

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

FIRST SELECTMAN: Monday - Friday: 9:00 – 12:00 & 1:00 – 4:00
phone: 860-364-5789; (H) 860-364-7475

NW PROBATE: Monday – Thursday: 9:00 – 4:00
phone: 860-824-7012

ASSESSOR: Monday 9:00 to Noon, Wednesday & Thursday: 9:00 – 12:00 & 1:00 - 4:00
phone: 860-364-0205

TAX COLLECTOR: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday: 9:00 – 3:30
phone 860-364-5402

TOWN CLERK: Monday – Thursday: 8:30 – 12:00 & 1:00 – 4:00
Friday: 8:30 – NOON
phone: 860-364-5224

BUILDING INSPECTOR & FIRE MARSHAL: Monday – Friday: 7:00 – NOON; Saturday 8:00 – 9:00AM
phone: 860-364-0909

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

HEALTH DEPARTMENT Monday – Friday: 7:00 - NOON
phone: 860-364-9397

SOCIAL SERVICE AGENT: Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday: 9:00 – 12:00 & 1:00 – 4:00
phone: 860-364-1003

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS Tuesday: 10:00 – NOON
phone: 860-364-5514

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

Board of Finance: Third Tuesday @ 6:30PM monthly, except March when it will be March 14

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

Inland Wetlands Commission: Second Monday, monthly @ 6:30PM except October when it will be October 10

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

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

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

Board of Education: Second Monday, monthly see their website

Sharon Parks & Recreation Committee: Second Monday, monthly @ 6:30PM except February when it will be February 14 and October when it will be October 10

Conservation Commission: Third Wednesday @ 6:30PM monthly

Zoning Board of Appeals: Quarterly, Feb. 27, May 15, August 14 & Nov. 20 @ 6:00PM

Sharon Energy & Environment Commission: First Wednesday monthly @ 5:30PM

Board of Assessment Appeals: Feb. 21 @ 5PM, March 10 @ 5PM, March 11 @ 9AM, March 17 @ 5PM, March 18 @ 9AM, March 22 @ 5PM and Sept. 9 @ 9AM (this one is for motor vehicles only)

Sharon Green Committee: Second Monday monthly @ 4PM except February when it will be Feb. 14 and October when it will be Oct. 10

ARPA Advisory Committee: Third Tuesday each month @ 5:00PM

Transfer Station Committee: Every other month @ 5PM at the Transfer Station – Feb. 5 April 19, June 21, August 16, Oct. 18 and Dec. 20

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, 2021– 2022

FRONT COVER

This years’ cover features a drone photograph taken high above the Clock Tower looking East up Cornwall Bridge Road. The photo was taken by Brian Wilcox who with his wife Laurie operates connecticutphoto.com from here in Sharon.

Brian, a Sharon native, has chronicled special events in Town for almost 30 years and through various platforms, shares the beauty of our Town and surrounding communities throughout the year.

Thank you Brian!

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT THE TOWN OF SHARON

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

SHARON TAX AND POPULATION DATA

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

ELECTED TOWN OFFICERS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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

BOARD OF FINANCE

Thomas H. Bartram, *Chairman*, 2023
Jessica K. Fowler, *Vice Chairman*, 2027
Robert E. Duncan, *Secretary*, 2027
Cody W. O’Kelly, 2023 Mary B. Robertson, 2025 Carol Flaton, 2023

Alternate Members

Robert W. Ensign, 2023
Lyman R. Whelan, 2023

TOWN CLERK AND REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS

Linda R. Amerighi, 01/06/26

REGISTRARS

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

TOWN TREASURER

Tina M. Pitcher, 2023

TAX COLLECTOR

Donna A. Christensen, 2023

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

REPRESENTATIVE TO REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BOARD

Sara Ellen Cousins, 11/30/2023

APPOINTED / HIRED TOWN OFFICERS

TOWN COUNSEL

Cramer & Anderson, LLP – D. Randall DiBella

TOWN AUDITOR

Sinnamon & Associates, LLC

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO FIRST SELECTMAN

Tina M. Pitcher

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK

Marlene M. Woodman

ASSESSOR

Jennifer Dubray
Patricia S. Braislin, Assistant

**ASSISTANT REGISTRAR OF
VITAL STATISTICS**

Marlene M. Woodman

DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Michael Crespan, MPH, RS
David R. Kurish, M.D., Advisor
Elizabeth H. Casey, Sanitary Inspector
Elizabeth H. Casey, Asst. Health Director
Joseph G. Kmetz, Jr., Food Establishment Inspector

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Lee Sohl

TREE WARDEN

Jeffrey Perotti

**CIVIL PREPAREDNESS
COORDINATOR**

Thomas H. Bartram

**FIRE MARSHAL &
BUILDING OFFICIAL**

Stanley MacMillan, Jr.
Michael Carbone, Asst. BO
Troy Kaiser, Deputy FM
Timothy Limbos, Deputy FM

LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR

Elizabeth H. Casey

REPRESENTATIVE TO REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BOARD

Anne M. Vance, *Alternate*, 2023

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

John J. Baroody, *Chairman*, 2023
Elizabeth M. Hall, *V. Chairman*, 2025
J. Barclay Collins, 2024 Lionel Goldfrank III, 2027 Stephen J. Szalewicz, Jr., 2027

Alternate Members

Theo Coulombe, 2023 W. Allen Reiser, 2025 Edwin Yowell, 2024

TRANSFER STATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Casey T. Flanagan Anne M. Saunders VACANCY

SALISBURY-SHARON RESOURCE RECOVERY AUTHORITY

Brent M. Colley, 01/14/2023
Vacancy 01/14/2024
Vacancy, 01/14/2022
Thomas H. Bartram, Voting Alternate, 01/14/2023

SHARON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

Carolyn O. Mattoon, *Chairman*, 10/09/2023
Katy Kinsolving, *Secretary*, 10/09/2023
Douglas W. Rick, 10/09/2024
Janice Dudek, 10/09/2024
Oscar R. Martinez, 10/09/2023
Roger Liddell, 10/09/2024
Michael Nadeau, 10/09/2024

ALTERNATES – BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Three Vacancies
Terms to November 19, 2022

CIVIL PREPAREDNESS COORDINATOR

Thomas H. Bartram

LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Brent M. Colley Thomas H. Bartram James Reid
Elizabeth H. Casey Thomas F. Casey, Sr.
Eric Golden

NORTHWEST CT TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD

Michael L. Levengood

SUMMARY OF SHARON TOWN MEETINGS 2021 - 2022

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!

October 27, 2021: Seven residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and two residents participated via ZOOM and voted to: change the Payee on a promissory note authorized by Town Meeting December 13, 2019 and July 16, 2020 for the Sharon Housing Authority HVAC project at Sharon Ridge, from Eversource to Salisbury Bank and Trust.

January 27, 2022: Approximately twenty residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted to: authorize the Town of Sharon to appropriate \$50,000 from the Undesignated Fund to the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon, Inc. towards their Expansion Project.

April 7, 2022: Five residents gathered and voted to: accept the June 30, 2021 financial statements for the Town; to approve expending up to \$14,000 out of the Parks & Recreation Committee’s portion of the Capital Non-recurring Account for roof replacement of the Pavilion at Veterans’ Field; and to approve expending up to \$425,210.69 out of the Undesignated Fund to pay off three Equipment Loans with Salisbury Bank & Trust Company.

May 13, 2022: Approximately twenty-six residents gathered following COVID 19 protocols and voted to: adopt the Annual Town Budget for fiscal year commencing July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023; approve for fiscal year commencing July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 various items concerning receipts and expenditures for the Town and educational purposes; and adopt the proposed Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

First Selectman

2021-22 highlights:

- We continued crack sealing and chip sealing all the roads that have been paved since 2010. This extends the life of these roads 5-6 years per application by preventing water and salt from getting underneath them.
- We received a State of Connecticut Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant for the expansion and improvement of town hall's back parking lot.
- A Broadband improvement task force (Sharon Connect) was established to explore our options/path to townwide broadband coverage.
- Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding was provided, and an advisory committee was formed to review and advise us on applications and proposed usage of funds.
- In December 2020, Sharon Energy & Environment Commission proposed a solar array at Sharon Center School that will help to cap electricity costs and create green energy for the next 20 years. The board continues to work on this effort with SEEC.
- In May of 2022 a meeting was coordinated by Kent McCoy & David Moore to explore options to reduce sound reverberation issues in Chapin Hall with a team of experts from the University of Hartford. Their analysis will help us uncover an affordable solution to this long-standing issue.
- Efforts to keep residents informed and promote Town events and meetings continue via a monthly newsletter and frequent updates to our town website.

There is much to be proud of and we thank all of 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 is the principal reason our taxes remain among the lowest in Connecticut.

As we do every year, we encourage your input and participation at all levels of Town Government. Your help, your opinions, your preferences, your concerns, your volunteerism is essential this town's success and improvement.

I close this report by thanking all that are reading this for your help, support, and positivity in my ten years as First Selectman. Sharon is a special place because we all work together.

Sincerely,

Brent M. Colley
First Selectman

Town Clerk

1,043 documents were recorded for fiscal year 2021-2022.

108 Property transfers for fiscal year contributed \$224,655.08 in Town Conveyance Tax and \$852,247.75 in State Conveyance Tax.

During calendar year 2021:

217 Births were recorded	707 certified copies of Birth Certificates issued
139 Death Certificates were processed	691 certified copies of Death Certificates issued
34 Marriage Licenses were processed	73 certified copies of Marriage Certificates issued

10 Resident Births and 36 Resident Deaths

265 Dogs were licensed 6/2021 – 5/2022

The Town Clerk collected \$1,209,501.93 for 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Highlights for the Office:

VITAL RECORDS:

Electronic filing Death Certificates is partly live. In the previous report I stated that I was looking forward to the new system and electronic, almost paperless advancement in recording of Deaths. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Most of the Nursing Homes have yet to go live in the system which means each and every death certificate that occurs out side of a hospital needs to be handled more than twice. It has created a burden on the office to maintain and file accurately all death certificates. This is unfortunate and another system created by the Department of Public Health that was put into service prior to it being effective.

LAND RECORDS:

We continue to index records onto the IQS system. This system has been the land line for Realtors, Attorneys, and Title Searchers. Due to the Pandemic, online searching is the norm for many of those who need to search records. This not only includes those mentioned above but for anyone who wishes to search the owners of the house they may have purchased. Our records now date back to the late 30's. Current records can be viewed online by visiting www.searchiqs.com. Fees are paid directly to the vendor and you can use your credit card. The Town still receives the \$1.00 per page statutory fee.

COVID-19

Many changes came out of the pandemic. Some good and some not so good. I can only say that moving forward we must be diligent in keeping updated on our vaccines and preventing this from happening again. I hope that our hospitals, first responders and all who were affected by this never have to endure another outbreak of such a devastating disease.

DOG LICENSES

I don't know how to break this to you but the State has mandated that DEEP develop an online dog licensing program. I'm not sure how I feel about this but I'm sure it will not fair well. For me this is devastating. Dog Licensing is one of the enjoyable jobs I have. It is so true that dogs are therapy. No matter what type of day I am having, I'm always uplifted in June when a dog comes through my door to receive his/her/its tag.

ONLINE VITAL ORDERING:

Now this is exciting and it works. The Town of Sharon is now part of the Permitium Team. Requests for Births, Marriage and Death Certificates can be ordered through our Permitium online system. Permitium also provides an application which is given to all new mothers and they can scan and request their newborns birth certificate. This has been given 5 stars from maternity at Sharon Hospital. It works and this has proven to eliminate many calls throughout the day.

ELECTIONS:

The State of Connecticut has stepped up making voting more accessible. The reasons for requesting an Absentee Ballot have relaxed and requesting one on the Electronic System has ultimately made requesting an absentee ballot a breeze. In order to use the Absentee Ballot Online request, you must have a valid CT license with your signature on file with the Department of Motor Vehicles. This was rolled out on the 13th of October and I have been receiving requests daily. Thanks to Facebook and the press that the Secretary of State has been using to promote this.

Respectfully,

Linda R. Amerighi-CCTC

Principal – Sharon Center School

Sharon Center School welcomed 96 students to an inviting learning environment and ended the year with 99 students. Ten students graduated from eighth grade and celebrated with a lovely commencement ceremony filled with school and community sponsored academic and citizenship awards.

Transitions:

We wished Cafeteria Assistant Deborah Anderson, Principal Karen Manning and Psychologist Hal Tingley the very best on their retirements and thanked them for their dedicated service.

We look forward to welcoming Principal Carol Tomkalski to the team.

Sharon Center School partnered with many local organizations and businesses in order to offer real world opportunities for students to learn both in and out of their classrooms. We appreciated the generous support of the Sharon BOE, Sharon PTO, Sharon Audubon, Hotchkiss Library, parents, community members, faculty and staff. Students have participated in many exciting enrichment opportunities throughout the year as there is post pandemic gradual return to activities.

- Primary classes visited the Sharon Audubon, Housatonic Valley High School Ag Fair, Freund's Farm, and Music Mountain.
- Grade 4 Visiting Artists, in-house grade 4 arts day
- Energy in Action Bus campus visit
- Grade 7 & 8: Natures Classroom experience in Litchfield, CT
- Grade 8 Lake Compounce and Lakeville Lake
- Middle school Regional Band / Chorus
- Sharon Drama Production of Law and Order Fairy Tale Unit
- Read Aloud Day
- Career Day in the middle school
- Field Day
- Art Show at Standard Space
- Walking field trips to Hotchkiss Library and numerous visits from Miss Sam the Hotchkiss children's librarian

Music teacher, Bethany Franklin prepared students for outdoor band and choral concerts in June. The Sharon Center School Marching Band made us proud of their performance in the Memorial Day parade and memorial service.

We are appreciative that our middle school students had the opportunity to participate in regional sports and activities including coding, art garage, track, soccer, basketball, baseball, and softball. We appreciate the support and flexibility received from the students, their families, the middle

school athletic director, school support staff, All-Star bus drivers, and coaches in order to make this work!

We offered congratulations to our 8th grade award winners: Samantha Carnaci, the 2022 Superintendents' Award winner and Leonardo Cajilima the coveted 2022 Sharon Cup Award winner. Leonardo Cajilima and Finian Malone were the recipients of the 2022 Connecticut Association of Boards of Education Leadership awards. We were so very proud of their accomplishments, wish them well in future endeavors, and look forward to hearing Leonardo Cajilima speak at the Sharon graduation in 2026.

Region One introduced a regional strategic plan designed to weave the efforts of the seven regional schools together with a long-range perspective. This allows each district to identify areas to focus their professional work, while keeping all seven districts moving toward the same end goals.

Sharon Center School faculty worked to identify high quality instructional practices that can be applied moving forward. This work included developing student reflection skills and portfolios that were successfully shared with families in the spring of 2022 at student led conferences. Additional areas of focus across the year were the science of reading, instruction for English learners, Social-emotional learning, Habits of Mind, Zones of Regulation and mathematical fluency.

Education is a shared responsibility and we value the participation of the entire community. Working together, community members, parents, families, friends, teachers, staff, and students facilitated the development of good citizens with strong values and keen intellects. We provided our children with a comprehensive educational experience including music, art, library, computer, Spanish, physical education and the opportunity for enrichment experiences including assemblies and field trips. Research shows these activities nourish children's brains and stimulate their overall development.

We are so very appreciative of all that the community has done for the Sharon Center School over the year! Sharon Center School is a wonderful place for children to learn and grow! I would like to thank the students, parents, their extended families, faculty, staff, BOE, PTO and residents of Sharon for their ongoing help and support. Have a wonderful summer. Stay safe, act respectfully and responsibly.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Karen Manning

Superintendent of Schools

2021-2022 was a year characterized by perseverance and resilience on behalf of Region 1 staff, students, and their parents/caregivers as we all learned to live with continued presence of COVID-19. Protocols for vaccination, testing, masks and quarantine influenced classroom environments and student/staff attendance. However, despite the occurrence of virus surges as it morphed into new variants, Region 1 staff remained dedicated to providing a high quality education to our students and our students remained engaged in their learning. By the end of the year, school operations had returned to near normal and the year ended on a positive note.

National media has publicized data indicating significant learning loss for students at all grade levels. This has not been the experience for students in Region 1. State summative data indicate that, while not yet attaining pre-pandemic levels of achievement, most students finished the year meeting or exceeding grade level expectations in the tested areas of English/Language Arts, Math and Science. Additionally, students were able to participate in school plays and concerts, art shows, athletic competition and field trips. Everyone worked together to successfully navigate COVID-19 disruptions, including substitute teacher and bus driver shortages.

As school staff worked hard to return schools to normal operations to the greatest extent possible, they closely monitored student mental health and the impact the pandemic has had on students. Administrators have used some of the federal ARP/ESSER funds to hire support students by adding counseling staff to ensure the presence of trained clinicians to support them. They have also planned team-building, student discussion groups and other engaging activities to cultivate safe and healthy school climates.

With respect to physical plants, school building committees continued to complete repairs and any new construction projects as needed.

Finally, administrators have worked with school safety committees to ensure that schools are safe and secure.

Region 1 staff, students and their families successfully weathered another challenging year as a result of their commitment to engaging in high quality learning experiences while caring for the well-being of one another. We are proud of and thankful for the strength of the Region 1 community.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa B. Carter

HVRHS - Principal

The 2021-2022 was expected to mark a “return to normalcy” for schools across the country, yet the persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic continued to complicate school operations. Although students returned to school as usual in the fall, we required face masks and publicized opportunities for vaccination that were available in the region’s schools. Quarantine requirements caused extended absences for many students, and the Omicron variant wreaked havoc on international travel opportunities during the Winter Break.

By the end of the year, however, mask restrictions were no longer in place, and Housatonic experienced one of the busiest months of May in recent history, with many organizations holding year-end celebrations that had not taken place for several years. These began with our performances of *Into the Woods*, the school musical, in March, and continued with art openings, musical concerts, FFA events, and National Honor Society inductions, culminating in the first truly traditional graduation since 2019, with no social distancing or mask mandates in place. Of particular note was the number and amount of scholarships and awards to our graduates that totaled over \$500,000. We thank our generous communities for their continued support of our young people as they embark on the next chapters of their lives.

A new point of focus this year was on the social and emotional welfare of our students. We continued to integrate Habits of Mind, a set of characteristics that describe the traits of effective learners and citizens, such as “persistence” and “communicating with clarity.” These are important foundational skills for students as they acquire academic content, and thanks to research about brain function, we are learning more and more about their integral role in student success.

We also added a Social Worker to our staff last year to support at-risk students both in and out of the classroom. Rachel Novak accepted the position last summer and began working with students in our alternative school, Bridges, to address the obstacles to their academic success. This was a helpful addition to our School Counseling team, which lost a member through retirement the previous year.

Staffing was a challenge across the school this year, with some long-term absences, departures, and retirements. We hired several replacement paraprofessionals, a tutor, two long-term substitute teachers and, recently, two new Mathematics teachers and a Special Education teacher to fill vacancies in those areas. This represents a significant “changing of the guard” in our Mathematics department, and we are excited for what our new teachers will bring to the school.

As a school, we continue to work with our students to become the most welcoming and accepting school we can be. Next year we will run courses in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Literature, as well as African American and Hispanic American History. Our students met several times to discuss the issue of diversity and acceptance as a school, and while our efforts to promote a safe and inclusive environment are ongoing, we are already planning a mural for our cafeteria that symbolizes our commitment to those values.

We are in the early stages of planning more extensive renovations to our cafeteria and auditorium, two of the most prominent public spaces in our building that are often the focal points for community gatherings as well as school events. Next year, we will present a comprehensive plan for updating these spaces and finalizing the installation of our Farm to Table culinary classroom that is scheduled to begin this summer.

Although our international trips this year were curtailed due to the impact of Omicron, we have a trip to Greece scheduled for this summer and trips to Scotland/Ireland and Japan planned for the following year. Our International Travel Club has raised tens of thousands of dollars to offset the costs of these experiences to make them available for all of our students as they work toward becoming more globally aware.

The resumption of these kinds of activities may not herald a “return to normalcy,” but they do mark a desire to define a “new normal” that respects the threat of infectious diseases and the importance of social and emotional wellbeing while providing a comprehensive and rigorous education. To that end, our school Leadership Team adopted several changes to our grading practices that are designed to encourage student involvement in formative learning, timely work submission, and preparation for rigorous, comprehensive final exams. Two years of learning during a pandemic has taught us a lot about how to persevere through challenges, and we are looking forward to applying those lessons to the social and academic challenges of our time.

Respectfully submitted,
Ian Strever, Principal

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The SCC has had three main focuses over the year – air quality, caterpillar defoliation damage and recreational easement maintenance.

On air quality, we have a continuing presence with WCCAA (Western Ct. Clean Air Action) that came together to monitor the potential effects of the startup of the Cricket Valley Plant.

Considering the analysis by the team at UCONN Storrs determining that our air quality has not been affected by CVP, we have chosen to discontinue air quality monitoring. Professor Christina Wagstrom at UCONN has been very helpful, but the low-cost monitors that WCCA is using in the NW CT corner are no longer in production at Aeroqual NZ because their accuracy at low levels of pollution appears limited.

As to caterpillar defoliation, earlier this year we interfaced with DEEP representatives to better understand the risk to local forests and common spaces from recent defoliation. Our findings and recommendations were communicated to the Board of Selectman in a letter dated May 19, 2022. Defoliation will likely be an ongoing focus into the new year, with significant damage having been done around Sharon Mountain and ongoing discussions at DEEP that logging may be in order in some instances.

Trail maintenance of recreational easements is ongoing. Phillip Lovett of Canaan has been able to finish brush hogging Surdan Mt. Rd and further work will likely be required on Smith Rd. SCC members have worked on maintaining Joray, Kings, Cemetery and Fairchild Rds over the past year.

Finally, the Commission has transitioned back to in-person meetings at Town Hall. However, ongoing precautions are being taken to be respectful of the health of fellow commissioners as well as members of the public, with occasional Zoom meetings as illness or other circumstances have required.

Respectfully,

Johannes Van Der Tuin

Chairperson Sharon Conservation Commission

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is a Commission which listens to property owners when they want to make a change to their property which is denied by Zoning Codes.

During the past year ZBA considered two applications. The first was an application for the construction of a garage with a ten-foot setback where the Regulations required a setback of 30

feet. The Commission felt that the property owner was constrained as to where else he could put the garage. The chosen location posed no safety problems and the neighbor had no objection. The variance was granted.

The other application was for the placed of a garage ten feet from the property line where the Regulations call for a setback of 30 feet. The property owner had no alternative for the location of the garage and the building was to be placed on the surface of the ground with no permanent foundation. The variance was granted.

In February the Commission had a workshop with Attorney Byrne. Mr. Byrne instructed the Commission in practices and Regulations of public meetings and hearings, i.e. alternate member participation, conflict of interest and the granting and/or denying of variances. The conversation was very helpful to the members of the Commission.

William Trowbridge, Chairman

Sharon Planning and Zoning Commission

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

During the past year, the Commission has considered numerous issues, among them:

- Consideration and adoption of amendments to Sharon's Planning and Zoning Regulations
- Review of Connecticut legislation affecting Planning and Zoning Regulations
- Commission choices to opt out of several sub-sections of this legislation
- Approval of the Sharon Affordable Housing Plan
- Consideration of the solar project for the Sharon Center School
- Review of cluster development in the rural residential zone

The Planning and Zoning Commission welcomes Larry Moskowitz as a regular member of the Commission.

We are grateful for the extraordinary effort of Jamie Casey, Betsy Hall, and Tina Pitcher. Enough cannot be said in appreciation of their knowledge, organization, and contributions to the work of the Commission. The Town is exceptionally fortunate to have them on the Commission.

It has been a rewarding experience to serve with and learn from the skilled members of this Commission but also a humbling one in lieu of the fact that I succeed Barclay Prindle, whose 57 years as Chair of the this Commission reflect the depth of his commitment to the Town of Sharon.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurance B. Rand, Chairman

Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission

During fiscal year 2021-2022 your Sharon Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (SIWWC) has reviewed 32 permits and 9 agricultural applications. The main responsibility of the SIWWC is to review the environmental impact of activities in regulated areas, offer alternatives and issue permits where appropriate. The SIWWC is also concerned with the preservation of any archaeological location, historic site or structure of antiquity in cooperation with the Sharon Planning and Zoning Commission.

Each of the applications received resulted in one or more field site visits before review at the following meeting. Approved activities include construction or repair of dams, stream crossings including bridges, farm ponds, timbering, construction of and additions to homes, 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 processed. In 2022 the SIWWC continued meeting with Covid-19 precautions in place but with reduced attendance due to health concerns of some Commission members. Site visits continued with reports filed by Commissioners who could not attend meetings. Precautions continue and may affect the ability of SIWWC to operate normally.

Thanks again to the Sharon Land Use Administrator, Jamie Casey, and Assistant Administrator Nikki Blass, for all their hard work with another year of Covid-19 continuing and health measures still recommended.

I would also like to mention the retirement of long serving member Harvey Hayden. His knowledge, dedication and humor will be greatly missed.

Respectfully submitted,
James D. Krissel, Chairman

Building Official/Fire Marshal

BUILDING OFFICIAL

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

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

Single- family construction resulted in 11 new homes and 1 demolition. The Hotchkiss Library began their construction this year.

	Permits Issued	Value	Permit Fee
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
2016-2017	620	19,408,755	148,517

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 324 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

Road Foreman

2021-22 highlights:

- At the Amenia Road end of Sharon Valley Road, we gained approval from the State DOT to realign that entrance/exit to calm traffic speed, especially traffic entering from Amenia Road. Later this year we will pave from Amenia Road to the intersection of Sharon Station and King Road. This is a paving project that is long overdue.
- We crack sealed Jackson Hill Road, Low Road, and Skiff Mountain. We also chip sealed Jackson Road, Fairchild Road, Lucas Road and Sharon Mountain Road. Road sealing extends the life of these roads by 5-6 years per application.
- Roadside drainage was improved in multiple locations across town on both improved roads and unimproved roads.
- Dug Road and Mudge Pond Road roadsides were reenforced to protect them both from wash-out and failure.
- Mudge Pond Road, Sharon Station Road, and Sharon Valley Road will have new guardrails by the end of 2022.
- The effort to remove dead and dangerous trees continued in 2021/22 via Town Tree Warden, Jeff Perotti; Lewis Tree; our Town Crew and Town Sub-Contractors.
- Roadside mowing and brush overgrowth projects continue. We thank you Scott Garay and his team for their service on these projects.
- We continued testing new road material(s), and crowning and grading methods on our gravel roads to improve their condition and attempt to reduce chronic mud, pothole, and wash-out issues.
- Drainage pipe replacements continued to be a big focus of our workload, and we thank all that have been helping us complete this important work.
- We also continued reviewing bridge and water crossing structures. Dug Road, on the Valley Road (Salisbury) end is a project that will be completed by the end of 2022.

As we move forward to 2022/2023, repaving Lovers Lane and Carey Hill Road, drainage and gravel road issues continue to top our list of priorities. We also remain focused on maintaining and improving our existing buildings, increasing our storage capacity, and our equipment replacement schedule.

Respectively submitted,

James Reid
Road Foreman

Social Service Agent

This past year Social Services in Sharon changed hands a few times. Mary O'Reilly left to fill a much-needed role as a Spanish teacher at HVRHS and Donna DiMartino filled in as interim until I, Melia Hill took the position in late October/early November 2021. This made for a rocky first few months of making sense of everything in the height of energy assistance application season.

The first couple of months were training and doing energy assistance work to help 35 Sharon families and individuals apply for and receive assistance with their electric and oil use for the 2021-2022 season.

The Foundation for Community Health's Prescription Assistance Program has been a huge help for Sharon residents this year. This calendar year I added two people to this; bringing the total number of people accessing this program to 12.

This Summer 2022 I've continued assisting less mobile Sharon residents with accessing the Corner Pantry in Lakeville- something that my predecessors have done. I've taken orders through the week and picked up food/delivered it most Fridays. I have a fairly regular delivery route now that has been manageable-both for the Corner Pantry and myself and it's very appreciated by the recipients. I typically bring food orders to 3-4 households each week.

There has also been a strong need for gas gift cards and other gift cards for grocery stores. I've gotten grocery store gift cards to Fresh Town in Amenia and Stop & Stop.

Total gift cards purchased for distribution in 2022 so far:

Fresh Town: 20 @ \$50/each

Stop & Shop: 10 @ \$50/each

Patco Gas Station: 30 @ \$50/each

Stop& Shop is less popular because of the distance it takes to get there. I also distributed some gift cards for Walmart and Target that were donated during last holiday season. Those have been arguably more useful even though they're also to stores that are further away.

Throughout all the above-mentioned, there's been a strong outpouring of donations- both anonymous and by caring Sharon residents who have asked what needs there are and responded to them.

Respectfully submitted,
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 2022 meeting of the Commission, Steve Szalewicz was re-elected Chairman, Jake Fricker was elected Vice Chairman, Beth Rybczyk was elected Chief Financial Officer. Other Commissioners are Doug Hobby, Ken Mishler and alternate Dobrila Waugh. This past year we lost long time members Harding Bancroft and Dr. Joseph Hajek. The both are a great loss to the commission. Particularly we acknowledge and thank Harding for his years of intelligent and faithful role as Treasure of the commission.

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 2022) show a past due owed to the Commission of \$88,658. 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 thanks to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) the Commission has been able to replace a single generator which covered three critical areas for both water and sewer with a dedicated, propane fired generator for the Whitford Road pump station. In addition, the original portable generator was repaired and put back in service for the Sharon Ridge pump station at the Sewer plant

A third generator dedicated to the Sewer plant along with propane tank was installed at the Sewer plant. This work insures a constant availability of both water and sewer services for our clients.

Additional work for 2023 will include an engineering study to determine if added filters and or other sources of water are available for high use conditions during drought similar to what we experienced this past summer.

Sewer System:

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

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

The continuing maintenance and upgrades of the system are necessary to insure reliable water and sewer services to our users.

Anyone interested in joining the Commission should contact the Selectman's Office 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.

Annual Report

During the Fiscal Year July 2021 through June 2022, the Commission held 10 regular monthly meetings. The Commission held 16 public hearings on applications received. Subsequently 16 Certificates of Appropriateness were approved and issued.

One open Alternate member vacancy was filled when Allen Reiser joined the Commission in February 2022.

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

There has been exciting news at Veterans' Field this year. A brand new Playscape was installed! It is especially popular with families on the evenings of the summer concerts when they gather to relax and listen to a variety of music.

At Veterans' Field, the Lions' Club Pavilion roof was replaced. The Pavilion is reserved during much of the summer for family reunions and parties, meetings, and classes to name a few. Also at the facility, the Region One middle school track team used the walking track for their meets.

Senior trips resumed in May after being on hold due to COVID. The outing was to the museum at Vassar College and then lunch at the Culinary Institute in Hyde Park.

In response to requests from program participants, there is now an online registration website. It is located at sharonct.myrec.com.

For information about programming or facilities please call the office of the Recreation Director, Matt Mette, at 860-364-1400.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Christensen

Sharon Green Committee

Phase 2 of the renovation of the Green is scheduled for the summer of 2023. Granite curbing will be extended along Main Street and tie into the previously installed curbing along Upper Main Street. The damage to the Green from parking and water run-off from Main Street will be alleviated. This work will complete the Green Rehabilitation which began in 2019.

We are indebted to Stephen Wasley who takes immaculate care of the Green.

The Sharon Green Committee

Betsy Hall
Linda Amerighi
Tom Casey
Eric Golden
Stephen Wasley
Marlene Woodman

Registrar of Voters

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

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

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

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

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

Connecticut now allows Election Day Registration. A Connecticut resident may register to vote and then vote with a special EDR ballot on the day of the election. This year the election will be for State and Federal offices. We urge all Sharon residents to vote every year, and we look forward to seeing you as you register to vote or at the polls.

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

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

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 2021-2022

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.

Septic Systems:	14	New Systems installed
	21	New Testing / Reserve area
	19	Replacement or Repairs to systems
	2	Central Sewage connections
	0	Abandon System – hooked into
	0	Town System

Subdivisions/Re-subdivision:

Future developments: 16

Well Applications 15 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 some of the current and anticipated challenges related to energy supply and demand in our town, to attend to environmental issues affecting the community and the ecology of the natural environment, and to educate the public concerning these matters.

This year the commission has made a particular effort to work more closely with the Town Selectmen on issues relating to energy and environment. We have also reached out to the new principal of the Sharon Center School advising her regarding these issues at the school.

Much of the Commission's effort this year was devoted to moving along the approval process for the Connecticut Green Bank's proposal for the installation of the solar array at the Sharon Center School. At this point the Selectmen have approved the electricity purchase agreement and the building permits are soon to be coming before Planning and Zoning and the Wetlands Commission.

When this project is complete, SEEC intends to look into the possibility of developing a Community Solar site in Sharon.

The Commission has also been involved in the plan to redo the Town Hall parking lot. SEEC Commissioner Mike Nadeau, who has expertise in environmentally positive drainage systems, has proposed a number of measures that could handle storm run-off and mitigate the need for a mechanical system. As of this writing, the plan for the renovation of the parking lot is being reviewed by Mike and the design engineer.

In partnership with Sharon Audubon, SEEC sponsored a workshop in June on Bird and Pollinator Friendly Gardens with Mike Nadeau and Eileen Fielding.

Katy Kinsolving, another Commissioner has created a Newsletter which provides updates on local environmental and energy events and issues, as well as more general information. Interested people can sign up at seesct@gmail.com

Again in April, SEEC hosted a roadside clean-up, with good participation and results.

SEEC also hosted a booth at the Sharon Arts and Crafts Fair in August, promoting pollinator friendly plants and reusable containers for take-out and beverages.

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

Sharon Housing Authority

In 2021/22 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.

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

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

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

Brent M. Colley, Acting Chairman

Animal Control Officer

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

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

Two infraction tickets were dispatched.

Income source and income collected:

Pound fees - \$390.00

Donations - \$10.00

Respectfully submitted, Lee Sohl, Sharon Animal Control

Litchfield Hills Probate District, #24

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

Litchfield Location

Kent Location

Canaan Location

Dawn W. Pratt, Clerk

Judge Blick Beth L. McGuire, *Chief Clerk*

Carolyn Poley, *Assistant Clerk*

860-927-3729

Megan W. Foley, *Clerk*

860-567-8065

860-824-7012

It is with great pleasure that I report to the residents of the Litchfield Hills Probate District the activity of the Probate Court for fiscal year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 and request this report be included in the Town's next published Annual Report.

	<u>2020 – 2021 FY</u> <u>Number of Matters</u>	<u>2021 – 2022</u> <u>FY</u> <u>Number of Matters</u>
Fee Waivers	99	78
Decedent's Estates	1,355	1389
Trusts	205	162
Conservators	226	222
Name Changes	46	24
Guardian of the Person & Estate	126	95

Guardian of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities	154	167
Adult Commitment	2	0
Children's Matters:		
Adoptions/Termination of Parental Rights and		
Emancipation of a Minor/Determine	12	10
Power of Attorney Accounting Matters	4	0
Total probate matters handled	2,227	2,147

Throughout the pandemic, the Court has remained open, all cases have been timely processed and hearings promptly scheduled. Currently, hearings are held either in- person, by teleconferencing or by Webex video conferencing.

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

This is the last Report which I will be providing. Effective January 1, 2023 I am retiring as I am reaching the mandated retirement age set by statute. It has truly been an honor to serve as your Judge of Probate for the past 16 years.

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

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

Sharon Day Care

The 2021-2022 year has been a challenge for ALL! While the Sharon Day Care has had its share of challenges, it has also achieved some very positive advances. Here are the highlights of our year:

- The crises caused by Covid had our center closed a number of times but we made it through via strong leadership by our director Carrie Ann Olsen and a dedicated resilient

staff. The families we serve were very cooperative and understanding even though they had work related responsibilities that we had to interrupt with our required closings.

- With a long waiting list it was an ongoing task for our director to find employees to allow us to work to full capacity.
- Enrollment growth required us to seek more space which we achieved temporarily with the cooperation of SCS and SCS BOE. We have a two year lease.
- The Sharon Classic Road Race could not be held, as per tradition, on the historic Sharon Town Green. With much analysis and community outreach we acquired a new venue for the 37th SCRR in Sharon Valley. It was a necessary move but it did attract some criticism from those who wanted the traditional race venue. With the move we had more space for displays and vendors, more parking area, a scenic race course. . . and bathrooms with running water. Even better, we made new friends. The residents of Sharon Valley reached out and joined in our efforts to create a successful event. . . *and it worked!*
- Our Director, Carrie Ann Olsen, was able to apply for and receive several grants to benefit our children, staff, and facilities.
- We were able to continue our support of the Sharon community by participating in fund raisers and food drives. The winter of 22/23 will have us collecting coats for young and old in the community.
- Many businesses in the area support us and we in turn support them, ever thankful for their contributions.

Everyone at Sharon Day Care is grateful for the financial and moral support we receive from the community and we are pleased to continue our child care service (accredited by the NAEYC) that we initiated in 1985.

Janet Nickson

Sharon Day Care Board of Directors

Sharon Historical Society

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

In 2022, the Sharon Historical Society & Museum welcomed 1006 in-person visitors, and increase compared with 806 visitors in 2021 and 802 in 2020. In addition to in-person visitors, SHS supports patron requests for family and property histories. Six dedicated volunteers and a Housatonic Regional High School intern serve as docents, write newsletter articles, assist with exhibitions, and assist with collections care and a comprehensive collections inventory project.

Support is critical for the preservation and of the Gay-Hoyt House and the museum addition, where we host programs and exhibitions, as well as store the SHS artifact collections and archives. In 2022, the Town of Sharon supported \$5,000 in maintenance and repairs to the exterior of the historic 1775 Gay-Hoyt House and the SHS museum addition. An additional \$78,800 in grant funds were awarded from Connecticut Humanities, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Rhoades Robinson Foundation, an anonymous foundation, Connecticut Connections, and the Connecticut League of History Organizations. Grant funding enabled SHS staff and volunteers to process the Frances Kelsey Photographic Archive, provide Children's Programs, prepare requirements for a permanent exhibition on the history of Sharon, and install a spotlight exhibit on the life of Charcoal Annie.

In addition to grant awards, contributions from members and business sponsors support the necessary operations and resources to design and deliver programs and exhibitions which tell stories of the history of the people and events in our town and region.

In the past year we have mounted exhibitions and delivered programs including:

- *Sharon Stories in the World and at Home highlighting recent acquisitions to our collection and focusing on how major events impacted our community*
- *The Golden Thread: Spinners and Weavers of Colonial America, including our own historic loom*
- *Reinventing Farming, a program about the farmers who raise our food with great care for the earth and its creatures, including an exhibition and a series of panel discussions with active local farmers expressing the challenges and value of local farming*
- *Sharon Collects, an exhibit of samplers collected and curated by local Sharon collector Alexandra Peters*
- *Children's activities at the annual Sharon Arts & Crafts Fair and a self-guided tour through the Historic Sharon Burying Ground (a.k.a. Hillside Cemetery)*

The Gallery SHS has offered a wide range of art exhibits:

- *Depicting Our Town, with works of local artist interpreting their views on home and community*
- *Northlight Studios 11th Annual Student Show*
- *Drone! Photography by Brian Wilcox and Graham Klemm*
- *The Summer Show*
- *Jano Fairservis Paintings*

The Sharon Historical Society thanks the Town of Sharon for supporting the preservation of the Gay-Hoyt House and the museum addition. Our continued improvements as a historical society and museum, and the growth of our collections, drives our ability to serve as a center for research, learning and historical understanding, and civic pride. We look forward to serving the evolving needs and interests of our patrons.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine M. Beer
Executive Director
www.sharonhist.org

Sharon Fire Department Ambulance Squad

The Sharon Fire Department, Inc. Ambulance members responded to 377 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 took delivery of our new 2021 AEV Type II TraumaHawk ambulance from Eastford Fire & Rescue Sales in September 2021. As with many orders, this was delayed. East Clinton, New York took possession of our existing ambulance. 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 serving our Town, staying protected and remaining 100% volunteer.

Respectfully,

Thalia MacMillan

Ambulance Captain

Sharon Fire Department, Inc.

The Sharon Fire Department, Inc. is comprised of 45 volunteers that serve the Town of Sharon. The Fire Department has responded to over 176 incidents in Sharon and Mutual Aide calls to neighboring towns.

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

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

Sharon Fire Department maintains and operates several pieces of Apparatus, each necessary depending on the call received. For calls such as fires, car accidents and Automatic alarms, Engine 5 (2017 E-One Custom), responds in the area around the Main station and Engine 6 (2000 Kenworth) responds to calls near the Ellsworth station. Tower 1 (2007 American LaFrance) is a 100-foot Tower Ladder. This is used for all chimney or structure fires. Calls for any type of fire have our pumper-tanker Engine 3, (1990 Ford) responding. 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, traffic incidents or cellar pump outs require response by Hazmat 1 (2006 Freightliner). Rescue 1 (1999 Ford) is utilized for calls with wires down, motor vehicle accidents and ambulance assistance. 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. Several fundraisers were planned throughout the year such as our Annual Golf Tournament, Wine Tasting Event, Pictures with Santa Event and the sale of Sharon Fire Dept., Inc. 2023 calendars to raise money for our Engine/Tanker. Generous donations from residents, grants from anonymous donors as well as grants from The Rosenheim Foundation and The Low Road Foundation will allow us to reach our goal for a new Engine/Tanker. Increased costs of our new Engine/Tanker made our goal lofty but we persevered to raise the \$565,000 necessary.

The Sharon Fire Department are grateful to the Town and its citizens for their continued support and generosity. Our volunteers are proud to serve the community of Sharon 24/7 - 365 days a year. We are always in need of new members to ensure this strong commitment. Visit our website at sharonfiredept.org 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 FY22, CMHA's outpatient services aided 914 people, and provided more than 420 clinical sessions every month and over 9,877 sessions over the course of the year.

Parenting Support Services

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

In FY22, 126 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 FY22, 204 families received intensive, home-based support, counseling, and parenting Assistance – a nearly 72% increase from FY21.

3. Collaborations

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

The following agencies are collaborators: cts 4 Ministries

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

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

CMHA provided more than 8,132 hours of service to 1,218 individuals and families in the Waterbury and Torrington region, with more than 420 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 7,500 adults and children each year. CMHA is Connecticut's first fully Joint Commission accredited Behavioral Health

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Litchfield County, Inc.

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

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

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

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

VNHLC cared for 2,442 patients and provided 56,861 patient visits in 2021-2022.

VNHLC is proud of its long-standing history with the Town of Sharon. 114 persons from Sharon received home health services from VNHLC during the past year.

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

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

- 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 - VNHLC receives an annual allocation from the town to help defray the costs of providing free Health Promotion visits and Public Health Programs. Health Promotion is a program in which certain elderly at-risk patients, who normally live alone and no longer qualify for insurance benefits, are routinely monitored free of charge by one of our staff nurses, therapists, social workers, or dieticians.

Structured Bereavement Groups are held twice a year. The groups are free and open to anyone in the community who has lost a family member or friend. The bereavement coordinator is also always available to meet privately with people. Just before the holiday season, an event, The Tree of Lights, is held to honor and remember VNHLC patients who have passed within the past 18 months to which family members and caregivers are invited.

This past year VNHLC was able to conduct public and many private flu clinics and administered more than 1,500 flu vaccines to mostly high-risk individuals. All ages, 18 and older, were welcome to attend.

Since VNHLC is a non-profit health agency, the Board of Directors serve on a voluntary basis and represent all the towns in which full services are provided. The representative from Sharon for 2021-2022 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 (NHCOCG) 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.

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

NHCOG experienced a complete organizational changeover during the last Fiscal Year (FY), which consisted of the latter half of 2021 and the first half of 2022. Executive Director Rick Lynn retired after more than 30 years and was replaced by Robert Phillips prior to the start of the FY. Office Manager, Darlene Krukar retired after more than 20 years of service to the region. Community Development Director, Jocelyn Ayer assumed a new position outside of the COG, as did Janell Mullen; former Regional Planner for the COG. Staffing needs were analyzed along with a strategic planning exercise which resulted in modified titles and roles such as Assistant Director, Senior Regional Planner, and Financial/Office Manager, which were filled by Emily Hultquist, Kathryn Faraci and Sarah Better, respectively. Emily brought many years of previous experience with her from the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), Kathryn retired from the state DOT and brought her 35 years of expertise to the region, and Sarah brought banking experience as well as small business management to the COG.

Prior to the restaffing efforts, NHCOG operated with only two staff for approximately 2.5 months. Despite these staffing challenges, work continued on the implementation of the COG's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region later in the FY. Major strategies outlined in the CEDS include expanding access to high-speed fiber optic broadband (Fiber to the Home – FTTH), promoting tourism/arts/culture, supporting local farms, strengthening manufacturing, and encouraging entrepreneurs and innovation. A new round of funding from US EDA was applied for and granted at the end of the FY and will provide for an update to our 5-year CEDS and continued implementation of the goals and objectives.

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

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

NHCOG also serves as the oversight agent for approximately \$385,000 in Homeland Security Grant funding that is received each year for the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Region 5. There are a number of 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 2021, 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. The Fuel Bank program partnership that was previously managed by NHCOG was concluded.

NHCOG also continued to assist local organizations including the Regional Housing Council, Northwest Hills Road Supervisors Association, Recycling Advisory Committee, and the Housatonic River Commission.

In addition, NHCOC 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. However, two of the planned events had to be cancelled due to insufficient staffing levels.

Serving as officers of NHCOC during FY 2021-2022 were Don Stein, Chairman; Bob Valentine, followed by Henry Todd, Vice Chairmen; Charlie Perotti, Secretary; and Michael Criss, Treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert A Phillips, AICP
Executive Director

Northwest CT Regional Housing Council

Providing housing options that are affordable for young adults, young families, seniors, and those who work in our towns has never been more important or urgent. Creating these housing options is the focus of the members of the Northwest Connecticut Regional Housing Council.

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

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

We thank David Berto of Housing Enterprises Inc. for attending our meetings and providing technical assistance to our housing organizations. We thank our member towns for their financial support, NHCOC for administrative support, and Jocelyn Ayer of the Litchfield County Center for Housing Opportunity for hosting our meetings and organizing speakers. Our towns’ \$100 annual dues are a cost-effective investment in our area’s future. For more information on the Regional Housing Council or the local housing organizations which are members, visit www.nwcthousing.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Groody Musselman, Chair (Litchfield Housing Trust)
Chris Sanders, Vice-Chair (Goshen Housing Trust)

Housatonic River Commission

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

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

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

As always, land use issues within the Housatonic River Corridor remain a significant concern. We continue to support efforts to address invasive plant species along the waterway, with several members working to monitor and in some cases control troublesome, aggressive invasives in the inner river corridor. Monitoring the work of the Housatonic Railroad, including their track repair, herbicide use, and derailment risk also continue. The River Commission provided comments and suggestions on many proposed projects as development along the River continues to increase significantly. All towns are reminded to please be sure that the HRC is notified of any proposed project within the River Corridor.

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

Jesse Klingebiel, Secretary

Housatonic Youth Service Bureau

Happy Birthday HYSB! In December 2021 the Housatonic Youth Service Bureau celebrated its 30th birthday...30 years of service to the youth and families of Region One.

We proudly serve the Northwest Corner as the only mental health agency providing FREE clinical services to children ages 3-21 and their families and we continue to grow and expand our programs to meet the increasing needs of our communities.

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

Post-pandemic fallout continues to have a huge impact in the work that we do; families are still coping with loss, anxiety, feelings of isolation, and hesitation about how/when to return to “normal” while also facing judgement and even criticism for those decision. We have also noted in significant increase in truancy cases being referred to our Juvenile Review Board. During the 2021-2022 school year, HYSB worked with 132 students in the region for individual counseling, 17 of those students resided in Sharon.

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year our clinical staff visited each of the 7 public schools as well as some of our private schools weekly to provide in-person counseling services to children during the school day. One of the critical differences between HYSB and other providers is our relationships with the school communities. This partnership allows us to be in the schools during the school days brining the services directly to the students and eliminating the barriers of transportation, scheduling, parent/caregiver availability, etc.

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

Your continued annual support makes it possible for HYSB to make a difference in the lives of thousands within our community.

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

Sincerely,
Kelly Parker, Executive Director

Women's Support Services

This past year has arguably been one of the busiest years Women's Support Services (WSS) has ever experienced. The numbers speak for themselves. During the past year we:

Provided support services to 821 clients - 37 of these clients were from Sharon.

Of this number, 412 were new clients. This is a nearly 30% increase in two years.

The composition of our new clients includes:

381 adults and 31 children

297 female, 111 male clients, 4 clients who chose 'Other'

Responded to 1485 hotline crisis requests – a nearly 65% increase in two years.

Provided emergency shelter to 20 people for a total of 2,135 nights of shelter. This included 11 women, 2 men, and 7 children.

Provided criminal and civil court advocacy and support to 670 victims of family violence – a 44% increase over two years.

Conducted 194 prevention workshops to children and teens in area schools. We are now active in every single elementary/middle school in the region, as well as Housatonic Valley Regional High School.

The increasing requests for support and expansion of programming has fueled growth in other areas as well. WSS recruited an additional Advocate this spring, bringing our Client Services team to 5 full-time staff. We have also added a Director of Operations, bringing us to 12 full-time staff members altogether. We also moved into new offices this spring, and we now have the space to host events and training workshops – along with all of our staff members! We are also in the midst of plans to create a welcoming community space, complete with kitchen and laundry, a dining area, and space for clients and their families to rest, do homework, and have a sense of normalcy, all while accessing vital services and supports under one roof. Thank you to the Town of Sharon for your grant of \$1,500 last year, which has been critical in helping Women's Support Services meet the increased requests from our clients and community.

Our growing team has brought us diversity, critical skills, and increased capacity. Our new Director of Community Engagement, in collaboration with the Director of Clients Services, revised our prevention education program to create a seamless progression of lessons from grade 6 – grade 12. In the Region One Middle Schools and High School, every student will access WSS programming. Also exciting is the fact that our Prevention Education team has begun engaging parents around the topics we are discussing with their children at school. This is a critical point for helping parents and caretakers to reinforce the lessons and strategies their students are , and will also be a learning opportunity for them. The Director also

revitalized our certification training program for volunteers and re-launched our *Early Years Program*, which focuses on Kindergarten - Grade 2. This program is largely volunteer-run.

I felt like a rock star reading to the class! The kids loved brainstorming. The class was very engaged and loved asking questions during and after hearing the story. It was the end of their school day when I left. As I walked outside, I overheard one of the students talking with her dad. She was excited to show him her paper and tell him about the story from class. I'm hoping that by bringing home her paper, she (and the other students) will share the lessons with her siblings and other people outside of class.

Amanda Gregg, WSS Volunteer

We are also better able to serve our clients. We now have staff members who are bilingual in English and Spanish, we have more options for emergency and interim housing, and we have the capacity to provide consistent support to clients who enter the Rapid Re-housing program, but still need on-going support. Most clients need support beyond counseling. They need help accessing services, obtaining legal documents, negotiating with agencies, organizing meetings and childcare, etc. If they don't have a car or just need someone to be with them, there is an entirely different level of support that is required.

We are also expanding our community education program, which helps healthcare and emergency service providers identify victims of abuse and refer to them to our services. We are engaging area businesses and other community partners to ensure that we are reaching the people who need our services, to raise awareness about the many forms of domestic violence, and to spread the message that abuse is not acceptable and victims are to be believed, not blamed.

The on-going support of the Town of Sharon has been critical to the continued strengthening of our programs and support services. Thank you.



Fiscal Year 22 was a very busy year for the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon. It began with our move out of 10 Upper Main Street in early July and our arrival at the American Legion on New Street. Library staff worked hard planning our temporary location, which has worked well for us. The shelves hold about 1/3 of our collection and we continue to acquire new books. The move led us to discover a treasure trove of 101 historical posters in a forgotten library table drawer. An ALA/NEH ARPA grant has supported the researching, cataloging, and digitizing of the collection, as well as the conservation of 19 of the most significant examples.

Our move coincided with the arrival of the first COVID-19 boosters and we did see an uptick in traffic to the library. By the end of the fiscal year our circulation numbers equaled pre-pandemic statistics. The largest change noted was the increased embrace of electronic formats by our patrons. By summer 2022 circulation of downloadable electronic books and audiobooks, available free of charge with a library card, equaled that of physical books and audiobooks on CD. DVD-use declined as more and more patrons turned toward streaming films on the two platforms that we offer, Hoopla and Kanopy.

The space limitations of the American Legion, along with the ongoing COVID situation, have limited our in-person programming options. Mrs. Sam, our children's librarian, saw excellent response to her children's activities and her summer reading programs. Babies, toddlers, and their parents enjoyed Saturday story times, while older kids decorated Zombie Barbies, made tiny book jewelry and buttons, watched movies, and more. Her display for National Observe the Moon Night won first prize in Connecticut. She supplied an ongoing series of Make and Take craft projects based on suggested books. Santa and his elves paid a visit to the front lawn in front of 10 Upper Main Street in early December. Mrs. Sam also visited regularly with all grades at Sharon Center School, bringing the Hotchkiss Library to the schoolchildren.

Adult programming remained mainly on Zoom; offerings ranged from author talks on Oscar Wilde, fresh egg cookery, gardening, and the translation of a Danish memoir, which was named one of the New York Time's top 10 books of 2021. We held our first off-site virtual programming, broadcasting a Valentine's Day cooking demonstration from Sharon's Le Gamin bistro. Patrons listened to Yale science graduate students discuss their research and watched local author and Tik Tok- baking sensation Jessie Sheehan make some delectable treats.

The Library received a \$3000 ARPA grant from the Town of Sharon, which funded a popular 20-week series, Resilience. Practitioners offered guided meditations, chair yoga, and some naturopathic ways to reduce stress and foster strength. Many attendees were Sharon seniors, who live alone. Despite the virtual environment, they clearly benefited from the fellowship of the regular gatherings. The success of that program has convinced us of the need for more focus on regular offerings for Sharon's seniors.

Our outdoor seating area in front of the American Legion offers two benches and a solar charger. Patrons and passersby are encouraged to read, talk, study, or eat lunch, while charging their phone or laptop. Our Wi-Fi extends outdoors and is accessible 24/7. Our patron computers supply free internet access during regular hours. The Library is committed to help close the digital divide.

FY2022 saw the successful completion of our Capital Campaign - *Honoring the Past, Forging the Future*, to fund our building project (\$3.2 million) and build our endowment (\$300,000). The Library surpassed its goal and raised over \$3.5 million from over 300 donors, including many individuals, families, foundations, businesses, and the Town of Sharon, who gave a \$50,000 grant.

In August 2021 we celebrated the ceremonial groundbreaking at our 10 Upper Main Street facility. US Senator Jahana Hayes, State Representative Maria Horn, State Senator Craig Minor,

Sharon First Selectman Brent Colley, and CT State Librarian Deborah Schander joined in the festivities. The Board of Directors voted to postpone construction, due to the shortage of labor and the huge spike in the cost of building materials, but by Spring 2022 Kronenberger & Sons Restoration, Inc. began work on the expansion and restoration of our beautiful building. We expect to return to the Green in May 2023. By relocating staff workspace to the rear of the building, the Library will offer more space for quiet study and reading, as well as collaborative meeting space with teleconferencing equipment, which will be available for use by residents of Sharon. A new community room will house children's and adult programming and will also be available for use by local organizations. The new entrance, the vertical platform lift, and two ADA-compliant restrooms will make the library accessible to all. All of these improvements have been designed to exist harmoniously with our beautiful original structure, which will be lovingly restored.

The staff and board of the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon are extremely excited about the future of the Library and everything we will be able to offer the residents of Sharon.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Hachmeister, PhD
Executive Director
Hotchkiss Library of Sharon

Chore Service

Chore Service, founded in 1992, provides in-home, non-medical assistance to seniors and people with disabilities within the community so that they may remain safely and independently at home. Chore employs local, caring people to provide essential services such as house cleaning, laundry, companionship, transportation, yard work, etc. to residents in North Canaan, Cornwall, Falls Village, Kent, Norfolk, Salisbury/Lakeville and Sharon. Services are partially funded by a grant from the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging which subsidizes clients aged 60 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 2021 through June 2022, Chore Service provided services to 19 Sharon residents. These residents received 785 hours of help with chores such as cleaning, errands and yard work so that they could continue to remain safely in their homes. Two Chore Workers who live in Sharon earned over \$8,000 last year.

Safety for both clients and workers remains a priority. COVID safety protocols and training remain in place with PPE supplied to workers and clients in need.

The need for services continues to grow and no one is ever turned away for the ability to pay. Like many businesses in our community, Chore continues to be affected by the labor shortage and found it essential to increase worker wages to provide a competitive wage.

Our federal grant monies are depleted before the year ends, so we are delighted that the Town of Sharon continues to contribute to these services. Many thanks to those that have supported and continue to support Chore Service. 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 are looking for employment or volunteer opportunities and would like to make a difference in someone's life, please give Chore a call.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane MacLaren
Executive Director
jane@choreservice.org

Salisbury/Sharon Transfer Station

As mentioned in the report last year, Connecticut is still in a solid waste crisis. The Materials Innovations & Recycling Authority's Waste-To-Energy facility in Hartford stopped accepting garbage in July 2022. In the short-term, the garbage generated in Salisbury & Sharon will end up in a landfill in Pennsylvania.

Our towns have been participating in Connecticut Coalition for Sustainable Materials Management (CCSMM) meetings. CCSMM is currently comprised of the Department of Energy and Environment, and just over one hundred Connecticut municipalities. Certainly, long-term goals will be to have more local infrastructure to manage both our recycling and garbage, ideally located within the State. The CCSMM has had working groups exploring: Extended Producer Responsibility; Food Scrap Collection/Diversion; Increased Reuse and Recycling; Unit-Based Pricing.

During the summer, we expanded the number of households in our food scrap collection pilot. Initially the pilot started with approximately one hundred-twenty households, we now have increased to over three hundred! We will continue to investigate ways to increase the program to include more households, businesses, and schools.

Please visit our website: www.salisburysharontransferstation.com

Brian Bartram, Manager

Sharon Connect Task Force

At a special Town Meeting on Nov. 10, 2022, Sharon residents voted overwhelmingly in support of a proposal for the town to pay \$1.6 million to Comcast to cover part of the cost to complete Comcast's network along 28.5 miles of road and to connect 250 homes that previously had no access to its high-speed internet network. Construction was expected to begin as soon as the final contract was signed and all permits were obtained.

After nearly 15 years of ignoring Town requests to complete its network so that all residents could have access to high-speed internet, Comcast in early May approached the First Selectman and the Sharon Connect Task Force to propose a partnership with the town to build out to the unserved homes. Comcast's proposal sent the all-volunteer Sharon Connect Task Force in a new direction.

Until it heard from Comcast, the Task Force had been pursuing a plan for a town-owned internet network. In January 2022, the Task Force had presented to the Board of Selectmen and in February to a town informational meeting, the results of the feasibility analysis prepared by Sertex Broadband Services for a town-owned, fiber-optic internet network that would serve all homes and businesses for a total capital cost of \$12.5 million. To cover annual operating expenses, the Task Force estimated that more than 500 Sharon households would need to subscribe to the town-owned network; after putting out a call for those interested, only 47 households presubscribed. The Task Force was preparing a plan to market the town-owned internet service when Comcast made its proposal.

Concurrently with the Comcast negotiations, the Town of Sharon awarded \$33,170 in ARPA funds to Comcast to wire Lower Deer Run, a dirt road with underground utilities – one of the hard-to-serve roads in town. Comcast completed that work on time to the satisfaction of residents, giving the town confidence that the larger plan could be successful. Since Lower Deer Run was one of the roads in the overall \$1.6 million plan, Comcast agreed to dedicate up to \$33,170 to pay for other Sharon households currently passed by Comcast but are not served because they are too far from the road.

The Board of Selectmen approved the proposal and sent it to the Board of Finance, which determined how the proposal could be financed and voted to send it to a town vote. The Board of Finance asked that the town hire a telecommunications lawyer to advise on the final contract and also, if it were approved, to hire a contract performance manager to make sure Comcast lived up to its terms.

In mid-October, after the town vote had been scheduled and publicly announced, Frontier Communications said it was planning to wire parts of Sharon with fiber-optic lines to deliver high-speed internet as part of a statewide buildout. Frontier expressed interest in partnering with the town to build to all homes at a roughly estimated cost to the town of \$3.2 million. The Task Force engaged with Frontier and hosted a town informational meeting about Frontier's interest. Nevertheless, the town's residents voted to go forward with Comcast's plan.

The Task Force expects to continue its weekly meetings and will work with the town's contract performance manager to help with oversight and to assist with permitting for Comcast's construction. It will continue to pursue state ARPA grants to offset part of its \$1.6 million investment. It expects to continue helping households with internet connectivity issues. It will continue to email community updates (sign up at sharonconnect.org to be added to the mailing list), to post news on its Facebook group (Sharon Internet Task Force), and to keep its website at sharonconnect.org up to date.

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 for their help. We would also like to thank the Board of Finance for its support. Mike Solitro, chief executive of Sertex, went above and beyond in assisting the Task Force with the technical and financial details of installing and operating an internet network. He gave us hours of his time and earned our trust and respect. Gayle Huntress, the Municipal Light Plant manager of the Town of Shutesbury MA, was generous with her advice and expertise in managing the construction and operation of a town-owned internet network. We are also deeply grateful to all our Task Force members, who contributed copious amounts of time and talent: John Brett, Patrick Gallaway, Roger Lourie, Linda Neiberg, Ben Newhouse, Alexandra Peters, Barbara Prindle, Brent Prindle, Beth Rybczyk, and Eric Simon.

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

ARPA Advisory Committee

The Sharon ARPA Advisory Committee continued its process of accepting and reviewing applications for funding from the town's roughly \$800,000 federal grant under the American Rescue Plan Act. Each applicant was granted a public hearing before the Committee. All meetings 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 in the process is to conduct a thorough public review and to invite discussion about how the town should allocate its funding.

By mid-October 2022, the Board of Selectmen had approved grant applications totaling roughly \$550,000. The decisions help to fulfill one of the main goals of the federal ARPA funding, which is to disburse the funds as quickly as practical to help local residents, institutions, and businesses recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic.

The Board of Selectmen approved the following grant applications:

\$19,111 – Sharon Fire Dept. and Ambulance Squad
\$15,000 – Housatonic Youth Service Bureau
\$38,000 – Silver Lake Shores Association
\$5,000 – Housatonic Valley Association
\$46,070 –support to local business (The Edward, Sharon Valley Tavern, Cornwall Bridge Gardens)
\$8,000 – American Legion Post #126
\$22,533.03 – High Speed Internet installation - Lower Deer Run
\$10,000 – Sharon United Methodist Church
\$10,000 – Greenwoods Counseling & Referrals
\$3,000 – Hotchkiss Library of Sharon
\$15,000 – Sharon Audubon
\$10,000 – Sharon Day Care Center
\$82,000 – Sharon Sewer and Water
\$9,474.56 – Support to Three Individuals
\$90,000 – Town Hall generator
\$50,000 – Sharon Housing Authority
\$50,000 – The Equus Effect
\$10,000 – Chore Service
\$21,000 – H&H Educators
\$12,000 – Town Highway employees - one-time cost-of-living payments

The Sharon ARPA Advisory Committee is pleased to assist the town in managing a transparent process for disbursing needed funds. We wish to thank all our current members and those who had previously participated in our twice-a-month meetings: Douglas Cahill, Thomas Casey, Donna DiMartino, Meghan Flanagan, Carol Flaton, Gretchen Hachmeister, Barbara Prindle, and Sophia Wang.

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

Town of Sharon

Budget 2021 – 2022

For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022

General Summary

	<u>2020-2021</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
Board of Selectmen Budget	\$4,632,979	\$4,852,223
Less non-tax revenues	<u>556,827</u>	<u>608,151</u>
	\$4,076,152	\$4,244,072
Board of Education Budget	\$6,555,837	\$6,579,893
Less non-tax revenues	<u>9,960</u>	<u>9,960</u>
	\$6,545,877	\$6,569,933

The Board of Finance approved the following:

TOTAL TO BE RAISED BY TOWN TAXES, 2021-2022

\$10,814,005

GRAND LIST, OCTOBER 2020

746,929,778

MIL RATE

14.50

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas H. Bartram
Chairman, Board of Finance