



TOWN OF MONROE

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

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FIRST SELECTMAN'S UPDATE

November 13, 2023 Town Council Meeting

WOLFE PARK FIELDS PROJECT COMPLETION

- The project to install the two new athletic fields at Wolfe Park has been completed and grass planted. Prior to being utilized, the new fields will need to be allowed to grow and become fully established to withstand the demands of intense athletic usage.



AMERICA 250 | CT COMMISSION

- In 2026, the United States will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the founding of the country. Last year, the Governor established this commission to plan the State's multi-year commemorations, celebrations, and reflections on this important milestone for our country.
- Last month, I designated Nicole Cignoli, Director of our Edith Wheeler Memorial Library, to serve as Monroe's local liaison to this state commission, which will be sharing information about themes, programs, funding opportunities, and promotional guidelines.

OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS TO SPONSOR STUDENT & FAMILY PRESENTATIONS AT MASUK HIGH

- As you know, the Town is a recipient of various opioid lawsuit settlement funds and I established an administrative team to provide recommendations for use of these funds consistent with the settlement agreements. I previously reported that the Town's first expenditure of these funds will be utilized to provide a school-based program to prevent drug misuse that was highly recommended by Superintendent Kobza. As authorized by the Town Council, the Town engaged Chris Herren to provide two presentations at Masuk High School.
- An All-American point guard from Massachusetts, Chris played Division 1 basketball before being drafted into the NBA. He played for both the Denver Nuggets and the Boston Celtics before losing his career, and almost his family, to the disease of addiction. Alcohol and drug-free since 2008, Chris has spoken to over a million students nationwide with the goal of sparking honest discussions and making a positive difference.
- Chris presented to the entire Masuk student body in 2016 and had a visible impact on nearly every student in attendance. His story transcends addiction. While bringing the audience through his own journey of self-discovery, Chris emphasizes the importance of self-respect, resilience, empathy, and compassion.
- Chris Herren will present to the Masuk community in two parts. The first is a one-hour parent and family presentation on Monday, November 20th at 7:00 PM in the Masuk Auditorium, to give families the background on his story and talking points to use with their kids. All Monroe parents and families are invited to attend. A second presentation, for all Masuk students, will be held the following day.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

- In the spirit of maintaining the current schedule to facilitate the preparation of the budget, I have reminded all department heads to submit capital project updates to our Finance Department for anticipated review by the incoming First Selectman and referral to the Strategic Planning Committee.

BICENTENNIAL TIME CAPSULE

- All are invited to attend our Bicentennial Committee's final event, installation of a time capsule on the Monroe green on Saturday, November 18, 2023 at 3:00 PM.

STATE APPROVES GRANT INCREASE TO REPLACE JUDD ROAD BRIDGE

- As you will recall, in 2021 the Town, working in collaboration with MetroCOG, secured a \$1 million grant from the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) for the rehabilitation of the Judd Road bridge that spans between Monroe and Easton. Monroe is serving as the administrating agency, through an agreement with the Town of Easton, and has facilitated the design phase of the project, which Monroe and Easton are funding equally. The construction costs will be funded through LOTICIP.
- Due to the substantial increase in the estimated construction costs since 2021, along with their further evaluation of this project, the design firm recommended that the bridge be replaced instead of rehabilitated. I am pleased to report that the state DOT has approved this change in scope, along with a corresponding funding increase of almost \$845,000.
- This construction effort is anticipated to be put out to bid in early 2024.

BUSINESS UPDATES

- iRepair – New screen replacement service for touch screen products (e.g., smartphones, tablets) open at 292 Elm Street.
- Chipotle – Opened on 10/19/2023 at 143 Purdy Hill Road.
- O'Reilly Auto Parts – Planning & Zoning Application received to construct a new facility at 215 Monroe Turnpike.
- Jadar Building Sales & Service – new hardware store coming to the former Stevenson Lumber site at 1565 Monroe Turnpike. Primarily on-line orders of bulk goods but will have some limited inventory of hand tools and supplies.
- Hi Paws – new pet grooming business at 437 Monroe Turnpike.
- Jersey Mike's – Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting on 11/15/2023 at 9:00 AM.
- Dunkin Donuts – 230 Roosevelt Drive location was temporarily closed for renovations that are now complete and store has re-opened.
- Starbucks – The previous structure at 255 Monroe Turnpike has been demolished and removed for site preparation work.
- Awesome Toys & Gifts – Ribbon Cutting ceremony scheduled for 11/18/2023 at 1:00 PM, 464 Main Street.
- Aldi – Groundbreaking Ceremony for construction of new store at 205 Monroe Turnpike scheduled for 11/17/2023 at 1:00 PM. Anticipated opening for the new store is in the Fall of 2024.