

# Grant will be used for school garden project

**BY BILL BITTAR**  
 REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

OXFORD — Old tennis courts behind Great Oak Middle School were transformed last year into a school garden where students will learn about agriculture by growing tomatoes, peppers, green beans and other crops. This year, plans to enhance it with a greenhouse and an outdoor classroom received a boost from a \$15,000 community grant.

It will be the first use of a \$50,000 annual payment from CPV Towantic's \$117.6 million tax stabilization agreement with the town for the company's 785-megawatt power plant under construction on Woodruff Hill Road. A



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**Guests enjoy refreshments following the dedication of a new garden at Great Oak Middle School in Oxford in September. The garden, which was built on the school's old tennis courts, was made possible, in part, by a grant from the Department of Agriculture, numerous donations, and volunteers.**

fund was set up to use the annual payment for youth and community programs.

The Oxford Community Support Committee vets proposals and makes grant rec-

ommendations to the Board of Selectmen for a final decision. On Wednesday night, the board approved the \$15,000 grant for the garden.

"It definitely fits the criteria for our grant very well," Todd Romagna, chairman of the Oxford Community Support Committee, said of the garden project. "It's going to be used for all the children in town for many years to come."

Kathleen O'Neil, the town's grant writer, filled out the application on behalf of the Oxford Agricultural Advisory Committee.

The town recently received a second annual \$50,000 payment from CPV for 2018, so

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Finance Director James Hliva said \$85,000 is now sitting in the account.

“It’s gonna be a great thing for Oxford to have these monies available for groups to continue with their agenda and goals,” Romagna said.

He encourages community organizations to review the criteria for grants on the town’s website, [www.oxford-ct.gov](http://www.oxford-ct.gov), where application forms can be downloaded. Completed applications should be turned in to

the Selectmen’s Office at Oxford Town Hall.

Tonight, the committee will review a proposal of around \$2,000 by the Oxford Great Oak Cheerleaders for new uniforms, and Romagna heard other proposals are in the pipeline.

All are welcome to attend tonight’s committee meeting, which will have a public comments session, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

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