

# Dear Bethel

First Selectman's Update

December 6th, 2024



## Rodents with huge flat tails

Beavers are active in Bethel and causing problems for residents along watercourses. Before destroying a dam, you should trap the beavers. Trapping season began December 1st and continues through March 31st and the DEEP Wildlife Division (860-424-3011) can share a list of approved trappers, some of whom are free. Once the Beavers are gone, coordinate with the Bethel Land Use Department before removing a dam. The town will periodically trap and remove dams from areas adjacent to town property, however, the town has no right to enter on private property nor does the town remove dams on private property. Learn more about these rodents at <https://portal.ct.gov/deep/wildlife/factsheets/beaver>.

## School Security

The Board of Selectmen has approved almost \$88,000 from our remaining ARPA funds this week to help the Bethel Public Schools with much needed security upgrades. Frankly, we knew this year's budget was tight and next year might even be harder. Hats off to the Bethel Public Schools administration, the Board of Ed, the Board of Finance, and the Board of Selectmen for continuing to work together to handle our challenges!

## Public Hearing

The Planning & Zoning Commission continues a public hearing 9 Putnam Park Road (6 units of 8-30g Affordable Housing) on Tuesday, December 10th. The commission will also continue their discussion of our Transient Oriented Development (TOD) and the town's Traffic and the Mobility Study. Learn more at <https://bethel-ct.gov/2024-zoning>.

## Office Hours

The next Office Hours is Wednesday, December 11th from 8 am to 9 am. Office hours are scheduled every few weeks and alternate between mornings and afternoons. The goal is to help folks who work have access to the town outside of work hours. If you have an issue and it's easier to connect during the day, please set up a call or visit at [firstselectman@bethel-ct.gov](mailto:firstselectman@bethel-ct.gov) or 203-794-8540.

## Town Holiday Hours

The Transfer station will close at 11:00am on December 24th and December 31st. The Town Hall will be closed on Friday, December 20th and will close at 12 pm on December 24th and December 31st. The early closures are due to contractual requirements. We are utilizing the morning of December 20th to recognize Town Hall employees and for customer service training.

## BVFD Address Error

Our volunteer fire departments count on our support. Unfortunately, due to a printing error, self-addressed envelopes sent out for the Bethel Volunteer Fire Department fund drive have an obsolete PO Box address. Donations can be made at the link below or put in the envelope and dropped off at Newtown Savings Bank at Dolan Plaza or you make a donation online. Thank you, Newtown Savings!  
<https://bethelvolunteerfiredepartment.myshopify.com/products/2024-annual-fund-drive>

## From Bethel Social Services

The weather has turned colder and local kids could use a coat! Spread that warmth to a child in need by donating to Coats For Kids! Every coat counts and every child deserves to feel loved! Let's make this holiday season truly magical together! <https://conta.cc/3ZwK2m6>

And for those who do not have a place to even lay their head, help Off The Streets provide mattresses to those who are finally securing housing. Visit <https://conta.cc/3Oz7N6P>

## Winter Walk at Putnam Park

Join the Putnam Park historian for a walking tour of the Revolutionary War Winter Encampment tomorrow, December 7th at 11 am! Learn about the lives of five people we've researched through the recent NPS grant project, Forgotten Voices of the American Revolution. Following the walk, which is a mile-long gravel loop, visitors may exit the park or stay to watch a tactical skirmish. A special pop-up gift shop will be available after the event.

## 98Q's 14th Annual Bags & Bears

Local kids in foster care can really use our help. Join Rich Minor broadcasting live at the Danbury Mall food court tomorrow, December 7th between 10 am and 3 pm. They are looking for gift cards to any store, new baby bottles, binkies, baby wipes, diapers toys, backpacks, stuffed animals, books, baby toys & clothes. Please bring items unwrapped.

## Stuff-A-Cruiser

We have many families in Bethel who have a difficult time financially. Taking the load off with a few gifts goes a long way. The Bethel Police Department, The Toy Room, and Byrd's Books are hosting their Stuff-A-Cruiser Book and Toy Drive this Sunday, December 8th from 9 am to 3 pm downtown in front of the Toy Room and Byrd's Books. Santa arrives at 11 am!

## Walnut Hill Food Pantry Concert

If you are a fan of Christmas classics and carols, Walnut Hill Church is hosting a Big Band Christmas Concert featuring Jay Prince and Friends on Friday, December 13th at 7 pm. Most importantly, all proceeds go to support the Walnut Hill Community Food Pantry! For tickets and info, visit <https://walnuthillcc.org/events/big-band-christmas-concert/>

## Cookie Sale

Don't miss the St. Thomas' Church 28th Annual Cookie Sale on Saturday, December 14th 9:30 am to 12 pm. A great way to support others and walk away with homemade cookies and fudge!

## Plumtrees Schoolhouse Sing-a-Long

Don't miss the annual Holiday Party and Sing-a-Long Open House at Plumtrees Schoolhouse on Saturday, December 14th from 1 pm to 3 pm. The Plumtrees Schoolhouse is a local treasure and our own Town Historian, Patrick Wild will be on hand. Music will be provided by Billy Michael and Santa will be making an appearance. For questions, contact Shani at [shaniburkespecht@hotmail.com](mailto:shaniburkespecht@hotmail.com) or 203-501-7594. You can also reach Sheila at 203-501-7717.

## Bethel Winter Guard Breakfast

Join our Bethel Winter Guard for Breakfast with Santa on Sunday, December 15th from 9 am to 11 am at the Dodgingtown Fire Department. Reserve your \$15 tickets at <https://www.zeffy.com/ticketing/pancake-breakfast-with-santa-2>

## Santa Con

Bethel Santa Con is back in downtown Bethel on December 15th from Noon to ????. Check out "Support Local - Bethel, CT" on Facebook for more details as they become available. In the meantime, pick out your Santa suit or Santa themed attire and get ready for some fun while supporting downtown businesses!

## Shoutouts

A huge shoutout to Taryn McCormick's 1st Grade class at Rockwell who held a Kindness Project today. Residents can stop by Hunt Baseball Field on Whittlesey Dr. next to the Football Field. You will find items secured to the fence, such as hats gloves and scarfs, in bags. If you are a family in need, please take one. (Please leave the bag and clothes pins.) If you would like to leave an item, please bring it in a waterproof bag and secure it with the clothes pins provided! Thank you for your Kindness!

Have a great weekend!

