

A Message from First Selectman Bindelglass ... Update for 7/24/2020



Good afternoon,

We are in the so-called dog days of summer, but there is still plenty going on. Travel during the pandemic has become a hot button issue within our state. Some of you may have vacation plans to states where the virus is not well controlled. Currently, there are 31 states on the Travel Advisory List so if you are going out of the northeast please double check the list. Pursuant to Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7III, if you travel to an affected state, upon returning to Connecticut you must self-quarantine for

14 days. There is a plan to impose significant fines for failing to follow this mandate. If there is a resurgence of the virus in Connecticut, it may well be brought in from one of these states. As much of a hardship as this may be, I believe it to be a good idea. For more details and the executive order concerning travel please go to www.ct.gov/coronavirus.

We cannot take for granted how well we have done in Easton and we do not want to jeopardize this. I would encourage families to talk with their teenagers and young adults. There is good evidence that in the states where the virus is out of control much of it has to do with the virus being spread by young people, who are going to social events and establishments (bars, restaurant, pool parties) and not being appropriately cautious. Even though they are either asymptomatic or only minimally affected, they then help spread the virus to those at higher risk. We do not want our town or state to go back to where we were this spring. We all understand how trying this pandemic has and continues to be but we have not reached a point where we can be cavalier, and the consequences of doing so are obvious in most of the rest of the country. Wear your mask; wash your hands and social distance!

Aquarion has informed us that reservoir levels are falling as they often do in the summer. For those of us who receive public water, the restrictions are not mandatory but voluntary. For rules and tips see www.aquarionwater.com/conserve.

As many of you have heard, the bear population in Easton is increasing. In June, there were 19 reports of bears entering people's houses in the state. This is a serious issue. The problem is that we inadvertently feed the bears (bird feeders, open garbage containers, etc.) and they become comfortable approaching houses. Please be careful. For more info please see <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Wildlife/Nuisance-Wildlife/Living-with-Black-Bears> .

This is the first year that we have made it possible for people to pay their taxes online by credit card. This seems to be going extremely well. For more information, please see the

Tax Collectors page on the town website. This is part of our ongoing effort to make services through town hall easier and more resident friendly.

Discussions are ongoing regarding the opening of schools. I have weekly meetings with the central office staff. There is still further guidance expected from the state and the school leadership and Boards of Education are waiting for the results of a parent survey. The start date of school is creeping up on us but, the plans are still under discussion.

Lastly, I am surprised as First Selectmen at the amount of calls I get about neighbors complaining about the condition of another neighbor's property. Usually this centers on upkeep or storage of materials, machines or vehicles. In general, it is about unsightliness. People complain that their neighbor's property detracts from the value of their own home or just that they feel they shouldn't have to look at it. What follows is the current ordinance of the Town of Easton:

For the purpose of this chapter, the term "nuisance" means any condition or use of premises or of building exteriors or vacant lots which causes or tends to cause substantial diminution in the value or enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood in which such condition or use of premises is located or which constitutes a hazard to health or safety of the general public. This includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

A.

The keeping or the depositing on or allowing the accumulation of or the scattering over the premises of lumber, junk, trash or debris; abandoned, discarded or unused objects or equipment such as furniture, bedding, stores, refrigerators, freezers, cans or containers;

persistent pools of stagnant water from storm runoff or subsurface seepage or discharges of water from the premises; and weeds or other unsightly vegetation contributing to higher pollen counts in the atmosphere.

B.

Vacant or abandoned structures not secured against entry by boarding, shuttering, locks or watchmen on premises or on regular patrol.

C.

The keeping, depositing or storing, outside of an enclosed building, of more than two inoperative or unregistered motor vehicles, or the used parts of a motor vehicle, except operative farm vehicles.

We have discussed doing a better job of enforcing the existing ordinance in Easton at the Board of Selectmen meetings. I would like to think that the best solution is that people took pride in the appearance of their own properties and respected their neighbors. This will be an ongoing discussion at upcoming selectmen meetings.

Enjoy the weekend. There is, after all, baseball to watch on TV!

Be safe and be careful.

Dave Bindelglass