Minutes
Coventry Town Council Meeting
November 4, 2019
Town Hall Annex

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.
   **Present:** Carolyn Arabolos, Lisa Conant, Mike Sobol, Joan Lewis, Jonathan Hand, Matthew O’Brien, Julie Blanchard
   **Also present:** John Elsesser, Town Manager; Amanda Backhaus, Finance Director

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. **Audience of Citizens:**
   Carol Polsky, 449 High Street, thanked the Council members for serving. She has lived in Coventry 30 years, and was always proud to say she was from Coventry until recently. She is dismayed about the tone of the political signs and Nazi phrases that have appeared around town lately. Her synagogue is planning an event about hate and racism at Eastern on November 17th, and she hopes you all will attend. (*Flyer for event attached to minutes.*)

   Joan Lewis presented a Council resolution to Sandy Sanborn, who has retired after decades of running the Sanborn Service station in Coventry Village. Joan thanked Sandy for his many years of community involvement and also thanked the Sanborn family for being present to support Sandy at the meeting.

4. **Acceptance of Minutes:**
   **Motion #19/20-73:** Lisa Conant moved to accept the minutes of the Town Council meeting on October 21, 2019, seconded by Jonathan Hand. The following corrections were requested:
   A. Julie Blanchard requested to include additional information about the proposed Library renovation square footage that she received via email after the meeting. It was agreed to attach that information to tonight’s minutes, and correct the October 21, 2019 minutes as follows: page 5, first paragraph, 8th line, change “said 432 square feet” to “gave a variety of answers, which were further clarified after the meeting.”
   B. Page 2, item 8, third paragraph, 7th line: change “120” to “120,000.”
   C. Page 3, second paragraph, 10th line: change “$10,000” to “$100,000.”
   D. Page 5, 8th line: change “library have” to “library has.”
   E. Page 5, second paragraph, 2nd line: add the word “asked” after Carolyn.
   F. Page 5, second paragraph, 14th line: change “acerbates” to “exacerbates.”
   G. Page 6, item B, second paragraph, second line: change the second sentence to read, “It is not really water vapor, it is oil aerosol.”
   H. Page 6, last paragraph, first line: change “aa+” to “AA+”.
   I. Page 6, last paragraph, second line: add a second sentence to read, “We also realized a bond premium of $244,600.”
   J. Page 7, first line: change “Girl softball” to “Girls’ softball.”
   K. Page 7, second paragraph, first line: change “review” to “reviewed.”
   L. Page 7, third paragraph: change all instances of “IBS” to “IVS.”
   M. Page 8, 5th bullet, third line: add the word “the” before “north.”
   N. Page 8, item 2, 4th line: change “senators” to “state elected officials.”
   **The motion to accept the minutes as corrected carried on unanimous vote.**

5. **Consent Agenda:**
   **Motion #19/20-74:** Lisa Conant moved and Carolyn Arabolos seconded to accept the
Consent Agenda. Julie Blanchard requested to remove item 6.D.1, Finance Committee minutes. The motion to accept the Consent Agenda as modified carried on unanimous vote.

6. Reports:

A. Council Chairwoman – Joan Lewis: Joan reported that two church fairs are taking place this weekend at St. Mary’s and Second Congregational church.

B. Council Members:
Lisa Conant said she was talking to Cindy Houser of the Lions Club and she suggested for Christmas in Village that the Town Council and Board of Education purchase trees and decorate them as a contest. She would like to discuss this further at the next Council meeting.

Carolyn Arabolos said it has been on social media, but she wanted to bring an article in about Sondra Stave, which appeared in the Journal Inquirer. It is about her service to the community (attached to minutes). The Chili Fest event took place this past weekend. It was a lot of fun and there were some great cooks. Carolyn has also served as the Council representative to contract negotiations with the Board of Education. The Board and teacher’s union have worked with a mediator. They are presenting the contract to the Board for ratification and hope to bring it before the Council at our next meeting. It was an interesting process and Carolyn thanked Joan for appointing her.

Jonathan Hand said earlier this evening, Joan recognized someone for a great achievement in town. He wants to recognize Joan for her capable leadership of the Council as Chair. It has been a pleasure serving with her.

Mike Sobol said it has been great to work under Joan’s leadership. He encouraged all citizens to go and vote tomorrow. A lot of citizen volunteers have put their names in the hat. Joan’s leadership has been an inspiration to all of us.

Matthew O’Brien said he attended the Veterans Day luncheon today at Patriots Park. The food from Highland Park Market and the speakers were terrific. Jamie DePaola spoke about the history of women in the Marines. It was nice to have the opportunity to recognize our veterans.

C. Steering Committee – Jonathan Hand:
A. Reappointments:
1. Motion #19/20-75: Jonathan Hand moved to reappoint Kevin Arpin to the Cemetery Commission, term to expire 10/17/2022. The motion was seconded by Matthew O’Brien and carried on unanimous vote.
2. Motion #19/20-76: Jonathan Hand moved to reappoint John Marvin to the Cemetery Commission, term to expire 10/17/2022. The motion was seconded by Mike Sobol and carried on unanimous vote.
3. Motion #19/20-77: Jonathan Hand moved to reappoint Anne Vieter to the Cemetery Commission, term to expire 10/17/2022. The motion was seconded by Matthew O’Brien and carried on unanimous vote.
4. Motion #19/20-78: Jonathan Hand moved to reappoint Lori Mathieu to the Inland Wetlands Commission, term to expire 9/15/2022. The motion was seconded by Mike Sobol. Joan Lewis said she wanted emphasize and thank Lori for her lengthy service. The motion carried on unanimous vote.
5. Motion #19/20-79: Jonathan Hand moved to reappoint Darby Pollansky to the Planning and Zoning Commission, term to expire 11/1/2022. The motion was
seconded by Matthew O’Brien. Joan Lewis also thanked Darby for serving for so many years. The motion carried on unanimous vote.

B. Appointments:
1. Motion #19/20-80: Jonathan Hand moved to appoint Patricia Laramee as a full member of the Inland Wetlands Agency to fill a vacancy, term to expire 9/15/2022. The motion was seconded by Matthew O’Brien and carried on unanimous vote.
2. Motion #19/20-81: Jonathan Hand moved to appoint Sondra Stave to the Senior Housing Alternatives Study Committee as a member at large, term for the duration of the committee’s work. The motion was seconded by Lisa Conant and carried on unanimous vote.
3. Motion #19/20-82: Jonathan Hand moved to appoint Roberta Wilmot to the Senior Housing Alternatives Study Committee as a member at large, term for the duration of the committee’s work. The motion was seconded by Julie Blanchard and carried on unanimous vote.

D.1. Finance Committee: Minutes, October 15, 2019:
Julie Blanchard asked for clarification regarding the discussion on page two, paragraph four, the cost of the Republican primary. She said we didn’t have a primary as a result of errors made by the Registrar of Voters. We had a primary because Republican people wanted to be on the ballot. John Elsesser noted that during the discussion it was made clear that the costs of a regular primary were not included in this calculation, only the expenses that were incurred as a result of the errors made by the Republican Registrars. Carolyn Arabolos noted that the minutes of this meeting have not yet been reviewed by the Finance Committee.

E. COVRRRA – John Elsesser:
We are still working on the scale at the transfer station. We are adding a foot to the concrete abutment to use the scale we got. The vendor measured it wrong and is adjusting the pad at their expense. An adjustment to the pad is faster than ordering a new scale.

F. Town Manager – John Elsesser:
1. Projects Update:
   • We are being featured by Green Bank for our solar installations. The sent some drone photos that show a different angle on our solar installations. We also just won the Sustainability photo of the month for a picture John took of a rainbow over the Town Hall solar carport.
   • If it doesn’t snow much, we have cut our key ways and are starting shimming and final paving. We plan to pave Jones Crossing. We can pave as long as it is 32 degrees and rising. Matthew O’Brien asked if more work will be done on the stone wall eventually. John said he will have to check. Amanda said she believes they are planning more work. The project is coming in under budget, so it looks like we will be returning some funds to CNREF.
   • We are doing some work on Wrights Mill Road to address a long-standing drainage issue. We also awarded the catch basin work for the Northfields area.
   • John has received formal notice of his appointment to the State Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. He attended his first meeting on Friday.
   • There are three RFP’s on John’s desk – girls’ softball fields, the methane fields at Miller Richardson, and design build for the unit ventilators from the School Building Committee. Matthew asked if a new permit at Miller Richardson is expensive. John replied any time you touch the cap a permit is required and yes, it is expensive. The
School Building Committee has decided to seek proposals to do design build for the unit ventilators. The costs seemed way off with the engineering approach. They were much higher than what they told us to budget for in bonding. John reached out to former committee member Matt Mullen, who gave us a draft RFP that we will modify. Matt also gave advice for how to do it right. Design build saves money in that it doesn’t specify name brands and gives basic plans for building official approval. This project is a priority for the committee. They will review the draft RFP before it goes out. There is also a forestry management RFP that we will look at with time. We are virtually out of money for trees this year. Mike Sobol asked if we know the cost impact of the recent storm. John said we are still pulling that together. The last blocked road just got opened today. Frontier didn’t get out here until today on Seagraves. There may be one or two stragglers that still do not have utilities. Mike said we talk a lot about trying to allocate money to tree management – has any more thought been given to that? John replied that we have doubled the budget and will continue to do so. We also haven’t received the LOCIP funding that was allocated. The whole bonding package is tied up with tolls.

- The legislature passed a law on a loan program for what happens when you don’t have all the money for crumbling foundations. The State will start taking applications for supplemental funds. That is good news and we will start getting it out to people. Often there are things you have to do to get your house back in order that are just not covered by the current funding programs. Joan asked how much of a backlog exists. John replied $155 million. There are not enough contractors. Some people are on a two-year waiting list. They can’t sign contracts until they have the money. Despite this, everyone has done an amazing job to get to where we are in two years, but we can’t let our guard down. At the Washington level they are finally putting some money toward the development of standards. Mathew O’Brien noted that UConn is supposed to work on standards development, too. John said that UConn is working on it, and the military is supposed to be doing something too. Matthew asked if you’re granted an award, is there a timeframe by which you have to use it? John said he doesn’t know. The person who runs the insurance program had quit but is staying a little longer while they look for a replacement.

- Matthew O’Brien asked for an update on the Bolton sewer extension. John replied that Mike Ruef talked with CT DEEP about whether we need to respond to the quality statement and they said not to. We need to decide whether we want to proceed with a full environmental impact study. There were a lot of factual errors in the information they cited. It appears we are waiting for a letter.

- Julie Blanchard asked about the need to schedule a test for a septic system at Laidlaw Park, and whether it is possible to do a smaller scale system with a tank that gets pumped more often. John replied that a holding tanks is not looked upon favorably - you have to prove you can’t do something else. A deep hole test only takes a couple of hours, but we just haven’t had the time. If we find fairly good soils a septic system is not that expensive to install.

- Lisa Conant asked whether a redesign is taking place at the Coventry Grammar School parking lot to accommodate more buses. John said yes. We haven’t had time to work on the design, but the goal is to get it out to bid for mid-June construction. We are prioritizing work on the Folly Lane Bridge and Swamp Road projects right now. Joan Lewis asked if anyone came to the public information meeting about Folly Lane. John replied that two people attended who had concerns about raptors and the ability to fish.

- Jonathan Hand said that the Town Hall flagpole project is looking good. John replied we are using MCS Property Management from town. You never know what will happen when you dig a hole, but we encountered eight feet of topsoil. We had to remove that and
bring in structural fill. Depending on the weather the brick may go in this week.

2. **Microgrid/co-gen update:** We are in a little bit of a holding pattern. The microgrid company has questions into CT DEEP that haven’t been answered. Before they write a check for $25,000 to Eversource they want to know these answers. John has asked State Rep. Tim Ackert to set up a meeting with the right people. That and the changing of the payment conditions will be part of the discussions. Rep Ackert said he will try to set something up with the Deputy Commissioner. Aside from that they have been able to fine-tune things, like the number of batteries has been reduced which will save money. Installation of tiles for peak demand readings are proceeding. The engineering company is doing that at their risk. Carolyn Arabolos asked how long it has been since they asked the questions. John said three weeks. They are continuing to have discussions with other financing sources.

3. **Sustainability CT Silver Certification:** We are pleased to join the ranks of those who have achieved the Silver Certification level. Town staff worked hard on this. The formal certificate will be presented at the CCM Convention. They have announced a crowdfunding initiative and want community involvement. The funding is available to non-governmental agencies too. Joan Lewis asked how many communities have earned Silver. John said he believes it is 14. It was a Town Council goal. We learn a lot about ourselves as part of the process. Carolyn asked if the microgrid happens, whether it would help us in the process. John said yes, if we get that we would generate almost all the power that the Town needs. It would also provide bulk discounts on natural gas. Bringing gas in has opened up a lot of potential. Council leadership helped make that happen.

4. **Capital budget:** A revised budget calendar is in your supplemental materials folders. The only change was the date for the Board of Education budget meeting. We had to adjust to allow advertising time for the legal notice. The operation budget manual coming out on Friday.

5. **Wreaths Across America:** Amanda Backhaus reported on this event, as she is one of the staff representatives on the Cemetery Commission. This is the second year in a row that Coventry is participating. The event will take place at noon on Saturday, 12/14 at Coventry Cemetery, 392 Main Street. A wreath is placed on each veteran’s grave site. The organization is accepting donations and has opened it up to purchase a wreath for other cemetery sites as well – those wreaths can be picked up at the event. To make donations for a specific veteran, please send that to the Finance Office at Town Hall. Other general donations can be sent to the organization. We are excited to expand the purchase of wreaths to other cemeteries, and will consider the possibility of rotating cemeteries for the ceremony in the future. Carolyn Arabolos said that a few of the Town Council members went to the event last year. It was a beautiful ceremony and she plans to go again this year. Joan Lewis offered to reach out to Center Cemetery to see if they will agree to be involved. Her husband is buried there. Carolyn said that Claudine Vieten started the event last year in honor of her father.

6. **Article:** **5 Goals for 5G:** John Elsesser said he wrote this article for *CT Viewpoints*. He thinks the State can do a better job of planning for 5G. If we are not careful, rural areas will not get coverage. The State required universal coverage for cable TV. It is not fair to be discriminated on based on your zip code. It can’t be cost effective that these four
companies won’t collaborate. If we don’t do it right it will not serve the State well. Joan Lewis said she hopes they follow some of John’s suggestions.

8. New Business:
A. 19/20-21: Consideration/Possible Action: Approval of Amended Town of Coventry Personal Policies and Procedures, Sections 1-15: Amanda Backhaus said the Steering Committee did a thorough review of this document, and we think it is at a good point to move forward. Jonathan Hand said a lot of things have been brought up to 2019 standards and the clearer we make it now the better, because it is likely not going to be looked at again in the near future. John said that there are still various appendices that have to be updated. Matthew O’Brien asked whether we can approve the package without the appendices, because they are referred to. John replied that the appendices are there, they will just be updated. Motion #19/20-83: Jonathan Hand moved to approve sections 1-15 of the Personal Policies and Procedures as recommended by Steering, with the stipulation that appendices must be modified. Lisa Conant seconded the motion. Matthew said he would hope that the next Council continues this work. Carolyn Arabolos commended the Steering Committee, because she knows this type of work can be tedious. She thanked Amanda as well. Amanda also thanked Laura Stone. John noted that the group process worked well. It was refreshing to hear questions from those not so close to it as he has been. Motion #19/20-83 carried on unanimous vote.

B. 19/20-22: Consideration/Possible Action: Approval of Pension Committee Recommendation for Appointment of Town Pension Attorney: John Elsesser said that Amanda Backhaus worked on this with the Pension Committee. They were not thrilled with the current attorney. Things have been late and we’ve had to file extensions, and Amanda got notice that their rates were going up. We worked with the Committee to test the market and received three proposals from well-qualified firms. Pullman & Comley offered a blended rate which we felt would be advantageous. We checked their references and they were outstanding. Matthew O’Brien asked if there is any sense for the ratio between senior staff and junior staff. Amanda said an hourly rate breakdown can be reviewed on an ongoing basis. They also do our tax sale work and we are familiar with them. John said that the existing attorney asked for an extension to respond to the RFP, but we declined. Motion #19/20-84: Jonathan Hand moved to approve the Pension Committee’s recommendation for the selection of Pullman & Comley as the Town Pension Attorney. The motion was seconded by Lisa Conant. John Elsesser noted that we will be going into pension negotiations with all nine AFSCME units this year. Motion #19/20-84 carried on unanimous vote.

C. 19/20-23: Consideration/Possible Action: Appropriation of up to $9,500 for Drainage Work Around Exterior of Community Center: John Elsesser said when they ripped the floor up and we could see everything, we discovered that some of the main joists were rotted. The contractor said they expected it. The whole front seam along the wall on the Lake Street side also needs to be replaced. All of the floor has been removed. We will add some sono-tubes with gravel so it’s not just sitting on blocks. There is about a $5,500 contingency that we may not need plus $4,000 to do a drain around the building. Motion #19/20-85: Matthew O’Brien moved to appropriate up to $9,500 for drainage work around the exterior of the Community Center from the Capital Non-Recurring Expenditures Fund. The motion was seconded by Jonathan Hand and carried on unanimous vote.

D. 19/20-24: Consideration/Possible Action: Appropriation for Signalized Crosswalk at Intersection of Main and Ripley Hill in an Amount not to Exceed $11,500: John Elsesser said the Town Engineer Todd Penney had reached out to CT DOT, who wanted more work from a traffic engineer. We reached out to CDM who prepared an in-depth report. They are recommending a solar-lit crosswalk system that will have a blinker and is paddle-activated. It won’t have wiring or
electricity costs. The battery is supposed to last five years. They recommend it be professionally
installed and a cost not to exceed $11,500. Matthew O’Brien asked how far the lights will be located
from the crosswalk to give notice to drivers. John said they will be at the crosswalk, but will be
bright. Matthew asked if there are any issues with grades. John said no. Amanda Backhaus noted that
use of either CNREF or the Council’s 1.5% fund would be fine. Motion #19/20-86: Jonathan Hand
moved to appropriate an amount not to exceed $11,500 from CNREF for the crosswalk solar
light installation at the intersection of Main Street and Ripley Hill Road. Mike Sobol seconded
the motion. Carolyn Arabolos said it’s a State road, so why does the Town have to pay? John replied
because the State won’t pay for it. They feel once that door is open everyone will want it. We can also
anticipate future requests at other crosswalks. We are curious to see how it changes behavior here and
perhaps we can work additional ones into future budgets. Robertson School does have a crossing
guard. Matthew asked if any additional signage will be installed. John said there will be one – the cost
is minimal at approximately $45. Jonathan said he has seen them in other communities and feels they
are effective, also since they are paddle-activated, they are not operating all the time. He would also
like to see the vertical stripes on the poles if possible. John said it will depend – he will mention it.
Carolyn asked when they will be installed. John said we have to go out to the vendors that install
them. We are not sure how fast it will go. We will go back to CDM to see who they have worked with
and get prices for installation. We also still need to get State permission for a right-of-way
encroachment permit. Mike Sobol said this was the result of actions by concerned citizens who came
forward to affect positive change. It is a great example of community involvement. He asked if it will
be possible to update some of the citizens who came forward. John said he is familiar with one of the
individuals and will inform her. Matthew said he thinks the word will spread quickly. Carolyn said
she thinks it is well worth the money, and she is pleased that this is one of the final things approved
by this Council. Motion #19/20-86 carried on unanimous vote.

E. 19/20-25: Consideration/Possible Action: Request of Board of Education to Use Funds from
Their Reserve Fund for Capital Expenditures in the Amount of $5,076.50 for Repairs to CNH Walk-in Freezer and Water Pump at the Complex: Motion #19/20-87: Matthew O’Brien moved
to authorize funds from the Board of Education’s Reserve Fund for Capital Expenditures as
outlined. The motion was seconded by Carolyn Arabolos and carried on unanimous vote.

10. Executive Session:
Motion #19/20-88: Matthew O’Brien moved that the Town Council enter into Executive Session
at 9:04 PM pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 1-200(6)(D)-discussion of the selection of
a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate by a political subdivision of the state when
publicity regarding such a site, lease, sale, purchase or construction would cause a likelihood of
an increased price until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or
transactions concerning same have been terminated or abandoned with the following people in
attendance: Town Council members, the Town Manager and the Finance Director. The motion
was seconded by Julie Blanchard and carried on unanimous vote.

Motion #19/20-89: Matthew O’Brien moved to leave Executive Session at 9:28 PM. The motion
was seconded by Carolyn Arabolos and carried on unanimous vote.

11. Adjournment:
Motion #19/20-90: Matthew O’Brien moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 PM. The motion
was seconded by Carolyn Arabolos and carried on unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone
Town Council Clerk

Note: These minutes are not official until acted upon by the Town Council at its next regular meeting. Those meeting minutes will reflect approval or changes to these minutes.
COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

BECAUSE TALKING CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING

Join us for an in-depth conversation about hate speech and race relations

DR. MARA GOTTLIEB
CEO, TALKING CHANGES, LLC

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH, 2019
2:00PM - 5:00PM

BETTY TIPTON ROOM
EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

SPONSORED BY THE HOCHBERG COMMITTEE FOR HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHT EDUCATION AND THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

NAACP TEMPLE B’NAI ISRAEL INTERFAITH WORKING GROUP
Conversation with Sondra Stave

"... if you want to get involved, you can be very involved."

By Tim Leininger
leininger@journal-inquirer.com

Sondra Astor Stave of Coventry has been a long-time participant in local politics. She was the first female chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission, has chaired the Inland Wetlands Agency, and sat on the Board of Education.

The New York City native and former teacher is also a well-traveled woman, having visited more than 100 countries and all seven continents.

Here she speaks about some of her travels, her involvement in town, and why she loves Coventry so much.

Q: Where did you start teaching?
A: Two days after I graduated from City College I married my husband (Bruce) with whom I was deliciously happy for 60 years until he departed almost two years ago now. At that time, he had just completed his bachelor's and master's degree at Columbia and had been offered a wonderful fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. We went to Pittsburgh and I taught there for four years.

At the end of that four-year period, my husband had completed his requirements for his degree except finishing up his dissertation. So we moved to Connecticut and I lived in Trumbull for three years. I taught in Milford for two years. My husband thought it would be better for his career if he was able to get a Fulbright and he was, in fact, offered a Fulbright to India. So for the next year instead of packing up our house to move six miles down the road, we packed up our house and went to India.

Q: What was he studying?
A: He was an historian. He was an eye-opening experience. We were able to spend two weeks traveling to Hawaii and then to Hong Kong and Thailand and Japan on our way to India. On our way home, we went to Russia and then went along the northern parts of Europe. By the time I got home we had been to 17 countries. I thought the world was unbelievably fascinating.

In India, we spent 77 days in a town called Bhagalpur, which is in Bihar. It was like going back to the 18th century. The people in Bhagalpur were not particularly excited about modernization or anything. My husband worked in a shed where cows would occasionally walk through. We were there for 77 days. We determined after that we could handle anything. We then went from there to New Delhi for orientation. New Delhi was much more modern. From there we went to Agra and Mathura, which is in the state of Uttar Pradesh. At that time, Maharashtra was going into the 20th century as fast as it could. That was much more fun, and I was able to teach fourth grade at a mission school.

It was then that I learned that while wonderful equipment was very enjoyable, good learning could take place with notepaper sheets of paper that are 10 years old. Teachers sat four to a bench with a table that was a desk and the parents were very eager for these children to succeed and go on to university. They were very well behaved. They wanted to take everything in and a tremendous amount of learning took place even with very, very limited materials.

Q: How long were you there for?
A: Ten-and-a-half months. At that point, we had a wonderful situation. You could get an around-the-world ticket with unlimited number of stops provided you continued in the same direction. So we kept going east.

After our return, we went back to the Bridgeport area for a year and my husband was then offered a position here at UConn and so we came to UConn with our four-month-old son. We found a lovely house on Tucker Street. When we first got here in June or July to look around, I was amazed at the blueness.

We founded the Northeastern Connecticut chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and I became the first president of that. We also went to the town meetings. It was like the civil rights textbooks had opened up. There were people, 200 of them. After the second meeting people noticed we were there. A few days later we got a phone call that there was a vacancy on the Planning and Zoning Commission and would (Bruce) like to join? He said, 'My wife might be interested. I didn't know any of this but I love learning things. So a couple of weeks later, I showed up at the first Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, realized that I was the only female there, and realized that I had very little understanding of what was going on. So I listened very carefully for several months.

After about four or five months, there was a public hearing and I realized I had a question. I had understood well enough to be able to ask a question. Questions are not asked by people who don't know anything. So I asked my question ... they answered the question. Nobody laughed, so a couple of minutes later I asked another question and that went fine too. At that point I felt that I was a functioning member.

A year later when the chairman of the commission died unexpectedly, we had a meeting to choose a new chairman. I came home. I remember telling my husband 'you won't believe this, but you are looking at the new chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission.'

I continued my service on the Planning and Zoning Commission until my husband got his first sabbatical and he applied for another Fulbright ... where we spent two months each in New Zealand, Australia, and the Philippines.

Q: Did you ever go back to teaching?
A: I actually didn't. I got a job working for the Program Review and Investigations Committee for the state legislature and I did that for a year. And then I got a National Endowment for the Humanities grant working on urban-suburban relations at the University of Harvard.

Subsequent to that, I became the director of the Eastern Connecticut Library Association, and I did that for two years. That was very enjoyable. There were 60 public and school libraries that formed a consortium to try to do things together and at that point Bruce got another sabbatical and China was opening up. He applied to go to China and we spent a year in China.

I ended up being a faculty member at Peking University, which is the Harvard of China, for a year, teaching the equivalent of college seniors, first-year graduate students, and once-a-week librarians who were just starting to learn English.

That was one of the most rewarding years I've ever had. I truly enjoyed doing that and I'm still in touch with many of the students that I taught in China because many of them came here.

We came back ... I enrolled at UConn again and the job that I was having at that point, which was my job of longest duration was as the director of adult education for the town of Mansfield and I did that for nine years. In between, I ended up being the editor of the "Exclusively Rhubarb Cookbook." I did that with Marilyn Richardson who did the drawings, and Rose Fowler.
Connecticut Women’s Hall of Fame to induct 4, honor 10 on Nov. 4

The Connecticut Women’s Hall of Fame will induct four new members and honor 10 others at “Women: A Force for Nature,” the hall’s 26th annual ceremony and celebration, at the Connecticut Convention Center, 100 Columbus Blvd., Monday, Nov. 4, from 6:30 to 9 p.m.

“We are thrilled to honor four extraordinary inductees and 10 highly accomplished honorees who are responsible for remarkable advances in environmental conservation and sustainability,” said Sarah Smith Lubarsky, executive director of the Connecticut Women’s Hall of Fame.

The 2019 Hall of Fame inductees are:

- Marian Chertow, professor of industrial environmental management at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, researcher. Her work includes the area of Industrial Symbiosis, a sub-field of Industrial Ecology that involves the shared management of resources by geographically close enterprises.
- Nell Newman, ecologist, conservationist, organic farmer and founder of Newman’s Own Organics and the Nell Newman Foundation.
- Martha “Mutt” Langwein and Elizabeth George Foulke (being honored posthumously), Pequot sisters and conservationists who passionately advocated to save the existence of the Mashantucket Pequot Indian Reservation and cultural heritage.
- The 2019 honorees are:
  - Ruth Blado, professor of Geology & Geophysics, Environmental Engineering and Forestry & Environmental Studies at Yale University
  - Maria Chrysochoou, professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Connecticut
  - Pamela Elkind, partner, Cardomy, Torrance, Sandlak & Hennessey, LLC
  - Adrienne Farrar Hoevel, president & CEO, Greater Bridgeport Community Enterprises, Inc.
  - Jeanine Armstrong Goun, P.E., vice president and executive director, Milone & MacBroom, Inc.
  - Margaret Miner, retired executive director, Rivers Alliance, member, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

Coventry woman has enjoyed a lifetime of civic involvement

I was on the Board of Education for four years. I was chairman of that for two years and then I’ve been chairman of the Economic Development Commission for a very long time and I am currently the chair of that.

I was also on the unfortunately unsuccessful committee to repeal and expand our city. I learned subsequently that we were done in by our own success. People determined that the library was functioning so well, why did it need to be expanded and rebuffed? That was one of my greatest disappointments. Now the town has gotten some funding because in addition to making the library larger and more pleasant looking and everything, there are a number of things in the library that absolutely have to be fixed.

Our magnificent Town Manager John Elsasser has the capacity to find grants and money. He sat with us during the planning part of this and he has architectural skills. The town is very lucky we have John, we have (Land Use Director) Eric Trott and we have a wonderful librarian who left to go to Southington. We now have a young woman who is very young and learning and seems to be doing okay.

Q: Are you still active in town governance?

A: Subsequent to Planning and Zoning and Inland Wetlands

- Kristin Morico, former global leader environmental programs, General Electric Board of Advisors member
- Mary Musiliakos, state representative 85th district, assistant deputy speaker
- Elise Patton, director of remediation (retired), Department of Environmental Protection
- Lynn Stoddard, founder and executive director, Sustainable CT. Tickets are $175.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.cwvf.org

MOVIE THEATERS

CINEMASTUDIO THEATRE
170 Everett St. (860-236-5033)
cinemastudio.org

REAL ART WAY THEATRE
50 Adams St. (860-292-1006)
realartway.org

PALACE 17 & ODYSSEY THEATER
150 Main St. (860-246-6677)
bowtiecinemas.com

FRONT STREET STADIUM 4
18 Front St. (860-522-7713)
harford.soughevers.com

MANCHESTER BUCKLAND HILLS 18 & MAX
893 Willow Street (860-661-9955)
cinemax.com/cinema/bucklandhills-18/admin/max

PARADE CINEMAS
418 W. Middle Turnpike (860-867-1439)
paradecinemas.com

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STAFF

CONTRIBUTED FROM PAGE 27

If I could tell you why this book became as successful as it did I could have a career as an entrepreneur. I have no idea. It was written up in several newspapers, the New York Times, a big one in Maine. We sold, I believe, 40,000 copies of the cookbook and the proceeds went to the Coventry Soup Kitchen. We gave them lots of money and we were very proud of that.

The only thing that I’m proud of is that I’ve donated more than 130 pints of blood in the course of my life. From the rubber cupboard came subsequently corn, pumpkin, blueberries, broccoli, and there would have been eggplant, but unfortunately Rose died and she was the energy behind all of this.

Q: Are you still active in town governance?

A: Yes I am. It started in 2006. This past year they were looking for people to house teachers and parents. I tucked out and got the two teachers and they were just absolutely delightful guests and I got to know the two parents as well.

Since my time in China when I was there for the year, my husband and I went back two other times. Once when we went to Tibet and once to work for some programs, but I haven’t been to China since 2006 and from what I’ve seen and read the changes have been humongous. So I really wanted to go back. So when I realized that not only could I help out by housing the teachers, but that it would give me an opportunity to get into the program, I was very keen on doing that. So we will be going to China from April 10th to 24th of next year and I am very excited about that.

Q: What do you attribute Coventry's ability to maintain its small-town atmosphere but be able to do big things?

A: We’ve backed out by having amazing professionals in town. David Petrone, who was the superintendent of schools, he’s really bright and well-intentioned. So he moved up through the ranks and became superintendent a few years ago. Coventry’s had some wonderful superintendents that I’ve worked with when I was on the board of education and he is clearly as good as anybody we’ve had. Our schools’ reputation has gone up from when we first moved to Coventry.

I still haven’t figured out how you do Coventry in one sentence. But what I do feel is that if you don’t do it so loudly that you scare the horses you can do what you want in Coventry and people will be okay with that. I’m a perfect example of the fact that if you want to get involved you can be very involved.

About 15 years or so ago when my husband was getting towards retirement, we talked about the fact that we didn’t have to stay in the area now and I realized that when I first got here it didn’t feel like home. Over the course of several decades, roots had developed, deep thick roots. I don’t want to go anywhere. My hope is that I will be carried out of this house feet first to the organ bank, and then to the crematorium, but I’m not going anywhere. This is home and I have wonderful friends in town and then the area. It’s an accepting place.
Dear Joan:

Here is an email that I received from Deb Walsh regarding the additional square footage in the library project.

Julie Blanchard

From: Deb Walsh [debwalshbell@gmail.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, October 29, 2019 3:20 PM  
To: Julie Blanchard  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Square footages

Hi Julie; sorry I am so late in getting back to you...in response to your question about library square footage, the answer from our architect is as follows:
areas for courtyard infill and entrance enclosure
Upper Level 918 sf
Lower Level 733 sf
Total 1651 sf

As noted in our presentation that not only solves the very vexing problem of water incursion into the lower level, but allows us to move the elevator to the outside of the building gaining access to the community space when the library is not open for business. Do let me know if you have any other questions.
Thanks, Deb Walsh