



Town of Kent Newsletter

Holiday Greetings Everyone!

It's been exactly one month since I assumed the duties as First Selectman and I want to thank you all for your words of encouragement and best wishes as I hit the deck running. A special thanks goes out to all the Town of Kent Department Heads and their staff for their patience and support as I settled into my seat in Town Hall. A very special "Thank You" to Joyce Kearns, the Admin Assistant to the Selectman's Office for her guidance, knowledge and good humor as she kept me focused on the important tasks and functions each day. Joyce will be filling another role any day now of Grandmother as her daughter gets ready to give birth to her son; we wish them all good health and much happiness! Finally, thanks to former First Selectman Jean Speck for her efforts to ensure a smooth transition so that we can continue to serve the folks of Kent in the best way possible.

Good News Spotlight!

High Watch and Town of Kent Reach PILOT Agreement

Recently, High Watch and the Town of Kent were in discussions regarding the issue of imposing property taxes on the High Watch properties on Carter Road. During these discussions, it was recognized that as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, High Watch was exempt from the taxes and should have been for recent tax years and should be on into the future. I am extremely pleased to announce that through good

faith negotiations and plenty of trust and compromise, we have reached a settlement called the Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) agreement where High Watch agrees to make one annual payment of \$30,000.00 in lieu of taxes to the Town ("PILOT payment") each year for three years, which shall be allocated and used by the Town in four equal \$7,500.00 portions in support of (a) Fire, EMS & regional paramedic services; (b) resident state trooper and public safety services; (c) public works and/or road maintenance or improvements; and (d) all other municipal services. We all know and appreciate the beneficial partnership that exists between High Watch and Kent. In addition to the wonderful programs that High Watch has in treating drug and alcohol addiction for individuals, they have been one of the of our best neighbors and friends supporting the Town through many civic activities that goes beyond any normal expected support. Most recently, it was High Watch who at the height of COVID-19, and at their own expense, established the High Watch vaccination site at the Kent Barns serving an enormous part of Kent and the surrounding area way before the State was able to establish their local vaccination site. Also, High Watch was the first organization to actively step up to provide financial support to Kent so that we could re-establish the Resident Trooper program, thereby reducing some of the financial burden that program has on our Town budget. More recently, High Watch has opened up "Wilson's" on Main St, one of our more popular eating establishments, and has also acquired the large victorian house on North Main St (previously owned by Dolph and Audrey Trayman) and has turned it into a series of apartments that house many of the folks working at Wilson's. The other good news is that the agreement states that these locations are subject to the same Kent property tax laws as other businesses since they are not directly involved with High Watch's primary business. Bottom line in all this is we very much need and want to continue to have High Watch partner with the Town so that we can be stronger together and expand upon our mutual interests and relationships. As First Selectman, I will continue to forge better working relationships with High Watch, as well as all our local businesses, educational, civic and non-profit organizations.

News From Town Hall

Department, Board and Commission Updates

Below are contact information, status updates, and news on projects and policies as well as general information about the various components of Kent's Town Government. As always refer to the Town website event calendar(www.townofkentct.org) for detailed information.

Board of Selectmen

Marty Lindenmayer, firstselectman@townofkentct.org

Glenn Sanchez, Glennsanchez@townofkentct.org

Lynn Worthington, lynnworthington@townofkentct.org

Joyce Kearns, adminassist@townofkentct.org

Selectman's Office phone: 860.927.4628

First Selectman's Cell Phone: 860.488.6074

November brought a new team of Selectman into Town Hall and we've jumped right into business. Board of Selectman meetings are now on the 4th Wednesday of the Month at 6:30pm both in person in the Large Meeting Room in Town Hall as well as being broadcast on Zoom for those who can't make it in person. I encourage you to reach out to any of the Selectman if you have an issue, question, comment, and/or suggestion. during the BOS meeting, there are generally two areas in which the public can address the BOS: "Public Comment on agenda items" and "Public Comment". "Public comment on agenda items" invites the public to comment on any items on the current agenda for a time period not to exceed two minutes per speaker. "Public Comment" allows for any areas of concern to be presented to the Board by the Public. Board members may ask questions of clarification, however no further action or discussion is allowed at that meeting but can be addressed at a later time.

Treasurer/Board of Finance

Barbara Herbst | 860.927.0109 | treasurer@townofkentct.org | 3rd Tuesday @ 7:00p
Our treasurer is overseeing the organization of the FY'25 Capital Plan in conjunction with both the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance and will be helping us get ready for the Town Meeting in January. Barbara will also be gathering the Town of Kent Department budget inputs in early January, so stay tuned for more information on that process.

Town Clerk

Darlene Brady | 860.927.3433 | townclerk@townofkentct.org

Town of Kent Launches Fraud Alert to Notify Property Owners of New Transactions

The Kent Town Clerk is providing a free new tool to help property owners protect one of their most valuable assets.

With Fraud Alert, you can sign up to receive alerts whenever a document, such as a deed or mortgage, is recorded under your name. Documents can be viewed online or at the Clerk's Office.

"This is an easy way for homeowners to have peace of mind," said Town Clerk, Darlene Brady.

Please note there may be other property owners in the town that share the same name. Get email alerts when a document is recorded in your name at the Town Clerk's Office.

You can sign up now at: <https://searchiqs.com/fraudalert/?CC=CTKEN>

Emergency Management

Deputy Director Eric Epstein | 860.927.5218 | emdirector@townofkentct.org

In case you haven't noticed, Winter weather is upon us and it comes in many disguises. Whether its a rainstorm from the Coast that brings flooding, warm weather and high winds, or we get snow squalls, cold to freezing temps, and high winds, or just the normal late night-early morning freezing of the water run-off in the roads with high winds or a combination of all of it, our Emergency Management Team (including myself, the KVPD, Resident Trooper, Public Works Supervisor, and Emergency Management Director/Deputy) currently led by Eric, is vital to our town responding effectively, and coordinating with the private, local, regional, and state EM organizations. There is good news coming up, I'm finalizing the staffing of our EM Director and Deputy Director positions and will have them before the BOS for discussion at our 27 December meeting.

Park and Recreation

Vacant | 860.927.1003 | parkandrec@townofkentct.org | 3rd Monday @ 7:00p

The Park and Recreation (P&R) department is going through some significant changes but I want you to know that Mike Perkins and the P&R Commission are working hard to continue the programs and to fill the Director position recently vacated. The P&R Director Search Committee is working diligently to identify and recruit the best possible person for this important job. If you know anyone who might be interested in the position, contact Lynn Worthington, Search Committee Chair.

Tax Collector

Debbie Devaux | 860.927.3269 | taxcollector@townofkentct.org

REMINDER...REMINDER...REMINDER...REMINDER

The second installment of the Real Estate, Personal Property and the Motor Vehicle Supplemental tax for the Grand List of 2022 is due and payable January 1, 2024.

The second installment of the Real Estate, Personal Property and Motor Vehicle Supplemental tax for the Grand List of 2022 will become delinquent on Friday, February 2, 2024.

Any questions or if you want to access your tax files online, go to:

Assessor

Jen Dubray | 860.927.3160 | assessor@townofkentct.org

*******Important Notice to All Property Owners in Kent*******

I know there has been "some" consternation over the revaluation that was conducted this year. Here's some (hopefully) calming words regarding the process and what it means and what help there might be if you qualify:

Vision Government Solutions has updated the values for Kent's 2023 Revaluation to reflect the current market. The change notices have been mailed. If you did not receive one, please call the Assessor's office and we will give you a copy.

Please remember that a revaluation is a revenue neutral process. The total amount of taxes that a town needs to collect is independent of the revaluation. Your tax bill will not increase the same percentage as your assessment since the mill rate will be changing. The mill rate will be set in May after the town budget is approved. If the Grand List increases significantly and the budget change is minimal the mill rate will most likely decrease. For more details about the Revaluation process please read the documents posted on the Assessor's page on the town website:

www.townofkentct.org.

Although the average assessment increase for residential real estate is 37%, there is variation from house-to-house since the market desires change from one period of time to the next. In addition, if you have made any changes to your property in the past year, these changes may also have impacted your property's valuation.

There is an Elderly and Totally Disabled Tax Relief Program available for those who are below the qualifying income levels set by the State of Connecticut. Please contact the Assessor's office after the first of the year for more information.

Planning and Zoning/Land Use/Building Official/Fire Marshal

Tai Kern | 860.927.4556 | landuseadmin@townofkentct.org | 2nd Thursday @ 7:00p

Building Official

Joe Manley | 860.927.4556 | landuseclerk@townofkentct.org

Fire Marshal

Stan MacMillan | 860.927.4556 | sharonlanduse@gmail.com

Social Services

Samantha Hasenflue | 860.927.1586 | socialservices@townofkentct.org

Kent Social Services has numerous programs to help our friends and neighbors and if you have any specific questions, please don't hesitate to ask. One of the most used services is the **Kent Food Bank**, which is supporting more and more people each week. We appreciate the many wonderful donations that come from the Kent business and religious communities as well as from the pantries and shopping carts of the people of Kent. We are experiencing an increase in need for items used by our "more experienced and seasoned" citizens, so if you are wondering what to donate, think about items need by these folks.

Most of all this time of year, we are so grateful and blessed to have those folks who volunteer, whether its on a regular basis at the Food Bank, or those who provide situational help at Senior Center events that come from our schools, businesses, non-profits organizations and others. We can't thank you enough for all you do!

Resident State Trooper

Andrew Fisher | 860.626.7900 | andrew.fisher@ct.gov

Our resident state trooper has two reminders for all citizens:

- Safety when traveling: The weather is unpredictable this time of year, but the most unpredictable part of traveling is the "other guy!" If you're out on the highways and byways, watch out for speeders and those that seem to be in a huge hurry. Don't engage in any road rage and remember to dial 911 if in an emergency situation.
- Phone & in-person scams: There are a number of scams that CT State Police are investigating, and Trooper Fisher recommends a good rule-of-thumb is to only answer a phonecall if you recognize the number, and never allow anyone

to come to your house unless you initiate it. A legitimate business would not show up at your home unless you're conducting business with them.

Road Foreman/Public Works

Rick Osborne | 860.927.3491 | publicworks@townofkentct.org

Notes from Rick about Roads....

With the amount of rainfall we have had this year there are a number of roads where water is running where it normally does not. We deal with these spots as they develop, some start the day of a storm others appear days later. Some areas have a lot of ledge outcroppings along the road edge so we cannot clean swales along the shoulder. In these areas we clean out by hand, there is often a very narrow water-way where a stick or leaves can block the drain and make the water run into the road. In those cases when the weather freezes the water run-off, we are forced to salt and sand to make the roads safe for traffic. Although it may appear to be massive amounts of salt being used, it really isn't. We concentrate dropping the salt along the edge of the water instead of the width of the road as normally applied so anything that overflows will be brine and not freeze in the road.

We have small but dedicated Town Crew who work hard to address all the problems of water flow, road flooding/freezing as quickly as possible, however during these winter months, the use of salt and sand are often the only option available.

Registrars Of Voters

Therese Duncan (D) & Sal Lillienthal (R) | 860.927.1313 | registrar@townofkentct.org

The Registrar's of Voters are working to ensure that you can register and vote safely in the upcoming Republican & Democratic Primaries. Early voting will provide us here in Kent with some new challenges, however we will be ready to serve our voters to ensure a safe and secure voting experience...stand by for more information!



I hope you found something interesting in this newsletter that will help you navigate around Kent. I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Warm Regards,
Marty

Martin J. Lindenmayer
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