Town of Fairfield News

3/8/2022 - 3.4 TOWN UPDATE



Dear Fairfielders,

I join the residents of Fairfield and the citizens of our country in feeling powerless to stop the attack on the Ukrainian people. Russian President Putin should pay a severe price for his senseless aggression against Ukraine. In a small but sincere act of solidarity, I have ordered the Ukrainian Flag to fly at half-staff beneath the American Flag in front of Town Hall. I also asked our Department of Public Works to illuminate Old Town Hall with blue and yellow lights for this month. I encourage Fairfielders to show their support for the people of Ukraine by lighting their front porches in yellow or blue.

On Saturday, I will join the Ukrainian-American Club of Southport at a rally at 1:00 PM and hope to see you there.





TOWN GOVERNMENT NEWS

STATE OF THE TOWN

On Monday evening, I delivered my State of the Town address before the Representative Town Meeting, which you can watch <u>here</u>. It was a nice opportunity to share my goals for the upcoming year for the Town of Fairfield.



After my address, the RTM took up the non-reoccurring list of Capital Projects that were unanimously approved by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. You can view the list of non-reoccurring Capital Projects that were approved on the <u>agenda</u> and <u>vote tally</u> by clicking the links.

TOWN BUDGET

On Monday morning, the Board of Selectmen (BOS) re-convened after last week's two budget hearings to vote on my proposed budget. In case you missed my budget newsletter update last week, you can read it here.

When I'm building a budget for our Town, I have to carefully consider the needs of all of our residents. Thirty-five percent of the budget funds all Town operations. This includes funding for our public safety departments (Police & Fire), maintaining and plowing our roads, maintaining our beaches, parks & recreation, conservation, libraries, and literally, every service Town Government provides for Fairfield's 61,000 residents. The remaining 65% of the budget is allocated to our Public School System. It also funds our school nurses and debt services for school construction and other capital projects.

I believe we can all agree that an excellent public school system is a top priority. Not only do we want our children to have the best education to be successful and competitive in a global economy, but it is also vital to the desirability of our Town and our property values. This year, the Board of Education (BOE) requested a \$10.4 million increase over the current year's budget. In weighing all the services our Town provides with your tax dollars, I must be very conscious of affordability. I reduced the BOE requested increase to \$7.9 million. Even with this reduction, 65% percent of the Town's budget will continue to be invested in our education system, and that percentage clearly represents a commitment to funding quality schools.

My budget also includes an expansive investment in Fairfield's Senior and Disabled Tax Relief that maximizes benefits for our lowest-income qualifying residents. Seniors, who call Fairfield home, deserve to retire with dignity in the community they helped build. For more information on the Senior and Disabled Tax Relief program please click here.

If you're interested in viewing the BOS hearings and final deliberations please click here: February 23rd, February 24th, and Final Deliberation. On Thursday, March 10th, the Board of Finance will hold its first public budget session. Visit Fairfieldct.gov/budget for more information and to follow along.

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

On February 24th, the Charter Revision Commission (CRC) convened for a discussion on Fairfield's Town governance. The Commission had an in-depth conversation about the merits of each of the Town's current bodies, Board of Selectmen (BOS), Board of Finance (BOF), and Representative Town Meeting (RTM). It was determined that the BOF is an important function of our Town governance, but questions arose as to whether or not the BOF, a 6-year term, should remain a nine-member board or be consolidated to seven members. The Commission is also still reviewing the structure of the BOS and the RTM. The Commission agreed that District RTM representation is part of the culture of Fairfield. There was also a discussion about adding a Town Manager position, how that role could be incorporated into the Charter, and in what capacity regarding reporting and responsibilities. The Commission continues to work hard in its efforts to review and revise our Town Charter. Please join the public comment session on Thursday, March 10th at 6:00 PM. **Our community's input is critical to this process.**

SPECIAL MEETING

Town of Fairfield's CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION



PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

The Commission encourages the public to share their comments on the town governance proposals put forth during the Feb 25th meeting. It's IMPORTANT we hear from our residents!

Please join the conversation!

SEE WEBSITE FOR AGENDA & LOG IN INSTRUCTIONS THURSDAY, MARCH 10 | 6:00 - 7:00 PM



WWW.FAIRFIELDCT.ORG/CHARTERREVISIONCOMMISSION

POLICE PROMOTIONAL CEREMONY

On February 23rd, I had the honor of giving the oath of office in a promotional ceremony for members of the <u>Fairfield Police Department</u>. Please join me in congratulating Fairfield's finest: Deputy Chief Keith Broderick, Captain Edward Weihe, Lieutenant Jeremy Zdru, Sergeant Jason Greenfield, Sergeant Eric Fuller, and Detective Michael Mazzocchi. I wish them all the best in their new roles.





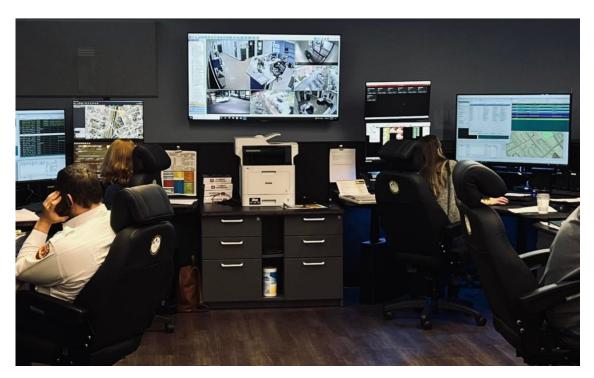


FAIRFIELD CT EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER IS NOW OPEN

The Town of Fairfield continually seeks innovative ways to improve and modernize its services and invest in the safety of our community. The opening of the Fairfield County Regional Dispatch Center is a prime example of how we accomplish that goal, and ensure the residents of Fairfield are provided with the most efficient services possible when facing a crisis.

The Fairfield County Regional Dispatch Center is officially open, the Town of Fairfield is now operating out of this new state-of-the-art facility, and we can't wait for Westport to join us soon. You can watch a quick news segment on the project here.





EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Assistant Chief (AC) Scott Bisson was recognized the by State National Guard for his efforts in the distribution of COVID supplies and serving as а point of distribution the at Fairfield Regional Fire School. Thank you, AC Bisson, for your



dedication to our community.

PROPOSED STATE LEGISLATION

Several bills are being proposed in the State Legislature that I feel residents should be aware of, as they can greatly impact our Town.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & 8-30g

As many of you are aware, the 8-30g State Statute has caused great concern for our residents. I support the spirit of the law to increase affordable housing options in Fairfield and throughout the state. It is vitally important that we provide a full range of housing options, offer housing that is affordable to our young people, our working families, and our seniors. However, I have also seen the unintended consequences of this law, as some developers have used it to subvert our local land-use regulations. Consequently, I believe that the 8-30g statute is flawed and in serious need of reform. You can click on this link to read the testimony I submitted on the proposed legislation. You can view all testimony submitted on the bill here.

BEACH ACCESS & PARKING

HB 5254 would prevent the Town of Fairfield, and other beach communities, from restricting access to parking near a public entrance to a public beach, recreational area, or scenic area. It would also prevent the Town from charging parking fees or continuing with our current beach permit program. The bill would have a huge impact on the Town's current budget, would take away the Town's ability to have control over its own shoreline, and would negatively impact residents who live near our beaches. You can read Fairfield's Parks & Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese's testimony in opposition to this bill here. The Fairfield Beach Resident Association is also submitting testimony in opposition.

OUTDOOR DINING

We support <u>HB 5271</u>, "An Act Concerning the Provision of Outdoor Food & Beverage Services and Outdoor Display of Goods." Residents have come to enjoy expanded outdoor dining, and we want to continue supporting our restaurants who have found outdoor dining to be critical to their survival throughout the pandemic. You can read Fairfield's Community and Economic Development Director Mark Barnhart's testimony in support <u>here</u>.

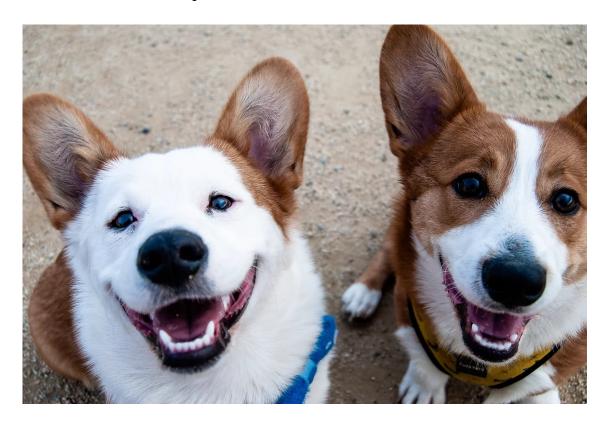
ADEQUATE SHELTER BILL

During my tenure in the legislature, I was a strong advocate on animal welfare issues and served as Co-Chair of the Animal Welfare Caucus for several terms working on common-sense laws to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Last week, I had the privilege to provide testimony on a bill that is important to me, <u>HB 5170</u>, "An Act Concerning the Tethering and Sheltering of Dogs." As an animal lover at heart, I will continue to support bills that protect the welfare of animals. The bill had a hearing before the Planning and Development Committee on February 25th, and I hope this bill will pass out of committee and be brought for a vote before the House and Senate. If you are interested in reading my testimony on this bill, please click here.

I have also asked members of the RTM to work on crafting a local ordinance regarding proper shelter and tethering of dogs. I am grateful to RTM Representative Karen McCormack, who is working diligently with residents in our community, meeting weekly to create an ordinance for our Town which would provide commonsense protections. I look forward to seeing their proposal when they finish their work later this month, which will be reviewed by the Town Attorney and then brought before the RTM for consideration.

If you are an animal lover and want to get involved in supporting animal advocacy, you can visit <u>CT Votes for Animals</u>, an organization I had the pleasure of working with for many years while I served in the legislature.

Photo from ctvotesforanimals.org



CAPALBO STRONG



It is wonderful how our community came together for one of our own during Capalbo Strong Night on Saturday, the 19th. Throughout Charlie's health battles, he has remained strong and optimistic, with the support of his family, friends, and community. The fundraiser collected about \$18,000, which will help Charlie and his family pay for

his treatment. The love that the hockey community and the Town have for Charlie is profoundly evident. I hope our residents will join me in keeping Charlie and his family in our thoughts and prayers.

If you weren't able to attend Capalbo Strong Night, the Capalbo Strong Fashion Show will take place on April 4th at The Brick Walk, and will begin promptly at 5:00 PM. I encourage you to attend in support of Charlie and his family or visit Charlie's <u>GoFundMe</u>, which was created in 2017 to help cover the expenses as Charlie courageously undergoes his fourth round of chemotherapy.

NATIONAL READ ACROSS AMERICA

I was so happy to be able to participate in Read Across America at both Roger

Sherman and Riverfield Elementary Schools this

past Wednesday and Thursday. Held annually

on March 2nd, this day honors Dr. Seuss' birthday while encouraging students to read, and reinforcing the importance of reading. I

selected Horton Hears a Who! to read to Ms.

Hoyt's 1St grade class at Roger Sherman and *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* to Ms. Cordon's

2nd grade class at Riverfield, both written by the beloved Dr. Seuss. I had a lot of fun answering the student's questions about my job as First

Selectwoman. I didn't realize how much I missed spending time with our students, and I appreciate both schools asking me to participate.



Ms. Cordon's 2nd grade class at Riverfield Elementary School



Ms. Hoyt's 1st grade class at Roger Sherman Elementary School

GIRL SCOUT TROOP VISIT | GOVERNMENT BADGE

I really enjoyed having the McKinley Girl Scout Troop and their Troop Leaders visit me yesterday afternoon in their quest to earn their government badge. It was particularly special to meet with McKinley students from the school that my own son attended as a child. The scouts asked many great questions about what it's like to run a Town government and were interested in how our Town operates. It always brightens my week when I have the opportunity to spend time with Fairfield's youth.





STUDENTS FOR CHANGE

Fairfield Warde sophomore, Andrew Fuller, is someone who fights for what he believes in. An educated young man, Andrew immersed himself in a class to obtain his emergency medical responder certification and continues to learn first-hand through his father, a former paramedic. Andrew's goal is to raise money to install defibrillators for Fairfield's beaches, with the hope to implement at least one to show residents the importance of these life-saving devices. Defibrillators can act as a crucial asset when someone is having a heart attack, and there are no medical responders present at the scene. It is a simple tool that any resident can easily use to save someone's life. Andrew hopes to use his knowledge to inform residents that they also have the power to help someone experiencing a heart attack with the assistance of these devices. Along with his fundraiser, Andrew was hired by



the Fairfield Regional Fire School.

Greenwich EMS as an EMR, a similar job to an EMT without the right to issue medication. Andrew has created a GoFundMe, with a goal of \$3,000 to install Fairfield's first beach defibrillator. If CPR/AED classes are something you are interested in, please check out the community classes, listed under *community* resources, that are being offered by

FAIRFIELD CARES

Photo by Andrew Fuller

Last Wednesday, Fairfield Cares held an informational seminar for parents of adolescent teens discussing the prevalence of Cannabis and Fentanyl in today's

society. Dr. Camenga, an associate professor of emergency medicine, led the presentation. After her presentation, there was a panel discussion with Chief Kalamaras, Detective Zerella, AMR Clinical Supervisor Matthew Hlavna, and Drs. Caleb Lusk and Deepa Camenga from Yale School of Medicine. If you were unable to attend this educational event and would like to stay informed, you can view the discussion here. It is wonderful that these individuals donated their time



to educate others on the impact of substances on adolescents, and I hope you take the time to view what they had to say.

CONNECTICUT'S OLYMPIANS

The Olympic Games have officially come to a close, and I'm sure you all had just as much fun as I did while watching these incredible athletes compete on an international level! I am excited to share some of the highlights of Team USA during this year's games. This past month, cheering for Team USA, and especially our Connecticut native athletes, alongside my family and friends, has been a fun experience. It is such a proud feeling to witness Team USA killing it in the Olympic Games and earning 25 medals!

Many athletes represented Connecticut in a big way by achieving their goal of

winning an Olympic Medal. If you want to learn more about other Olympic athletes who attend Connecticut Universities, you can click here.

Connecticut Medalists:

- <u>Lindsey Jacobellis</u>: Gold Medal in Women's Snowboard Cross & Gold Medal in Mixed Team Snowboard Cross
- Julia Marino: Silver Medal in Women's Snowboard Slopestyle
- Zachary Donohue: Bronze Medal for Ice Dancing & Silver Medal in Figure Skating Team Event



It wouldn't be a Winter Olympics without recognizing **Shaun White** for his successful career in snowboarding. Shaun White, 35, who has been a trailblazer in snowboarding, is now retiring after five Olympics and sixteen committed years. Shaun made his debut at the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics in Italy and is ending it with the Beijing Winter Olympics. He has earned three Olympic Gold Medals and came close to his fourth and final, only to place 4th in the Men's Snowboard Halfpipe Final. It has been aweinspiring to watch his success.

Photo by REUTERS/Hannah Mckay

Olympic athlete, Erin Jackson, has made history as the first black woman to win a medal in speed skating. Erin earned a Gold Medal in the Women's 500m Final and proudly represented Team USA. She finished the event in record time, with an impressive time of 37.04 seconds. What a wonderful moment in history to be a part of as a viewer! Congratulations, Erin, on such a momentous win and for paving the



way for the future. You can read more about Erin's success <u>here</u>.

Photo by AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki

BUY A BRICK PROJECT

The Fairfield Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Town of Fairfield, invites all **Fairfield and Southport businesses, nonprofits, and organizations** ?to become a part of the downtown streetscape by purchasing a commemorative brick? in celebration of the Chamber's 75th Anniversary. The bricks will be installed as part of a Town streetscape enhancement project, tentatively planned for later this year, and will be used to reconstruct the semicircle alongside the Fairfield Public Library on the Post Road in the heart of downtown. <u>Click here</u> for more information or to purchase a brick.



LOVE LOCAL BINGO

Love Local Bingo wraps on Friday, March 4th! Thank you to all of the businesses and patrons that have participated in this year's promotion! Don't forget to submit your bingo card and receipts to win great prizes! To submit your card, visit our website Bingo — Experience Fairfield CT

March kicks off Women's History
Month, which is particularly important
to me, serving as the second woman
elected to lead the Town of Fairfield in
382 years. In honor of Women's History
Month, I have included below virtual
events coming up which may be of
interest.

- Female Genius: Eliza Harriot and George Washington at the Dawn of the Constitution
- Her Story: How Women and Girls Transformed the World!
- Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg
 "Great Americans" Medal
 Posthumous Presentation



For more information visit womenshistorymonth.gov

I hope you have an enjoyable weekend.

Brenda L. Kupchick

Fairfield First Selectwoman

COVID-19 UPDATE

The <u>CDC</u> has changed from community transmission indicators to a community indicator based on hospitalization data. CT is currently rated as "low," as is <u>Fairfield County</u>. We don't have word yet on how CT DPH will change their protocols, but I do believe this is a much better tool in assessing the real impact of COVID in our community at this point in the pandemic.

The Fairfield Public Schools are now operating under mask choice protocol.

For vaccination locations, there are <u>numerous sites</u> available in Fairfield and nearby as well as <u>daily walk-in clinics</u> in many Towns.

There are <u>10 COVID testing</u> sites in Fairfield under contract to offer no-cost testing to CT residents.

Fairfield's Positivity Rate: 4.3%

Fairfield County Hospitalizations: 42

Vaccine First Dose: 84.3%

FAIRFIELD COVID RESOURCE PAGE

MARCH UPDATES

COMMUNITY CLASSES

A number of community classes are to be held at the Fairfield Regional Fire School, 205 Richard White Way. If you have questions regarding any of these courses, please contact (203) 254-4708, or email frfs@fairfieldct.org.

CPR/AED - FIRST AID Certification

Sunday Morning, March 13th 9 AM – 4 PM \$100 per student

<u>Heartsaver Layperson</u> <u>CPR/AED Certification</u>

Thursday Evening, April 21st 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM \$50 per student



CAREERS IN THE TRADES & PUBLIC SAFETY

Thursday, April 28th, Fairfield Warde and Ludlowe



High Schools, along with the Wakeman Boys & Girls Club, are hosting their first "Careers in the Trades and Public Safety Expo." The event will take place from 7 PM - 8 PM at the Wakeman Boys & Girls Club, <u>386 Center Street in Southport</u>, where students from grades 8 - 12 are invited to attend. This expo will be a tremendous opportunity to share information about your company, industry, and educate students on different career paths.

Space will be limited, so reserve your spot today! Please contact Alice Gorman at agorman@fairfieldschools.org.

METRO-NORTH

Starting March 27th, Metro-North will expand its number of active railways during the work week. This will increase the number of trains running from 244 to 278, making commutes much easier for those who work in the City. Metro-North is bringing this focus to their New Haven, Stamford, and New York City lines, as well as restoring express trains. This change will bring them closer to returning to their normal service, pre-pandemic.



TOWN SERVICES

PURCHASE YOUR 2022 GOLF ID

BIGELOW CENTER FOR SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Fairfield senior center's mission is to provide services and programs for older

adults that promote well being, support independence, and encourage involvement in community life. To become more involved with local activities and stay informed on news surrounding the Senior Center, you can view their Newsletter.



GLASS RECYCLING

The Town of Fairfield Transfer Station has added a **GLASS ONLY** collection bin along with our mixed recycling bins. I hope residents will take advantage of this opportunity which will help save the Town money in recycling costs – but also will help our efforts to be a more environmentally conscious community. We would like to encourage residents to separate their glass containers and drop them off at the **Transfer Station**. As always, recycling is at no charge to residents with a valid beach sticker. You can read more information here.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The hardest part of getting help is reaching out. We are here to help. Please call us at (203)-256-3170 Monday through Friday between 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM for more information or to schedule an appointment.

For more additional information and resources, social services offers a comprehensive newsletter with various programs addressing career development, service members, and housing here.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARIES

5:00 PM.

Both branches of Fairfield Public Library are open the following hours: Monday – Thursday, 9:00~AM-8:00~PM; Friday 9:00~AM-5:00~PM, and Saturday and Sunday, 1:00~-



Meeting rooms at both libraries have reopened for outside rentals. Reservations can be made online via the Library's website.

If you missed the marvelous evening with **One Book One Town author TJ Klune** at SHU Community Theatre on March 1st, **you can view it on the Library's YouTube channel:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VD0KM4-HOY. TJ gave an engaging presentation of his process as an author and in particular, his creation of **The House in the Cerulean Sea**.

Join us on Friday, March 4th, beginning at 3:15 PM, for "First Friday Jazz" with pianist Mark Edinberg. Mark will be playing in the Periodicals Room at Main Library until 4:45 PM.

Town Librarian Scott Jarzombek hosts monthly "community office hours," alternating between Main Library and Fairfield Woods Branch. This month he will be at Main Library on Tuesday, March 15th, between 1:00 and 6:00 PM (Study Room E, 1st floor). Please stop by and share your observations.

Free tax assistance is once again being offered at Main Library on Tuesdays until April 12, 2022. IRS-certified counselors will meet with residents between 9:30 AM -4:00 PM on a first-come, first-served basis; no appointment is necessary. This service is intended for low- and middle-income households and those over the age of 60, although all individuals will be assisted.

The Bruce S. Kershner Art Gallery Committee at Main Library welcomes the public to view its new show, "Color Play." The exhibit features the work of Earl Grenville Killeen, Dionne Pia, and Emily Teall and runs through April 2nd during Library hours.

It's not too late to join the Library's **Adult Reading Challenge**, going on now until Dec. 31, 2022! Explore new genres, discover new authors, and be entered to win prizes while you enjoy reading. Read just one book from each genre listed before midnight on New Year's Eve to complete the challenge! Check the Library's website for information on how to get started.

Current mask policy: In accordance with the current community COVID transmission levels masks are now by choice in the library. Social distancing is advised.

Please view our online calendar of events on our website (<u>Fairfield Public Library | You Belong Here!</u>) to see the offerings and reserve your spot!

Fairfield Public Library offers 24/7 access to its digital collection of books, music, magazines, movies and databases. Information services are available in person, by phone (203-256-3160), by email at eref@fplct.org, and via text messaging (text askfplct to 833-232-4100).

Pequot Library: We're Here, We Care – We are open for browsing! Visit Monday-Friday, 10 AM - 6 PM, Saturday 10 AM - 4 PM, and Sunday Noon -4 PM. Drop in during browsing hours to check out items from our circulating selection, see our latest exhibit in the Perkin Gallery, or view treasures from our Special Collections.



Now on view: Magic, Mayhem, & Maturity: The Growth of Youth Fantasy Literature

Drawing on materials from the Children's Historical Collection and the modern circulating collection, this exhibition examines the emergence and evolution of youth fantasy literature. Oftentimes, stories from this genre use magic as a metaphor for the turbulent transition from childhood to adulthood. Spanning fairy tales to 19th century works like *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Wizard of Oz* to more modern stories like *Harry Potter*, *Children of Blood and Bone* and *The Gilded Ones*, this exhibition further explores how these stories have evolved to tackle this transition in a more frank manner and, significantly, to embrace all voices.

For more programming, visit <u>Upcoming Events – Pequot Library</u>

Get details on our <u>website</u> and social media: <u>Facebook</u>, <u>Instagram</u>, <u>Twitter</u>, and <u>YouTube</u>. Sign up for Pequot Library's <u>Digital Digest eNewsletter</u> or contact our <u>Chief Librarian</u> for personalized book recommendations.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Behind in your rent or mortgage?

Operation Hope may be able to help!

Please contact Brenda at 203-292-5588 ext. 225or email her at blobdell@operationhopect.org

All inquiries are confidential

OPERATION HOPE

Struggling to make ends meet?

Reminder: Operation Hope's Food Pantry is here to serve all Fairfield residents. We are open at 636 Old Post Road Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM and Thursday from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Please let us help you with groceries and other basic necessities!

PREVIOUS UPDATES:

Budget Update

February 18

February 4

January 21

January 7

Archives

Did someone forward you this email? Sign up to receive my update directly here.

Archives