



*Dear Fairfielders,*

*Many of you are either in the midst of celebrating or preparing for the holidays. In addition to the celebrations, the end of another year naturally brings with it time for slowing down and time for reflection. I'll be spending some time thinking about how we can lift each other up as a community, serve those who need our help, be the best version of ourselves we are called to be, and work toward peace in our community and beyond. Sending you all warmest wishes for a safe and healthy holiday season.*

*Bill Gerber  
First Selectman*

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### **Giving Back**

Fairfield's Department of Human and Social Services\* has an annual tradition of providing gifts for local Fairfield families in need. With your help, we served nearly 180 Fairfield families during the holidays last year, through the generosity of individuals, town departments, businesses, faith-based and community organizations.

During this special yet stressful time of year, our goal is to support parents with gift cards to supermarkets, gas stations, local stores and businesses. Amazon, Target, Walmart - anywhere families may shop for their loved ones for the holidays. The ability to select and purchase gifts for their families provides our clients another level of independence in an otherwise difficult time. We also collect gift certificates for experiences such as vacation camps, afterschool programs, dance lessons, art classes – any activities that may be beyond the reach of struggling families – to allow children to participate in extra-curricular enrichment opportunities. All donations are welcome.

If you are interested in donating to the Holiday Giving program, please contact Eileen Fickes, Social Worker for the Department of Human and Social Services, at 203-256-3170 or by email at [socialservices@fairfieldct.org](mailto:socialservices@fairfieldct.org). Donations are accepted during business hours 9AM-4:30PM at the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities, 100 Mona Terrace.

On behalf of the families that receive the holiday gifts, the Town of Fairfield Dept. of Human and Social Services would like to thank you in advance for helping care for our residents and your neighbors this holiday season.

*\*The Department of Human Services Department provides emergency assistance to town residents who are facing unexpected financial crises. The department offers many confidential services to address a variety of issues residents may face, including advocacy, case management, counseling, crisis intervention, and screening for other assistance programs.*

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### **Holiday Schedule**

Please note that Town Hall will be closed on Monday, Dec. 25.

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### **Lithium Battery Safety Video**

On December 5, the Fairfield Fire Department, in partnership with the Connecticut Career Fire Chief Association and Underwriters Laboratories (UL), held a statewide media kick-off to promote a video educating the public on how to prevent and mitigate fires involving lithium-ion batteries. Please watch [this video](#) featuring Fairfield Firefighters to learn how to protect yourself and your loved ones.





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Here's a quick update on several key priorities we continue to drive forward.

### **UI Monopoles**

Since Nov. 27, 2023 we have been represented by highly experienced counsel in this matter. That's good news but can't make up for the fact that the Town was late to file as an intervenor to dispute the project, and our new attorney has only been involved for three weeks. In the most recent hearing, the Siting Council limited the attorneys for the intervenors to one hour each for witness questioning. In contrast, UI has had four days of hearings to question witnesses. We believe this to be an unfair and broken process, and we regard this move as blatant disregard for our due process rights. We've voiced our complaint to both the Council and the Governor. The Council plans to issue a decision in March. We are meeting with our attorney next week to plan our next steps.

You can advocate and stay informed by joining Sasco Creek Neighborhood Environmental Trust at [empoweringfairfield.org](http://empoweringfairfield.org). Although their name is "Sasco Creek", this group is advocating for our *entire* community, from Southport to Grassmere and extending into Bridgeport. They don't want to see any of us have to bear the burden of these intrusive and unsightly 145' monopoles, especially areas that historically have been a dumping ground for ugly and invasive structures.

### **Penfield Fill Remediation and Pavilion Rebuild**

Although it looks like a construction zone, no actual construction has yet begun at the Penfield site. There is one hot spot that remains to be remediated before any construction can begin. That work will be done in January, once sites that accept the contaminated fill open additional capacity. We are eagerly awaiting the results of the coastal resilience study due to be completed this month. Once that report is reviewed, we can prepare a recommendation for the Board of Selectmen and report on next steps.

### **SantaCon**

This year's SantaCon resulted in a huge amount of trash strewn about the beach, both on private property and on our town's public beach. Although Fairfield U. students organized a next-day clean-up, an enormous volume of plastic waste and other garbage had already

been washed into LI Sound by two successive tides. THANK YOU TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS who grabbed rubber boots and plastic bags and waded out into the water to retrieve floating debris and dispose of it properly. Above and beyond the environmental damage, there was real potential for serious human tragedy as well. We will be meeting with Fairfield U. and other key stakeholders in the coming weeks to discuss ways we can partner to mitigate damage and avoid potential tragedy.

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### **Town Boards and Commissions**

Fairfield is blessed with a highly talented pool of residents eager to volunteer their time and talent for the betterment of our community. If you think your skills might benefit the Town, you can learn more about the process of serving on a Town Board or Commission and apply [here](#).

### **Board of Selectmen Meetings**

Our last Board of Selectmen meeting of the year will be held on Monday, Dec. 18 at 4PM. Meetings are held in Town Hall and open to public, and you can attend either in person or on Webex. You can also read minutes of previous meetings [here](#).

### **Correction**

Last week's email included the wrong link to the Town's tree planting program. If you're interested in having a tree planted on your property in the public right of way, you can find more info [here](#).

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***We're Better Together!***

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