

BROOKFIELD SPOTLIGHT



Message from your First Selectman

August 2020

Islands Closed on Candlewood Lake

At the request of the towns on the lake, public access to all islands owned by FirstLight Power will be closed until further notice starting this weekend as a precaution to control the spread of COVID-19 and address the large crowds that have been congregating on the islands during the Pandemic.

Town achieves highest Bond Rating

Standard and Poor's has given the town a Triple A rating for debt, their highest rating. They cited "Strong Management", "Strong Budgetary Flexibility" and "Very Strong Liquidity." S&P also rates the town as "above the sovereign," which means they believe our credit rating is higher than the nation's credit rating.

This rating will allow us to borrow at the lowest rates possible.

Connecticut Residents Asked to Report Receipt of any Unsolicited Packages of Seeds

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture and The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station have been notified that several Connecticut residents received unsolicited packages containing seeds that appear to have originated from China. The types of seeds in the packages are unknown, but they may be invasive plant species. The packages may have Chinese writing on them. People in several other states across the country have received unsolicited packages of seeds over the last several days.

Please do not plant these seeds. CT DoAg and CAES ask that anyone who receives an unsolicited package of seeds from China to immediately contact their state plant regulatory officials, Dr. Kirby Stafford at 203-974-8485 (Kirby.Stafford@ct.gov) or Dr. Victoria Smith at 203-974-8474 (Victoria.Smith@ct.gov). Please hold on to the seeds and packaging, including the mailing label, until someone contacts you with further instructions.

Invasive species wreak havoc on the environment, displace or destroy native plants and insects and severely damage crops. Taking steps to prevent their introduction is the most effective method of reducing both the risk of invasive species infestations and the cost to control and mitigate those infestations.

Messages to Residents Using CodeRED

The 33rd update was distributed on the CodeRED system on July 10. It will be the last message we send for now. We will begin sending again if the situation warrants it. We thank our 1,200 users for signing up, and encourage you to tell your neighbors because we'd like more subscribers. You can sign up by clicking on the CodeRED icon on the bottom of the main page on the town [website](#).

Town Hall Hours

We will remain open to the public by appointment only from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. to keep our

employees safe. We will address opening to the public again sometime in mid-August, after the Board of Selectmen have met to discuss and conferred with the Director of Public Health.

For state resources and information on COVID-19, visit the state's [website](#).

Lions Club Shred and Dumpster Day – Community Event

The Lion's Club Shred & Dumpster Day will be on Saturday, August 29 from 9 a.m. - noon at Town Hall. Details can be found on the town [website](#) sometime in August.

United States Census 2020 – It's not too late to complete yours

You should have received in the mail the official 10-minute questionnaire that should be completed by every household. You can respond online at my2020census.gov using the barcode printed on the front of the questionnaire. If you are unable to respond online, complete and mail back your questionnaire. If you need help completing your questionnaire, call toll-free 1-844-330-2020.

Between August 11 and October 31, census takers will interview homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census to help make sure everyone is counted.

When you respond to the census, your answers are kept anonymous. They are used only to produce statistics. The U.S. Census Bureau is bound by law to protect your answers and keep them strictly confidential. The law ensures that your private information is never published and that your answers cannot be used against you by any government agency or court.

Steve Dunn
First Selectman



Mark Your Calendar

4th Annual Brookfield Creates

The Sidewalk Chalk Art Festival is scheduled from 4 - 6 p.m. on Friday, August 7, at Town Hall (rain date August 14) on the Town Hall Sidewalk. Have fun, show creativity, and make some beautiful artwork for all to admire! Participants and spectators will follow guidelines staying six feet apart and no materials will be shared. Please see the flyer on the town [website](#).

Board of Selectmen Meeting

7 p.m. Monday, August 3

View the meeting on YouTube, connect by phone to participate in public comment. Meeting information can be found on the agenda on the town [website](#).

Coffee with the Community

5:30 p.m. Monday, August 24

Residents are welcome to address the selectmen with any questions, comments or concerns. View the meeting on YouTube, connect by phone to participate. Meeting information can be found on the agenda on the town [website](#).



Important Alerts

DOT Lane Closure

The Connecticut Department of Transportation will be conducting a nighttime milling and resurfacing project on a 2.33-mile segment of Route 7 northbound and southbound in Brookfield beginning on Sunday, July 26, and scheduled to conclude on Tuesday, September 8 weather permitting.

Assessor

Income and expense reports are due in the Assessor's office by September 1, 2020.

If you are a veteran and have a DD-214 that you have never submitted, please submit it to the Town Clerk by 9/30/20 for exemptions on your taxes for next year. **If you have already submitted a DD-214, you do not need to do so again.** If your income level is below \$58,900 (married) or \$52,700 (unmarried) you may qualify for an extra Veteran's discount. Please see our [website](#) or contact our office for more information.

If you are totally disabled or blind and have never submitted an application to the

Farmers Market

The Farmers Market is every Friday from 3 - 6 p.m. behind Town Hall. See town [website](#) for vendor information. Shoppers need to wear masks and the vendors are all physically distanced.

Brookfield Creates

Rock Painting at Home sponsored by the Brookfield Arts Commission. Please place your order by Monday, August 10. Please see [flyer](#) for further details.



Public Works

The DPW will be doing a preventative maintenance process on Secor Road in July called a Fiber Mat. The process should prolong the life of the road for 5-7 years at a relatively low cost.



Assessor's Office, please submit one by 10/1/20. **If you have submitted one in the past, you do not need to do so again.**

If you have a retrofitted vehicle (maximum of 2), every year on or before October 1 you must complete a new application. If this is the first year you own the vehicle, you will need to attach a copy of the bill of sale for the car and the retrofitting. All applications are on our [website](#).

If you would like to appeal your car taxes, the Board of Assessment Appeals will meet on September 26 from 9 - 11 a.m. at Town Hall. Please see the application and directions on our [website](#) to be sure you bring in all necessary documentation.



Town Clerk

Brookfield now has a secure absentee ballot drop off box located outside of Town Hall. Absentee ballots can be returned via mail in the enclosed postage paid envelope or in the secure box. You must return your ballots before the close of polls on August 11, 2020.

Tax Collector

The office is closed to the public. We are not accepting cash, but there are several ways you can make your tax payment.

Taxes are payable at Town Hall, 100 Pocono Road or by mail addressed to TAX COLLECTOR, P.O. BOX 508, BROOKFIELD, CT 06804-0508.

The last day to pay taxes is August 3, 2020 without interest penalty.

You can mail us the payment. You may drop it in the drop box outside Town Hall during business hours between 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. You can also use our on-line option, but please note that we have to use an outside service with a fee for an electronic check (echeck) is 95 cents or 2.95% for a credit card or debit card.

If you mail your payment, it must have a U.S. Postal Service postmark no later than August 3, 2020. Postmarks after that date are considered delinquent.

Failure to receive a bill does not exempt you from the tax or penalty. There is a \$20 service charge for all returned checks.

Visit the Town of Brookfield [website](#) to pay online, view your tax bill or for additional information.

A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be enclosed if you wish a receipt



2020's *One Town, One Read program* at the Brookfield Library is in the books! This year's title, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by Frank L. Baum, drew participation from all ages. Thank you to all our Yellow Brick Road Scavenger Hunt participants, community readers, and business partners. A special thank you to the Friends of the Brookfield Library for donating money for the raffle prizes. If you were a lucky prize winner, please call the library to schedule a time to pick up your prize.

Summer Reading concludes August 7. There are still a few more "Imagine Your Story" activities, and you can still visit our *Search & Find Challenge*. Participate in Zoom *crafts* and *Science* sessions. For *teens*, we have meditation, and game nights.

Our virtual *book clubs* for adults have been very popular. Check them out. Has the pandemic adversely affected your career path or made you reconsider its direction? Be sure to get a Zoom invite for our virtual program: *Making a Successful Career Pivot in Post-Pandemic Times: 8 Strategies to Develop Your Career Resilience*: Wednesday, August 19, 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. *Registration is required*.

Contact-less curbside pick-up of library materials continues with expanded hours. Look for details on our [website](#) about our opening and relevant protocols soon!



Parks & Rec

The Town Park Beach is open daily through August 23 and weekends only August 29-30 and September 5-7, including Labor Day. Season passes and reservations required. Full details available [here](#).

The Newtown Savings Bank Concerts in the Park series continues on Friday nights for the month of August. Join us in person or watch on the Town's YouTube Channel each week from the comfort of your home. Full schedule available [here](#).



Looking for a fun way to spend these last weeks of summer? We have many in-person and virtual camp options for kids of all ages. For adults options include golf lessons, pickle ball lessons, tai chi and yoga on the beach. Full details available [here](#).

Senior Center

Renter's Rebate

You can still apply for the rebate through October 1. You must apply every year to receive this benefit. If you turned 65 by December 31, 2019 and your income is below **\$37,000** for unmarried and **\$45,100** for married individuals, you may qualify. You will need to provide rent and utility receipts for 2019 and a federal tax return (if you have filed one) or all of the tax

documents you would use to file a return. Applications will be processed over the phone and through the mail. Please call 203-775-7312 with questions or to arrange getting paperwork to Social Services.

AARP Safe Driving Program

All AARP Driver Safety in-person events have been cancelled through December 2020. The online courses remain an alternative. Full details on [website](#).

Promo code for 25% discount: **DRIVINGSKILLS**

The Senior Center Office is Open! While the Senior Center building remains closed to the public, we are here if you need anything. Call us at 203-775-5308 for assistance or just to check in and say hello.

Meanwhile, we are offering a wider variety of “grab and go” activities, a grab and go curbside lunch program and several zoom programs and exercise classes. Please sign up for our monthly newsletter [here](#).

Economic Development Office

Construction of the Aquarion water main on Vale Road is progressing nicely (see pic below). “THANK YOU” Greenfield Global for making this happen.



Schools

Following State Board of Education guidance to waive the 180-day student attendance requirement, the town board has adopted a 177-day school calendar. This gives the faculty and staff additional work days to prepare for school reopening and accommodating the social distancing requirements. The first day of school will be Tuesday, September 8, 2020 (after Labor Day).

The state Department of Education and the Governor directed local schools to develop plans for:

- reopening school for all students this fall, five days per week
- a hybrid model for 50% of students in school at one time

- a full distance-learning model.

Each plan includes procedures for face coverings, social distancing, cleaning and hygiene, cohorting and transportation. Dr. Barile reiterated that the top concern is the physical and emotional health and safety of our students and staff. [School Reopening Preview Presentation to the BOE \(7/15/2020\)](#).

As part of the plan, the Board of Finance approved the purchase of 91 laptops to replace aging laptops for teachers at WMS, and 300 Chromebooks for students.

You can read the reopening plan unanimously approved by the board on the [website](#). The plan was developed in conjunction with Brookfield's Director of Public Health and the district's consulting physician. The board will conduct a follow-up survey and schedule Q&A sessions to gauge parents' plans for the school year.

Stay in the know!



Town Boards and Commissions

Visit our website regularly for updates and schedule of upcoming meetings.

[Visit our website](#)

Town Events and Activities

Follow town department social media pages for all that is going on around town!

[Click to Connect](#)