

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

To: Members of the South Windsor Town Council

From: Matthew B. Galligan, Town Manager

Subject: Town Manager's Report for 12/18/17 Town Council Meeting

Date: December 14, 2017

Lights at the High School Football Stadium Field

I have met with some residents who have concerns about putting lights at the High School stadium field. This issue came up at the last Council Meeting as well. I would like to go over the process one more time in writing so that everyone knows exactly what has to happen.

Lights at the field should be a discussion first started at the Board of Education. The Board of Education is responsible for the asset that the Town gives them during the operations of all schools. If they are going to have night games, they would also be responsible for those events and activities. Therefore, if anything were to move forward on this project, there would need to be a clear direction from the Board of Education.

They would have to consider additional capital and operational costs if they were to install lights. The capital costs should be a recommendation to the Capital Projects Committee for their review and comparison to other capital projects priorities. This is essential to make sure that all priorities are set by the Board, the Capital Projects Committee, and the Town Council.

During this period of time, the Board of Education's budget would have to be reviewed for operational costs, and it would need to be determined who will be paying for the electricity, extra staffing that may be needed at night games, and any extra police presence to either direct traffic or keep the peace onsite.

Hypothetically, after the Board of Education has gone through their deliberations and submitted the lights to the Capital Projects Committee, the Town Council would also

need a reference from the Board of Education to review this process. The Town Council would then be obligated to do an 8-24 referral to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their approval. The Planning and Zoning Commission would be required to review the project's impacts to the neighborhood and fields and then report back to the Town Council whether they approve or disapprove the 8-24 referral. If approved, the Town Council would need a majority vote to move forward with the project. If the Planning and Zoning Commission disapproves, the Town Council would need a supermajority vote of at least six members of the Council voting in favor to move the project forward.

At that time, the Town Council would work with the Capital Projects Committee on funding, design, and implementation of the lights. Once this part is finished, the site plan would need to be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their approval. I believe this would be a special exception site plan. Their final outcome would determine whether the lights can be installed on the field under the Planning and Zoning regulations. Once approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the project will come back to the Town Council for implementation and funding which would also include which budget will pay for maintenance and operating costs.

I do feel that if the project moves forward, it should be compared to the Capital Projects list that the Town and Board of Education have been working on for years. It could bump another priority, such as roofs, drainage, ADA compliance, etc., that has been on the waitlist for many years.

This is the process in a nutshell, and I would wait to see if the Board of Education wishes to move forward.

Coyote Sightings

It has come to my attention through various sources that we do have a problem in the Town of South Windsor with coyotes, especially in the Foster Street area. The public should be aware that as they are walking their dogs, they should be on a short leash and close to them as they are more likely to be attacked if they are free and off-leash. I

would also remind our residents that although fencing and even electronic fencing may be on your property, it would be detrimental to leave your dogs unsupervised as coyotes can penetrate those fences.

I will be talking to the Police Chief to see if we can put out a press release to the Town on this issue, as well as contacting the DEEP as we have done in the past. The DEEP will most likely tell us that they are wild animals, and there is nothing they can do. However, I would like to inform them, especially if these animals happen to be moving in packs, in case there are any programs we can institute to protect residents' pets on their property.

Two Ordinances

Before you tonight are two items for consideration of ordinances. The first one is the construction ordinance due to the recent construction disruption in certain neighborhoods in the Town. The ordinance before you was rewritten by the Town Attorney and is a sample that has been approved in other communities. The Council can review this ordinance and modify it.

The other ordinance is for fracking. This has also been adopted by other communities and is an important ordinance. They are finding that some of the materials given to towns for their roads and drainage have these types of materials that could be detrimental to the environment.

The two ordinances will need public hearings, and we can have further discussions at those public hearings. For the fracking ordinance, we will be bringing in an expert to the public hearing to discuss the issue of fracking so the Council and Town residents understand why we are considering this ordinance. This individual has made presentations to other towns, and the Town Attorney has asked this person to come to the public hearing in January so that we can have a better understanding of what this issue entails.

Board and Commission Roundtable Discussion

I know the Council had some discussions on trying to work with the Boards and Commissions regarding the quorum issues. I would suggest having a roundtable discussion with all Boards and Commissions sometime in January 2018. On that agenda would be the issues of membership and quorums as well as other issues that I feel are important to these Boards and Commissions as far as FOI, staffing, their effectiveness, and their job description as proposed many years ago in the strategic planning process. I will let the Council know when that date is going to be so that the Council may also be invited to participate in those discussions.

Citizens' Survey

I emailed a copy of the Citizens' Survey to the Town Council that was submitted to Town residents in the mid-2000's with a list of questions about the Town. I have submitted these questions to our Department Heads to update, and I would also like the Council to review these questions and make suggestions to the Town Manager's Office. I would like to resubmit the modified survey to the residents sometime in spring 2018 so that we can review the issues that our residents feel they want accomplished and then be able to move forward in future budgets to meet the needs of those programs.

Crumbling Foundation Relief

At the last Council meeting, the Town Council said they would like to have a program for people who have crumbling foundations so their taxes could be reduced. Even though they would get a Certificate of Occupancy if they repair their foundations, they would like those taxes reduced for a period of five years. I have looked at the State Statute, Public Act No. 16-45, which I have attached for your information. This Statute does not allow this to take place. I would suggest contacting our State Legislators to enhance this Act to allow a municipality, at their local option, to be able to implement this suggestion from the Council. I do feel this is the only way this can be done as the State Statute does not allow us to currently do this, but it does allow us to reduce assessments for crumbling foundations until repair and a C.O. is received. If we can get a letter from the Mayor endorsed by the Town Council and Town Manager, I would sit with our

Representatives in this upcoming session to get this changed so that people can get some relief over a couple of years.

Evergreen Walk Property

As you know, there was a referendum process for the sale of a small piece of property at Evergreen Walk to the developer so that they could use a portion of the property as coverage for a project they were working on. That referendum passed, and we are moving forward with the sale of that small strip of land to Evergreen Walk. The issue that has arisen is that the money generated from this small parcel is to be turned over to the State Department of Transportation. On other parcels of land given to us by the State that we have used for economic development, the State Representatives had exempted that requirement from the deed so that we can promote economic development, and the proceeds would come back to the Town. I am letting the Town Council know that I will be contacting our Representatives so that we can change that deed in the next legislative session so the small amount of money could be put back into the project or into Buckland Road to promote additional economic development.