

July 28, 2010

Selectman's Report
Noel Bishop

I will be submitting regular reports as your First Selectman on our town webpage. This information is not intended to be all-inclusive, but rather to highlight significant items of interest and meeting dates. I encourage you to access our town website at www.westbrookct.us on a regular basis since it has been updated and contains the agendas and minutes of all of our Boards and Commissions; a monthly calendar and contact names of our municipal employees and their respective offices. If any of you have any suggestions on my report, or any other items on our webpage, please contact me at nbishop@westbrookct.us.

* The Board of Selectmen have appointed a nine member Charter Commission and at a meeting on July 26, 2010, the following individuals were elected as officers John Ferrara, Chairman, Paul Keryc, Vice Chair, Lee Bridgewater, Recording Secretary, Mary Labbadia, Alternate Recording Secretary. Additionally, all of the meeting dates have been established and since the Charter Commission is one of the major initiatives of this community, we have created a link on the Town's web page that will be updated on a regular basis regarding the activities and public meetings of the Charter Commission. Please see the town's website for a link to the Charter Commission page.

* Our next Town Meeting will be on August 23, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The major item on the agenda will be to act on the recommendation from the Boards of Finance and Selectmen to approve an appropriation to select the company that will perform a major revaluation for all of our properties beginning in the Fall of 2010. The company being recommended is Vision Appraisal. Since this item is important, representatives from Vision Appraisal will be at the Town Meeting and will provide information on their company and the methodology they will utilize to conduct their appraisals.

* Last year we received federal stimulus money in the amount of \$660,000.00 to be used for the re-surfacing of McVeigh Road. This project will begin sometime in August and we anticipate completion before the beginning of the school year. This was a cooperative effort between the DOT, our Public Works Department, the Selectman's Office and both our state and federal government.

* Westbrook was also the recipient of stimulus money to develop an energy program for our community. A hot water heater was purchased with these funds and has been installed at the high school. Also, an educational program, with cooperation from the school system, has begun and will be implemented for our community. A strategic plan will be implemented that will make specific recommendations for how our residents and business communities can be more "green" and utilize additional savings in energy

management. The amount of this grant was \$44,140.00. Furthermore, Westbrook was one of six towns that in securing a major regional energy grant for the amount of approximately \$225,000.00. We are in the process of hiring a District Regional Energy Manager that will work with our respective communities to encourage all of us to be more energy efficient.

* The Board of Selectmen, on July 22, 2010, approved a major refunding of some of our existing bonds, specifically a portion of our callable maturities for our middle/high school the library. This represents a cash flow net savings of \$317,033.33 and a 3.619 interest savings of our prior bonds. These savings will occur over a period of the next 13 years and are the result of the extremely low interest rates for bonds in the current market.

* I am very pleased to inform you that as a result of our Harbor Commission's initiative regarding dredging this past year, we have a major new development. We were informed on Friday, July 23, 2010, in the Spring of 2011, that an additional federal appropriation (**if approved by the U.S. Senate**) would be received to complete the total dredging of the Patchogue River. This brings the total amount of federal appropriations in the past 3 years to approximately \$1.5 million; which is the amount required to complete the dredging. This dredging project is vital to the continued growth for the economy of our community and this financial assistance, at no cost to Westbrook, is some of the best news that we have heard in recent months.

* A new On-Line Mapping System is now available through a link on the Town's website and at public access terminals installed in the Land Use and Assessor's Office. The information displayed includes: tax maps, Assessor Information, streets (public and private), aerial photography, open space, zoning, flood zones, topography and environmental resource data from the state. The system will greatly improve staff efficiency and provide valuable information to property owners.

* I encourage you, in approximately 3 weeks, to access our website for an updated list of all of our Boards and Commissions with their current Chairman. You will also note that at any given time, we have several Boards and Commission that do not have a full compliment of membership. Any interested resident is strongly encouraged to contact the Selectman's office for further information. It has been suggested that if you are not sure of the commitment required or the nature of the responsibility you may wish to sit in on one of their meetings to gain an understanding of how important all of our boards and commissions are to Westbrook. It is the volunteers who serve at this level that really make all of the major policy decisions for Westbrook. We need your help.

Thank you for your attention to these items. As I stated at the beginning, you can anticipate, as items of importance develop, that they will be posted on the website. I encourage your comments.