

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

FIRST SELECTMAN: Monday - Friday: 9:00 – 12:00 & 1:00 – 4:00
phone: 860-364-5789; (C) 860-248-0920

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 by appointment
phone: 860-364-0909

LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR Monday – Friday: 7:00 – NOON
phone: 860-364-0909

HEALTH DEPARTMENT Housatonic Valley Health District
phone: 203-264-9616 Monday – Friday 7:00 - Noon

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

Board of Selectmen: Second Tuesday @ 3PM and fourth Tuesday @ 5:30PM monthly except November and December when there is no 5:30PM meeting

Board of Finance: Third Tuesday monthly @ 6:30PM monthly

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

Inland Wetlands Commission: Second Monday, monthly @ 6:30PM except February when it will be Feb. 13, October when it will be October 15 and November when it will be Nov. 12

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 for May when it will be May 28 and December when there is no meeting

Board of Education: Second Monday, monthly see their website

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

Conservation Commission: Third Wednesday @ 6:30PM monthly, except for June when it will be June 20

Zoning Board of Appeals: Quarterly, Feb. 20, May 20, August 19 & Nov. 18 @ 6:00PM

Sharon Energy & Environment Commission: First Tuesday, monthly @ 5:30PM except for November when it will be Nov. 6

Board of Assessment Appeals: Feb. 21 @ 4PM, March 8 @ 6PM, March 9 @ 9AM, March 15 @ 6PM, March 16 @ 9AM, March 22 @ 6PM, March 23 @ 9AM and Sept. 7 @ 9AM (this one is for motor vehicles only)

Sharon Green Committee: Second Monday monthly @ 4PM except February when it will be Feb. 13 and October when it will be Oct. 15 and November when it will be Nov. 12

ARPA Advisory Committee: Third Thursday, monthly @ 5:00PM

Transfer Station Committee: Every other month @ 5PM Feb. 21 April 17, June 19, August 21, Oct. 16 and Dec. 18

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, 2022– 2023

FRONT COVER

Back Row L to R- Beth Rybczyk, John Brett, Nikki Blass-Project Manager

Front Row L to R- Ben Newhouse, Roger Lourie, Co-Chair Meghan Flanagan, Barbara Prindle, Co-Chair Jill Drew

Missing from Photo- Alexandra Peters, Eric Simon, and the Late Brent Prindle

The cover of this year’s Annual Report is dedicated to the Sharon Connect Task Force. The Task Force was formed in November of 2019 with a charge to research and propose a plan to extend broadband to all of the residents of Sharon. Within a few months, the ramifications of the Covid Pandemic proved how vital connectivity is.

After researching many opportunities, the Task Force proposal to partner with Comcast to build out their system came to Town Meeting on November 10, 2022 and was overwhelmingly approved. The contract with Comcast was signed on March 2, 2023 and construction began soon after.

Photo taken by Derek Drew – thank you Derek!

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
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
2022-2023	14.40	768,936,413	2,689
2023-2024	14.40	768,817,236	2,675

ELECTED TOWN OFFICERS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Casey T. Flanagan, *First Selectman*, 2025
Lynn Kearcher, 2025 John G. Brett, 2025

BOARD OF FINANCE

Thomas H. Bartram, *Chairman*, 2029
Jessica K. Fowler, *Vice Chairman*, 2027
Robert E. Duncan, *Secretary*, 2027
John P. Hecht, 2025 Mary B. Robertson, 2025 Carol Flaton, 2029

Alternate Members

Michele W. Pastre, 2029
Christine Clare, 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, 2025

TAX COLLECTOR

Donna A. Christensen, 2025

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Thomas F. Casey, Sr., *Chairman*, 2027
Elizabeth C. Forstmann, 2027 Deborah Hanlon, 2025

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Doug A. Cahill, *Chairman*, 2025
Anne M. Vance, *V. Chairman*, 2025
Kathleen Visconti, *Secretary*, 2023
Nancy Hegy Martin, 2027
Philip B. O'Reilly, 2027 Vacancy Plamen Petkov, 2025

REPRESENTATIVE TO REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BOARD

Sara Ellen Cousins, 11/30/2025

JUDGE OF PROBATE

Jordan Richards, 01/04/2023 – 01/06/2027

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Tina M. Pitcher Casey T. Flanagan Bruce Dechert
Michael D. Lynch Brian F. Kenny Howard M. Randall
Lorraine J. Lewis Linda R. Amerighi Michael R. Tesoro
Judge Manning, Sr. Winston P. Foote

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Laurance B. Rand III, *Chairman*, 2029
Elizabeth M. Hall, *V. Chairman*, 2027
Stanley MacMillan Jr., *Secretary*, 2025
Susan Lynn, 2025 Larry Moskowitz, 2029

Alternate Members

Jill Drew, 2027 Edward W. Wilbur, 2027 Katy Kinsolving, 2025

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

William Trowbridge, *Chairman*, 2027
Allen I. Young, *V. Chairman*, 2027
Brian E. Abut, 2027 Zelina Blagden, 2025 Vacancy, 2025

Alternate Members

Donna DiMartino, 2027 Elizabeth Rybczyk, 2025 Scott J. Pastre, 2027

ELECTIVE STATE OFFICERS

GOVERNOR & LT. GOVERNOR

Ned Lamont and Susan Bysiewicz 01/04/2023 to 01/06/2027

UNITED STATE SENATORS

Christopher S. Murphy 01/03/2019 to 01/03/2025
Richard Blumenthal 01/03/2023 to 01/03/2029

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS

5th Congressional District

Jahana Hayes 01/03/2023 to 01/03/2025

REPRESENTATIVES IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Senate – 30th Senatorial District

Eva Bermudez Zimmerman 01/04/2023 to 01/08/2025

House of Representatives – 64th House District

Maria Horn 01/04/2023 to 01/08/2025

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

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Housatonic Valley Health District

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
Troy Kaiser, Deputy FM
Timothy Limbos, Deputy FM

LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR

Elizabeth H. Casey

REPRESENTATIVE TO REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BOARD

Anne M. Vance, *Alternate*, 2025

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

John J. Baroody, *Chairman*, 2028
Elizabeth M. Hall, *V. Chairman*, 2025
J. Barclay Collins, 2024 Lionel Goldfrank III, 2027 Stephen J. Szalewicz, Jr., 2027

Alternate Members

Theo Coulombe, 2026

W. Allen Reiser, 2025

Edwin Yowell, 2024

SEWER & WATER COMMISSION

Jacob E. Fricker, *Chairman*, 2028
Ken Mishler, *Vice Chairman*, 2025
Douglas O. Hobby, 2024
Stephen J. Szalewicz, Jr., 2025
Elizabeth M. Rybczyk, 2026

Alternate Members

Dobрила M. Waugh, 2027 Barry Pinchoff, 2028

SHARON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Brent M. Colley, *Chairman*, 2024
Donn Castonguay, *Treasurer* 2024
William J. Manasse, *Asst. Treasurer & V. Chairman*, 2026
Jeannette Moss, *Secretary & Tenant Representative*, 2025
Vacancy

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
Marlena Aakjar Michael L. Levengood
Scott Eldridge
1 Vacancy

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Johannes Van Der Tuin, *Chairman*, 2026
Carl Chaiet, *V. Chairman*, 2028
Claudia E. Cayne, *Secretary*, 2027
James D. Krissel, 2028 Cicily W. Hajek, 2028
F. Pieter Lefferts, 2025 Bethany Sheffer, 2024

INLAND WETLANDS & WATER COURSES COMMISSION

James D. Krissel, *Chairman*, 2027
Scott L. Schreiber, *V. Chairman*, 2027
Michael H. Dudek, *Secretary*, 2027
Robin L. Zitter 2025 William Trowbridge, 11/16/2027
Laurance B. Rand, III, 11/20/2029 Sharon M. Tingley, 2025

Alternate Members

Lynn Kearcher, 2027
Vacancy, 2026

NORTHWEST HILLS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Casey T. Flanagan
Lynn Kearcher, *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, 2025

James Saunders, Alternate, 2024

SHARON GREEN COMMITTEE

Thomas F. Casey, Sr., *Chairman*

Elizabeth M. Hall

Linda R. Amerighi Marlene M. Woodman

Stephen R. Wasley

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

Scott Flint Christopher Dennis

Jameason Russin

TRANSFER STATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Paul Bacsik Anne M. Saunders Margaret (Meg) Szalewicz

SALISBURY-SHARON RESOURCE RECOVERY AUTHORITY

Brent M. Colley, 01/14/2026

Vacancy 01/14/2024

Vacancy, 01/14/2025

Thomas H. Bartram, Voting Alternate, 01/14/2024

SHARON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

Carolyn O. Mattoon, *Chairman*, 10/09/2026

Katy Kinsolving, *Secretary*, 10/09/2026

Douglas W. Rick, 10/09/2024

Vacancy, 10/09/2024

Vacancy, 10/09/2026

Roger Liddell, 10/09/2024

Michael Nadeau, 10/09/2024

Helena Barnes, 10/09/2026

Katherine Shepard, 10/09/2026

ALTERNATES – BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Michael Taylor, November 19, 2024

Two Vacancies

Terms to November 19, 2024

CIVIL PREPAREDNESS COORDINATOR

Thomas H. Bartram

LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Casey T. Flanagan Thomas H. Bartram James Reid

Elizabeth H. Casey Thomas F. Casey, Sr.

NORTHWEST CT TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD

Michael L. Levensgood

SUMMARY OF SHARON TOWN MEETINGS 2022 - 2023

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!

August 18, 2022: Sixteen residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted to: approve the Solar Municipal Assistance Program for a solar array to be erected on Town property by Sharon Center School.

October 28, 2022: Approximately twenty-eight residents gathered and voted to: re-approve the expenditure of \$105,432.89 from the Capital Non-recurring Account for Phase 2 of the Green Rehabilitation Project; expend a total of \$310,402 to purchase a 2022 F350 truck and a MACK truck with \$150,000 to come from the Equipment Replacement Account and the balance of \$160,402 to come from the Undesignated Fund.

November 10, 2022: Approximately 350 residents gathered and voted to: expend up to One Million Six Hundred Thousand (\$1,600,000) Dollars for the expansion of broadband internet service infrastructure; have the First Selectman authorized to execute and bind the Town of Sharon to a contract with COMCAST; and to authorize the Town to pay a contract deposit in an amount up to Eight Hundred Thousand (\$800,000) Dollars from its existing Undesignated Fund and to secure a bank loan, if necessary, after applying any available grant funding to pay upon the completion, the second installment of Eight Hundred Thousand (\$800,000) Dollars on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance.

December 20, 2022: Thirteen residents gathered and voted to: increase the Board of Education’s 2022/2023 budget by \$117,629 to bring the budget into compliance with the MBR (Minimum Budget Requirements), with funds to come out of the Board of Education’s portion of the Capital Non-recurring Account.

March 16, 2023: Approximately seventeen residents gathered and voted to: accept the June 30, 2022 financial statements for the Town; to amend the Ordinance pertaining to the membership of the Sharon Energy & Environment Commission; and to allocate \$15,000 from the Silly Putty Fund with Stipulations.

April 5, 2023: Approximately twenty-three residents gathered and voted to: join the Housatonic Valley Health District.

May 12, 2023: Approximately fifty-nine residents gathered and voted to: take no action on the Board of Education budget for fiscal year July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024; to approve the Board of Selectmen’s budget for fiscal year July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 with Line Item 37H (Youth Services Summer Jobs) to be reduced to \$0; approve for fiscal year commencing July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 various items concerning receipts and expenditures for the Town and educational purposes; adopt the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan; and for the Town of Sharon to file an application for federal financial assistance with the USDA, Rural

Development – project includes: replace and consolidate water system crossings of the State roads – anticipated cost \$1.3 Million with collateral being a general obligation bond.

June 7, 2023: Approximately twenty residents gathered and voted to: adopt the Sharon Center School Six (6) Year Capital Building Project Plan; and to adopt the Sharon Center School budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

June 22, 2023: Approximately fifty-five residents gathered and voted to: approve the receipt and expenditure of the LoCIP Funds for - \$30,000 Green Curbing Project; \$40,000 Hazardous Tree Removal or Trimming; and \$30,000 for Speed Humps on Hilltop Road; and deny the expenditure not to exceed \$550,200 for the Sharon Center School Roof Project.

First Selectman

2022-23 highlights

- We continued with our efforts to protect roads paved between 2010 and 2019 with crack sealing and chip sealing. We also invested significant funds in hazardous tree removal.
- With the help of the Sharon Broadband Taskforce and the support of town residents we partnered with Comcast to bring high-speed internet to town residents that previously did not have it.
- We joined the Housatonic Valley Health District.
- We partnered with Cardinal Engineering to address the drainage issues on Rolling Hills, Dug, and Low Roads.
- We continued our effort to keep residents informed and promote Town events via the Town website and monthly Town Newsletters.

There is much to be proud of and we thank all the Elected Officials, their Staff, our Sharon Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Volunteers (especially our Volunteer Fire Department, Ambulance Squad and Ladies Auxiliary). Their hard work and dedication are the principal reason our taxes remain among the lowest in Connecticut.

We encourage Town taxpayer/landowner input and participation at all levels of Town Government. Your involvement is essential to accomplish what is best for this community.

On behalf of my fellow Board Members, Casey Flanagan, and Dale Jones, I close this report by asking you to attend Board of Selectmen meetings, Board of Finance meetings, and Town Meetings, and read the monthly newsletter, this allows for discussions that lead to decisions that work for everyone.

This is my final Town report. I am retiring in 2023. I thank you all for your support and involvement in my 10 years of service to this Town. I leave office knowing that this Town is in good hands with your new Board of Selectmen. The future is bright, but it still needs your involvement to maintain this positive/collaborative path.

Brent M. Colley
First Selectman

Town Clerk

1,043 documents were recorded for fiscal year 2022-2023.

108 Property transfers for fiscal year contributed \$128,858.77 in Town Conveyance Tax and \$466,353.26 in State Conveyance Tax.

During calendar year 2022:

156 Births were recorded	664 certified copies of Birth Certificates issued
130 Death Certificates were processed	786 certified copies of Death Certificates issued

31 Marriage Licenses were processed 71 certified copies of Marriage Certificates issued
15 Resident Births and 46 Resident Deaths
245 Dogs were licensed 6/2022 – 5/2023
The Town Clerk collected \$709,581.94 for 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Highlights for the Office

DOG LICENSES:

Remember that ALL dogs need to be licensed in the State of Connecticut. If you are a resident of Sharon and have a dog and it is not yet licensed in Sharon, please contact my office. A dog's license is a Dogs ticket home.

ONLINE VITAL ORDERING:

In 2021 the Town of Sharon became part of the Permitium Team for online ordering for Births, Marriages and Deaths. The Town Clerk's office is pleased to announce that it works and feedback has been positive.

ELECTIONS:

Legislation passed to have early voting which will begin in 2024. Information will be forthcoming on the process. If you would like to know more about early voting, please contact the Registrar of Voters

Respectfully,

Linda R. Amerighi-CCTC

Principal – Sharon Center School

I am pleased to present the Sharon Center School's Town Report for the past school year, 2022-2023. It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I reflect on the achievements, challenges, and progress made at Sharon Center during this academic year. We made it through a transition year as I took over at the helm following Dr. Karen Manning's retirement from Sharon Center after 16 years of service.

On June 14th, we graduated 6 students from our 8th grade class and ended up having to hold the ceremony indoors at the last moment due to the weather. Overall, the ceremony went off without a glitch and provided an evening that engaged all of our students. The following awards were presented:

Sophia Camphouse	Sharon Women's club, SCS ELA, President's Award for Educational Achievement, American Citizenship
Griffin Ducey	Ted Christinat Science, American Legion, President's Award for Educational Achievement, American Citizenship
Lily Haxo	Barbara Yohe Math, Compo Award, SCS Award, President's Award for Educational Achievement, American Citizenship
Riley Heady	Sharon Women's Club, SCS Award, President's Award for Educational Achievement, American Citizenship
Finian Malone	Lucia Gulino Art award, Compo Award, SCS SS, American Legion, Sharon School Cup, President's Award for Educational Excellence, President's Award for Educational Achievement, American Citizenship
David Nam	Outstanding Musician, American Citizenship, President's Award for Educational Achievement

In addition, Haley Swaller, former SCS graduate, received the Sharon Center School Scholarship Award.

Academic Excellence: Our dedicated team of educators and support staff worked tirelessly to provide students with a rigorous and well-rounded education. I am pleased to report that our students continued to achieve academic success. Our standardized and district assessment scores showed improvement across grade levels, reflecting the commitment of our teachers, students, and parents to academic excellence. Educators at Sharon Center School will continue to engage in professional learning around the initiatives of the Science of Reading, Building Thinking Classrooms, Habits of Mind, and Humanities.

Extracurricular Activities: We continued to foster involvement in extracurricular activities and introduced several enrichment activities as well. Students participated in a range of clubs, sports, and outdoor experiential learning activities, enabling them to develop important life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and time management. Students participated in activities such as, “Fitness is Fun”, an after-school study program, as well as enrichment programs run by the After School Arts Program, Scribble Art, the Sharon Historical Society, as well as the Sharon Audubon.

Community Engagement: Sharon Center School believes in the importance of community engagement. Throughout the year, we organized various events and initiatives to strengthen our ties with the Sharon community. These included parent-teacher conferences, open house/back to school picnic, Trunk or Treat, musical and drama performances, talent show, veteran’s day celebration, and volunteer programs, all of which contributed to a sense of partnership between the school and our town's residents. In addition, Lilly Barnett, Art Teacher went to the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance to secure funding for a mural project. A mural committee was put together that included school staff, parents, and community members.

Infrastructure: We continued to invest in our school's infrastructure. This year, we had several issues with leaks in our roof. It was decided to move forward with a roof replacement project to ensure that we are providing students with a safer and more comfortable learning environment.

Challenges: Not having an after-school program for our students has been one of the greatest challenges. Moving into next year a board of directors will work through the process of establishing a 501(c)3 to be able to put together a consistent program for our families that will sustain through the years ahead. This process will also allow for us to secure grant opportunities to support with the funding of an after-school program that our families will be able to take advantage of with minimal cost.

Transitions: We wished several Sharon Center School staff farewell as they entered into their retirement. Mrs. Leslie Klish, Technology Teacher, Mr. Bruce Adams, Technology Assistant, and Ms. Kathy Amiet, Board Clerk. In addition, our music teacher, Ms. Bethany Franklin moved on to another opportunity.

Future Goals: As we look ahead to the coming school year, we remain committed to providing an exceptional education for our students. We will continue to focus on academic excellence, expand our extracurricular offerings, and strengthen our ties with the Sharon community. Additionally, we will remain vigilant in our efforts to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. We will look to build a STEM program, as well as continuing a robust Music program, and continue to engage in outdoor experiential learning opportunities. We are committed to building our relationships within our small school community and will look to establish programs and opportunities that will allow that for our students and staff.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude to the Sharon community and Board of Education for your continued support of Sharon Center School. I would also like to extend a special thank you to our PTO for all that you do to support our students and staff throughout the school year. Together, we can provide our students with the best possible education and help them reach their full potential.

Thank you for entrusting us with the education of your children. We look forward to another successful school year and to making a positive impact on the lives of our students.

Sincerely,

Carol Tomkalski, Principal

Superintendent

The 2022-2023 school year began in full swing as we returned to completely normal routines and activities in a post-pandemic school environment. Staff and students welcomed the return of collaborative classroom environments and robust athletic and after-school activities.

With respect to academic news, Region 1 school students continued to grow and learn in all disciplines. However, there were some notable shifts in curriculum, instruction and assessment that included:

- adopting instructional practices for pre-kindergarten-third grade students that are aligned with the new CT State Department of Education (CSDE) Science of Reading legislation.

All Pre-k-8 schools are required to acquire new materials and training to successfully implement this new curriculum. Grant funding is being used to offset much of this cost.

- changing instructional strategies in the grade 5-12 mathematics classrooms to incorporate more peer-to-peer interaction and higher order thinking with respect to critical thinking and problem-solving.
- a return to mid-term and final exams at HVRHS as a means of assessing summative learning with respect to the key learning targets in each discipline as well as preparation for similar assessments that students may encounter in college or other postsecondary experiences that may require an examination for certification or licensure.

Student social emotional support remains a priority for all schools. Toward that end, all Region 1 schools benefited from a grant award received by EdAdvance, the local Regional Educational Service Center, located in Litchfield, CT. All seven schools in the region are able to add a .5 school counselor to their staff for the next five years with no charge to the schools. With this addition, each Pre-k-8 school now has 1.5 counselors and the High School has 2.5 school counselors and one social worker.

Many students continue to participate in the visual and performing arts in all of the Region 1 Schools. Dramatic performances and art shows are wonderful opportunities for students to show their talent and exhibit their work. Students also have field trip opportunities that include attendance at live performances and museum visits. Finally, the Pre-k-8 schools have opportunities to meet with local authors to listen to their stories and learn about their craft.

Athletics and extracurricular activities made a comeback in the post-pandemic environment. Student participation has increased from the previous year and is expected to continue as we move farther away from the pandemic. The 2022-2023 year was the second year of The Region 1 Middle School Athletics and Activities program, which fields teams from all Pre-k-8 schools as well as provides students with access to the Art Garage and Sci-Tech Center located on the HVRHS campus.

All Region 1 school facilities continue to be well maintained. Local school Board of Education Building Committees collaborate with their municipal governments to develop the scope and funding for major projects. For HVRHS, a Board of Education Building Committee consisting of representatives from all six towns in the Region oversees the maintenance of the High School building in Falls Village, which also houses the Pupil Services and the Central Office.

2022-2023 was a great year of learning and growing for all students. The success of the Region 1 program depends on the generous investment of all of the stakeholders in each of our towns. We are thankful for everyone's support as we continue to work together for the benefit of all.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa B. Carter

HVRHS - Principal

The 2022-23 school year saw the launching of Housatonic's Capstone course, a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2023. In the spring of the junior year, students worked with a Capstone teacher to design a project based on personal interest and a specific research question. Students then spent the next seven months carrying out their project and sharing it with the public. At the heart of Capstone are the attributes of our Portrait of the Graduate. Students are required, through their public presentation, to discuss how their project helped them develop Confidence, Self Advocacy, Communication, Problem Solving, and Global and Environmental Awareness. Outcomes from the projects allow for curriculum developers to consider what changes may need to be made to provide our students with instruction and opportunity to practice 21st Century Skills, and more importantly, they offer our students a way to explore their passions and think about learning outside of the classroom. Over the two-day "Expo" event, small audiences saw a variety of projects: students pursuing their drone and CNA licenses; students creating literature from illustrated children's books to historical essays; students raising awareness about topics from boating safety to mental health; a motorized bike; an ozone engine; and a pollinator garden, just to name a few. As the presentations continued, more and more students attended them to support their friends and ask authentic questions about their work.

In a related effort, we expanded our student-led conference program so that all 9th and 10th grade students had the opportunity to reflect on their growth as individuals as well as areas in which they see the need and potential for future growth. This reflective work is based upon the five aforementioned qualities of the Portrait of a Graduate, and students, parents, and advisors used the experience to inform decisions about the student's educational future.

Additionally, we have made strides in collaborating as a region to achieve greater student outcomes. Through advisory lessons, students starting in Grade 6 develop an understanding of a variety of attributes including time management, self advocacy, learning styles, workplace skills and attitudes, and defining success. Elementary school students are using the same digital platform for this work, and reports on their progress are shared with the high school. These student success plans, along with the region-wide efforts toward developing students in the image of our Portrait of a Graduate are unifying the region in ways that have been a long time in coming. The Salisbury Stars program recognizes students at Salisbury Central School for achievement on Portrait of a Graduate qualities, and students at Salisbury Central and the Cornwall Consolidated School complete mini-capstone projects that prepare them for larger projects at Housatonic. Work continues to create a balance between a focus on the social/emotional learning that is derived from Habits of Mind and the Portrait of a Graduate, with elementary schools putting greater emphasis on the former and the high school on the latter. Changes have been made to the regional calendar for next year to allow for shared release time to facilitate greater cooperation between the elementary and high school faculty.

The 2022-23 school year saw a return of midyear and final assessments for nearly all courses at Housatonic. Throughout the fall of 2022, teachers developed mid-year assessments with the goal of a 1-2 hour summative assessment for each course. The length of these assessments increases with grade level. Teachers developed these assessments during professional learning time, including work with a consultant on how to review student standard performance and how to use

the performance data to drive further instruction for the remainder of the course, as well as identifying areas where curricular modifications are needed.

In the winter and spring of 2022-23, Principal Strever worked with the new Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Jeanine Rose, on a systematic effort to meet with the academic departments to discuss and plan for curricular needs. The district's goal is to have a written curriculum for every course accessible online within five years. Courses without written curricula were identified and prioritized for completion. The curriculum template requires curriculum writers to address Standards, Skills, Summative Assessments, and 21st Century Skills. A curriculum review cycle is also being developed to ensure learning that meets the evolving needs of our small towns as well as the larger world.

Respectfully submitted,
Ian Strever, Principal

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The SCC has had two main focuses over the year – native plant protection and recreational easement maintenance.

On native plant protection, the Sharon Conservation Commission has worked with relevant town stakeholders, including the Sharon Energy and Environment Commission, Sharon Wetlands Commission, Sharon Audubon Center, Sharon Land Trust and others to draft language in support of a Native Plants Proclamation to be submitted to the Sharon Board of Selectmen for review. Language has been drafted and approved by Sharon Conservation Commission recommending the institution of a Native Plan Month and calling to attention the indigenous species that are in important part of Sharon's natural heritage.

As to Sharon's recreational easements, maintenance is ongoing. Phillip Lovett of Canaan has been able to furnish brush hog work to keep easements minimally passable, but more clearing is likely needed on the Smith Rd, Ceasar Rd. and Cemetery Rd. easements. Specifically, a long-term solution – potentially a boardwalk – is being contemplated to circumvent the phragmites growth along the north end of the Smith Rd. easement.

The Commission has largely been back to in-person meetings at Town Hall. However, occasional Zoom meetings have been called as illness or other circumstances have required.

Respectfully,

Johannes Van Der Tuin

Chairperson Sharon Conservation Commission

Zoning Board of Appeals

The ZBA is a Commission to which property owners can apply when changes they wish to make on their properties are denied by Zoning Regulations.

During the past year, the ZBA considered three applications. The first was an application for the construction of a garage closer to the property line than allowed by Zoning. This was a small lot, there was no alternate location on the lot and the neighboring property owner agreed. The application was approved.

The second application was for the construction of a garage too close to the property line. The opinion of the Board was that the proposed location of the garage was a design consideration and not a hardship and there were alternate locations on the property. The application was denied.

The third application was for the construction of a garage too close to the property line. There was no alternate location on the property and the neighboring property owner agreed. The application was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

William Trowbridge, Chairman

Sharon 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. Those Regulations were adopted in Sharon in 1972. Second, the Commission 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 Regulations are available online or at the Town Hall. The Planning and Zoning Commission meets on a monthly basis to advance the agenda items and to conduct planning sessions.

Over the past year, matters that the Commission considered include:

- Amendments to the Regulations regarding cluster housing
- Amendments to the Regulations involving procedures regarding boundary changes/first cuts
- Land use application fees
- The proposed solar array at 64 Hilltop Road

- Town Hall parking lot expansion and EV chargers
- Cannabis establishments and growing
- Air B&B policy
- Affordable housing programs

In reviewing the activity of the Commission this past year, the range and depth of that activity are remarkable. None of it would be possible without the tireless work of Jamie Casey, the Land Use Administrator, and Tina Pitcher, the Recording Secretary. The sheer volume and complexity of the work Jamie accomplishes coupled with her expertise and judgment enable the Planning and Zoning Commission to meet its many challenges and achieve the best possible results. Tina has exceptional ability to listen, collect, and organize the ideas, comments, and presentations that come before the Commission and transcribe them in clear and proper form. Together, Jamie and Tina's expertise, their dedication, and their countless hours of work enable this Commission to accomplish the essential work expected by the residents of Sharon. We owe Jamie and Tina our deepest respect and appreciation.

It has been a busy and eventful year, and I am thankful to have the opportunity to work with the members of the Commission. They are dedicated and intelligent individuals who offer their time and effort for the sole purpose of preserving our quality of life and ensuring that Sharon continues to grow and to develop with changing times. I thank every one of them for making this a most productive year.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurance Rand, Chairman

Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission

During fiscal year 2022-2023 your Sharon Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (SIWWC) has reviewed 36 permits. The main responsibility of the SIWWC is to review the environmental 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 one or more 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 home, buildings, 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 are processed.

Thanks again to the Sharon Land Use Administrator Jamie Casey and Assistant Administrator Nikki Blass for their hard work in 2022-2023.

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 Friday from 8 AM to 9 AM. Saturday mornings are by appointment only. The office is open from 7 AM until 12 noon, Monday through Friday.

The five new dwellings do not adequately represent the number of many major additions to home and accessory buildings being constructed.

Single- family construction resulted in 5 new homes.

	Permits Issued	Value	Permit Fee
2022-2023	662	27,118,176	241,859
2021-2022	776	36,574,939	263,187
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

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 306 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.

Stanley MacMillan

Building Inspector, Fire Marshal, Open Burn Official

Social Service Agent

This past year was record-making with oil prices surging to nearly \$6 a gallon during the holiday months. Sharon Social Services helped 42 or 43 (the records I got from CAAWC say both) households apply for energy assistance. They received a total of \$26,994.03 in assistance. In total, 54 households in Sharon received help with their energy bills, with the difference being that some households signed up for assistance on their own. The total expenditure for Sharon from CAAWC (Community Action Agency of Western CT) was \$43,861.78. This was up from having helped 35 families and individuals apply for energy assistance the previous season.

Two households received help applying for energy assistance from Operation Fuel for a total expenditure of \$1,500. 4 additional households wanted help from Operation Fuel and got help starting applications for it, but despite trying to contact Operation Fuel multiple times, I never heard back from them and the new system platform they switched to in the Fall kept saying additional information was needed from applicants before their applications could be fully processed or approved.

Even though more families received energy assistance than the previous season, Sharon Social Services saw an increase in energy-related grant requests. That oil and propane bill assistance totaled: \$11,276.96 and helped 14 households with bills they couldn't afford.

Prescription assistance via the Foundation for Community Health continued to help the same 12 people that were receiving help since at least the previous year.

As for store card distribution this past year, card purchases were made through both the Sharon Fund and the Sharon General Assistance Fund.

General Assistance card purchases:

- 10 \$50 Walmart cards
- 40 \$50 Patco gas cards
- 10 \$50 Stop&Shop cards

Sharon Fund card purchases:

- 50 \$50 Patco gas cards
- 25 \$50 Stop&Shop cards
- 20 \$50 Freshtown cards

Since gas cards were so popular this past year, I recently wrote up distribution rules to curb giving them out and try to help save them to help more households going forward. I've printed these out and have posted and pinned them on my office Facebook page, on the door to my office and also taped to the wall in my office for better reading.

As for the food pantry, there have been many donations throughout the year- both anonymously and not. I've continued to encourage healthier food donations and I think that in time it'll happen

more automatically (I hope!). There has been an increase in food help need since Covid SNAP boosts ended starting in March of this year. I've worked closely with the Corner Pantry to help get food to Sharon residents who either can't drive or work during pantry hours. I have been helping at least 10 families and individuals with food orders- not all 10 place orders each week.

Communication amongst area town social service directors has been slowly improving and this Spring saw the first social service conference, which took place in Litchfield. At this, Sharon (CT.) was mentioned first thing for foreclosure prevention via MyHomeCT- a program started during COVID to help homeowners who had fallen behind in their mortgage payments. It was a very well-attended conference and a wonderful opportunity to learn about other related resources for future recommendations.

All in all, it was a very busy second year and things seem to be falling into place more and more!

Melia Hill

Social Service Agent

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. Kathleen Visconti manages the business office located at the water plant on Calkinstown Road.

Phone number for the plant is 860-364-8009. The Commission has engaged VRI Environmental Services based in Lagrangeville, 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 2023 meeting of the Commission, Jake Fricker was elected Chairman, Ken Mishler was elected Vice Chairman and Beth Rybczyk was elected Chief Financial Officer. Other Commissioners are Steve Szalewicz, Doug Hobby and alternate Dobrila Waugh.

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 2023) show a past due owed to the Commission of \$127,107.53. 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

This year a preliminary evaluation report was done to determine if additional filters, water treatments are needed and/or are other sources of water available for high use conditions and drought conditions was done. This is an ongoing discussion on short term and long-term solutions.

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 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 Selectmen's Office and attend one of our monthly meetings at 7:00PM in Town Hall the second Thursday of each month.

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.

During the Fiscal Year July 2022 through June 2023, the Commission held 11 regular monthly meetings. The Commission held 18 public hearings on applications received. Subsequently 18 Certificates of Appropriateness were approved and issued.

The Commission held its first “History on the Green” event on June 3rd at Standard Space Gallery. Historic Sharon photographs were on display. Brian Ross gave a brief talk on the early history and settlement of the town and representatives from Preservation Connecticut gave an overview of the importance of Historic Districts in our state. The event was well attended by townspeople and was deemed a pleasant success.

Sharon Historic District Commission

**Current members: John Baroody, Chairman; Elizabeth Hall, Vice Chairman,
J. Barclay Collins, Lionel Goldfrank, Steve Szalewicz.**

Alternates: Edwin A. Yowell, Théodore Coulombe, and Allen Reiser.

Commission Clerk: Jamie Casey

Sharon Parks & Recreation Committee

Sharon Parks and Recreation offers a variety of activities for adults and youths. The adult outings this year included: the Essex Steam Train, Mystic Seaport and Museum, lunch at the Culinary Institute of America and four plays at the Goodspeed Opera House.

A Sprint Triathlon is held each August with the proceeds going toward funding the Summer Concert Series at Veterans’ Field.

The tennis courts are very active; a tennis program for grades 5-8 drew 26 participants this spring. The walking track is used daily, weather permitting.

The office of the Recreation Director has relocated to Veterans’ Field in the new dog pound building. All contact information remains the same for questions, or suggestions: Matt Andrulis Mente, 860-364-1400, or sharon.rec.ctr@snet.net. If you are interested in being part of a walking group or a play group for under school age children, or have other ideas, please get in touch with him.

Thank you to all of the sponsors and volunteers in the Community who make our events possible!

Donna Christensen

Sharon Green Committee

Granite curbing was installed on the Upper Main Street side of the Green in 2019. In the early summer of 2023, the curbing was continued on Main Street, completing the project. The two main sections of the Green are now protected from parking encroachment and water erosion. RAR Excavating, LLC from Torrington, was the contractor for both projects and their expertise is evident in the way the Green looks.

As the work was nearing completion, the State required that the sidewalks on both sides of the intersection of Main and West Main be made handicapped accessible and that another catch basin be installed on Main Street. Even though this required quite a bit of extra time and materials, the project came in at only \$6,500 over budget.

The people of Sharon voted to use town funds for improving and rehabilitating the Green and our committee is very grateful for their support.

Scott Flint has replaced Stephen Wasley, who retired as caretaker, and continues to beautifully care for the Green.

Sharon Green Committee Members

Linda Amerighi
Tom Casey
Betsy Hall
Stephen Wasley
Marlene Woodman
Scott Flint, Ex-Officio

Registrar of Voters

The Mid Term Elections went well with no mandatory COVID protocols in place. Out of 1,697 active registered voters, 1,279 voted, 72.4%. We hope to see a similar turnout for Municipal Elections!

We are looking forward to Early Voting being implemented for the Presidential Preference Primary in April of 2024. We will advise Sharon residents of all procedures as the State of Connecticut provides guidance. Connecticut allows Election Day Registration during Early Voting. A Connecticut resident may register to vote and then vote with a special EDR ballot during Early Voting or the day of the election.

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 1,697 registered voters: 735 Democratic, 361 Republican and 586 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.

This year the November election will be for Municipal Offices, with the Presidential Preference Primary in April. 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), Patricia Chamberlain (R) and Trisha Davisson (R)

Sharon Health Department

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 2022-2023

The Sharon Health Department continued to respond to the global and statewide COVID-19 pandemic as well as all infectious diseases and 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.

Notice of retirement of both Michael Crespan, Health Director and Jamie Casey, Sanitarian was given to the Board of Selectmen in October. In May 2023, Sharon ended it's long history with a local health department and joined Housatonic Valley Health District.

Septic Systems:	12	New Systems installed
	17	New Testing / Reserve area
	18	Replacement or Repairs to systems
	1	Central Sewage connections
	0	Abandon System – hooked into
	0	Town System
Subdivisions/Re-subdivision:		
Future developments:	0	
Well Applications	13	Wells

Respectfully,

Michael A. Crespan, MPH, RS, Director

Dr. David Kurish, Medical Advisor

Jamie Casey, Sanitarian

Sharon Energy and Environmental Commission

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

The Commission welcomed two new members this year, Helena Furberg Barnes and Katherine (Shrevie) Shepherd. We regretfully accepted the resignation of Jan Dudek.

The Commission spent a considerable amount of time and energy working with the Connecticut Green Bank on the application to install a solar field to supply power to the Sharon Center School. At this point the project seems to be moving along but it is too early to confirm completion of the application process.

Another major effort involved a proposal to install a bio swale in the proposed town hall parking lot enlargement, and thus solve much of the drainage problems affecting the site. The design was rejected due to the fact that it would eliminate several parking spaces.

Members of the Commission met with Carol Tomkalski, new principal at the Sharon Center School, to discuss the possibility of working with the school on various environmental projects. Ms. Tomkalski, was receptive, but proposed that SEEC wait to work with an anticipated new hire.

The Commission undertook a number of educational initiatives including:

- An online newsletter with information about energy and environmental issues and activities.

- A flyer about pollinator decline and conservation gardening

- A flyer about waste disposal and composting.

- An Earth Day event: “Convince Me to Compost” at the Cornwell Library

- A Pollinator Pathway Event with Sharon Audubon

- A talk by Eve Schaub on her effort to live A Year Without Waste, co-sponsored by SEEC and the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon.

- A booth at the Sharon Art Fair promoting various energy saving and environment friendly practices.

Again this year, the Commission sponsored a roadside clean-up effort in April. About 30 people showed up and a large truckload of trash and recyclables was collected.

Members of this Commission have been attending the Conservation Commission’s meetings in an effort to work more closely with that and other town commissions.

SEEC has also supported every effort to reduce waste and support enlarging the successful compost program at the transfer station.

Current Members: Lyn Mattoon, Chair, Katy Kinsolving, secretary, Helena Furberg Barnes, Roger Liddell, Oscar Martinez, Michael Nadeau, Douglas Rick, Katherine (Shrevie) Shepherd

Respectfully submitted,

Lyn Mattoon

Sharon Housing Authority

In 2022/23 we continued improvements to both Sharon Ridge and Sharon Ridge Extension apartments and the complex. For their assistance and efforts to help us accomplish and fund these improvements we owe a great deal of gratitude to Connecticut Real Estate Management, Sharon Lawn & Landscape, Cornwall Plumbing and Heating, and Salisbury Bank & Trust.

About Sharon Ridge:

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.

About Sharon Ridge Expansion:

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.

In August of 2022, ARPA and the Board of Selectmen approved a \$50,000 grant that was used to place three HVAC systems.

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, Chairman

Animal Control Officer

A total of six dogs were impounded from July 2022 through June 2023. Five were redeemed and one was adopted.

71 calls/complaints were investigated, including missing pets, roaming dogs, one dog bite, and miscellaneous domestic and wild animal questions.

No infraction tickets were dispatched.

Income source and income collected:

Pound fees - \$140.00

Donation - \$5

Respectfully submitted by

Lee Sohl

Sharon Animal Control

Litchfield Hills Probate District, #24

The Litchfield Hills Probate Court handles a wide range of important and sensitive issues, including not only overseeing decedent's estates and trusts, but also issues affecting children, the elderly, persons with intellectual disabilities, and individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

The Court is primarily concerned with Trusts and Estates, Conservatorships, Children's Matters, Intellectual Disabilities, and Mental Health Commitments, but also handles a wide variety of other matters.

At this beginning of the year, the Honorable Diane S. Blick retired after sixteen years of dedicated service to the Court. Her work at the Court built an exemplary record of accomplishment and compassion. Upon her retirement, Jordan M. Richards took office and is serving in his first term as Judge of Probate.

During its most recent fiscal year, the Court experienced an increase in the number of new cases filed. According to information collected by the Office of the Probate Administrator, the Court is more than 7% busier than it was last year.

Beth McGuire continues to serve as the Chief Clerk of the Court. She and Megan Foley work in the North Canaan office. Dawn Pratt and an assistant clerk work in the Court's Litchfield office. All of the staff members at the Court are knowledgeable, dedicated, and look forward to assisting anyone who comes to the Court.

Respectfully submitted,

Honorable Jordan M. Richards

Sharon Day Care

The Sharon Day Care, Center for Learning and Growing, has experienced an interesting year of challenges and accomplishments, all very much supported by our trained and dedicated staff, cooperative helpful families, and an eleven-member volunteer board that works together year round. The town of Sharon has shown its strong support, too, in providing us with annual funding.

Highlights of our activities and accomplishments:

- * Initiated the school year with an Open House
- * Continued updating of our website which features center activities and offers necessary forms for parents and personnel to use, saving time, effort, and paper
- * Through an agreement with the SCS BOE we were able to expand our facility, within SCS, giving us the necessary extra room we need in order to better cover our enrollment and work within the guidelines of NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) by whom we are accredited
- * Conducted celebratory events for both Mother's Day and Father's Day and held our annual Easter Egg Hunt for the community to enjoy
- * Held a successful Silent Auction Event at the Sharon Playhouse to raise funds which has now become a successful major annual fund raiser for us wherein we also enjoy community collaboration
- * Celebrated our 38th Annual Sharon Classic Road Race in Sharon Valley with cooperative support from valley residents and Sharon Parks and Recreation
- * Families enjoyed a variety of social activities, two of which included a fall fete and an end of the year BBQ
- * Director, Carrie Ann Olsen, applied for and obtained grants which covered tuition assistance (Sharon Community Foundation), winter clothing items needed for our children and for toddler playground supplies (NW Community Foundation)
- * Parents are encouraged to visit the center and participate as volunteers
- * We have an ongoing waiting list. Area families continue to wait patiently for their children to be admitted to our programs
- * There were episodes of Covid requiring precautionary health measures including extra testing and some program closings

The Sharon Day Care remains thankful to the Sharon community for their ongoing support of our efforts to provide high quality child care.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Nickson
SDC BOD

Sharon Historical Society

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

In 2023 we fulfilled this mission in a variety of ways. Throughout the year, we have welcomed more than 800 visitors to SHSM to view our galleries and to participate in programs. Additionally, over 100 children have interacted with the stories of Sharon through educational programs that help inspire analytical thinking skills.

SHSM has mounted a number of historical and art exhibitions throughout the year:

- *Blood, Sweat, and Service*
- *Butterflies, Birds, Botanicals and More*
- *Family Ties: The Ebenezer Gay Family*
- *Housatonic Camera Club: Water*
- *Illustrators in the Northwest Corner*
- *The Life of Charcoal Annie*
- *Northlight Art Center 12th Annual Student Show*
- *A Room of One's Own (Juried Show)*
- *Textiles by Anne Cameron*
- *Two Area Illustrators: Arthur Getz and Eric Sloane*

Programming has included:

- guided and self-guided cemetery tours.
- family outreach at the Annual Craft Fair on the Green.
- showing the Civil War movie *Glory* in partnership with The Hotchkiss Library of Sharon.
- school programs with Sharon Center School.
- judging at Connecticut History Day contests.
- hosting *Sharon Voices* event to capture area oral histories.
- game nights and afternoons at the museum.

Beyond exhibitions and programs, SHSM assists researchers in their quests to find out more about the history of the town of Sharon and those who once lived here. We welcome patrons into our research library, while also helping those who reach out to us online. Topics range from genealogical and property histories to stories connected to objects in the collection.

Our collection is held in the public trust, meaning it is preserved for the current and future residents of Sharon. In 2023, we brought several major archives and objects into the collections. We also added nearly 400 new and updated records to our online database for easy research from

anywhere in the world. The second year of an Institute for Museum and Library Services grant has resulted in the continued digitization and processing of the Frances Kelsey Photographic Archive to add to our understanding of Sharon in the 20th century.

The Town of Sharon has supported us in these endeavors by providing us with \$10,000 in funds to do this important work. Besides the Town of Sharon, SHSM has also received funds in 2023 from various grant-making organizations, foundations, and individual members and donors.

The Sharon Historical Society and Museum thanks the Town of Sharon, the people of Sharon, and all of our tireless volunteers for their ongoing support of our mission. We hope that by doing this work, we can help create a community strengthened by its past.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen M. DePauw, Executive Director

www.sharonhist.org

Sharon Fire Department Ambulance Squad

The Sharon Fire Department, Inc. Ambulance members responded to 423 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 utilize our 2021 AEV Type II TraumaHawk ambulance for all calls. We have had several mechanical issues with our powerload stretcher and electrical issues in the 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 were a combination of eat in and take-out offerings.

Our members are committed to the goal of serving our Town, staying protected and remaining 100% volunteer. As we have had several retirements this past year, a recruitment drive is needed to bring in new members.

Respectfully,

Thalia MacMillan, Ambulance Captain

Sharon Fire Department, Inc.

The Sharon Fire Department, Inc. is comprised of 43 volunteers, who have responded to over 223 incidents in Sharon and Mutual Aide calls to neighboring towns in the last fiscal year.

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.

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, driving, fire protection gear, equipment and apparatus maintenance and life span.

Sharon Fire Department maintains and operates several pieces of Apparatus, each with different roles. 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 add our pumper-tanker Engine 3, (1990 Ford) to the response. Tower 1 (2007 American LaFrance) is a 100-foot Tower Ladder that responds 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, motor vehicle accidents and ambulance assists. It is necessary to maintain and keep each piece in good working order, ready to respond to an emergency. Often, we are confronted with emergency repairs to keep apparatus in service.

The department began a capitol campaign in October of 2021 to replace our 32-year-old Engine 3. Increased costs for the new Engine/Tanker have continued throughout the year making our final purchase price in excess of \$584K. This is over a \$50K increase from when our endeavor began. Several fundraisers and generous donations from residents were received. Major contributors, Rosenheim Foundation, Low Road Foundation in addition to anonymous donors have allowed us to reach our goal for a new Engine/Tanker. Production delays have also occurred. The latest estimates have our new 2022 Kenworth T880 3000-gallon Engine/ Tanker arriving in December of this year. Hopefully, we get a new firetruck for Christmas.

The Sharon Fire Department Inc. 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 for more information.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Hohlfeld, Treasurer

Eric Golden, Chief

Stanley MacMillan III, President

Community Mental Health Affiliates

1. 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), the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), and the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

2. 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 FY23, CMHA's outpatient services aided 539 people, and provided more than 605 clinical sessions every month and 7,256 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 age birth-17. 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.

In FY23, 144 families received in-home parenting services.

Intensive Family Preservation

This intensive in-home program is 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 FY23, 322 families received intensive, home-based support, counseling, and parenting assistance – a 57% increase from FY22.

CMHA provided 8,029 hours of service to 1,143 individuals and families in the Waterbury and Torrington region, with more than 820 clinical sessions completed on average every month.

These services include individual, family, and group therapy, psychiatric evaluations, and medication management.

Community Mental Health Affiliates, Inc. (CMHA) is a private non-profit treatment provider headquartered in New Britain, with several locations providing a variety of services throughout northwest and central Connecticut. CMHA partners with clients and the community to promote recovery from mental illness and addiction, treating more than 7,000 adults and children each year. CMHA is Connecticut's first fully Joint Commission accredited Behavioral Health Home and a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC). Visit cmhacc.org to learn more.

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, Dietary, Pediatrics, Wound Care, Chronic Disease Management and non-medical Home Assistance Programs.

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

VNHLC cared for 2,204 patients and provided 50,198 patient visits in 2022-2023.

VNHLC is proud of its long-standing history with the Town of Sharon. 106 persons from Sharon received home health services from VNHLC during the past year.

Eighty-four (84%) percent of all our patients were age 65 or older and 24% lived alone.

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

- Flu Clinics
- Matter of Balance Classes – classes focus on how to maintain balance, continue moving and exercise at any age.

- Blood Pressure Clinics
- Health Promotion Visits - VNHLHC 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 VNHLHC patients who have passed within the past 18 months to which family members and caregivers are invited.

This past year VNHLHC was able to conduct public and many private flu clinics and administered more than 1,400 flu vaccines to mostly high-risk individuals. All ages, 18 and older, were welcome to attend.

Since VNHLHC 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 2022-2023 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 (NHCOC) 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.

NHCOC generally meets monthly 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

At the conclusion of the Fiscal Year, NHCOC approved a budget that realized increases in funding and services levels in many areas. These areas included an increase in the state Regional Service Grant (RSG), an increase in the state DOT planning funds for the region, the creation of a regional opioid response fund and a \$1.2M award from Health Resources and Services Administration over the next 4 years for the establishment of a Rural Health Network Project Director to continue the work in this area over the last couple of years. Leonardo Ghio was added to NHCOC staff as the new Project Director for this work.

During the Fiscal Year of July 1st, 2022, and June 30th, 2023, NHCOC planned for a relocation of the home office from Goshen to Litchfield in space within the EdAdvance building at 355 Goshen Road. The move will become official on September 1st, 2023, and will provide

additional office space for a growing staff, several sizes of conference room space and efficiencies with other overhead costs along with full time access to our current Information Technology services provided by EdAdvance.

NHCOG also initiated a review and update of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Major strategies outlined in the current 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 2nd round of 3-year funding from US EDA was applied for and granted at the end of the FY and will provide for the continued update to our 5-year CEDS and continued implementation of the goals and objectives contained within.

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

NHCOG also serves as the oversight agent for approximately \$365,000 in Homeland Security Grant funding that is received each year for the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Region 5. There are several projects and equipment acquisitions to support this program within multiple Emergency Support Function groups in region-5 (all of NHCOG and portions of NVCOG and WESTCOG).

In 2022-2023, NHCOG 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, the Northwest Hills Public Works Equipment Cooperative, and the region's cooperative purchasing program. NHCOG also started a few new programs including being the fiduciary of a Produce Rx Program and the recent designation of the Wild and Scenic status for a portion of the Housatonic River working with the 7-town membership of the Housatonic River Commission (HRC).

NHCOG continuously promotes the on-line Interactive Regional Trail Map that was developed by NHCOG in cooperation with the Housatonic Valley Association to promote access to the public trails in the region.

In addition, NHCOG continued to host a quarterly "5th 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. These also have been utilized to meet the new statutory requirements of Land Use Officials annual training program.

Serving as officers of NHCOG during the majority of FY 2022-2023 were Henry Todd, Chairman, Mike Criss, Vice Chairmen; Charlie Perotti, Secretary; and Tom Weik, Treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A Phillips, AICP
Executive Director

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 11 regularly scheduled monthly meetings in the past year. Meetings took place at 7:30 on the second Tuesday of each month. Most meetings were held virtually over Zoom, but also in person at Cornwall Consolidated School. Adjusting our operations slightly in response to the River’s Wild and Scenic Designation, the Commission continued work with non-voting representatives from HVA, the CT DEEP, National Park Service (NPS), FirstLight, and Northwest Hills Council of Governments. The voting members continued to be our town commissioners and alternates from Canaan, Cornwall, Kent, New Milford, North Canaan, Salisbury, and Sharon.

The HRC continues to have a primary responsibility for monitoring and advising these seven towns on issues that involve the Housatonic River and working to maintain a healthy and scenic river corridor. The annual dues requested from each town are \$400 per year. Much of the time at our meetings this year focused on building the framework around our participation in the Wild and Scenic River Partnership Program and funding from NPS, including establishing guidelines for our expanded operations and approval of future grants from HRC to support River projects and management. These efforts are structured to maintain local control for these projects within the framework of HRC. We are grateful for the tremendous guidance from NPS in this transition, especially Liz Lacy and Jackie Dias.

Our monthly meetings continued to provide space for updates from each of our supporting partners on their work addressing issues including HVA’s successful River Information and Outreach (RIO) program, fishing management (CT DEEP), and river access. HRC’s mission includes maintaining public access, and the proposed Ruggles Landing is being partnered with the state and town of North Canaan to allow for safe river usage. In addition, 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 continues. 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

In December 2022, the Housatonic Youth Service Bureau marked its 31st year of service to the youth and families of Region One. We take pride in being the sole mental health agency providing FREE clinical services to children ages 3-21 and their families. As we celebrate another year, we reflect on our growth and the expansion of our programs to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

The Housatonic Youth Service Bureau, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, serves the towns of North Canaan, Canaan, Salisbury/Lakeville, Sharon, Cornwall, and Kent. Our licensed clinicians offer a variety of free services that foster the overall health and well-being of children and their families, impacting the lives of thousands within our community.

The lingering effects of the post-pandemic fallout continue to influence our work. Families are struggling to regain control of their schedules, commitments, expectations from work/school/activities. In 2020 the world came to a standstill, and everyone found their schedules empty and workloads emptied. For the first time in 2+ years the world seems to be back in full function and young people in particular are struggling to keep up. Our youngest clients are experiencing this hustle and bustle for the first time, and many of them are finding their support systems are less accessible.

To combat these feelings and offer our support, HYSB's clinical staff visit each of the seven public schools (as well as some private schools) on a weekly basis to offer in-person counseling services to children. These services are offered during the school day, so they are not adding to the already busy schedules of our client families. This also ensures that parents are not being forced to choose between counseling or work/sports/clubs/etc.

Beyond counseling, HYSB provides customized group programming tailored to the unique needs of each community. These programs create a safe environment where children can connect with peers and HYSB social workers to discuss sensitive topics, share strategies for overcoming adversity, and learn when and how to engage with other adults and authorities. Some program highlights include the formation of a Rainbow Alliance club at HVRHS, as well as a Teen Leadership Program, Girls Circle, and our continued work with the regional Juvenile Review Board.

Your annual support empowers HYSB to make a positive impact on the lives of thousands in our community. With funding from the Town of Sharon and generous donors across Region One, HYSB sustains free services, including mental health counseling, community outreach, youth empowerment, summer internship programs, case management, and referral services. We express heartfelt gratitude for your continued financial support and eagerly anticipate continuing our collaborative efforts for the well-being of the children and families in our community.

Sincerely,

Kelly Parker, Executive Director

Project SAGE

Over the past year, the urgent need for Project SAGE's client and community services remains present, as demonstrated by the statistics below:

From July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, Project SAGE provided the following supports:

- Support services were provided to **805 clients (25 of these clients were from Sharon.)**
- **Of this number, 429 were new clients.** This is a 10% increase since 2020.
- The composition of our new clients includes:
 - 405 adults and 24 children
 - 305 identified as female and 124 identified as male
- Project SAGE responded to **2,040 hotline crisis requests – this number has more than doubled since 2020.**
- Provided **emergency shelter to 41 people for a total of 1,719 nights of shelter. This included 26 women, 2 men, and 13 children.**
- Provided criminal and civil court advocacy and support to **624 victims of family violence** – a more than 30% increase since 2020.
- Conducted **over 250 prevention workshops to children and teens** in area schools, totaling **over 3,200 child and student interactions.** We are now active in every single elementary/middle school in the region, as well as Housatonic Valley Regional High School.

Project SAGE continues to innovate and grow to meet the increasing, complex needs of our clients. In December of 2022, Women's Support Services officially announced a name change to Project SAGE (Support – Advocate – Guide – Educate). Chosen to honor the wisdom and experience of our clients and their capacity to make their own choices, Project SAGE illustrates that domestic violence affects everyone and we serve people of all ages, identities, and backgrounds. The name change offered an opportunity to reintroduce ourselves to the community and reinvigorate critical conversations on the need to end relationship violence. With this in mind, the past year has been one of tremendous change and growth. **Thank you to the Town of Sharon for your generous grant of \$1,500 last year, which has been critical in helping Project SAGE continue strengthening our programs and support services.**

With an agency comprised of 12 full-time staff members, Project SAGE has been able to meet the increasing requests for our services. Clients are received in warm, inviting spaces at our new home at 13a Porter Street in Lakeville and the expanded office space has accommodated an ever-growing staff. In addition to full-time staff, the agency created opportunities for interns of various ages and backgrounds to gain experience relevant to their educational or professional pursuits. Interns provided support to program and prevention education staff and became certified volunteers through the 20-hour training program.

The work you all do is so inspiring, and I am so grateful to have been part of it.

Christina B., High School Intern

Working to create connection beyond the walls of our Porter Street office building, Project SAGE launched a monthly digital newsletter “This Month At...” last fall. The newsletter features updates on the work of the agency, information on special events, and links to resources on topics including the connection between domestic abuse and human trafficking, the importance of consent in relationships, digital safety and more. Director of Community Engagement, Linda Ciano, also relaunched our *Main Street Partners* program, which seeks to engage local businesses in our efforts to eliminate domestic violence in our communities. A primary focus this year has been to provide opportunities for connection – whether that be relational like placing a client in contact with an advocate to assist them in navigating the civil or criminal court system or to resources like state and federal programs offering disability benefits, food resources, or child care.

Project SAGE’s dedicated and diverse staff have greatly contributed to the tremendous growth of our prevention education and shelter programs. Our revised prevention education curriculum provides a seamless progression of lessons from grade 6 through grade 12 and every student in the Region One Middle and High Schools have access to Project SAGE programming. Last school year, we had more than 3,200 child and student interactions and taught over 250 workshops. This is a more than 40% increase over last year in response to increasing requests for these services. Additionally, our *Early Years Program*, focused on teaching children in preschool through grade 2 about emotion regulation, bystander intervention and more, has been relaunched thanks to the assistance of our certified volunteers. Studies show that promoting healthy relationships and teaching youth the skills to form them reduces the risk for victimization in adulthood. For this reason, Project SAGE is wholly committed to providing prevention education to children and youth so that they learn what it means to be in healthy, loving relationships.

Project SAGE also supports clients working to live independently. Stable, permanent housing is key to achieving that. This past year, the agency’s shelter programming has greatly expanded in large part due to the HUD-funded Rapid Re-Housing Program (RRH). A one-year bridge program, RRH removes the barriers to gaining stable housing for victims of domestic abuse. For many survivors, this is the first time they have ever had a home to call their own. Jesi Sarno, Project SAGE’s Housing Specialist Advocate works closely with clients to help them take the next step towards living autonomously. By the end of June, Jesi helped 30 families including 91 children move into stable housing through the RRH program.

Even after the transformation Project SAGE has undergone in the last year, we are looking ahead to the future with plans to renovate the second part of our Porter Street office building. The completion of phase II will serve as a vital community resource that meets the diverse and urgent needs of our clients, will foster the healthy development of our youth, and create a dynamic space for training, engagement, and community collaboration. **Thank you to the Town of Sharon for encouraging the work of Project SAGE and supporting our mission to end relationship violence.**

Hotchkiss Library

2023 has been a busy and exciting one for the Hotchkiss Library. We celebrated our 130th anniversary with a rainy, yet very festive, party at Weatherstone and witnessed the expansion and restoration of our beloved home at 10 Upper Main Street on the Green. We thank the members of American Legion Post 126 for making their building available to us to rent for a second year.

The 24th Annual Sharon Summer Book Signing – our first in three years – took place under a gorgeous white tent on our neighbor’s grounds at the Sharon Historical Society. It was a great success and brought out a record crowd. It was wonderful to see all the support for libraries, books and authors.

The staff worked hard to help patrons and eagerly awaited the move home. We continued our library services, lending many books, DVDs, and audiobooks on CD and supplying our patrons with many books through interlibrary loan. Our electronic circulation surpassed the levels of the early pandemic and continues to grow, as more patrons become comfortable with downloading and streaming our digital resources on hoopla, Kanopy, and Palace.

Children’s programming was especially robust for Summer Reading. Limited adult programming continued on Zoom, including three wonderful presentations on the Library’s newly discovered historical poster collection, as well as sessions on delicious desserts and Rob Sedgwick’s riveting memoir. We were thrilled that our first in-person adult program featured Sharon author and artist Peter Steiner. Our weekly knitting group also returned to gathering in person.

We bid goodbye to our beloved children’s librarian, Mrs. Sam, who welcomed a new baby to her family, and Miss Renee joined the team. She is a new favorite at weekly story times and other kids’ events, and is also visiting Sharon Daycare and Sharon Center School regularly.

While we worked out of the New Street location, things were unbelievably busy at 10 Upper Main Street. Construction was well underway at the start of FY23; the start was slow as we realized how difficult the bedrock would prove to be. Once the blasting and rock removal was behind us, construction on the addition began in earnest. Meanwhile, restoration of the interior continued. Soon windows were sparkling, and the original dark green trim returned to the doors and windows. Contractors installed a new HVAC system; electricians rewired the building; our data network was updated. We selected new carpeting and furnishings. This work was made possible by the generosity of the many Sharon residents and friends who contributed to our Capital Campaign. Those same people continued to give to our annual appeal and attend our annual fundraisers that keep our doors open and services running. We are grateful to the Town for their annual grant and their gift to the Capital Campaign.

With the exception of copying and printing, our services and programs are provided free of charge. We look forward to expanding our programming and reach in our new and improved Library when we return to the Green in early FY24.

Gretchen Hachmeister, PhD
Executive Director

Chore Service

Chore Service, founded in 1992, provides in-home, non-medical assistance to seniors and people with disabilities within the community so they may remain safely and independently at home. Chore employs local, caring people to provide essential services such as house cleaning, laundry, companionship, transportation, and yard work to North Canaan, Cornwall, Falls Village, Kent, Norfolk, Salisbury/Lakeville, and Sharon residents. Services are partially funded by a grant from the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging, which subsidizes clients aged sixty and over regardless of income. Client contributions supplement the grant along with donations from towns, churches, charitable foundations, and donors so that the program can remain affordable for everyone. When necessary, referrals are made to the VNA, physicians, social workers, etc., to assure safety.

From July 2022 through June 2023, Chore provided services to 21 Sharon residents. These residents received 535 hours of help with chores such as cleaning, errands, and yard work so that they could continue to remain safely in their homes. Five Chore Workers who live in Sharon earned, in total, close to \$12,000 last year.

Chore began the year asking the pivotal question, “How can we expand to provide additional much-needed services to more people while ensuring our long-term financial viability?” This question was the basis for many discussions during several board and staff sessions led by an outside consultant. As a result, we have developed and adopted a three-year strategic plan, which meets those goals. Our mission will remain the same, but ways to expand our scope of services, increase community partnership, and address cuts in federal funding drive our strategy.

Our federal grant monies are depleted before the year ends, so we are delighted that the Town of Sharon continues contributing to these services—many thanks to those who have supported and continue to support Chore. The additional ARPA funds received this year were crucial in allowing us to continue to serve the elderly in Sharon. We are most grateful for the generous support of all our donors, including the Town of Sharon.

Chore Service remains committed to helping our most vulnerable community members. If you need assistance or know someone who might benefit from our services, please call (860) 435-9177 or visit our website at www.choreservice.org. Also, if you seek employment or volunteer opportunities and want to make a difference in someone’s life, please call Chore.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane MacLaren
Executive Director

Salisbury/Sharon Transfer Station

In July 2022, the second largest trash-to-energy facility in Connecticut closed. The Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA) stopped processing our garbage at its Hartford facility. We are still under contract with MIRA through June 2027, however our garbage is now being sent to a landfill in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

During the 2022-23 year, our food scrap pilot has expanded to almost 400 households. During this year, residents have diverted more than 28 tons of food scraps from the garbage.

In June 2023, the Connecticut Legislature expanded the mandated recovery or composting of food scrap from more “generators”. This provision goes into effect in January 2025. The Transfer Station Recycling Advisory Committee (TRAC) have been working to continue to expand this pilot.

Please visit our website: www.salisburys Sharontransferstation.com

Brian Bartram, Manager

Sharon Connect Task Force

Sharon Connect Task Force members concentrated their efforts on helping manage the \$1.6 million project Town residents approved in Nov. 2022 for Comcast to build out its high-speed internet network along the 28.5 miles of road in town where it had never provided service. When completed, the project will provide access to wired, high-speed internet for the first time to roughly 250 homes.

The Town signed the Comcast contract on March 2, 2023. Working closely with Nikki Blass, who the Town hired in a part-time role as the contract performance manager, Task Force members established regular meetings with Comcast project managers to stay up to date on the project and help address any issues that arose.

Comcast’s first step was to apply for permission to attach its wires to roughly 700 utility poles in Sharon. It takes several months to get approval because Frontier Communications and Eversource, which co-own the poles, must send someone out to inspect every pole and determine if it has enough space and is strong enough for another wire to be attached to it. Knowing there would be a lengthy delay before it could begin aerial work, Comcast sent in its applications and then pivoted to concentrate on construction in areas of town that did not need access to utility poles. That included roads like Hooperfields Drive where all utilities are buried underground. The trenching was sometimes slow and difficult going, but Comcast began “lighting up” homes in August. Under its contract with the town, Comcast will receive the first payment for its work when half the homes in the project are “serviceable,” meaning they are connected to the network and ready to subscribe to internet service.

The Task Force sent regular eblast communications to those who signed up to receive email updates on the project and answered dozens of individual questions from residents. Members

also attended Board of Selectmen meetings to answer questions and brief the Selectmen on the project. Project managers estimate the construction work will be completed by early 2024. Task Force members intend to apply to the CT Office of Telecommunications and Broadband, in the Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection, for a grant to offset the project's cost to the town. Applications are expected to be available before year-end. There is no assurance the grant will be awarded.

In addition to working for universal access to wired, high-speed internet, Task Force Co-Chair Meghan Flanagan pushed Frontier Communications to make a plan to fix long-standing issues with its copper-wire network that provides landline telephone and digital subscriber line (DSL) internet service to local residents. Considered an obsolete technology, its copper network has been allowed to deteriorate and several customers reported waits of as long as two weeks to get service restored after heavy rains or other network disruptions. Frontier managers worked to begin a project to rehabilitate the main cable that provides service to the area. Frontier has also said it plans to build out fiber-optic connections in some parts of Sharon, but there hasn't been much movement on that plan so far this year.

Meanwhile, Task Force members are working in partnership with the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon and five other local libraries to develop a proposal to hire a full-time "digital navigator" for the region, a person who would be available to help residents free of charge with technology issues. There will be federal grant money available to fund such a position starting in mid-2024.

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 made sure Sharon residents got the best deal possible. Nikki Blass has been a delight to work with and provides a steady hand at the tiller. Comcast's project managers and the construction team on the ground have been first-rate, a model of how a multi-billion-dollar company can work in partnership with a small town. Huge thanks to the residents of Sharon who attended the Town Meeting and voted to approve the project. We are also deeply grateful to our Task Force members, who have given generously of their time and expertise: John Brett, Roger Lourie, Ben Newhouse, Alexandra Peters, Barbara Prindle, Beth Rybczyk, and Eric Simon. We greatly mourn the passing of Brent Prindle, a Task Force member who was a key leader of this project and who contributed so much to the entire town over many years.

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

ARPA Advisory Committee

The Sharon ARPA Advisory Committee is an ad hoc committee of volunteers convened to advise the Board of Selectmen on options for allocating the \$795,811 in federal funds Sharon received in 2021 to respond to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown.

After a very busy first year, the Committee had a chance to catch its breath. Since the immediate needs of the town and its residents were addressed in the prior year, the Committee reviewed fewer applications for assistance. The Committee published a 48-page Grantee Spending Report that explained the grant-making process and detailed each grant awarded. Copies are available online at sharoncovidrecovery.org and at Town Hall.

The town has a little more than \$200,000 in funds remaining to be obligated. The Committee recommended that the bulk of those funds be earmarked for municipal technology projects while retaining some funds to cover new applications for relief. The U.S. Treasury requires that all funding be obligated by Dec. 31, 2024 and spent by Dec. 31, 2026.

Since last year's report, the Board of Selectmen approved three additional applications for funding: Up to \$25,000 for a Performance Manager to oversee the Comcast high-speed internet project; \$7,000 to Tri-State Communications to cover back rent it owed the town; \$7,450 to American Legion Post #126 to install air conditioning in its building on New Street.

All meetings of the Committee were open to the public and recorded on video. The links were publicly posted, along with the Minutes and the Agendas, on the town website. Although the Board of Selectmen make the grant decisions, the Committee's role is to conduct a thorough public review and to invite discussion about how the town should allocate its funding.

The Sharon ARPA Advisory Committee is pleased to assist the town in managing a transparent process for disbursing the federal funds. We wish to thank all our current members: Douglas Cahill, Thomas Casey, Donna DiMartino, Meghan Flanagan, Gretchen Hachmeister, Barbara Prindle, and Jeanmarie Bustillo.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Drew and Thomas Bartram, co-chairs

Northwest Conservation District

The Northwest Conservation District (NWCD) is an environmental non-profit organization serving 34 municipalities in northwestern Connecticut. Our mission is to promote conservation and protect the environment through education and technical assistance services.

TECHNICAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO MUNICIPALITIES

During 2022-2023, we assisted our towns' land-use departments and citizens with on site development reviews and field inspections of sites in a variety of land use settings. Our recommendations on proposed land use changes balance development with protection of the natural environment. We provide practical, science-based solutions using the latest techniques, including Low Impact Development (LID), to ensure that projects work with the landscape and are designed to address changes in our climate. Our professional soil scientist is able to review inland-wetland delineations.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND PROJECTS ACROSS THE DISTRICT

We conducted workshops on topics including LID and stormwater management, residential rain gardens, soil health, renewable energy options, pollinator gardens, home composting, invasive plant management, cover crops and other best agricultural management practices. We support the work of the state-wide Pollinator Pathway Northeast (www.pollinatorpathway.org).

We provide support to USDA-NRCS's conservation planning program and to farms in our District through our Climate Smart Agriculture Initiative that provides free cover crop seed to farmers to help them transition to healthy soil practices.

We support the CT Envirothon Program (www.ctenvirothon.org) providing hands-on science for high school students through workshops and educational support. Participating schools take part in an annual May Field Day statewide competition and the winning team competes at a National Conservation Foundation (NCF) competition. Twelve teams participated in the event. NWCD participating schools included Housatonic Valley Regional; Northwest Regional 7; Marvelwood School from Kent, and Nonnewaug High School winner of the statewide competition and that went on to the international competition in Canada.

EARTH DAY PLANT SALE

Our Earth Day Plant Sale is held annually at the Goshen Fairgrounds over a three-day period in late April. Through the plant sale, we continue to encourage people to make personal changes to promote clean air, clean water, healthy soils, and quality habitat. This year we provided extensive educational material with an expanded display of literature and information boards on many topics and we shared literature from many of our northwest corner partners. NWCD staff and Master Gardeners are on hand to help people select the right plants for their needs and growing conditions.

OUTREACH AND WEBSITE

We continue to publish our "Voice of Conservation" bi-annual newsletter, as well as a new yearly "Education Edition" in print form and electronic offerings through our website, and Facebook. Recorded webinars and educational articles are now offered on our website with news and links on our Facebook page, and we are planning additional resources for on-line outreach to help readers conserve natural habitats and wildlife. Our goal is to make our educational programming available to a wider audience. To be added to our mailing list, email info@nwcd.org.

THANKS TO YOU!

NWCD appreciates the ongoing support and partnership of the District's 34 municipalities, the generous contributions of local individuals, our funders, and many volunteers. We welcome feedback and requests for information, assistance, and educational programming.

Lawrence Rousseau, Chairman, Northwest Conservation District

Town of Sharon
Budget 2022 – 2023
For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023

General Summary

	<u>2020-2021</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Board of Selectmen Budget	\$4,852,223	\$4,971,604
Less non-tax revenues	<u>608,151</u>	<u>617,971</u>
	\$4,244,072	\$4,353,633
Board of Education Budget	\$6,579,893	\$6,149,572
Less non-tax revenues	<u>9,960</u>	<u>9,960</u>
	\$6,569,933	\$6,139,612

The Board of Finance approved the following:

TOTAL TO BE RAISED BY TOWN TAXES, 2022-2023

\$10,851,235

GRAND LIST, OCTOBER 2021

768,936,413

MIL RATE

14.40

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas H. Bartram
Chairman, Board of Finance