

## Town Receives Congressional Grant Awards

In early 2023, Town staff busily worked to submit eight proposals for funding to Connecticut's congressional representatives through the Congressionally-Directed Spending program. The review process is meticulous and challenging, with only a handful of municipalities from each state receiving any amount of funding each year out of thousands of requests that are submitted. Of these eight submitted by the Town of Winchester, two were successfully approved for funding by Congress in December: the first is \$850,000 to upgrade police and public works radios to ensure maximum connectivity in all parts of town, and the second is \$2,530,000 to help construct a new Public Works facility, as our current facility has significant structural challenges that require urgent attention.

While the Board of Selectmen still needs to vote to accept these grants, and more work is needed to locate additional funds to support the much-needed new Public Works facility project, these awards represent \$3,380,000 of investment in the Town without burdening local property taxpayers, and the Town receiving an unprecedented two funding awards from Congress underscores the amazing work being done here in Winchester and Winsted. A special thank you to our representatives in Congress: Senator Chris Murphy, Senator Richard Blumenthal, and Rep. John Larson!

## Events & Activities - Winter 2022-2023

- **Jan. 16 - Mar. 20 - Amateur Radio Licensing Class:** Wireless Operators of Winsted offers a free amateur radio licensing class at the **Winsted Elks Lodge**. The class runs as 10 weekly sessions at **7:30pm**. Each class is 90 minutes long. Only cost is \$32.95 for the ARRL Ham Radio License manual
- **Feb. 5 - Senior Center UCONN Woman's v. South Carolina Basketball :** Watch the game of the season from great seats at the XL Center in Hartford. Tickets are \$115/person. Bus departs at **10am** w/ a limited number of seats. So, don't wait to purchase now. Trips make great gifts.
- **Feb. 21 - 23 - Senior Center Atlantic City at Caesars:** The bus is filling up and trip includes motor coach transportation, 2 nights accommodation at the hotel/casino, \$50 slot bonus, \$50 meal voucher, 2 shows - "Simon & Garfunkel" & "The Carpenter's Tribute" & hotel baggage handling, tax, and driver gratuities. Bus departs **8am** and returns approximately **8pm**. Cost is according to room at \$295 per person for double, \$285 per person for triple, and \$395 per person for single.

**Other Recreation Department Info:** programs running this Winter include Mad Science, Art Ventures, Karate, Gymnastics, and Tennis Lessons. Contact Director of Recreation Tanya Risucci at trisucci@townofwinchester.org for more information!

**Other Senior Center Info:** In 2023, the Senior Center is coordinating trips to Washington DC (March 24-28), Niagara Falls (June 26-30), and Cape Cod/Martha's Vineyard (Sept 11-15). Costs vary per trip. Please visit the Senior Center to find more information and register to participate!

For more information about programming in town, please visit the Recreation and Senior Center pages on the Town website (townofwinchester.org) and beardsleylibrary.org.

Please submit any events that you would like to see listed in the Spring edition (events to be held between March 1st and May 30th) of the Winchester Wire to [communications@townofwinchester.org](mailto:communications@townofwinchester.org).



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**Nextdoor:** Nextdoor.com

You can also visit [townofwinchester.org](https://townofwinchester.org) to find links to our social media pages. Town Hall can be reached at 860-379-2713 or at [communications@townofwinchester.org](mailto:communications@townofwinchester.org).

# WINCHESTER WIRE

The latest, direct community updates from the Town of Winchester, CT.



### REMINDERS & UPDATES

**AMBULANCE & FIRE DEPT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED URGENTLY; LEARN MORE WITHIN**

**ONLINE PERMITTING PORTAL NOW ON TOWN WEBSITE**

**FIBER OPTIC INTERNET COMES TO WINCHESTER; VISIT TOWN WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE**

**NEW BUSINESSES OPEN ON MAIN STREET INCLUDING GIANNI'S DELI, JT'S CAFE, AND ANNIE SIMARD REAL ESTATE.**

**W WAKEFIELD BRIDGE OVER TAYLOR BROOK TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE IN SPRING FOR CULVERT REPLACEMENT; READ MORE ON TOWN WEBSITE**

## Winchester PD spread Holiday Joy

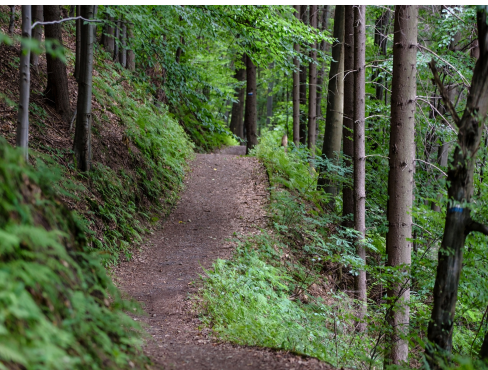
Winchester PD's Annual Stuff-A-Cruiser Toy Drive kicked off on Sunday, Dec 3rd, with Officers and a special guest from up North accepting generous donations of presents to ensure the gift of holiday cheer reaches each child in Winchester. The results of the annual drive, as seen in the photo here, show the spirit of giving runs strong in our town!



## Mad River Rec Area Growth

The Town and Fit Together have partnered to improve and expand upon the existing network of trails in the Mad River Recreation Area. On Nov 30, Town Manager Josh Kelly and Fit

Together's Exec. Director, Carla Angevine, hosted a public meeting to discuss prospective improvements to the site. Angevine was pleased with the overall excited energy from over 60 members of the public in attendance. She looks forward to hosting preliminary hikes for



anyone wishing to familiarize themselves with this local natural treasure. The Town and Fit Together will apply for a grant in 2023 that will fund the first phase of this project.



## Energy Assistance Available

Energy Assistance is available through the Salvation Army and the New Opportunities Inc. office in Winsted. Please call Alta at 860-738-9138 for Energy Assistance through New Opportunities (in Winsted) or Pam at 860-379-8444 for the Fuel Assistance Program.

WE HAVE AN URGENT NEED FOR MONETARY DONATIONS TO THE RESIDENT ASSISTANCE FUND. This fund helps community members who are struggling to meet their basic needs. Please considering donating today! If you would like to donate, please contact Katie Vaill at 860-853-6601.

## Can It Last? Yes It Can!



In June of 2022, we were thrilled and humbled to receive featured attention from the *Wall Street Journal* in an article entitled *Rural Counties are Booming, but Can It Last?*, written by Sarah Chaney Cambon and Andrew Mollica. The article highlighted an influx of new residents 15% higher to areas such as our own compared to metropolitan zones, a 52% overall spike in job postings joined by a 6.3% annualized raise in wages and a significant increase in school enrollment by the end of 2021.

As we head into 2023 with great momentum, we want to take a brief retrospective look of our own to provide the *Wall Street Journal* with our initial answer.

There's a vital aspect of any booming town that we believe was missed in the June article that deserves a focus in our response: care and investment in the community.

In 2022, the Town awarded 26 local businesses a total of \$250k through the Façade Improvement Program and 11 local businesses a total of \$100k through Business Start-Up Program. These investments, provided through ARPA and private grant dollars, were matched by over \$1.5 million in private investment, representing a total \$1.8 million investment 2022 through this program alone. The Town was also awarded over \$5 million in competitive grants in 2022, significantly increasing outside investment in our town.

As a means of services, the Winsted Senior Center provides its members with meals, event celebrations, programs, trips, and fitness classes such as Chair Yoga, Qigong/Tai-Chi, and Mindfulness/Relaxation all geared towards healthy aging. Our Recreation Department saw just under 1500 participants in our town's sports and events for the year. In addition to responding to emergency calls, welfare checks, and town concerns, our Emergency Services departments conduct regular town-wide celebrations like the Fireman's Carnival and Trunk-or-Treat, and community outreach programs like our most recent Stuff-A-Cruiser toy drive. Thanks to the generous donations of residents like you, our Resident Assistance Fund has been able to help provide key necessities for those most impoverished and in need in our community.

While the numbers outlined in the *Wall Street Journal* article were optimistic for our town and region, the reality of the care and investment going into our community is what has really made this past year special. As we charge in 2023 together, facing new challenges and opportunities, we believe that the resounding answer our community's actions provide to the question of "can it last?" is "yes, it can!"

## Introducing our Local Economic Growth Section

Entrepreneurial fires are burning bright in the Town of Winchester. With so much changing everyday, we at Town Hall wish to celebrate the spirits and hard work of our citizens in a new section of the Winchester Wire. The Next L.E.G. is dedicated to featuring budding ventures, impactful upcoming changes, and events that bolster business and pull our community together.

In that vein, we'd like to welcome Annie Q. Simard Real Estate to 564 Main Street (ribbon cutting pictured to the right), Gianni's Deli to 98 Main Street, and JT's Cafe to 720 Main Street. We hope you will visit these businesses and help give them a warm Winsted welcome!



## Ambulance & Fire Services in Need of Members

The Ambulance Service seeks people 18 & older with a valid driver's license and EMT or EMR certification. Prospective uncertified volunteers are eligible for certification financial aid if they commit to at least a year of active duty. Members volunteer 24 hours a month on the ambulance. Schedules are very flexible. Benefits provided include full uniform, radio, incentives, etc.

Email [join@winstedems.org](mailto:join@winstedems.org), call 860-379-6596, or visit [winstedambulance.org/join](http://winstedambulance.org/join) for more information



The Winsted and Winchester Center Fire Departments seek people 18 and older with a valid driver's license. Incentives are available. Applications must be filled out and submitted to Station 1 at 27 Elm Street. Go to [winstedfire.org](http://winstedfire.org) or email [jlagassie@townofwinchester.org](mailto:jlagassie@townofwinchester.org) for more info.

## New Faces in Town Hall

We are excited to welcome our new Assessor, Josh Dionne, and Junior Assessor, Rebecca Curtis. Josh has been involved in commercial real estate for more than 25 years, working in areas relating to office leasing, retail leasing and development, as well as the sale and valuation of properties. Rebecca joins us with a collective 25 years of experience in banking & trusts, collections, security supervision, and as an entrepreneur and owner of her own childcare business. Both Josh and Rebecca come into their roles knowing that customer service is the Town's #1 priority, and they are up to the challenges that face Assessors every day.

Their past experiences leverage Josh and Rebecca's unique abilities to serve our community with honor, compassion, and meticulous attention to detail. Drop by the Assessor's office to meet Josh and Rebecca and see first-hand how their approaches and personalities are a welcome addition to this department.



Rebecca Cutris  
New Junior Assessor

On the financial side, Lydon Palella, joins us as our new Assistant Tax Collector. Lydon comes with experience managing financial and business aspects in the service industry and is pursuing his degree in Finance.

Lastly, we are joined by Alan Nero II, as our Communications Coordinator. Alan has come aboard following a decade spent in communications, promotions, multi-media, and event production & management. He looks forward to strengthening our town's connection and future growth.

The Chief of Police, William Fitzgerald, is retiring effective Feb 1, 2023. The Town is seeking a Chief of Police with applications due January 13th.

Our offices are open. Please come on in and say hello!

## Town Board & Commission Meetings

Below is a selection of regular board and commission meeting schedules convened to consider, advise, and decide on issues faced by the town and its residents. Please note meeting dates are subject to change due to holidays and extenuating circumstances.

- **Board of Selectmen:** 1st & 3rd Monday of each month, 7:00 PM, in the Hicks Room at Town Hall.
- **Board of Education:** 2nd Tuesday of each month, 7:00 PM, in the Hicks Room.
- **Planning & Zoning Commission:** 2nd & 4th Mon. of each month, 7:00 PM, in the Hicks Room.
- **Water & Sewer Commision:** 2nd Tues of the month, 6PM (note: new time!), Blue Room at Town Hall.

To volunteer for a Board or Commission, please contact the Town Manager at [townmanager@townofwinchester.org](mailto:townmanager@townofwinchester.org).

Visit [townofwinchester.org](http://townofwinchester.org) for a full listing of agencies, meeting dates and times, and the most up-to-date information.