember, if you contract for snow removal, you are still responsible for where the snow ends up.

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Avon Town Council
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www.avonct.gov



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IMPORTANT DATE

STATE ELECTION

NOVEMBER 6, 2018

6:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

Absentee Ballots will be available.

**Any questions regarding absentee ballots should be directed to the
Town Clerk's Office at (860) 409-4310.**

District #1—Avon High School
510 West Avon Road
Gymnasium

District #2—AVFD Co. #1
25 Darling Drive
Upper Level

District #3—Roaring Brook School
30 Old Wheeler Lane
Gymnasium