



Town of Fairfield

Office of the First Selectman
William A. Gerber

PRESS RELEASE

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January 30, 2024

First Selectman Bill Gerber Delivers State of the Town Address

Fairfield First Selectman William A. Gerber delivered the 2024 State of the Town address at the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) on Monday, January 29. In his address, Gerber outlined a promising vision for the Town for the next year, and looked ahead to the next decade as he emphasized the importance of strategic long-range planning and investments. In his remarks, he reflected on the Town's vibrant neighborhoods and business community, and discussed the challenges that lie ahead.

First Selectman Gerber emphasized five key areas where long-term planning is vital to the Town's success, including commercial and residential development; investing in the Town's decades-old sewer system to accommodate additional development on the Post Road corridor and update existing lines; the Town's schools; traffic and the Complete Streets program; and flood resiliency for residents near the coastline and within the river basin system.

Gerber then addressed challenges in the fiscal 2024-2025 budget, beginning with a grand list growth estimate at only $\frac{1}{4}$ of one percent, versus an average of two percent per year over the past four years. At the same time, the Town also was able to employ American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for projects that would have been bonded or paid for out of the operating budget. The Town's borrowing amounts will now return to normal levels and will cost more than in the recent past.

The First Selectman provided additional focus on current issues in front of the administration, including a permanent resolution to the Fill Pile, the rebuild of the Penfield Pavilion, and the United Illuminating proposal to build massive monopoles throughout Fairfield and the Town's opposition to that plan. He spoke about the importance of understanding the impacts of racism on public health and plans to read a proclamation on racism as a public health crisis at the January 31 Board of Selectman (BOS) meeting. He issued a call to celebrate our highly participatory, municipal democracy, and to reopen the Charter revision process.

In conclusion, the First Selectman discussed the Town's flourishing arts and cultural scene, inviting local artists to reach out to the newly formed Fairfield Arts Commission to help make

Fairfield known as a destination for the arts. He emphasized the success the Town enjoys with an excellent school system, vibrant downtown and businesses, and access to rail and airports, our position along the I-95 corridor between New York City and Boston, two private universities and top-notch public services, along with one of the longest coastlines of any municipality in the state.

Gerber invited all elected and appointed officials and all residents to join in the celebration of Fairfield and to collaborate on finding solutions to problems, emphasizing his belief that the Town is better when everyone works together.

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