

TOWN OF SHARON

ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 30, 2021

**TOWN OFFICE HOURS:**

- FIRST SELECTMAN:** Monday - Friday: 9:00 – 12:00 & 1:00 – 4:00  
phone: 860-364-5789; (H) 860-364-7475
- NW PROBATE:** Monday – Thursday: 9:00 – 4:00  
phone: 860-824-7012
- ASSESSOR:** Monday 9:00 to Noon, Wednesday & Thursday: 9:00 – 12:00 & 1:00 - 4:00  
phone: 860-364-0205
- TAX COLLECTOR:** Monday, Wednesday & Thursday: 9:00 – 3:30  
phone 860-364-5402
- TOWN CLERK:** Monday – Thursday: 8:30 – 12:00 & 1:00 – 4:00  
Friday: 8:30 – NOON  
phone: 860-364-5224
- BUILDING INSPECTOR & FIRE MARSHAL:** Monday – Friday: 7:00 – NOON; Saturday 8:00 – 9:00AM  
phone: 860-364-0909
- LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR** Monday – Friday: 7:00 – NOON  
phone: 860-364-0909
- HEALTH DEPARTMENT** Monday – Friday: 7:00 - NOON  
phone: 860-364-9397
- SOCIAL SERVICE AGENT:** Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday: 9:00 – 12:00 & 1:00 – 4:00  
phone: 860-364-1003
- REGISTRAR OF VOTERS** Tuesday: 10:00 – NOON  
phone: 860-364-5514

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Board of Selectmen: Second Tuesday @ 3PM and fourth Tuesday @ 5:30PM monthly except November when the only meeting will be the 9th and December no 5:30PM meeting

Board of Finance: Quarterly @ 6PM, March 15, June 21, September 20 & December 13

Planning and Zoning Commission: Second Wednesday, monthly @ 5:30PM

Inland Wetlands Commission: Second Monday, monthly @ 6:30PM except October when it will be October 11

Sharon Housing Authority/Sharon Ridge Expansion Corporation: Third Tuesday, monthly @ 5PM

Sewer & Water Commission: Second Thursday, monthly @ 7PM

Historic District Commission: Fourth Monday, monthly @ 5:30PM except no meeting for December

Board of Education: Second Monday, monthly see their website

Sharon Parks & Recreation Committee: Second Monday, monthly @6:30PM

Conservation Commission: Third Wednesday @ 6:30PM monthly

Zoning Board of Appeals: Quarterly, Feb. 22, May 16, August 15 & Nov. 21 @ 6:00PM

Sharon Energy & Environment Commission: Second Thursday monthly @ 5:00PM

Board of Assessment Appeals: Feb. 22 @ 5PM, March 11 @ 5PM, March 12 @ 9AM, March 18 @ 5PM, March 19 @ 9AM, March 23 @ 4PM and Sept. 3 @ 9AM (this one is for motor vehicles only)

Sharon Green Committee: Second Monday monthly @ 4PM except no meeting in October

ARPA Advisory Committee: First Wednesday each month @ 6:30PM and the third Monday each month @ 4:30PM except January when the 4:30PM meeting will be Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> and February when the 4:30PM meeting will be Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>

Sharon Housing Plan Steering Committee: First Monday of each month at 5:30PM except for July and September when there will need to be a Special Meeting as the first Monday are holidays  
Transfer Station Committee: Every other month @ 5PM at the Transfer Station – Feb. 16, April 20, June 15, August 18, and Oct. 19  
SSRRA: check on Town of Salisbury Website  
 For precise time and place check with Town Clerk where agendas/notices must be posted at least 24 hours in advance

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*Report of the Auditor, 2020– 2021*

***FRONT COVER***

The Sharon Fire Department, Inc, Ambulance Squad purchased the new 2021 AEV Type II TraumaHAWK ambulance. The funding came solely from donations, fundraisers, the John Morgan estate, Robert Rosenheim Foundation and an anonymous family foundation making the purchase possible. The new features will help increase the Squad’s ability to provide the best care possible. Among the features are ultraviolet lights in the ceiling and duct work and cameras that allow for 360-degree views. The Ambulance Squad remains an all-volunteer crew available 24/7 and does not charge for services.

For 31 years Engine 3 has been responding to 911 calls. Purchased new in 1990, the costs to keep this engine in service have increased annually, forcing the Sharon Fire Department Inc. to update their apparatus next year. Successful rural firefighting depends on tankers for water supply due to lake of fire hydrants in the town’s rural 60 square miles. The Department is in the process of obtaining quotes to replace Engine 3 that must meet all NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) mandates and regulations. The Department remains totally volunteer and available 24/7.

A list of the active members serving our community can be found on the colored insert page.

***Photo by Brian Wilcox***

## FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT THE TOWN OF SHARON

The Town of Sharon, in Litchfield County, was incorporated in October, 1739 and held its first Town Meeting on December 11, 1739. Sharon continues in the original Town Meeting / Selectmen / Board of Finance form of government. Total area: 59.6 square miles; land area; 58.7 square miles and has a population estimate of 2,718 according to the Department of Health as of July 1, 2019. The Town maintains 83.54 miles of roadways, of which 55.84 miles are Improved (asphalt) Roads and the remaining 27.70 miles are Unimproved (gravel) Roads. Bowne Road, Butter Road, Herb Road, Cole Road, Modley Road and West Woods Road #1 have been designated as (Scenic Roads” under Town Ordinance, and portions of State Highways 7 and 4, and all of Rt. 41, have been designated as “State Scenic Roads”. Elevation ranges from 1551 feet on Ellsworth Hill to 503 feet at Amenia Union (Hitchcock Corners).

### SHARON TAX AND POPULATION DATA

Year	Mil Rate	Grand List	Population Estimate
2000-2001	16.40 revaluation	342,018,170	2,968
2001-2002	16.70	351,457,158	2,968
2002-2003	16.90	362,171,770	2,969
2003-2004	17.00	389,529,522	2,914
2004-2005	13.75 revaluation	518,775,238	2,968
2005-2006	14.20	525,462,385	3,012
2006-2007	14.90	532,251,589	3,012
2007-2008	14.90	541,255,445	3,036
2008-2009	14.90	558,016,740	3,052
2009-2010	10.35 revaluation	837,360,422	3,058
2010-2011	10.90	839,977,000	3,022
2011-2012	11.35	843,796,767	3,014
2012-2013	11.35	847,349,680	3,029
2013-2014	11.70	851,634,816	2,774
2014-2015	13.25 revaluation	720,510,556	2,766
2015-2016	13.70	725,187,484	2,747
2016-2017	14.40	733,261,051	2,725
2017-2018	14.70	742,904,118	2,725
2018-2019	14.70	750,070,851	2,706
2019-2020	14.40 revaluation	729,146,484	2,714
2020-2021	14.40	734,801,807	2,718
2021-2022	14.50	746,929,778	2,689

**ELECTED TOWN OFFICERS**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Brent M. Colley, *First Selectman*, 2023  
Dale C. Jones, 2023                      Casey T. Flanagan, 2023

**BOARD OF FINANCE**

Thomas H. Bartram, *Chairman*, 2023  
Jessica K. Fowler, *Vice Chairman*, 2027  
Harding F. Bancroft, Jr., *Secretary*, 2025  
Cody W. O'Kelly, 2023                      Mary B. Robertson, 2025                      Robert E. Duncan, 2027

**Alternate Members**

Robert W. Ensign, 2023  
Carol Flaton, 2027

**TOWN CLERK AND REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS**

Linda R. Amerighi, 01/06/26

**REGISTRARS**

Barbara S. Coords, *Republican*, 01/08/2025  
Marel E. Rogers, *Democratic*, 01/08/2025

**TOWN TREASURER**

Tina M. Pitcher, 2023

**TAX COLLECTOR**

Donna A. Christensen, 2023

**BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS**

Thomas F. Casey, Sr., *Chairman*, 2023  
Elizabeth C. Forstmann, 2023                      Brent N. Prindle, 2025

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Doug A. Cahill, *Chairman*, 11/03/2025  
Kathleen Visconti, *V. Chairman*, 11/03/2025  
Deborah Rathbun, *Secretary*, 11/07/2023  
Amanda Thompson, 11/07/2023                      Anne M. Vance, 11/03/2025  
Monica Connor, 11/07/2023                      Plamen Petkov, 11/03/2025

**REPRESENTATIVE TO REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BOARD**

Sara Ellen Cousins, 11/30/2023



**APPOINTED / HIRED TOWN OFFICERS**

**TOWN COUNSEL**

Cramer & Anderson, LLP – D. Randall DiBella

**TOWN AUDITOR**

Sinnamon & Associates, LLC

**EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO FIRST SELECTMAN**

Tina M. Pitcher

**ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK**

Marlene M. Woodman

**ASSESSOR**

Jennifer Dubray  
Patricia S. Braislin, Assistant

**ASSISTANT REGISTRAR OF  
VITAL STATISTICS**

Marlene M. Woodman

**DIRECTOR OF HEALTH**

Michael Crespan, MPH, RS  
David R. Kurish, M.D., Advisor  
Elizabeth H. Casey, Sanitary Inspector  
Christopher Chaber, Food Establishment Inspector

**ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER**

Lee Sohl

**TREE WARDEN**

Jeffrey Perotti

**CIVIL PREPAREDNESS  
COORDINATOR**

Thomas H. Bartram

**FIRE MARSHAL &  
BUILDING OFFICIAL**

Stanley MacMillan, Jr.  
Michael Carbone, Asst. BO  
Charles Carleton, Deputy FM  
Timothy Limbos, Deputy FM

**LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR**

Elizabeth H. Casey

**REPRESENTATIVE TO REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BOARD**

Anne M. Vance, *Alternate*, 2023

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

John J. Baroody, *Chairman*, 2023  
Elizabeth M. Hall, *V. Chairman*, 2025  
J. Barclay Collins, 2024    Lionel Goldfrank III, 2022    Stephen J. Szalewicz, Jr., 2022

**Alternate Members**

Theo Coulombe, 2023    Vacancy, 2022    Edwin Yowell, 2024



**SEWER & WATER COMMISSION**

Stephen J. Szalewicz, Jr., *Chairman*, 2025

Elizabeth M. Rybczyk, *V. Chairman*, 2026

Douglas O. Hobby, 2024     Harding F. Bancroft, Jr., 2023     Joseph V. Hajek, 2022

**Alternate Members**

Dobrila M. Waugh, 2022     Jacob E. Fricker, 2023

**SHARON HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Brent M. Colley, *Temporary Chairman*, 2024

Patricia Whelan, *Treasurer*, 2023

William J. Manasse, *Asst. Treasurer & V. Chairman*, 2026

Jeannette Moss, *Secretary & Tenant Representative*, 2025

Donn Castonguay, *Commissioner*, 2024

**TOWN HALL COMMITTEE**

Donna A. Christensen     Thomas H. Bartram     Linda R. Amerighi     Zelina Blagden

**SHARON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**

Donna A. Christensen, *Chairman*

Alphonse J. Tortorella     Raymond Aakjar, III

Michele Purdy     Frank Handelman

4 Vacancies

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Paul Bacsik, *Chairman*, 2024

Carl Chalet, *V. Chairman*, 2023

Claudia E. Cayne, *Secretary*, 2022

James D. Krissel, 2023     Cicily W. Hajek, 2023

Johannes Van Der Tuin, 2026

F. Pieter Lefferts, 2025

**INLAND WETLANDS & WATER COURSES COMMISSION**

James D. Krissel, *Chairman*, 2023

Scott L. Schreiber, *V. Chairman*, 2022

Michael H. Dudek, *Secretary*, 2022

Harvey W. Hayden, V.M.D., 2025

William Trowbridge, 11/21/2023

Laurance B. Rand, III, 11/23/2023

Sharon M. Tingley, 2025

**Alternate Members**

Lynn Kearcher, 2023

Robin L. Zitter, 2026

**NORTHWEST HILLS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

Brent M. Colley

Casey T. Flanagan, *Alternate*

**NORTHWESTERN CT REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL**

Bob Whelan  
Meg Szalewicz, Alternate

**SOCIAL SERVICES AGENT**  
**MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY**  
**VETERANS' SERVICE CONTACT PERSON**

Melia Hill

**OPEN BURNING OFFICIAL**

Stanley MacMillan, Jr.

**HOUSATONIC RIVER COMMISSION**

William R. Tingley, 2022  
James Saunders, Alternate, 2024

**SHARON GREEN COMMITTEE**

Elizabeth M. Hall, *Chairman*

Thomas F. Casey, Sr.    Linda R. Amerighi    Marlene M. Woodman  
Stephen R. Wasley    Eric Golden

**SAFETY OFFICERS (Halloween Only)**

David G. Wilbur    Thomas F. Casey, Sr.    Howard Randall    Ethan Fax

**WESTERN TOURISM DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE**

John Baroody

**HOME LAND SECURITY**

Thomas F. Casey, Sr.

**TOWN HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

James D. Reid, *Foreman*  
Todd C. Anderson    Mark A. Anderson, *Mechanic*  
Daniel V. Bottass, *Asst. Mechanic*    J. Todd Smith  
Stephen R. Wasley    Christopher Dennis  
Jameason Russin

**TRANSFER STATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Casey T. Flanagan    Anne M. Saunders    VACANCY

**SALISBURY-SHARON RESOURCE RECOVERY AUTHORITY**

Brent M. Colley, 01/14/2023

Vacancy 01/14/2024

Vacancy, 01/14/2022

Thomas H. Bartram, Voting Alternate, 01/14/2023

**SHARON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION**

Carolyn O. Mattoon, *Chairman*, 10/09/2023

Katy Kinsolving, *Secretary*, 10/09/2023

Douglas W. Rick, 10/09/2022

Janice Dudek, 10/09/2022

Oscar R. Martinez, 10/09/2023

Roger Liddell, 10/09/2022

Michael Nadeau, 10/09/2022

**ALTERNATES – BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS**

Three Vacancies

Terms to November 19, 2022

**CIVIL PREPAREDNESS COORDINATOR**

Thomas H. Bartram

**LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Brent M. Colley      Thomas H. Bartram      James Reid

Elizabeth H. Casey      Thomas F. Casey, Sr.

Eric Golden

**NORTHWEST CT TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD**

Vacant, January 2022

## **SUMMARY OF SHARON TOWN MEETINGS 2020 - 2021**

Governing of the Town of Sharon is based on the Town Meeting as the legislative body with financial concerns in the prevue of the Board of Finance and the day to day governing under the Board of Selectmen, primarily the First Selectman. In lieu of a county system, Connecticut Towns govern the “township” as well as any villages within their borders. Important to note is the fact that major decisions are accomplished by those in attendance at Town Meetings, there is no quorum required, nor are absentee ballots available!

July 16, 2020: Seven residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted to: accept the Town’s financial report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2019; approve (retroactive) for fiscal year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 various items concerning receipts and expenditures for the Town and educational purposes; adopt the proposed Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan; approve an additional expenditure of up to \$36,000 to the 2019-2020 budget for Labor Counsel with the funds out of the Undesignated Fund; authorize an allocation of \$100,000 from the Undesignated Fund balance to provide a reserve for any potential liability that the Town may have to pay on the Sharon Housing Authority promissory note from Eversource that the Town has acted as a grantor on as approved at the December 13, 2019 Town Meeting; and adopt a Revision to the Highway Construction Ordinance.

November 13, 2020 In Person and Via Zoom: Eight residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted to: approve an additional appropriation from the Undesignated Fund of up to \$324,750 to provide additional funding of the Town’s share of the costs of design, construction and equipment of a waste transfer station to be operated by the Salisbury-Sharon Resource Recovery Authority on the Millerton Road site in Lakeville.

December 4, 2020: Ten residents gathered at the Sharon Congregational Church and voted to: accept and expend the STEAP Grant of \$125,000 for the Town Hall Parking Lot Expansion Project with the funds to come from the Undesignated Fund and reimbursed by the Grant; approve an allocation of \$60,000 from the Capital Non-recurring Account as the required match for the Town Hall Parking Lot Expansion Project; and to act on the Board of Selectmen’s request for a \$70,000 supplemental appropriation to settle the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities case between the Town and Timothy Marks.

March 19, 2021 In Person and via Zoom: Twelve residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted to: authorize the First Selectman to secure a 5 year loan through Salisbury Bank and Trust Company in the amount of \$144,893 at an interest rate of 2.25% for the purchase of a new Volvo Loader with a 3,000 hour/five year warranty.

May 14, 2021 In Person and via Zoom: Thirty eight residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted to: approve accepting the June 30, 2020 financial statements for the Town; adopt the annual budget of the Town for fiscal year commencing July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; approve for fiscal year commencing July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 various items concerning receipts and expenditures for the Town and educational purposes; adopt the proposed Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan; and adopt the proposed Food Truck Ordinance.

June 17, 2021: Approximately fifteen residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted on: expending \$1,094,000 for the Air Conditioning Project at the Sharon Center School subject to the receipt of the following funding: carry over of \$250,000 2020-2021 unexpended funds from the Board of Education budget; \$220,000 approved in the Board of Education 2021-2022 budget; \$190,462 ESSER II Grant Funds, and allocate up to \$515,913 from the Board of Education's portion of the Capital Non-Recurring Account.

## First Selectman

This past year has been a challenging one to say the least. COVID-19 forced all of us to re-invent our lives in 2020 and it has continued to impact us in 2021. Even though our day-to-day routine was different, we were able to provide many of the services we normally provide to our residents via inventive work arounds and online options. Drop boxes, downloadable documents, phone calls, and ZOOM calls became the new norm and we managed through the tough times. We thank all elected & appointed officials, their staff, our boards, commissions, committees, and volunteers for the hard work they put into the effort to keep Town business and Town services available to the public. We especially wish to thank our Volunteer Fire Department, Ambulance Squad, Ladies Auxiliary, and all health care workers for their dedication, sacrifices, and long hours during this pandemic, without your efforts we could not have overcome the difficulties it presented. The Board of Selectmen is extremely proud of how our town pulled together during these trying times.

### **2020-21 highlights:**

- All the roads that were paved between 2010 and 2018 are now sealed and protected. Moving forward we have Sharon Valley Road and Carey Hill Road left as our final roads to pave.
- The new Salisbury-Sharon Transfer Station project is complete and serving both towns recycling and waste needs.
- The Green Committee's Upper Main Street Drainage and Green Regrading Project was completed in the Fall of 2019.
- We have been awarded a Connecticut Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant to make improvements to the Town Hall & 67 Main Street Parking Lot. Improvements will include EV charging stations, lighting, drainage, and a generator for both properties.
- Efforts to keep residents informed of Town events and meetings have continued with our new website and monthly emails sent out monthly via Constant Contact.

On behalf of my fellow Board Members, Casey Flanagan and Dale Jones, I close this report by asking you (as we do every year) to attend and/or watch our monthly meetings and read our monthly newsletter. It is with your input and involvement that we accomplish what is best for this community.

Brent M. Colley  
First Selectman

**Town Clerk**

1,181 documents were recorded for fiscal year 2020-2021.

135 Property transfers for fiscal year contributed \$216,857.18 in Town Conveyance Tax and \$960,606.99 in State Conveyance Tax.

During calendar year 2020:

198 Births were recorded	706 certified copies of Birth Certificates issued
147 Death Certificates were processed	695 certified copies of Death Certificates issued
27 Marriage Licenses were processed	28 certified copies of Marriage Certificates issued
10 Resident Births and 46 Resident Deaths	
249 Dogs were licensed 6/2020 – 5/2021	

The Town Clerk collected \$1,300,540.18 for 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Highlights for the Office:

**VITAL RECORDS:**

Electronic filing Death Certificates have been up and running in a couple of larger cities. The most recent update was that each county will be rolled out in phases beginning September 2021. Looking forward to the new system and electronic, almost paperless advancement in recording of Deaths.

**LAND RECORDS:**

The office is continually indexing records onto the IQS system. This system has been the land line for Realtors, Attorneys, Title Searchers, including many during this Pandemic. The Board of Finance approved additional appropriations to further index land records into the system. Those records have been placed on the system. We are continuing to upload documents.

Current records can be viewed online by visiting [searchiqs.com](http://searchiqs.com). Fees are paid directly to the vendor and you can use your credit card. The Town still receives the \$1.00 per page statutory fee.

**COVID-19**

The office in 2020 remained closed to the public but with many challenges that had to be addressed. The 2020 Presidential Election was at the forefront of all challenges that needed to happen. The Secretary of State, Town Clerks and Registrar of Voters had hurdles to jump over and deal with an election like NO other in history. The Town Clerks rallied and together we

accomplished one of the hardest challenges we faced. We had to make this Election work and to adjust to multiple changes. Mission accomplished. We were fortunate enough to have Marlene prepare a grant proposal for funding and to receive additional funding of \$5,000 from Center for Tech and Civic Life. This was a Covid 19 response grant program distributing nearly \$350 million to support election administrators across the country to ensure the 2020 election was safe, secure, professional, and inclusive. We were also extremely grateful to have the use of the Sharon Center School Gym in order to comply with all CDC requirements. It was my honor to help in any way I could to assist during a stressful, unprecedented time.

As 2020 was coming to a close, the pandemic remained in the forefront. We persevered 2020 year with our Town Hall offices remaining open and striving to provide service to our residents and public.

It was a difficult year for many, losing loved ones, being closed off from friends and family, finding ways to make day to day living bearable. I spoke with many on the phone who appreciated a little bit of conversation.

In closing, I want to extend my appreciation to the Connecticut Town Clerks Association, it's President Anna Posniak, Windsor Town Clerk, who was the foundation for disseminating information to Town Clerk's. She always remained calm and dignified during the stressful election. She worked tirelessly with the Secretary of the State's office to ensure that we all could follow through on the changes. She received the prestigious award of "Town Clerk of the Year in 2019" but due to the pandemic and the cancellation of the Conference she was not able to receive it. When ballots for Town Clerk of the Year 2020 were returned with her name being submitted again the Association presented the "Town Clerk of the Year" for 2020 to each Town Clerk in Connecticut. At the Spring Conference the Litchfield County Town Clerks rallied together and the theme for our Conference was "Celebrate Us" a wonderful tribute to each and every Town Clerk in Connecticut. I am proud to be a Connecticut Town Clerk but most of all the Sharon Town Clerk.

Thank you all who have been patient. God bless, Stay Safe – Stay Strong.

Respectfully,

Linda R. Amerighi



## Principal – Sharon Center School

We made it!

The annual town report focuses on the school year and the many milestones that are reached each year.

Without a doubt our stakeholders are our heroes this year! Facing many challenges due to the global pandemic we were able to keep Sharon Center School open for in-building learning all year! Our team members all played critical roles in making this happen and we are so very grateful!.

The Superintendent and Central Office team worked in collaboration with our families, faculty, staff, and community members to develop an opening and operating plan. Clear communication from the Superintendent and Regional Medical Advisor to all stakeholders kept us safely moving forward across the year. All stakeholders followed the guidelines and stayed home if there were any questions about fitness to be in the school building. The custodians kept the building spotless and met all sanitary requirements. Our office staff communicated endlessly with our families and provided everyone with what they needed whether they were participating in in-building learning or live stream remote learning. Procuring supplies during the pandemic was challenging, substitutions were made, and everyone patiently endured long waits for supplies. Our teaching assistants were able to assist teachers as well as serve as substitute teachers when necessary. Our teachers taught the students in front of them as well as students via live stream. Everyone's technological skills improved! It was amazing to see our youngest students quickly and efficiently log in to Google Classroom! Our community was very accommodating and we were able to keep the doors open and learning vibrant all year.

Transitions:

We wished several Sharon Center School staff members the very best on their retirements. Congratulations to Jane Caputo 25 years, Kolleen Indorf 28 years, and Mark Pastre 23 years of dedicated service to Sharon Center.

We wished middle school English Language Arts teacher Olivia Sheldon good luck as she transitioned to a new teaching assignment out of the area.

We welcomed middle school mathematics teachers Emily Loiodice and Dallas Speranzo! We welcomed teaching assistants Cathy Davidson to the kindergarten classroom and Aneta Haratyk to the library.

The excitement and joy of our students and staff was boundless when we were finally allowed to travel to COVID safe outdoor venues at the end of the school year and to enjoy the equipment on the playscape. Students traveled to Sharon Audubon, Hotchkiss Library in Sharon, Pine Knob trail in Sharon, and Trevor Zoo in Millbrook.

Special thanks to our PTO for providing the community with an end of year celebration that included an ice cream truck!

Students were exuberant to participate in an end of year celebration, Games Day, cleverly designed and implemented by James and Justine Smith assisted by Liz Foster.

Seventeen students graduated from eighth grade and we celebrated with a lovely graduation ceremony on the front lawn in front of the Phoenix statue. Our graduates definitely demonstrated their resilience across the school year!

Congratulations to our 8th grade award winners:

American Legion Awards - Nicole Haxo and Charlotte Smith

Jack "Compo" Compresi Athletic Awards - Savannah Milton and Daniel McDonald

Sharon Woman's Club Awards - Savannah Milton and Noelle Maus

Sharon School Cup Awards - Nicole Haxo and Charlotte Smith

Lucia M. Gulino Award - Keiana Wallace

Sharon Center School Outstanding Musician Award - Charlotte Smith

Sharon Center School Foreign Language Award - Olivia Peterson

Sharon Center School Language Arts Award - Savannah Milton

Sharon Center School Social Studies Award - Charlotte Smith

Ted Christinat Science Award - Olivia Peterson

Barbara Yohe Math Award - Charlotte Smith

President's Award for Educational Excellence - Charlotte Smith and Noelle Maus

The American Citizenship Awards - Andy Delgado, Nicole Haxo, Haley Hosier, Noelle Maus,

Daniel McDonald, Katerin McEnroe, Olivia Peterson

We are so very appreciative of all that the community has done for Sharon Center School over the year! Sharon Center School provides a holistic learning experience for children to learn and grow! I would like to thank the students, parents, their extended families, faculty, staff, BOE, PTO and residents of Sharon for their ongoing help and support. Be well!

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Karen Manning

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The commission continues to weather the Covid situation as well as could be expected; holding zoom meetings or at the back door of Town Hall on folding chairs. Social distancing has been strictly observed. We may have actually met in town hall once last winter. The minutes can confirm that.

SCC had a continuing presence at the WCCAA (Western Ct. Clean Air Action) that focuses on how Cricket Valley Power in Dover affects our air quality. As of October, the team at UCONN Storrs (Hartford funded) had determined that our air quality has not been affected by CVP. Professor Christina Wagstrom has been very helpful but the low cost monitors that WCCA is using in the NW CT corner are no longer in production at Aeroqual NZ as their accuracy at low levels of pollution appears useless. Their replacements will be considerably more expensive and trading up as our present monitor ages might not be prudent. Our air monitor has continued to work but not reliably with long outages and re-bootings needed occasionally.

Phillip Lovett of Canaan was finally able to finish brush hogging Smith Rd. SCC members have worked on maintaining Smith and Joray Roads over the past year.

SCC is looking for a new member to replace yours truly. I need a break after 15 years of service and I don't have the resilience of Cicily Hajek and her decades of participation. Johannes Van der Tuin has been a solid addition to the roster with his expertise in the energy sector and willingness to do trail work. I have referred all telephone calls of interest to Brent Colley.

Respectfully,

Paul Bacsik, Chairperson

## Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals considers applications from property owners who wish to make changes to a property which are prohibited but which the property owner feels should be give special consideration.

During the past year the Zoning Board of Appeals received only one application: The Hotchkiss Library of Sharon wished to build an addition which was closer to an adjacent property than the Zoning Regulations permitted. The Library's request conformed to the general plan of the neighborhood and to the style of the existing Library. The proposed addition presented no safety threats or inconvenience to the public and there were no objections from neighboring property owners so this application was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

William Trowbridge, Chairman

## Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission has two basic functions. First, it administers the Town Zoning Regulations, in accordance with Title 8 and Chapter 124 of the Connecticut General Statutes, which was adopted in Sharon in 1972. Second, it oversees the proper and desirable use of the land in accordance with the Town Zoning Regulations and the Town Plan of Conservation and Development. Matters that often come before the Commission include; size, use, and placement of lots, buildings and other structures; residential or commercial use of property; location, size and depth of roads and driveways, and much more. Jamie Casey, the Land Use Administrator, is appointed by the Commission and among her countless responsibilities, she enforces the planning and zoning regulations. Copies of the Planning and Zoning Regulations are available on-line or at the Town Hall. The Sharon Planning and Zoning Commission meets on a monthly basis to advance the agenda items and conduct planning sessions.

Over the course of the past year, examples of matters that came before the Commission were:

- Support an application by the Sharon Land Trust to obtain an Open Space Grant from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to preserve a 168-acre parcel that will maintain active farmland; a core forest area; and a scenic ridgeline.
- Approve Renovation to Sharon Center School;
- Approve Expansion of the Hotchkiss Library;
- Review Applications for new Subdivisions
- Discussions to Amend Zoning Regulations concerning Solar Power;
- Discussions to Amend Zoning Regulations concerning restoration and conversion of old farm buildings, no longer associated with farming and agriculture, to other uses.

As I review the minutes of the past year, I am overwhelmed by the depth and range of activity required of this Commission. Of course, none if it would be possible without the tireless work of Jamie Casey, Land Use Administrator and Tina Pitcher, Recording Secretary. The sheer volume and complexity of the work that Jamie accomplishes coupled with her expertise and judgment, enable this Commission to meet its many challenges and achieve the best possible results. Tina Pitcher, has the innate ability to listen, collect, and organize all the ideas, comments and presentations that come before the Commission and transcribe them in clear and proper form. Together, Jamie and Tina's expertise, dedication and countless hours, enable this Commission to accomplish the essential work expected by the residents of this Town and we owe Jamie and Tina our deepest respect and appreciation.

It has indeed been a busy and productive year and I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to work alongside such a devoted and intelligent group of individuals who comprise the Zoning Commission. These dedicated volunteers offer their time and talent for the sole purpose of preserving our quality of life and ensuring that Sharon continues to grow and develop with changing times. That is one of the reasons why it is so difficult for me to tender my resignation as Chairman and member of the Sharon Planning and Zoning Commission. Since being appointed

Chairman to the town's first planning and zoning commission in 1967, I have had a front row seat to witnessing her progress while maintaining the delicate beauty that is our quintessential town. As an eighth generation Sharonite and having just celebrated the birth of my great grandson in Sharon Hospital, there is no greater gift than the honor of serving this wonderful community over the past 67 years. Although I leave this position with a heavy heart, I am grateful for the past and confident in those who will continue after me. I look forward to the future of our beautiful and dynamic little town and the continued work and success of the Commission.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barclay W. Prindle, Chairman

### Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Commission

During fiscal year 2020-2021 your Sharon Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission (SIWWC) has reviewed 46 permits including 5 for new construction, 5 agriculture and timber harvest, 2 Sharon Land Trust projects, 1 pond dredging and 1 subdivision review. The main responsibility of the SIWWC is to review the environmental impact of activities in regulated areas, offer alternatives and issue permits where appropriate. The SIWWC is also concerned with the preservation of any archaeological location, historic site or structure of antiquity in cooperation with the Sharon Planning and Zoning Commission.

Each of the applications received resulted in one or more field site visits before review at the following meeting. Approved activities include construction or repair of dams, stream crossings including bridges, farm ponds, timbering, construction of and additions to homes, building and replacement of driveways, decks, septic systems and recommendations including the use of aquatic control chemicals in ponds. Permits are not issued until all information is received and applications processed.

In 2021 the SIWWC continued meeting with Covid-19 precautions in place but with reduced attendance due to health concerns of some Commission members. Site visits continued with reports filed by Commissioners who could not attend meetings. The virus may continue to affect the ability of SIWWC to operate normally. We also hired a Wetlands Enforcement Office to assist with enforcement.

I wish to thank the Sharon Land Use Administrator, Jamie Casey, and Assistant Administrator, Nikki Blass, for all their hard work this year with Covid-19 continuing and emergency health measures needing to be in place.

I would also like to mention the passing of long time SIWWC Chairman, Edward Kirby, in February of 2021. He is greatly missed and is irreplaceable. All the Commission members who served with him benefited from his knowledge, humor and grace.

Respectfully submitted,  
James D. Krissel, Chairman

**Building Official/Fire Marshal**

**BUILDING OFFICIAL**

Our office is located on the second floor of the Town Hall at 63 Main Street. The Building Inspector is available in the office Monday through Saturday from 8 AM to 9 AM. The office is open from 7 AM until 12 noon, Monday through Friday.

This office continues to work with the effects of Covid and many buildings and renovations. Our offices have remained open to the public.

Single- family construction resulted in 10 new homes and 1 demolition.

	Permits Issued	Value	Permit Fee
2020-2021	852	24,379,900	184,893
2019-2020	646	21,829,431	164,559
2018-2019	636	19,416,431	153,041
2017-2018	638	14,487,196	114,572
2016-2017	620	19,408,755	148,517
2015-2016	749	21,184,084	168,232

**FIRE MARSHAL**

In addition to the investigation of all fires, the Fire Marshal is responsible for the annual inspection of all Public Facilities as well as multi-family dwellings. Included are: Sharon Hospital, Sharon Health Care, Sharon Center School and Sharon Daycare. The Fire Marshal conducts all Fire Prevention education for Sharon Center School and daycare students during Fire Prevention Week in October.

**OPEN BURN OFFICIAL**

There were 476 Open Burning Permits issued this year. Open Burning is allowed in Connecticut with a valid permit. Two indexes are checked to see if a day is acceptable to burn – the Air Quality Index (AQI) through the DEEP and the Open Burning Index. If the AQI is higher than 75 anywhere in the State, there would be no burning that day. Permits are available in this office and are valid for 30 days.

Respectfully,

Stanley MacMillan

Building Inspector, Fire Marshal, Open Burn Official

## Road Foreman

2020-21 highlights:

- The Millerton Road side of Sharon Valley Road received its initial coat of pavement. B. Metcalf Paving is the contractor.
- We crack sealed and chip sealed Calkinstown Road, Fairchild Road, Jewett Hill Road, Still Meadow Road, South Ellsworth, West Cornwall Road, White Hollow Road. Chip sealing extends the life of these roads and protects the Town's investment in them. We tested a double chip seal application on South Ellsworth Road from West Woods Road #2 to Loper Road and have been impressed with the results.
- The effort to remove dead and dangerous trees continued with assistance from Town Tree Warden, Jeff Perotti; Lewis Tree; and Town Sub-Contractors.
- Roadside mowing and brush push back projects continue. Thank you to sub-contractor Scott Garay for his on-going service on this project.
- We continued testing new road material(s), and crowning and grading gravel roads in new ways to improve their condition and attempt to prevent chronic pot hole and wash-out issues.
- Drainage projects and pipe replacements continued to be a big focus of our workload, and we thank all that have been helping us complete this important work.

As we move forward to 2021/2022, repaving Sharon Valley Road and Carey Hill Road and addressing gravel road issues continue to top our list of priorities. We also are focused on maintaining and improving our existing buildings, increasing cold storage capacity, and continuing our equipment replacement schedule.

Respectively submitted,

Jamie Reid  
Road Foreman

## Sewer & Water Commission

The Sharon Sewer and Water Commission is an all-volunteer Commission comprised of five members with up to two alternates. The Commission has the responsibility of overseeing the operations of both the Water treatment facility and the Sewer treatment facility. Both facilities are self-supporting and funded by the users' fees. Cheryl Ziegler manages the business office located at the water plant on Calkinstown Road.

Phone number for the plans is 860-364-8009. The Commission has engaged VRI Environmental Services based in Millbrook, NY to run the water and sewer facilities on a day-to-day basis and provide the management oversight for their staff. VRI can be reached at 860-364-0457.

During the June 2021 meeting of the Commission, Steve Szalewicz was re-elected Chairman, Beth Rybczyk was re-elected Vice Chairmen, and Harding Bancroft was re-elected Financial Officer. Other Commissioners are Doug Hobby, Joseph Hajek, and alternates Dobrila Waugh and Jake Fricker.

Each month the Commission meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM to review the past months activities and plan for any future projects. Reports are provided by VRI. The Clerk provides reports on all financial actions for the month. These reports reflect the functioning of the various aspects of the systems and provide the data for required reporting to state agencies which oversee and regulate water and sewer systems. The systems continue to meet or exceed all state standards and the Commission is operating on a sound financial basis in spite of having no rate increases since 2002 for water and 2003 for sewer.

Currently our records (October 2021) show a past due owed to the Commission of \$119,600. Many if not all of these accounts are in payment arrangements and some properties have lien applied to insure payment. It is in the best interest of all users of the systems to keep current in order to provide a reliable cash flow for operating the systems.

## WATER SYSTEM

The major aeration system for Beardsley reservoir is complete and operational for this summer providing a good supply of water.

Additional remote read meters are being installed to both facilitate the reading of meters and provide less disruptive access for users. At this time there are no plans to change over all meters to remote read, however, the Commission will add remote read meters as funds and situations dictate.

The focus for 2022 will be on upgrading our emergency generators, the systems require 5, and seeking funds for replacing water lines which cross Main Street. Doing this work prior to state re-paving the road will save significant costs.

## SEWER SYSTEM

The Commission has undertaken a study of the sewer capabilities by Wright Pierce Engineers to determine our current capacity and what capability exists within the system for expansion.

The Commission has also upgrade the UV light final treatment for sewer effluent, replacing a decades old obsolete system.



The continuing maintenance and upgrades of the system are necessary to insure reliable water and sewer services to our users. Anyone interested in joining the Commission should contact the Selectman's office.

## **Historic District Commission**

The Sharon Historic District Commission (SHDC) is a unit of Sharon's Town Government organized and operating under principles set forth in Chapter 93a, Section 7-147 of the Statutes of the State of Connecticut as well as those of the Sharon Historic District Rules and Procedures.

The SHDC represents the interests of our community in maintaining the historical and architectural integrity of the town's historic districts. Working with property owners and municipal agencies, the SHDC helps to preserve buildings and structures within the designated areas by reviewing any proposed changes that will be visible from a public way.

The Commission helps promote the preservation and responsible treatment of Sharon's significant historical and architectural resources: providing a connection to our heritage, adding to the visual richness of the town, creating economic benefits such as more stable property values, well-maintained infrastructure, stronger community identity and increased tourism.

The establishment and designation of our historic districts are an effective legal means of giving local Sharon residents control over the character and appearance of our community while still allowing growth and change.

A Property Owners Guide for the District, created by the Commission, provides information and answers to frequently asked questions for the use of District residents and local real estate agents. It is posted for the general public on the Town of Sharon website.

### **Annual Report**

During the Fiscal Year July 2019 through June 2020, the Commission held 9 regular monthly meetings. March and April meetings were cancelled due to Covid restrictions. May and June meetings resumed and were held under current allowable guidelines. The Commission received and processed 21 applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, 4 more than the previous year. The Commission's *Administrative Review & Procedures* were updated and approved.

Scot Samuelson resigned in early 2020. As a result, one open Alternate member vacancy remains to be filled.

### **Sharon Historic District Commission**

**Current members: John Baroody, Chairman; Elizabeth Hall, Vice Chairman,  
J. Barclay Collins, Lionel Goldfrank, Steve Szalewicz.  
Alternates: Edwin A. Yowell and Théodore Coulombe.**

**Commission Clerk: Jamie Casey**

## Sharon Parks & Recreation Committee

The Little Rascals summer camp was cancelled for the first time in its history due to the pandemic. Sharon Beach was open while staff were present throughout the season.

The Sharon Sprint Triathlon was held with changes adhering to COVID guidelines. Participants were very happy to be able to get out and swim, bike and run after so many events had been cancelled due to the pandemic. The entry fees and sponsorships help to fund the Summer Music Series held at the Lions' Club Pavilion.

Plans for updating the interior of the Community Center are in the works. The goal is to create a pleasant space for groups to meet.

The newly established middle school regional sports teams will be using the Veterans' Field facility. A new playground is planned for the area to replace the old one in existence.

For information about programs or committee vacancies please call the office of the Recreation Director at 860-364-1400.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna Christensen, Chairman

## Sharon Green Committee

The section of the Green which fronts Main Street continues to be a problem. Cars are still encroaching on the grass creating bare spots and erosion. Water is still draining off of Main Street onto the Green during rain storms. Extending the granite curbing to encompass the Green would solve both problems. Placement of the curbing must be done in conjunction with the repaving of Main Street. The Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance have both agreed to use the funds left over from the Green rehabilitation to pay for this last piece of the project. An affirmative vote from a Town Meeting for the expenditure is still needed. The Committee plans to urge the State to schedule the repaving for the summer of 2022.

The people of Sharon and visitors to our Town are continually commenting about how beautiful the Green looks since the renovation. We are extremely lucky to have Steve Wasley as the Greenskeeper. His hard work and attention to detail are responsible for keeping the Green so pristine.

Committee members: Betsy Hall, Linda Amerighi, Tom Casey, Eric Golden, Stephen Wasley and Marlene Woodman

## Registrar of Voters

As COVID protocols continue to change the way public places are visited, the Registrars of Voters have continued to register voters and conduct elections in a safe and secure manner.

ROV's duties continue to be maintaining and updating the list of registered voters and running elections. That list of registered voters is maintained by registering new voters and conducting an annual canvass. The canvass records moves out of town, deaths and actual voter activity. If a voter fails to vote in four consecutive elections, his or her status automatically goes to "inactive" and he or she must be re-instated by one of the Registrars to be allowed to vote. At this writing, Sharon has 1,738 registered voters: 745 Democratic, 393 Republican and 590 Unaffiliated.

Registering to vote is easy and there are several ways in which to accomplish your registration: in person, by mail or online. The ROV office is open every Tuesday from 10 AM until noon, our office is located on the first floor of Town Hall. Registration cards may be mailed back to our office or placed in the wooden lock box in the front lobby of Town Hall. Online registration is available through the DMV or online at <https://voterregistration.ct.gov/OLVR/welcome.do>. If you call our office (860-364-5514) we will be happy to mail a registration form to you.

A registration form must include proof of the applicant's identification, generally a Connecticut driver's license or the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number. We urge registrants to include a phone number so that we may contact you if we have a question. A letter confirming registration will be mailed, thus we need to have a correct mailing address. Those of you whose mail is delivered by an adjoining town's letter carriers, or who receive mail in a P.O. Box, please indicate that mailing address

A registered voter from any party or an unaffiliated voter may vote in any election. A voter must be registered in a political party to be able to vote in the primary elections of that party. For local referenda U. S. citizens owning property valued at more than \$1,000.00 may vote, even if they are not a registered Sharon voter.

Connecticut now allows Election Day Registration. A Connecticut resident may register to vote and then vote with a special EDR ballot on the day of the election. This year Sharon will vote for municipal offices, and we remind all voters that local offices are where democracy begins. We urge all Sharon residents to vote every year, and we look forward to seeing you as you register to vote or at the polls.

Registrars: Marel Rogers (D) and Barbara Coords (R)

Deputy Registrars: Jan Dudek (D), Linda Neiberg (D) and Trisha Davisson (R)

**Director of Health**

Description: The Office of Public Health provides a range of services that improve the health of Sharon residents. The office enforces the uniform public health code of the State of Connecticut to ensure safe food, drinking water, bathing beaches and sewage disposal. The office investigates potential violations of the Public Health Code to prevent impacts to the public health and safety of residents.

YEAR 2020-2021

The Sharon Health Department continued to respond to the global and statewide COVID-19 pandemic as well as all infectious diseases and possible incidents of possible rabies exposures. The Department also works with land use commissions conducting compliance reviews, conducts all septic testing, installations and final inspections for repairs and new construction.

Septic Systems:	6	New Systems installed
	31	New Testing / Reserve area
	16	Replacement or Repairs to systems
	4	Central Sewage connections
	0	Abandon System – hooked into
	0	Town System
Subdivisions/Re-subdivision:	1	
Well Applications	10	Wells

Respectfully,

Michael A. Crespan, MPH, RS, Director

Dr. David Kurish, Medical Advisor

Jamie Casey, Sanitarian

## Sharon Energy & Environment Commission

The mission of the Sharon Energy and Environment Commission is to study and address some of the current and anticipated challenges related to energy supply and demand in our town, to attend to environmental issues affecting the community and the ecology of the natural environment, and to educate the public concerning these matters.

The Commission welcomed one new member this year, Michael Nadeau, an expert in organic and ecological best practices in land use. Mike has brought great energy as well as his expertise to his work on this commission.

The Commission's most significant accomplishment this year has been managing an application to the Connecticut Green Bank for an installation of solar panels to serve the Sharon Center School. Under the Bank's Municipal Assistance Program (MAP) the town stands to have its first solar powered municipal building and realize a long-term significant savings electric bills as well as a reduction in fossil fuel generated power use.

A second significant achievement has been joining the Pollinator Pathway, an initiative to create corridors of pesticide-free habitat and safe food sources for pollinating insects, birds and other wildlife. The Sharon Energy and Environment Commission has linked with Sharon Audubon, which has a pollinator garden, and Sharon Land Trust to promote the replacement of invasive plants with pollinator friendly native plants in Sharon.

<https://www.pollinator--pathway.org/towns/sharon>

The Commission had a popular booth at the Sharon Arts and Crafts Fair promoting this initiative with literature and sample native plants.

Again SEEC hosted a clean-up day for Sharon roadsides in April. This year, due to a successful recruitment effort, there was a substantial turn out and at least a ton of trash and recyclables were collected.

The Commission has worked hard to communicate with the public on matters relating to energy and the environment. Some of our budget was used to pay for a column in the Lakeville Journal called SEECing Solutions which directed readers to further information on the Sharon CT website.

However, the effort was found to be relatively ineffective. We are currently looking for other ways to communicate with the community.

We have investigated the possibility of saving the pond in the center of Sharon from complete eutrophication but have made little progress on that particular effort.

SEEC supports every effort made by the Transfer Station to reduce the tonnage of solid waste and applauds the Transfer Station's compost collection program.

Current members: Lyn Mattoon, Chair; Katy Kinsolving, Secretary; Jan Dudek; Roger Liddell; Oscar Martinez; Michael Nadeau; Douglas Rick

**Sharon Housing Authority**

In 2020/21 we completed improvements to heating, plumbing, water storage, and water delivery at both Sharon Ridge and Sharon Ridge Extension apartment complexes. For their assistance and efforts to help us accomplish and fund these improvements we owe a great deal of gratitude to Salisbury Bank & Trust, Eversource, Cornwall Plumbing and Heating, Connecticut Real Estate Management, and Water Systems Specialties.

Sharon Ridge is a 20 unit moderate income affordable rental apartment complex managed for the SHA by Connecticut Real Estate Management (CREM). There are 2 one-bedroom, 14 two-bedroom and 4 three-bedroom apartments. Two units are handicap accessible. Renovations were completed in 2008 with further renovations initiated in 2013. These 20 apartments are CHFA monitored Affordable Housing. To qualify, you must be at or below 80% AMI for Litchfield County and rent is based on 30% of your Adjusted Gross Income.

Because of our need for additional affordable housing, Sharon Ridge Expansion was constructed in 2013. It provides an additional 8 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom apartments. Two of the apartments are handicap accessible and five are handicap adaptable. These 12 apartments are USDA Rural Development subsidized apartments. Applicants must be at or below 80% AMI for Litchfield County and rent is based on 30% of Adjusted Gross Income.

All applicants must submit an application to CREM, P.O. Box 248, Southington, CT. 06489. Applications can be obtained by calling the Sharon Ridge office at 860-364-1372.

The Sharon Housing Authority invites all Sharon residents to attend our monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at 5pm. Please check the Sharon Town website for agendas and meeting minutes.

Brent M. Colley, Acting Chairman

**Animal Control Officer**

A total of 6 dogs were impounded from July 2020 through June 2021. All the dogs were redeemed by their owners.

71 complaints were investigated, including missing pets, roaming dogs, and miscellaneous domestic and wild animal questions.

Two infraction tickets were dispatched.

Income source and income collected:

Pound fees - \$390.00

Donations - \$10.00

Respectfully submitted, Lee Sohl, Sharon Animal Control

**Litchfield Hills Probate District, #24**

*Serving Canaan (Falls Village), Cornwall, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Morris,  
Norfolk, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, Thomaston and Warren*

[www.litchfieldprobate.org](http://www.litchfieldprobate.org)

<b><u>Litchfield Location</u></b>	<b><u>Kent Location</u></b>	<b><u>Canaan Location</u></b>
Dawn W. Pratt, Clerk	Judge Blick	Beth L. McGuire, <i>Chief Clerk</i>
Natasha Mitchell, <i>Assistant Clerk</i>	860-927-3729	Megan W. Foley, <i>Clerk</i>
860-567-8065		860-824-7012

It is with great pleasure that I report to the residents of the Litchfield Hills Probate District the activity of the Probate Court for fiscal year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 and request this report be included in the Town’s next published Annual Report.

<u>Type of Matter</u>	<u>2019 – 2020 FY</u>	<u>2020 – 2021 FY</u>
<b><u>Number of Matters</u></b>	<u>Number of Matters</u>	
Fee Waivers	79	<b>99</b>
Decedent’s Estates	1,221	<b>1,355</b>
Trusts	175	<b>205</b>
Conservators	186	<b>226</b>
Name Changes	31	<b>46</b>
Guardian of the Person & Estate	72	<b>126</b>
Guardian of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities	105	<b>154</b>
Adult Commitment	2	<b>0</b>
Children’s Matters:		
Adoptions/Termination of Parental Rights and		
Emancipation of a Minor/Determine Paternity	15	<b>12</b>

Power of Attorney Accounting Matters	1	4
<b>Total probate matters handled</b>	1,887	<b>2,227</b>
Passports processed	90	<i>Discontinued</i>

The number of probate matters handled by the Court increased even though from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 each of the town halls, where our court facilities are located, were primarily closed to the public due to the Covid 19 pandemic. During that time only those with an appointment were allowed at the Court. Throughout the pandemic, the Court has remained open and all work has been timely processed and hearings promptly scheduled. Hearings were held either by teleconferencing or Webex video conferencing. Town halls in our district have now reopened so in-person hearings have been resumed. Teleconference and Webex hearings are still being utilized but less frequently than during the pandemic.

The category Fee Waivers represents the number of matters which were handled by the Court for which no probate filing fee is collected due to the fact that the Petitioner is indigent.

The Court’s location in the Litchfield Town Hall is open to the public Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. The Court’s location in the North Canaan Town Hall is open to the public Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. While the Kent Town Hall was closed to the public during the pandemic, office hours there on Tuesdays will begin August 2, 2021. Additionally, I continue to be available to the residents of Kent by telephone or scheduled appointment.

The Court Staff joins me in extending our sincerest appreciation to the town leaders, residents and professionals who utilize the services of the Probate Court for your continued support.

Respectfully submitted, The Honorable Diane S. Blick, Judge of Probate

**Sharon Day Care**

The Sharon Day care has experienced yet *another* unique year in 2020-2021 primarily owing to the restrictions and variants of the COVID 19 pandemic. The impact was felt by the enrollment, staff, families, and facility in that there were several times during which we were forced to either close or quarantine. The efforts to stay abreast of all financial needs and health requirements were steadfastly handled by Carrie Ann Olsen, Director, and Kathryn Gracey, Bookkeeper. The two worked tirelessly throughout the months making sure the center was kept in good order and fiscal needs were taken care of via sundry federal and state compensatory programs.

The board of directors held Zoom meetings and corresponded frequently through email and phone conversations. It was determined that the center would only remain open when the board



and director felt the safety of the families served, and staff providing the services, were ready and well equipped to maintain a safe and healthy atmosphere. The board and director have decided that a section related to COVID issues and compliances must become an integral part of the center's employee handbook.

Highlights of 2021 include:

- Face masks, thermometers, sanitizers, and other health related supplies were purchased.
- Several grants were applied for and obtained.
- The staff was compensated for while unemployed, first by the Day Care budget, and then by state and federal assistance.
- Staff members were encouraged to receive vaccinations to prevent COVID infection and spreading of the virus.
- The board of directors conducted their monthly business meetings via ZOOM and email; a positive use of ZOOM was found to be that meetings could ensue regardless of weather. Board members absent from home would ZOOM in from a current location.
- Mini fund raising sales were held to bring in needed revenue with adherence to strict COVID health restrictions. In turn, the center reached out to help the community when feasible.
- The 36<sup>th</sup> Sharon Classic Road Race, traditionally held the first Saturday in May, was postponed until September 25, 2021. Traditional plans to hold it on the historic Sharon Town Green required a manicured form of the event so as to keep all attendees safe.
- Enrollment has remained steady (currently, there is a waiting list) families have been supportive and understanding that space restrictions and specific health procedures have to be complied with on a daily basis.
- At the time of the writing of this report, the day care is remaining vigilant as to grants that may assist the day care to maintain its fiscal needs.

As a non-profit organization in the town of Sharon since 1985, we remain thankful for the support we have received from the community. The future of our town's positive growth and security is greatly dependent on the nurturing of our children. The ten member volunteer board, via both individual actions and committee work, maintains the center on a twelve month calendar.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Nickson

Sharon Day Care Board of Directors

## Sharon Historical Society

The mission of The Sharon Historical Society is to collect, preserve and share Sharon's stories.

Support from the town of Sharon is critical to the Sharon Historical Society & Museum. Contributions enable us to dedicate resources to programs and exhibitions which tell stories of the history of the people and events in our town and region. We have dedicated resources to the preservation of the Gay-Hoyt house, landscape, and our collections. In addition, we have completed upgrades to our website and online resources.

A balance of real and virtual online programming has marked our year, and we have made adjustments to our operations for the safety and health of our community during this challenging time. In spite of COVID-19 restrictions our exhibitions and programming this year has included:

- *The Gay-Hoyt House: You're Invited* – exhibition of artifacts from the historical collection
- *Arts and Crafts for Children and Families* – at the Sharon Annual Arts and Crafts Fair
- *Scavenger Hunts of Historical Sharon Landmarks for Children and Families* – ongoing program
- *Early American Handweaving* - lecture
- *Early American Handweaving* - class
- *From Sharon to Spoon River* – theatrical performance in partnership with the Sharon Playhouse, the Historic Hillside Burying Ground Association, and the Hotchkiss Library
- *Voices of Sharon* - oral history series
- *Renewal, Rhythm, Repetition* – Gallery SHS art show
- *Four Women* – Gallery SHS art show
- *Richard Roney-Dougal Retrospective* – Gallery SHS art show
- *Duet: Sculptures by Stephen Goldberg* – Gallery SHS art show
- Genealogical and other types of historical research
- A spring and fall Sharon Archives newsletter sent to all Sharon households
- A newsletter and resource listing for K-12 schools

This year, we were granted funding from the Rhodes Robinson Foundation to support programs for children and families, an audience group of focus for us. In addition, we were granted funding from the Town of Sharon for conservation and upgrade work on the Gay-Hoyt House, critical to preserving the historic house and to utilizing the house for exhibits. We were awarded a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to contract an archivist to process the Frances Kelsey Photography Collection, a collection which will be shared in future exhibits to tell stories of people and events in the town of Sharon during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Our continued improvements as a historical society and the growth of our collections drives our ability to serve as a center for research, learning and historical understanding, and civic pride.

This unprecedented period in our history has highlighted how essential our local organizations are to the community. As we partnered with our fellow non-profit organizations, implemented a student internship program, and moved programs and access to exhibitions content online, we have seen steady participation from our town community and our patrons around the world. We look forward to serving the evolving needs and interests of our patrons.

The Sharon Historical Society thanks the Town of Sharon for supporting its programs.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christine M. Beer  
Executive Director  
[www.sharonhist.org](http://www.sharonhist.org)

### Sharon Fire Department Ambulance Squad

The Sharon Fire Department, Inc. Ambulance members responded to 346 emergency calls to Sharon Residents this year. We respond 24 hours a day and remain **100% volunteer**. Our EMT and EMR members are State Certified and we continue training within our department and comply with all state requirements for continuing education.

Covid-19 continued to impact our area squads. Sharon Fire Department Ambulance maintained a healthy stock of personal protective equipment (PPE) through purchases and offerings through the State of Connecticut. Prices for PPE and other equipment continue to increase dramatically.

We expected the delivery of our new 2021 AEV Type II TraumaHawk ambulance from Eastford Fire & Rescue Sales early Summer 2021. As with many orders, this was delayed. **Update: It arrived September 1, 2021** and was placed into service. East Clinton, New York took possession of our existing ambulance.

Sharon continues to remain a HeartSafe Community. We offer CPR training and we purchase and maintain AED units throughout the town. Among other places, these units are located at Sharon Center School, Sharon Town Hall, Hotchkiss Library, Sharon Country Club, Sharon Playhouse, Sharon Recreational fields, Sharon Beach and Sharon Audubon. The town generously provides a line item in the year budget so that we receive \$5,500 each year towards the batteries and maintenance of this equipment.

Our Monthly Pancake Breakfasts continued as take-out offerings. Please check next year's town calendar to see when we will resume.

Our members are committed to serving our Town, staying protected and remaining 100% volunteer.

Respectfully,  
Jamie Casey  
Ambulance Captain

## Sharon Fire Department, Inc.

The Sharon Fire Department, Inc. is comprised of 42 volunteers that serve the Town of Sharon. The Fire Department has responded to over 240 incidents in Sharon and Mutual Aide calls to neighboring towns.

We operate and maintain the Main Station Fire House at 36 West Main Street as well as the Ellsworth Sub-Station at 7 Dunbar Road. The cost of operating and maintaining the two fire stations as well as maintenance to all apparatus and specialized equipment makes up our operating budget.

Sharon Fire Department maintains and operates several pieces of Apparatus, each necessary depending on the call received. For calls such as fires, car accidents and Automatic alarms, Engine 5 (2017 E-One Custom), responds in the area around the Main station and Engine 6 (2000 Kenworth) responds to calls near the Ellsworth station. Calls for any type of fire have our pumper-tanker Engine 3, (1990 Ford) respond. Tower 1 (2007 American LaFrance) is a 100-foot Tower Ladder. This is used for all chimney or structure fires. Brush fires have different equipment requirements, Utility 1 (1987 GMC) and Utility 2 (1953 Dodge) are first to respond for these incidents. Calls involving Hazardous Materials or traffic incidents require response by Hazmat 1 (2006 Freightliner). Rescue 1 (1999 Ford) is utilized for calls with wires down, traffic control or closures, cellar pump outs, motor vehicle accidents and ambulance assist., It is necessary to maintain and keep each piece in good working order, ready to respond to an emergency. Often times we are confronted with emergency repairs to keep apparatus in service.

Our Fire Department, as with all others, must meet all NFPA, National Fire Protection Association, and OSHA mandates and regulations to remain in service. Every facet of Firefighting is regulated from training and certifications, driving, fire protection gear, all equipment and apparatus maintenance and life span.

Compliance is costly! These mandates often create a financial shortfall requiring fundraising efforts. Covid has made fundraising impossible this fiscal period and we have been forced to push back our campaign to replace our 1990 Ford Engine 3 to this fiscal year.

The Sharon Fire Department are grateful to the Town and its citizens for their continued support and generosity. Our volunteers are proud to serve the community of Sharon 24/7 - 365 days a year. We are always in need of new members to ensure this strong commitment. Visit our website at [sharonfiredept.org](http://sharonfiredept.org) for more information.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Hohlfeld, Treasurer

Eric Golden, Chief

Stanley MacMillan III, President

## Community Mental Health Affiliates

### **Funding Sources**

CMHA received funding from a variety of sources, including its own annual fund drive, employee giving campaign, private donations, town grants, fees and insurance payments, as well as the state of Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

### **Programs and Activities**

#### **Outpatient Mental Health**

CMHA's outpatient services include individual, family and group psychotherapy, psychological and psychiatric evaluation, medication management, behavioral health home services, peer engagement and support, and case management. Treatments include Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) for children, and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) for adults. When people in need of treatment do not have insurance, CMHA helps them to enroll in Medicaid, if eligible, and to access other benefits. CMHA also offers a sliding fee schedule.

*In FY21, CMHA's outpatient services aided 440 people, and provided more than 563 clinical sessions every month and over 6,762 sessions over the course of the year.*

#### **Parenting Support Services**

CMHA programs receive funding from the CT Department of Children and Families (DCF) to operate countywide services for parents/caregivers of children 3-17, utilizing a menu of evidence-based therapies for families and children. All treatment uses a combination of home visitation, individual and group therapeutic sessions, and other modalities as needed. CMHA staff work with parents in their homes to provide parenting coaching for DCF-referred families with children with behavioral issues. This program features the use of evidence-based curriculums: Triple P for children ages 6-12, Triple P Teen for children ages 13-17, and Circle of Security (COS-P) for children ages birth-6.

*In FY21, 190 families received in-home parenting services.*

#### **Intensive Family Preservation**

This intensive in-home program designed to support families in crisis when children are at imminent risk of out of home placement by DCF. The goal is to keep children safe and avoid either a permanent or long-term separation from their family and community. IFP builds upon the conviction that many children can be safely protected and treated within their own homes when parents are provided the services and support and are empowered to change their own lives.

*In FY21, 119 families received intensive, home-based support, counseling, and parenting Assistance.*

### 3. Collaborations

CMHA collaborates with a number of area agencies, receiving and giving referrals so that clients can obtain the appropriate level of coordinated, holistic care.

The following agencies are collaborators:

- Acts 4 Ministries
- All About You Home Care Services
- Catholic Charities Family Service Center
- Center for Human Development (CHD)
- Charlotte Hungerford Hospital
- Chrysalis Center
- Community Health and Wellness Center of Greater Torrington (regional FQHC)
- Department of Children and Families Region 5
- Connecticut Junior Republic, Inc.
- EdAdvance (Regional Education Service Center)
- Family & Children's Aid
- Family Resource Center
- Family Strides
- FAVOR-CT, Inc.
- Friends In Service to Humanity of Northwest CT, Inc. (FISH) Emergency Shelter
- Focus Center for Autism
- Homeless shelter at Winsted Y
- Litchfield County OBGYN
- Litchfield County Pediatrics in Torrington
- Markowski, M.D. Joel A. (Torrington pediatrician)
- Midwestern CT Council on Alcoholism, Inc. (MCCA)
- McCall Center for Behavioral Health
- Mental Health Connecticut - Torrington
- New Opportunities, Inc.
- Northwest CT Chamber of Commerce
- Northwest CT YMCA
- Operation Overflow Winter Homeless Shelter – Torrington
- Prime Time House, Inc. / with The Connection
- ProHealth Physicians of Torrington, Inc.
- Susan B. Anthony Project, Inc.
- The Connection, Inc.
- Tides of Mind Counseling
- Torrington Chamber of Commerce
- Torrington – Winsted Pediatrics, Inc.
- Visiting Nurse Services of CT
- VNA Northwest, Inc.

- Wellmore Behavioral Health
- Western CT Mental Health Network,
- Winchester Emergency Shelter
- Y House - Torrington YMCA

## Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Litchfield County, Inc.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Litchfield County was created in 2020 by the mergers of Salisbury Visiting Nurse Association (est. 1904), VNA Northwest (Bantam, est. 1928) and Foothills Visiting Nurse & Home Care (Winsted, est. 1922). The combined agencies will be caring for the residents of all towns in Litchfield County plus Burlington, Canton, and Hartland.

VNHLC is a State licensed, Medicare certified, non-profit VNA providing care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. VNHLC provides services in the areas of Skilled Nursing, Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapies, Medical Social Work, Hospice, IV Therapy, Dietary, Pediatrics, Wound Care, and Chronic Disease Management.

VNHLC is very proud to be named to the HomeCare Elite for 9 consecutive years and identified as one of the best Home Care Agencies in the United States.

VNHLC employs 115 people, 95% of whom reside locally in Northwest Connecticut.

VNHLC is proud of its long-standing history with the Town of Sharon. 121 persons from Sharon received home health services from VNHLC during the past year.

Eighty-one (81%) percent of all our patients were age 65 or older.

VNHLC also offers, with funding assistance from the town, the following services free of charge to residents of Sharon:

- Matter of Balance Classes – classes focus on how to maintain balance, continue moving and exercise at any age.
- Blood Pressure Clinics
- Health Promotion Visits - VNHLC receives an annual allocation from the town to help defray the costs of providing free Health Promotion visits and Public Health Programs. Health Promotion is a program in which certain elderly at-risk patients, who normally live alone and no longer qualify for insurance benefits, are routinely monitored free of charge by one of our staff nurses, therapists, social workers, or dieticians.

Structured Bereavement Groups are held twice a year. The groups are free and open to anyone in the community who has lost a family member or friend. The bereavement coordinator is also

always available to meet privately with people. Just before the holiday season, an event, The Tree of Lights, is held to honor and remember VNHLC patients who have passed within the past 18 months to which family members and caregivers are invited.

VNHLC provides free space two days per month for voucher distribution by WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Nutrition Program.

This past year VNHLC was able to conduct public and many private flu clinics and administered 1,556 flu vaccines to mostly high-risk individuals. All ages, 18 and older, were welcome to attend.

Since VNHLC is a non-profit health agency, the Board of Directors serve on a voluntary basis and represent all the towns in which full services are provided. The representative from Sharon for 2020-21 was Mary Robertson.

Referrals for services are accepted from anyone and services are provided regardless of ability to pay, as long as contributions, grants and other appropriations are sufficient to cover these costs.

Michael Caselas, Executive Director

### Northwest Hills Council of Governments

The Northwest Hills Council of Governments (COG) consists of the Mayors and First Selectmen from 21 member towns in the Northwest Corner. It is one of the nine Councils of Governments that have been established in Connecticut.

The COG generally meets on a monthly basis to discuss issues of municipal concern, oversee COG planning projects, and explore new opportunities for regional cooperation. Additional information on COG initiatives and activities is available at: [www.northwesthillscog.org](http://www.northwesthillscog.org).

A major focus area in 2021 was the continued implementation of the COG's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Region. Major strategies outlined in the CEDS include expanding access to high-speed fiber optic broadband (Fiber to the Home – FTTH), promoting tourism/arts/culture, supporting local farms, strengthening manufacturing, and encouraging entrepreneurs and innovation.

The COG also concluded the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update for all 21 towns in the region this year. At the time of this report, the retained consultant has submitted the draft plan for



final FEMA review and approval. FEMA requires that these plans be updated every 5 years for towns to remain eligible for various FEMA funding programs.

The NHCOCG continuously promotes the on-line Interactive Regional Trail Map that was developed by the COG in cooperation with the Housatonic Valley Association to promote access to the public trails in the region. A statewide CT Trailfinder website is now also complete which will further draw attention to the outstanding trail resources we have in the Northwest Hills. It is notable that the trail schema that was developed is being used for the development of a state-wide program.

A Corridor Management Study of East Main Street in Torrington was a major transportation planning project that was completed this past year. The purpose of this study was to develop recommendations to enhance the safety, traffic flow, and streetscape of this heavily travelled corridor. The COG also continues to coordinate the popular Rural Independent Transportation Service, which offers trips to the elderly and disabled for medical appointments.

The COG is allocated about \$2M each year from ConnDOT for priority local road improvement projects and projects are currently in various stages of approval/development in Burlington, Litchfield, Torrington, and Winchester.

The NHCOCG also serves as the oversight agent for about \$385,000 in Homeland Security Grant overall funding that is received each year for DEMHS Region 5. There are a number of projects and equipment acquisitions to support this program and are decided upon by a committee made up of emergency support function leads on an annual basis.

In 2021, the COG continued coordination of numerous popular programs such as a prescription assistance program in cooperation with the Foundation for Community Health, a Neighbor-to-Neighbor program in cooperation with the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, a fuel bank program, the Northwest Hills Public Works Equipment Cooperative, and the region's cooperative purchasing program.

The COG also continued to assist local organizations including the Regional Housing Council, Northwest Hills Road Supervisors Association, Recycling Advisory Committee, the Regional Coordination Center for COVID-19 response and recovery, and the Housatonic River Commission.

In addition, the COG continued to host a quarterly "5<sup>th</sup> Thursday" forum for area Planning, Zoning, and Conservation Commission members to meet and discuss items of mutual interest, hear guest speakers, and provide input on regional plans.

Serving as officers of the COG during FY 2019-2020 were Don Stein, Chairman; Bob Valentine, Vice Chairman; Charlie Perotti, Secretary; and Michael Criss, Treasurer. COG staff included Darlene Krukar, Office Manager; Jocelyn Ayer, Community and Economic Development Director; Janell Mullen, Regional Planner; and Rick Lynn, Executive Director.

Finally, the COG extends its deepest appreciation for the more than 30 years that Rick Lynn served as Executive Director to the COG. In the month of June, Mr. Lynn retired and Robert A Phillips assumed the role as Executive Director.

The same appreciation is also extended to Darlene Krukar, who will also be retiring at the end of the calendar year 2021 after over 20 years of managing the financial and office administration.

Lastly, we wish the best of luck and appreciation to Jocelyn Ayer as she moves on to new opportunities in the region working on affordable housing initiatives by the end of the calendar year 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A Phillips, AICP

Executive Director

**Northwest CT Regional Housing Council**

Providing housing options that are affordable for young adults, young families, seniors, and those who work in our towns is critically important to our towns. Creating these housing options is the sole focus of the Northwest Connecticut Regional Housing Council.

The Council is made up of representatives from each town's local housing organization who meet quarterly to report upon and gain valuable information for their town-specific planning and housing development. At meetings, we learn from each other as we share the progress and current hurdles we are encountering in our varied town housing initiatives. Questions raised and hands-on ideas and resources cause attendees to leave the meetings with possible next steps, support, and resources. The Council also advocates for the funding resources critically needed by our local housing organizations to build affordable housing in our towns.

The Housing Council has a website with resources for our local housing organizations and people looking for information about affordable housing in Northwest Connecticut. The site contains links to all the housing organizations in our region, frequently asked questions, photos of the affordable housing in our region and stories from employers and residents about the importance of affordable housing options in our towns. Check it out at: [www.nwcthousing.org](http://www.nwcthousing.org)

We thank David Berto of Housing Enterprises Inc. for attending our meetings and providing technical assistance to our housing organizations. We thank our member towns for their financial support and NHCOCG for hosting our meetings and organizing speakers. Our towns' \$100 annual dues are a cost effective investment in our area's future.

For more information on the Regional Housing Council or the local housing organizations which are members, visit [www.nwcthousing.org](http://www.nwcthousing.org).

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Groody Musselman, Chair (Litchfield Housing Trust)

Chris Sanders, Vice-Chair (Goshen Housing Trust)

**Housatonic River Commission**

*“to coordinate on a regional basis the local management and protection of the Housatonic River Valley in northwestern Connecticut”*

The Housatonic River Commission (HRC) held 10 regularly scheduled monthly meetings the past year. Meetings took place at 7:30 on the second Tuesday of each month. Starting in April 2020 the HRC meetings were held via Zoom due to the Pandemic. The Commission is made up of representatives appointed by the Board of Selectmen in each of the following towns along the Housatonic River: Canaan, Cornwall, Kent, New Milford, North Canaan, Salisbury, and Sharon. The HRC is responsible for monitoring and advising these seven towns on issues that involve the Housatonic River and working to maintain an environmentally healthy and scenic river corridor. The annual dues requested from each town are \$400 per year.

The process of recognizing the Housatonic River through the National Park Service’s (NPS) Wild and Scenic designation as a Partnership River with federal financial support continues with significant help from Housatonic Valley Association (HVA). Quarterly meetings of the Housatonic Wild and Scenic Coordinating Committee have continued with representatives from NPS, HVA, CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), and Northwest Hills Council of Governments. At these meetings each group provides updates on their work addressing issues in the Housatonic River Management Plan including HVA’s successful River Information and Outreach (RIO) program, fishing management (CT DEEP) and river access. Tremendous time and energy has been spent on river access as dynamic changes in river usage during the COVID pandemic resulted in noteworthy action by towns to maintain safety. HRC’s mission includes maintaining public access and the proposed Ruggles Landing is being partnered with the state and town of Canaan to allow for safe river usage.

Now two decades since the historic EPA/GE/Pittsfield consent decree HRC continues to monitor the PCB cleanup and remediation proposals for the rest of the Housatonic River.

As always, land use issues within the Housatonic River Corridor remain a significant concern. We continue to support efforts to address invasive plant species along the waterway, with several members working to monitor and in some cases control troublesome, aggressive invasives in the

inner river corridor. Monitoring the work of the Housatonic Railroad, including their track repair, herbicide use and derailment risk also continue. The River Commission provided comments and suggestions on many proposed projects as development along the River continues to increase significantly. All towns are reminded to please be sure that the HRC is notified of any proposed project within the River Corridor.

We welcome all citizens to come to our meetings and get involved in discussions about the River. We are also grateful for the support we have received from the member towns, local zoning officials, and the Northwest Hills Council of Governments.

## **Housatonic Youth Service Bureau**

For 30 years, the Housatonic Youth Service Bureau (HYSB) has proudly served the Northwest Corner as the only mental health agency providing FREE clinical services to children ages 3-21 and their families in the Region One community.

HYSB is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that serves the towns of North Canaan, Canaan, Salisbury/Lakeville, Sharon, Cornwall, and Kent. Our licensed clinicians provide a variety of free services that promote the overall health and wellbeing of children and their families and impact the lives of thousands living in our community.

Fall 2020 was full of new experiences for students and families returning to school and activities after the COVID-19 pandemic lock down and adjusting back into a routine. These adjustments were hard for many students and their families after such an extended period of isolation and remote learning. HYSB worked with 97 students in the region, 12 of whom resided in Sharon.

As a result of COVID-19, HYSB experienced a three-fold increase in client referrals and demand for services in the spring of 2021 across Region One. We are thankful to have been able to return to in-person services while still offering tele-health options for clients who are sick or require a virtual option due to transportation limitations, schedules, etc. Unfortunately to accommodate the increase in cases, HYSB has temporarily halted our group programs and enrichment opportunities to prioritize clinical cases. We are working diligently to secure additional funding to relaunch those additional programs as they too play a valuable role in our overall service plan for ongoing support as well as prevention work.

Providing critical services during major transition years for children throughout their education and mental health development; HYSB worked with clients ranging from the kindergarten to 12th grade of which the eighth grade had the largest demand across Region One making up 33.3% of our total client base. We delivered 49 hours of clinical services to this group.

HYSB clinicians provided one-one no-cost services to students in their homes and at school dealing with concerns relating to “non-school related issues”—which represented 83.3% of all referral causes—and “parenting/family issues”. On a referral basis, 66.6% of referrals came from parents/guardians, 33% from the schools.

Our custom group programming is based on the unique needs within each community and designed to provide a safe environment where children can connect with their peers and HYSB social workers to discuss sensitive topics and share strategies for overcoming adversity and learning when and how to engage with other adults and authorities.

Your support makes it possible for HYSB to make a difference in the lives of thousands within our community. HYSB staff works tirelessly to address the concerns of children and their families and provide high-level free clinical services.

Through the support of the Town of Sharon and generous donors across Region One, HYSB is able to continue to offer our free services, such as mental health counseling, community outreach, youth empowerment, and summer internship programs as well as case management services, referral services, and other services for the children and families in the town of Sharon. We are incredibly grateful for your continued financial support and look forward to continuing our work together for the children and families we serve.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Parker  
Executive Director

### Women's Support Services

As Women's Support Services celebrated our 40th Anniversary this September, we had much on which to reflect. From a grassroots, volunteer effort in 1981 with a budget of \$15,380 to a full-time staff of 10 members and a budget in excess of \$1 million, there have been a lot of changes along the way. Some of the significant achievements include:

- **1985** – Women's Emergency Services (as we were then known) is one of the founding members of the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV).
- **1986** – Governor O'Neill signs into law a bill making family violence a specific crime under state law and allowing police to make arrests without warrants in domestic violence cases.
- **1998** – WES partners with the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation to launch the "Calling All Cars" program, providing reliable donated vehicles to clients.
- **2001** – Trade Secrets, WSS's signature fundraising event is founded, enabling the purchase of a new home in Sharon.
- **2014** – WSS partners with CT State Troop 'B' in Canaan and Troop 'L' in Litchfield on the Lethality Assessment Program, helping police identify victims of abuse and refer them to WSS for support.

- **2018** – WSS significantly expands its prevention education programming, reaching all schools in Region One, along with a number of private schools in the area. The following year, WSS launches the “Boys and Men” programming.

As we reflect upon the past forty years, a critical element to our ability to reach clients, educate children and teens, and create a healthier community, has been our partnerships and the overwhelming support we have received from the community and from our volunteers. The past 18 months has been a testament to that support, as we have grappled with COVID-19 and its immediate impact. It was our partnerships – with town social workers, the state police, area healthcare professionals and the schools, volunteers and donors, who ensured client support and safety and delivered much-needed encouragement to our team. **Thank you to the Town of Sharon for your grant of \$1,500 and for being such an important partner during this difficult time.**

**From 01 July 2020 through 30 June 2021, Women’s Support Services:**

Provided support services to **677 clients**, 369 of whom were new clients.

The composition of our new clients includes:

344 adults and 25 children

269 female, 98 male, 2 who identified as Other

Responded to **1234 hotline crisis requests**.

Provided **emergency shelter to 32 people for a total of 2841 nights** of shelter. This included 7 women, 1 man, and 16 children.

Provided criminal and civil court advocacy and support to **544 victims of family violence**.

Conducted **139 prevention workshops** to children and teens in local schools, daycares, and camps.

**The long-term impact of COVID-19 is revealed in our drastically increased shelter provision – a nearly 350% increase over last year – and our clients at court – a nearly 20% increase.** It is clear that this impact will be felt for some time to come. In closing, we would like to share a quote with you. Our Family Violence Victim Advocate works at the GA 18 Torrington Superior Court where she ensures victim input to both the criminal and civil court processes. The quote below is taken from the victim impact statement that one of our clients read in court during the proceedings against her abusive boyfriend. It speaks to the resiliency and strength of our clients and the importance of our programming. It also reveals how the necessity of court closures at the height of COVID-19 meant that victims of domestic violence shouldered extraordinary burdens as their cases were delayed, often for months and months, and they were forced to face their abusers in court multiple times.

*Your honor, I have found a strength and courage these past two years I never knew I had. I will continue to use my voice to help advocate for other women who are domestic violence survivors and hold my abuser accountable. This is my third appearance in court to ask that my abuser be held accountable. I'd like to share a quote from an Advocate for victims, "...a survivor shouldn't have to prove how harmed they are to prove the danger of the perpetrator's actions. The heinous acts of the abuser should stand alone, and it shouldn't be on the back of the survivor to prosecute their abuser." **The abuse should not define the survivor – it should define the perpetrator.***

## Hotchkiss Library

The Hotchkiss Library of Sharon reopened its doors to patrons just weeks before the start of FY21. This year was unprecedented, as we continued to deal with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and saw the Library's ongoing commitment to providing our patrons with the highest quality services and programming possible.

Unable to host either of our annual fundraisers, the Sharon Summer Book Signing and the Fall Gala Auction, the Library was very fortunate to receive a second PPP grant in the amount of \$42,328 in FY21. These funds, in addition to our annual fund receipts and the Town's grant, allowed us to keep our doors open. The number of patrons coming into the building rose slowly, while others embraced our curbside pickup option. And our digital collections offered a lifeline to residents, who preferred to stay home. Digital circulation of downloadable audiobooks, eBooks, and movies increased 25% over the previous year. We added a new option for streaming movies with Kanopy, which offers 30,000 titles. As a member library of the Bibliomation Consortium, Sharon residents have access to 4,250,915 items. In addition, interlibrary loan services allowed Sharon residents to request materials from Bibliomation libraries. All of these materials are available to library card holders free of charge.

A wide array of virtual programming replaced in person gatherings and was widely embraced by our local audience. Our virtual book signing series included well-known novelists, investigative journalists, cookbook authors, and gardeners, and we averaged between 20 and 40 viewers for each program. We hosted a local speaker on Food and Climate Change. Each of these presentations was recorded and accessed by even more viewers on our YouTube channel. We brought the wider world to Sharon.

We are especially proud of our ongoing community outreach programs and collaborations with other local nonprofits. We marked the tenth-anniversary of our Books for Babies program at Sharon Hospital, through which we provide two board books and a Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Literacy to the family of every baby born in the Birthing Suites. On Columbus Day weekend the Library hosted a day of sold-out walk-through performances of *From Sharon to Spoon River* at the Historic Sharon Burying Ground, in collaboration with the Sharon Playhouse and the Sharon Historical Society. 50 avid hikers joined us on Zoom to learn about the Sharon Land Trust's many beautiful nature trails from executive director, Maria Grace.

We introduced a series of online technology talks, including *Digital Privacy and How to Buy and Sell Online*. Glorious fall weather allowed us to host two art shows, with limited visitors allowed inside.

35 children spoke to Santa, socially-distanced, outside of the Library. Ms. Sam started a baby and toddler group on Sunday mornings, launched a weekly program of Short Stories on WHDD Robin Hood Radio, and curated make-and-take craft bags and themed book bags for families to pick up. She hosted story times and craft instructions online and weather-permitting, hosted children outside on the Library lawn.

Even when the doors were closed or when folks did not feel comfortable coming inside, the Hotchkiss Library was there for everyone. Our strong Wi-Fi signal reached outside and folks sat outside to access the internet. We increased the frequency of our electronic communications to patrons, publicizing not only news about the Library and our programming, but announcing events hosted by other area nonprofits and libraries, tips on accessing technology, and other helpful guidance.

Throughout FY21 our computers were available to those without their own, and we continued to be the only place in town to offer the means to print, copy, fax, and scan. Our friendly staff ably assisted those in need.

Libraries are truly essential to communities and the Hotchkiss Library is no exception: our librarians were stalwart essential workers throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gretchen Hachmeister  
Executive Director



Chore Service, founded in 1992, provides in-home, non-medical assistance such as house cleaning, running errands, yard work, etc., for clients in Canaan, Cornwall, Falls Village, Kent, Norfolk, Salisbury/Lakeville and Sharon. Clients contribute only what they can (if they can) toward the service, and Chore pays workers \$15.00 per hour for inside work and \$16.00 per hour for outdoor work to help residents in our community. Fundraising, grants, and town contributions make up the difference between what clients can contribute and the cost of providing services.

From July 2020 through June 2021, Chore Service provided services to twenty-three Sharon residents. These twenty-three Sharon families received 539 hours of help with cleaning, errands and yard work so that they could continue to remain safely in their homes. Three Chore Workers who live in Sharon earned over \$5,000 last year. Our federal grant monies that subsidize



services for those age 60 and over are always depleted before the year ends, so we are delighted that the Town of Sharon continues to contribute to these services.

As we face shrinking federal and state grants, we are most grateful for the support of our donors, including the Town of Sharon, for your generosity.

Jane MacLaren  
Executive Director

### Salisbury/Sharon Transfer Station

This year we opened the new transfer station at 410 Millerton Road. This station was the result of years of hard work of many residents volunteering on committees, elected officials, and staff. Thank you to all for your dedicated effort on this project.

Connecticut is still in an evolving solid waste crisis. By June of 2022, the trash-to-energy facility in Hartford where our garbage is sent will be closing. Currently, the only viable option appears to be transporting our garbage to landfills in other states, such as Ohio, Virginia, or even Alabama. As such, it is more important than ever for EVERYONE to reduce the amount of garbage they produce.

In May, we began a small pilot program for the diversion of food scraps from 120 households in our Towns. It has been a success, and we will be working to expand the program as time progresses. Obviously, it makes sense to handle waste and recycling on a more local level, than to ship it to a landfill hundreds of miles away.

Brian Bartram, Manager

### Sharon Connect Task Force

The all-volunteer Sharon Connect Task Force was formed in November 2019 to address the lack of reliable high-speed internet and cell phone coverage for many of our residents. We have adopted a clear mission: To present the residents of the town of Sharon with all the information needed to make an informed choice in a town vote on how/whether to provide universal access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet to all homes and businesses.

The Town awarded the task force \$2,775 in January 2020 to fund the printing and mailing of a resident survey of internet use and access. Residents were given time to fill out the survey online and then a printed survey was mailed to approximately 1,500 households that had not completed it online. Residents from 551 households completed

the survey -- a very high percentage for surveys, indicating a strong interest in the topic -- and the results were compiled and posted online at the Sharon Connect website, [sharonconnect.org](http://sharonconnect.org). The task force held a community meeting online on Dec. 2, 2020 to discuss the results. More than 50 residents attended the meeting to ask questions. A recording of that meeting can be found at [sharonconnect.org](http://sharonconnect.org).

A full 70% of those who responded (388 households) said they would support the town installing a fiber-optic network or using other means to provide high-speed internet for all residents. Another 25% (138 households) said they might support it but needed more information. Only 4.5% (25 households) said they would not support it or did not answer the question.

With that mandate, the task force continued its work researching both the details of installing a town-owned fiber-optic network and also entering into discussions with Comcast, the dominant incumbent cable provider of high-speed internet in Sharon. It also reached out to Frontier, which provides internet access to about 20% of households. To keep residents informed, the task force created a website, established a regular email newsletter, and started [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/sharonconnect) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/sharonconnect) accounts.

In May 2020, task force volunteers conducted a public outreach campaign to alert residents to a new federal program, the Emergency Broadband Benefit, which would help pay monthly bills for internet access. Task force members staffed a table outside of Sharon Pharmacy one weekend to pass out literature on the program. Members also worked with the Sharon Social Service agent and the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon to distribute information about the program and assist residents who wished to apply for the funding.

The task force worked with Region One administrators and staff at Sharon Center School and Housatonic Valley Regional High School to determine which families did not have adequate internet access and to find workarounds, including distributing wireless internet hotspots and signal boosters, to households lacking high-speed access during the pandemic lockdown when there was no in-school instruction. The task force co-chair, Meghan Flanagan, advocated on behalf of individuals with billing and connection issues with Comcast and Frontier. The task force also spread the word about the arrival of beta-testing for Starlink, a low-orbit satellite provider of internet service, to the Sharon area.

The task force applied for federal and state grants to support further research into the costs of designing and installing a town-owned high-speed internet network but was not awarded any funds. As part of the Town of Sharon's budget for the fiscal year 2021-22, the town allocated \$30,000 to fund an engineering analysis to assess the feasibility of installing a town-owned high-speed internet network. To help document the need and attempt to keep engineering costs as low as possible, task force members fanned out to document the current utility infrastructure, especially in the underserved Ellsworth area

of town. That data is being used by task force member Brent Prindle to create an online map of how and where internet service is delivered, including how many miles of lines are overhead and and how many are buried underground.

The task force held a second Community Information online meeting on April 29, 2021, to answer questions about the goals of the engineering analysis. A recording of that meeting can be found at [sharonconnect.org](http://sharonconnect.org). The town issued a request for proposals that attracted five bids and awarded the contract to a team of Sertex Broadband and Pike Telecom. They are currently conducting the analysis and their report will be completed in mid-January 2022. A third Community Information meeting is scheduled online for Dec. 8, 2021 to discuss the progress on the engineering analysis as well as new interest on the part of Comcast in building out the portions of Sharon that are currently not served by its network (27 miles of road and roughly 240 homes and businesses).

The Sharon Connect Task Force wishes to thank First Selectman Brent Colley for his support and guidance, as well as Selectmen Dale Jones and Casey Flanagan, who have asked great questions and provided solid information to keep the task force focused. We would also like to thank the Board of Finance for its support. Big thanks also go to Land Use Administrator Jamie Casey for her help in gathering public records regarding the town's current utility infrastructure and Assistant Assessor Patricia Braislin for access to the Grand List and online maps of parcels and roads in town. We are also deeply grateful to all our task force members, who have given generously of their time and expertise: John Brett, Patrick Gallaway, Roger Lourie, Linda Neiberg, Alexandra Peters, Barbara Prindle, Brent Prindle, Beth Rybczyk and Eric Simon.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jill Drew and Meghan Flanagan, Co-chairs

**Town of Sharon**

**Budget 2020 – 2021**

For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021

General Summary

	<u>2019-2020</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>
Board of Selectmen Budget	\$4,654,428	\$4,632,979
Less non-tax revenues	<u>537,784</u>	<u>556,827</u>
	\$4,116,644	\$4,076,152
Board of Education Budget	\$6,555,977	\$6,555,837
Less non-tax revenues	<u>9,960</u>	<u>9,960</u>
	\$6,546,017	\$6,545,877

The Board of Finance approved the following:

TOTAL TO BE RAISED BY TOWN TAXES, 2020-2021

\$10,369,526

GRAND LIST, OCTOBER 2019

734,801,807

MIL RATE

14.40

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas H. Bartram  
Chairman, Board of Finance