



Office Of The First Selectman  
*Town of Seymour*  
1 First Street  
Seymour, Connecticut 06483

**W. Kurt Miller**  
First Selectman

It is my pleasure to present for consideration this fiscal year 2019-2020 budget. For the fourth year in a row, we have kept the mill rate level while continuing to move Seymour forward. I believe this no-frills budget includes crucial investments while staying within the means of a level budget and I hope it wins your support.

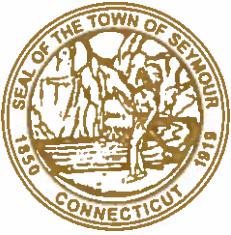
Over the past several years we have been able to create financial stability through proactive planning, integrating technology and by prioritizing long-term success. Our success, however, continues to be threatened by an financial environment that has never fully recovered from the 2008 financial crisis and which looks increasingly unstable as well as increasing financial volatility at the State level caused by decades of poor planning. In spite of these challenges, we remain committed and confident about the future stability of Seymour.

Financially-speaking, the hard work we have done over the past 7 years has yielded great results. We achieved and have maintained a AA+ bond rating from Standard & Poor's, the second-highest possible. Our fund balance, the Town's rainy day fund, is at about 12% and our debt service ratio is below 7%, both well within the range that ratings agencies prefer. We have slowly built a variety of funds that allow us to brace against the ebb and flow of the budget cycle – the mill rate stabilization fund, the debt service fund, the workers' compensation interservice fund and the capital fund. Each addresses a crucial obligation and allows us to plan for an uncertain future without placing vital initiatives on hold. We have also, through our OPEB trust fund, begun to address the long-term obligations that are crippling governmental finances everywhere.

In addition to restructuring our finances, we have actively sought and implemented cost-saving measures. In negotiations with the Town's bargaining units, all Town and school district employees are on the same healthcare plan, which provides leverage when negotiating insurance rates. Additionally, new employees no longer receive retiree healthcare, greatly reducing our future obligations. Similarly, in 2018, we avoided a \$1 million annual increase by switching insurers. We also recently completed the conversion of our streetlights to LED, saving upwards of \$100,000 per year. In 2016, we teamed up with Woodbridge to provide expended animal control services for roughly the same price as our previous part-time staff while avoiding the high cost of building a new structure.

In the same spirit, we have striven to find internal efficiency wherever possible. The Town and school district share IT services and a Facilities Director. The expertise of these staff is invaluable and has helped us to accomplish a great deal. In addition, Public Works now performs services for the school district that were previously contracted. We are currently planning to integrate our Finance Departments. We have also restructured departments to increase efficiency. In 2015, we brought Recreation, Senior Services and the Library together under the umbrella Community Services department, leading to expended programming options with increased attendance. Similarly, in 2018 all aspects of land use were consolidated in the Department of Development & Enforcement allowing us to streamline processes for both homeowners as well as developers looking at investing in Seymour.

Seymour has seen a great deal of investment over the past several years. Although it may not be apparent to residents, most of Seymour's largest employers have made major investments in their facilities in



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Seymour. In the past year alone, Thule, who invested \$1.6 million in their facility in 2013, invested an additional \$6.5 million. Likewise, Basement Systems, who invested \$17 million in 2016, invested another \$7 million. MPI invested \$1.25 million in 2015 and Emery-Winslow Scale Company is investing \$1.8 million. In 2015, the Town sold LoPresti Elementary school for \$335,000 to a developer who created 42 apartments with an assessed value of \$2.5 million.

We have also seen great progress completion on many long-stalled projects. The long-vacant Seymour Lumber was demolished in 2014 and parts of Tri-Town Plaza were demolished in early 2019. We are working directly with the property owners and are optimistic about more developments on these sites in the near future. Additionally, the \$6.3 million Paul Pawlak Sr. Fish Bypass, stalled for almost a decade, was completed in 2015. Similarly, the \$2.5 million reconstruction of Rimmon Street, also stalled for almost a decade, was completed in 2019. In 2017, the first phase of Seymour's long-awaited Greenway Trail was constructed and plans are currently underway to expand it.

We have also focused on improving our long-ignored infrastructure. In the last 7 years, approximately one third of all Town roads have been repaved. Where possible, we are leveraging State and Federal funding to reduce the burden on taxpayers. The recently completed Rimmon Street reconstruction, as well as the upcoming Holbrook Road reconstruction, will be funded by these sources. Likewise, we have begun addressing the deficiency of our municipal buildings. In 2016, voters approved a \$1.5 million bond measure to modernize Seymour's buildings and construction is ongoing. In 2018, Seymour teamed up with Johnson Controls for a \$9 million energy savings performance contract that will allow for crucial upgrades with no up-front cost for the Town.

This budget continues the trend of improving services while remaining level. It provides for additional staffing including another School Resource Officer as well as a Human Resources Director shared with the school district, a contracted economic development professional through the Connecticut Economic Resource Center and additional administrative support. The Town will also invest in a new bus for the Community Center to increase attendance in programming, another pavement reclaimer for Public Works to allow for improve pothole repair and upgraded radios for Emergency Services personnel.

Looking forward, the Town faces additional challenges that we intend to face head on. The Community Center requires substantial investment as repair bills become increasingly costly. We are investigating the feasibility of new construction to see if it is more cost-efficient. Likewise, Bungay Elementary School requires substantial renovation. Although we've made great strides in repairing our roadways, we know more investment is required and are looking at how to fund them.

Sincerely,

W. Kurt Miller