



The Newspaper of Richmond & Huntington
Volume 41 **March 2024 Issue** Number 2

Education Funding Scramble in Montpelier ... And Here...

If you are looking for a succinct, yet understandable answer about the latest bottom line on the funding of public education and the effect it will have on your tax bill, this is not the article for you. It is about changes to voting on the school budget.

At this point along the winding road, the Vermont Legislature, recognizing that the through-the-roof taxation (word has gotten out) needs to be fixed. A bill is going through the channels and will not be signed into law when this publication goes to press.

What is coming out of Montpelier is not official... yet.

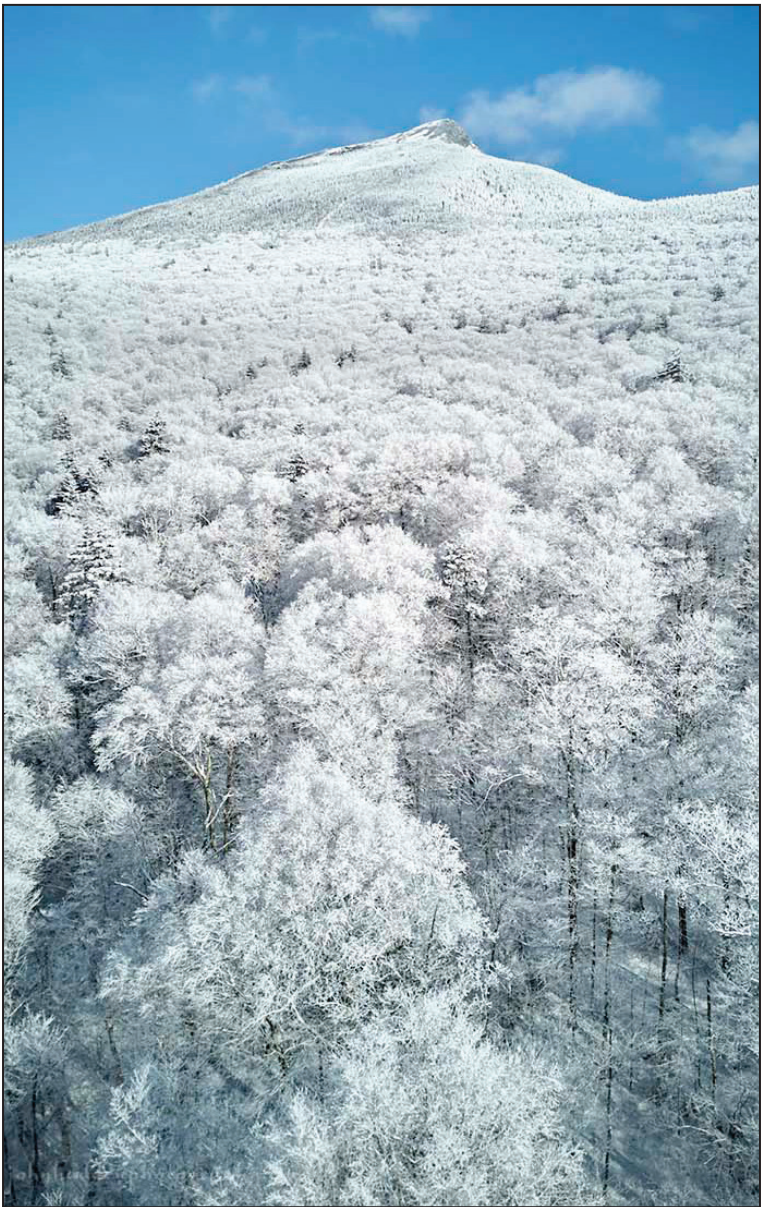
So, what is known at this time is the Board of the MMUUSD (the consolidated school district that includes Richmond and Huntington)

decided to have another school vote on April 2, complete with tabulators, machine ballots and polls that are open 7 am to 7 pm (6:30 am to 7 pm in Huntington).

The MMU ballot is still being sent out now for absentee requests as, until the law has been signed by the Governor, the election still needs to be administered for Town Meeting Day. Your Town Clerk cannot make a decision to not send a ballot. If you receive the MMUUSD, vote.

When you hear that the law has changed, something will be done differently. Instruction will be provided to those administering the election. Plan to go to Town Meeting on March 5 and then also vote the school district ballot on April 2.

More to come in the next issue.



The summit of Camels Hump, taken by John Hadden with a drone at the foot of the Burrows Trail. This photo appeared recently in his popular online EAST STREET WEATHER BLOG (eaststreetweatherblog.wordpress.com) that features daily local weather observations, forecasts and the almanac - and colorful photos.

The Written Word as It Appears in This Newspaper

1. Camels Hump or Camel's Hump
2. Browns Court or Brown's Court.... Browns Trace or Brown's Trace
3. Volunteers Green or Volunteer's Green or Volunteers' Green
4. Farmers Market or Farmer's Market or Farmers' Market
5. Cochrans or Cochran's or Cochrans'
6. Its or it's or its' (hint: one of these is not a word)

Many years ago, about 25 years or more, the TIMES INK had a volunteer copy editor whose real job was as a reporter for the TIMES-ARGUS. At a meeting of the volunteer staff, she pointed out that the paper's content style was "all over the place." Times were 2 PM, 2 P.M., 2 pm, 2 p.m., 2:00 PM, 2:00 P.M., 2:00 pm or 2:00 p.m., for example; dates included Jan. 4, 1/4/24, January 4, 1-4-24, for another example. These were all appearing throughout the same issue of the paper.

Names, titles, a capital article in a headline or not:
A Potluck At The Church or A Potluck at the Church.

The group at the meeting sat down and developed styles for this publication, which don't necessarily follow the NEW YORK TIMES: THE ELEMENTS OF STYLE. The results of the work of this group have mostly stayed the same. It is easier on the eye of the reader to not have a sentence broken up with periods, so the decision is 2 pm, January 4; and lower case articles in headlines, unless the article is at the beginning of the line. NO CAPS except for acronyms and / or Board abbreviations.

And, a more recent decision to not cause our readers EPA. What is EPA, you might ask? Exclamation Point Apoplexy, which comes from having too many exclamation points shouting from the page when editing or reading. One exclamation point per 10,000 words is plenty (it may be too much).

However, there have always been gray areas around apostrophes. Huntington resident Brian Valentine, in an informal discussion about the iconic image of Vermont, declared, "Camel's Hump and Camels Hump have two completely different meanings." He then went on to say that he will always use the apostrophe [in reference to the mountain].

Graphically speaking, it is easier to design a piece without an apostrophe and thus, the apostrophes in common places regularly appearing both ways, are relegated to the bin. Camels (sorry, Brian), Browns, Volunteers, Farmers are the style. Cochran's is the way that organization spells its name.

And speaking of its... its is possessive (no apostrophe), it's is a contraction of it is, and its' is not a word - why is it even being mentioned in this newspaper?

Finally, the Oxford comma. People are passionate about their commas. It can and does appear either way everyday. The choice in this paper is related, once again, to readability.

Page 1 articles written by Heidi Racht

Town Meeting Business

Richmond

**Town Meeting: Tuesday, March 5,
beginning at 9 am**

VOTE

**Camels Hump Middle School
March 5 Polls Open: 7 am to 7 pm**

FOOD

**Lunch by Community Senior Center
- hotdogs & chili dogs
Hopefully Girl Scout cookies**

Huntington

**Town Meeting: Tuesday, March 5,
beginning at 9 am
Dog Registration available.**

VOTE

**Brewster-Pierce School
March 5 Polls Open: 6:30 am to 7 pm**

FOOD

**Sweet Rolls and Coffee in the morning
Potluck lunch organized by the
Community Church
Dessert: Boy Scout Bake Sale
Girl Scout Cookies Table in morning**

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Write to Us!

Letters on local topics are encouraged. Please submit to news@timesinkvt.org. All submissions must have a signature and phone number for verification. Letters with an inflammatory tone, or prose likely to incite high blood pressure in some of the readers, will be reviewed and evaluated by THE TIMES INK! Board of Directors before printing.



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news@timesinkvt.org

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Issue: March 21

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Letters

Opinions & Other News

To Friends and Family

I want to express gratitude for my rescue in the recent wind storm. It was heartwarming and wonderful for the gathering of so many to help. Thank you to each and everyone and I want you to know how grateful I am that no more damage was done. God bless you all for your caring.

May this new year bring blessings to you all.

I love you all,

—Charlotte Moultroup, Richmond

Support Article 12

Please join me in supporting Article 12 of Richmond's Annual Town Meeting on March 5, 2024 to ensure that our Town workers and residents have a safe and energy efficient building to conduct the work of town government. This \$9.8million investment is eligible for support from other funds created for this purpose and to ensure that everything from the windows to the invisible electrical systems in the walls will help and protect those who are helping us. Looking forward to seeing you on Town Meeting day at 9 am!

—Connie van Eeghen, Richmond

Supporting Adam Wood for Richmond Selectboard

I have had the distinct pleasure of getting to know Adam Wood, a Richmond Resident running for Selectboard. Adam has lived in town for many years, raising his family here. As a member of the Planning Commission, Adam is experienced with the issues of housing and working hard to steer planned growth that will benefit all of us. Adam has also volunteered for many years with the Richmond Fire Department. He is experienced in Richmond's needs. If you've been involved in some of our town events like the Fourth of July celebration it's likely you've seen Adam quietly helping out. He has been a busy guy for years making Richmond a better place.

In talking with Adam, you come away with a clear impression of someone who is level headed, thoughtful and considerate of people's views. As a tradesman and business owner he is no stranger to navigating budgets, projects and how to get things done well. I am delighted he is willing to step up and run for Selectboard and am confident he will serve us all well. Please join me in supporting Adam Wood for Selectboard in Richmond.

—Marshall Paulsen, Richmond

Save Browns Court Park

I am a current member of the Volunteer Green Park, Browns Court Park, and the Old Round Church Green Park committee, commonly known now as the 3 Parks Committee (a temporary, separate committee from the Recreation committee).

I made a motion at an American Rescue Plan Act committee meeting to allocate \$450,000 of ARPA Funds that the Town of Richmond has in the bank, to bring the parks back to their original glory and perhaps add a few more recreational items.

In reviewing town budgets, I believe that the parks have been overlooked for maintenance for some time. When the committee met, our first action was to inspect the three parks and create a maintenance check list. What we found was disheartening. It was clear that these three parks need major renovations and maintenance.

We found sink holes, rotten trees, trees that had been cut down but, the stumps not removed, dead grass lacking topsoil and re-seeding, broken items at the playground, mold on benches, broken benches, and more. So began our mission to give the three parks a facelift.

In doing so, we realized that the Town doesn't have a lot of recreational space. We have Volunteers Green Park with extreme limitations because of flooding, the Old Round Church Green, the portion directly outside the front of the Church (the Richmond Historical Society owns the Parking area below) and Browns Court Park, as the only place we can do additional recreation.

At a recent Selectboard meeting a brief presentation was given about the possibility of affordable housing at Browns Court

Park with the current ball field remaining in place.

Browns Court Park was recently surveyed by Button Professional Land Surveyors, PC, and they stated the entire parcel is 3.13 acres and the usable land is actually 2.2 acres because of the banks, ravines, tree lines, and zoning required set-backs.

Browns Court Park is the only recreational park that doesn't get impacted by flooding. Browns Court Park could become more of a communal gathering space for all ages of Richmond residents for recreation with expanded facilities.

John Linn, of Hillview Design Collaborative, has done Architectural drawings of Browns Court Park showing possible Bocce courts, Pickle ball courts, bleachers, the current softball field, picnic tables, park benches, and a twenty-space gravel parking lot.

Why am I telling you all this...it's because I do not believe it is appropriate to build affordable housing on this property, property that was donated to the Richmond Baseball Association and then conveyed to our Village Trustees somewhere between 1911 – 1916, according to the land records.

Did you know that the road called Browns Court used to be known as Athletic Drive?

According to the 2020 census, Richmond has 4,167 residents. I agree the State of Vermont needs more housing, and I believe that the Town of Richmond needs more housing. However, I do NOT believe that housing should be built on Browns Court Park, not at the expense of our limited green spaces.

I am not writing this post for the Three Parks Committee, but as a life-long Richmond resident, who, as part of being a member of this committee, has become concerned about the condition of our three parks. The Town has limited ability to maintain and expand facilities at Volunteers Green due to its flood history.

The Round Church Green Park is an inappropriate location for anything other than passive recreation. There is not any other Town owned recreational land in Richmond other than Browns Court Park that is not flood susceptible and is suitable for outdoor recreation.

Thank you for your consideration. I love Richmond and am proud to be a Richmond resident. If you feel the same, and want to save Browns Court Park please let your Selectboard members know, write a letter to FPF, or attend Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 4th, at Camels Hump Middle School where this item will be addressed at the end of the meeting.

Your voice can make a difference.

—Denise Begins Barnard, Richmond

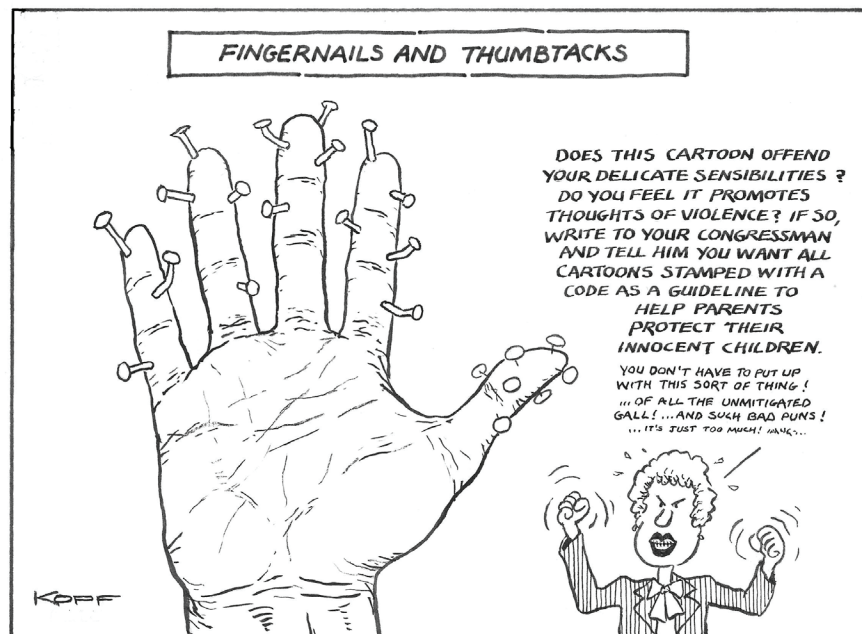
Town Clerk Vote on March 5

Thanks very much for allowing me the privilege of being the Huntington Town Clerk these past 18 years. I hope that you will vote for me again, or for the first time, on March 5. It has been interesting, challenging and fun to be in the "hub" of Huntington Center with lots going now in elections and land records management, especially.

Being Town Clerk has enabled me to meet so many of you and to work collaboratively with more volunteers in our community. This is a great town and I am proud to be part of what makes it work for us and makes it special.

Please vote March 5 and come participate in Town Meeting at the school, eat lunch with neighbors, and get to know our town better.

—Heidi Racht, Huntington Center



Historical Society Meeting to Feature Monitor Barn



East Monitor Barn before restoration began in 2023. Courtesy photo

The Richmond Historical Society will be holding its Annual Meeting and Program on Sunday, March 10, at 3 pm, in the Community Room of the Richmond Free Library. In addition to a brief summary of the activities of the Historical Society and the election of officers for 2024, there will be a program, presented by Eliot Lothrop of Building Heritage. He is the lead restorationist of the multi-year project to restore the VYCC's East Monitor Barn.

Built in 1901, the barn, one of the largest dairy barns in the state, was in need of a major restoration effort. Once the restoration is completed, the East Monitor Barn will house the administrative offices of the VYCC, thus allowing the West Monitor Barn to be used as housing for the many young adults that participate in the VYCC's conservation and sustainable agriculture programs. For more information: rhs@richmondvthistory.org

Community Supper

A Community Supper will be held at the Community Church in Huntington Center on Saturday, March 16, 5 pm to 7 pm.

The menu includes stuffed roast pork, mashed potatoes, tossed salad, rolls and butter. Dessert is cherry cheesecake.

The meal is by donation and \$10 would be appreciated. Kids can eat for free. Suggested donation is \$10 per person.

Reservations are recommended. Call or text Ellie (802-398-5320) or email ellielawyer93@gmail.com.

All are welcome.

Family Law Clinic

Legal Services Vermont is hosting a free Family Law Clinic for low-income Vermonters on Tuesday, February 27, from 9 am to noon. It is by appointment only and space is limited. You can ask for an appointment by phone, video conference or in-person in Burlington.

Lawyers can answer your questions about divorce, parentage, custody, visitation, child support and more.

To make an appointment, call 1-800-889-2047. Leave a message with your name and contact number. Please be sure to mention the Family Law Clinic. A Legal Services Vermont advocate will call you back to screen for eligibility and schedule your appointment.

Three Parks Committee Presents Research Results

Submitted by Fran Thomas

Richmond received \$1.2 million dollars from the Federal Government as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. A committee was formed to make recommendations as to how these funds should be used. In August of 2023, the Richmond Selectboard allocated \$450,000 of the unallocated ARPA funds toward the improvement of the recreational facilities at the Town owned parks – Volunteers Green and Browns Court and at a later meeting the Town-owned Round Church Green was added. In September, the Selectboard appointed seven members to a committee, now referred to as the Three Parks Committee. This committee has been charged with developing plans for the improvement of the facilities at each of the three parks and to bringing its proposals to the Selectboard, including draft quotes for the expenditures, and future maintenance costs.

Since being appointed, the committee has been meeting approximately every two weeks. It has reached out to other town committees and organizations including the Trails, Parking and Recreation Committees, the town tree warden, the farmers market, youth baseball, softball and soccer groups, Zoning Administrator, Town Manager, Selectboard and the Highway Department Foreman, as well as neighbors of the parks. The committee has talked to a number of local and Vermont contractors to get tentative quotes for the various options and improvements that it has been exploring. It requested, and the Selectboard authorized, a professional survey of Browns Court Park in order to establish firm boundary lines and also one of the plateau at Volunteers Green to establish the elevations. The agenda for each Zoom and in-person meeting has been posted, and minutes are available on the Town website. The committee welcomes participation from the Richmond community.

Below are some of the topics being researched and discussed for each park:

Browns Court: keep the current softball field with a possible realignment; research the advantages of installing four pickle ball courts versus a tennis court or a multi-use court that would cost more and create logistical challenges; install two bocce courts; plant cedar trees [arborvitae] for noise abatement; remove several trees and the dying and overhanging branches along the perimeter of the park; create a parking lot that could accommodate at least 20 cars for those who use the park for any recreational activity. Improvements such as the above can only happen if Browns Court remains as a Town

Park and is not slated for housing.

Round Church Green: Add another bench and a picnic table; power wash the two granite monuments; clean and refinish one of the existing benches, improve the grass especially where there is mostly dirt; remove several dying trees and trim dead and low hanging branches; possibly add a fence with granite posts to resemble what was there many years ago.

Volunteers Green: Due to the two major flooding events that had a significant impact on the park, ideas to improve this heavily used park have been more difficult. The Richmond Recreation Committee has applied for a grant to help fund the cost of replacing the more-than-30-year-old playground equipment and is working with a member of the Three Parks Committee on a design that is All Accessible. The play equipment has held up well over the years, but now shows its age and the damage caused by three major floods and several lesser ones. Each flooding incident has required a significant amount of labor and funds to get the playground equipment, the playing fields and the restroom facility back in shape. The Three Parks committee, the Recreation committee and the Town Highway foreman are hesitant to install a new playground, a significant investment, in the location of the current playground.

An idea, being explored, is the removal the bandshell, which is in need of significant repairs, and the installation of a new playground up on the bandshell area. The rest of the bandshell area would be reworked and the hope is that there would be room to also build a pavilion with restrooms. To answer the need and request for a safe place, away from traffic, for people to walk, jog, etc. the committee is exploring the idea of an "All Accessible" path (paved or sure-pack) along the perimeter of the grass area at Volunteers Green. This trail would not be up close to the Winooski River, where the current trail has suffered erosion from flooding.

The list of items to tackle is long and the total costs will be significant. The need for improved and new facilities is there. And now, while the Town has the funds, is the time to move forward on some or all of the above projects.

If you have concerns, thoughts or are interested in helping, please come to one of the committee meetings or contact one of the members, all of whom are listed on the Town's website. <https://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-meetings/volunteers-green-and-browns-court-project-committee>

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Next Chicken Dinner is March 15th!

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Please help conserve and protect
Richmond's best places.

Our town's highly successful Conservation Reserve Fund is up for its annual renewal in this year's voting. To keep it working, it needs your "YES" vote on or before March 5.

For every dollar taxpayers have invested in the Fund, it's brought in \$3.87 in matches from other sources — over \$2.1 million in additional support in all. That's enabled Richmond to:

- Protect important local forests, streams, wildlife habitat and farmland, including the Andrews and Stage Road Community Forests, Beeken Rivershore Preserve and Bombardier Meadow,
- Safeguard, improve and maintain popular recreational and educational sites, like those above plus Gillett Pond, Volunteers Green, Willis Hill, Huntington River Gorge, the Johnnie Brook Trail and others,
- Restore local historic landmarks, like the portico at the Richmond Town Center.

And all for just a penny on the tax rate.

Let's keep the Fund working for Richmond. Please join us in voting "YES" on Article 13 on this year's ballot. Request a mail-in ballot from Linda Parent at lparent@richmondvt.gov, or call 802-434-2221. Or vote for the Fund in person at Camels Hump Middle School on March 5 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Thanks for supporting local conservation!

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Check Out Space! NASA Solar System Ambassador Bridget Kimsey will visit Huntington Public Library and Richmond Free Library as we continue to explore our universe and get ready for the big 2024 Total Solar Eclipse. Head to Huntington on March 3 and then join us here in Richmond on March 23 at 11 am for the final program: Eclipse 101! Get to know what to look for, how to look for it, and how to keep your eyes and animals safe! These programs include activities for kids, teens and adults. No registration necessary.

Vermont Reads: Last Night at the Telegraph Club RFL joins libraries and community groups around Vermont in a big community discussion of *LAST NIGHT AT THE TELEGRAPH CLUB*, by Malinda Lo. The book is suited for teens and adults and focuses on a Chinese-American young woman coming of age in 1950's San Francisco. Copies of the book are available to take home (to keep or to borrow) now. Our facilitated book discussion is March 13 at 6:30 pm, with a free swing dancing lesson on April 5, and a paper lantern making project with Radiate Art Space on April 21. Join us as we explore themes of Chinese-American immigrant experience, McCarthyism, and queerness in mid-century America. Books are available now at the library.

The Great Puzzle Challenge Make a team of up to 3-4 people and compete to see who can assemble their fun 500-piece jigsaw puzzle fastest! February 24 at 11am. Register in advance: library@richmondvt.gov or (802) 434-3036.

Solar Eclipse Scavenger Hunt To help our young library patrons understand and prepare for Vermont's total solar eclipse on April 8, we will have a scavenger hunt set up throughout the Library during the month of March. Curious kids can hunt for images of the sun in all phases of the eclipse and take note of what time the sun will appear in our sky like that on Eclipse Day. The hunt begins and ends at the youth desk on the second floor.

Lego Club We have loads of Legos. Periodically, we offer multi-week sessions of after-school Lego Club fun for ages 4 - 12. Lego enthusiasts work together or separately to build amazing projects. No registration is necessary, just come play. The next six-week Lego Club session will be on Tuesdays, March 12 – April 16, from 3 pm to 4 pm.

Paint a Puzzle Kids, in grades K – 4, are invited to sign up for this puzzling activity. Equipped with paints and brushes and inspired by the swirly star art of Van Gogh and other artists, create your own 36-piece work of puzzle art. Join us on Friday, March 1, at 10:30 am. Register by calling or emailing the Library.

Free Stuff Pause in the entryway and browse the bins. Everything is free. Many items are donations that arrived too late to use in the Book Sale, some are library duplicates, and there are MANY adult DVDs featuring great movies and TV shows. See something you like – take it!

MMCTV Video Workshop for Middle School Students We are once again working with local community media center MMCTV to offer the ninth annual video workshop for middle school students during the February school vacation. This year the theme will be *IT HAPPENED AT THE LIBRARY*. We will imagine plausible and fanciful scenes set in the library and produce short videos using a variety of filming techniques. Students ages 10 – 14 are invited to register for

this fun, free workshop offering hands-on filming and editing experience. Time will be split between the library and the television studio on February 26 and 27 from 9 – 12. Space is limited so be sure to sign up soon by calling or emailing the library.

Cookbook Club Cookbook Club meets monthly on second Saturdays at noon. On March 9, the group will be discussing and eating recipes from *BEAN BY BEAN* by Crescent Dragonwagon. Space is limited and registration is required. Email Suzanne at skrohn@richmondvt.gov for information.

Knitting for Beginners Learn to knit from members of our long-running knitting group. These knitters are experienced instructors and look forward to introducing you to the craft. Class is held March 9 from 10:30 to 12:30. Class is free, and yarn will be provided, but participants must bring a pair of US Size 7 (4.5 mm) single-point knitting needles. For adults and teens ages 14 and up. Register by calling or emailing the Library.

New! Seed Library Our new seed library officially opens for (free) business on February 28. Stop in to "check out" some of our seeds generously donated by High Mowing, Fedco and Seed Savers Exchange. If possible, plan to save and bring back some of your harvested seeds for next year! Stop in or email skrohn@richmondvt.gov for more information.

AARP Volunteer Tax Preparers Volunteers working with AARP are meeting with seniors to prepare tax returns in the library community room on Tuesday mornings, February 6 - April 9. Call the Library to schedule an appointment.

(Mostly) Fiction Book Group Join us in the Mezzanine Lounge on March 12 at 6 pm to discuss *THE MERCIES*, by Kiran Millwood Hargrave. Contact Gwen Landis (434-5012; gwenne1972@yahoo.com) for information on joining this group.

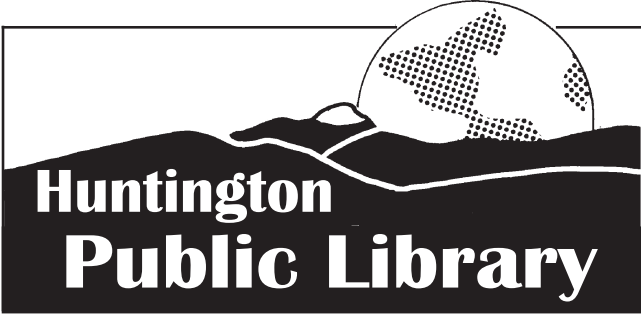
Mystery Book Group Join us in the Mezzanine Lounge on March 21 at 7 pm to discuss *IRON LAKE* (Cork O'Connor #1), by William Kent Kruger. Contact Maureen Parent (434-2055, msparent@gmavt.net) with any questions.

Children's Art from the Ukraine On loan from The Fermata Arts Foundation in Avon, Connecticut, we will be displaying sixteen drawings done by students of the Vasylykivskyi Children's Art School in Izyum, Kharkiv region, Ukraine. Ranging in age from 9 to 14, students created a piece in support of Fermata's mission of promoting peace through arts and culture.

Ecological Shifts on the Trail with Green Mountain Club Green Mountain club hosts Ali Kosiba for Ecological Shifts on the Trail (Climate Change in Vermont's Forests) on February 29 at 7pm.

Weekly/Monthly Children's Programs Weekly programs at the RFL run from September through May and follow the MMUUSD schedule for vacation days and weather closure days.

Storytime/Playgroup The good times kick off with stories and action songs in the Library Community Room and then the toys come out for free play with friends new and old. Co-sponsored by the Library and the Lund Center. Kids infant through five years and their grown-ups are invited to join the fun on Wednesdays from 10 am until noon.



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**Huntington
Public Library**

www.huntingtonlibraryvt.org

Two Upcoming Nature Literacy Programs
 Nature Literacy Programs are a collaboration between the Huntington Public Library and the Huntington Conservation Commission.

Wild Apple Tree Release Workday and Workshop Saturday, March 9, 8:30 am to noon, at the Huntington Community Forest. Huntington resident Joe Perella will be leading the program. Joe has many years of experience working in and caring for apple orchards. The work is limited to eight people who will be working hands-on under Joe's tutelage, using tools and releasing wild apple trees in the HCF. Sign up is required by contacting the Library. Upon registration you will receive detailed instructions from Joe. If you would like to learn about apple tree release but don't care to engage in the actual work, you are invited to stop by during the morning work session. Apple tree release is a pruning practice that increases fruit production and provides more food for wildlife. https://mywoodlot.com/images/supporting_information/how_to_release_and_prune_apple_trees.pdf

Living with Black Bears Wednesday, March 13, at 6:30 pm, at the Library. We will be welcoming Jaclyn Comeau, Vermont Fish and Wildlife's bear biologist, to give her presentation LIVING WITH BEARS. She will spend about 30 minutes talking about who bears are, what they like and don't like, and how best to handle them: all their bear habits. Then there will be about 30 minutes on bear-human conflict situations, what are the typical causes, While you're waiting for the program you might want to read about bears. These two books are available at our Library: IN COMPANY OF BEARS - WHAT BLACK BEARS HAVE TAUGHT ME ABOUT INTELLIGENCE AND INTUITION by Benjamin Kilman; Beyond the Bear and LIVING WITH BEARS HANDBOOK by Linda Masterson.

Terry Boyle Art Exhibit The exhibit represents a variety of gorgeous watercolor paintings throughout February. Be sure to stop in to see exhibit more than once, as Terry has refreshed the exhibit.

Save the dates! Sunday, March 3, at 2 pm. While we eagerly wait for the upcoming solar eclipse, the Richmond Free Library and the HPL will have three educational programs with NASA Solar System Ambassador Bridget Kimsey. Free events, all ages welcome.

March 3 at 2 pm in Huntington - WHAT'S OUT THERE? TRAVEL THE UNIVERSE. Explore the universe beyond our solar system, including fascinating phenomena like star death, black holes and more. This program includes activities for all ages.

March 23 at 11 am in Richmond - ECLIPSE 101 - ARE YOU READY? Learn about the upcoming total solar eclipse on April 8 and the different ways to safely view it. Plus pick up free eclipse viewing glasses!

Vacation Afternoon Family Movie Matinee Join your friends and neighbors for a matinee on Friday, March 1, at 2 pm. Families and children are invited to watch ENCANTO. Bring your friends and something cozy to snuggle with and we will pop the popcorn.

Family Drop-in Play Group Saturday, March 9 and April 13, 9 am to noon. Come meet other families with small children in a supportive setting. The Library will be open to mull around, browse, and even check out material, children can play with toys and an easy seasonal craft

will be out. Coffee and tea, plus a small snack will be provided. Please contact Stacey for more information or to sign up to bring a snack.

Seed Swap & Social Sunday, March 10, 11 am to 1 pm. Come meet fellow gardeners in town, pick up new ideas, and share seeds. Coffee and tea will be ready and hot.

Planet Huntington Sunday, March 10, 5:30 pm. Visit Spain with Nancy Mead and Pam Steeg. We are grateful for hosts Don Dresser and Barb Winters for continuing this wonderful series.

Weekly Coffee Chat with Don Dresser Wednesday at 9 am to 10:30 am. Don has strong coffee and a variety of morning treats for a delicious way to break up the week by meeting friends in a great place. You can browse for books and check them out while you are there, too! Senior event sponsored by the Community Senior Center. Free event.

Thanks to all who attended the Friends of the Library's Annual Baby Brunch last month. We had a wonderful turnout, and 13 families each chose a new picture book to be added to the Library's collection in honor of their child. Thank you to volunteers who provided refreshments. Two special thanks: gratitude to author Janet Burnham and her daughter, Kristen Mullins, who donated copies of Janet's books to be included in the family gift bags and to Krin's Bakery for generously donating cookies to each family and the event.

If you were invited to the Baby Brunch but were unable to attend, please stop at the Library to pick up your gift bag from the Friends and, if you would like, choose a children's book for the Library collection in your child's honor.

New Adult Fiction NATURAL BEAUTY by Ling Ling Huang; PROPHET SONG by Paul Lynch; A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES by Sarah J. Maas; THE MOUNTAIN IN THE SEA by Ray Nayler; HOLLY by Stephen King; THE BRIDGERTONS: HAPPILY EVER AFTER and ON THE WAY TO THE WEDDING by Julia Quinn; ONCE UPON A WARDROBE by Patti Callahan; THE WOMEN by Kristin Hannah; THE PROSPECTORS by Ariel Djanikian.

Adult Nonfiction EAT, POOP DIE - HOW ANIMAL MAKE OUR WORLD by Joe Roman; THE SEARS BABY BOOK - EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR BABY FROM BIRTH TO AGE TWO by Sears Family; THE BOOK OF WILDING: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO REWILDING BIG AND SMALL by Isabella Tree; EVE - HOW THE FEMALE BODY DROVE 2000 MILLION YEARS OF HUMAN EVOLUTION by Cat Bohannon; DARK AND MAGICAL PLACES - THE NEUROSCIENCE OF NAVIGATION by Christopher Kemp; TRAINING FOR THE UPHILL ATHLETE - A MANUAL FOR MOUNTAIN RUNNERS AND SKI MOUNTAINEERS by Steve House; Power and Thrones: A New History of the Middle Ages by Dan Jones; How to Read a Tree - Clues and Patterns from Bark to Leaves by Tristan Gooley; VERMONT ALMANAC VOLUME 4; MOTHER NATURE: A 5,000 MILE JOURNEY TO DISCOVER IF A MOTHER AND SON CAN SURVIVE THEIR DIFFERENCES by Jedidiah Jenkins; LOOSE ENDS - MEMORIES OF A LIFE NOT LIVED YET by Joseph A. Citro.

Picture Books HOW BIG ARE YOUR WORRIES, LITTLE BEAR? by Jayneen Sanders; THE SUN PLAYS WITH THE MOON - DISCOVER ECLIPSES THROUGH IMAGINATION AND WONDER by Alicia Mofford; SOMETIMES IT'S GRANDMAS AND GRANDPAS NOT MOMMIES AND DADDIES by Gayle Haverford



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Hello, I'm
Matt Moultrou
 I'm running
 for
 Richmond
 Selectboard
 for the
 two-year
 term.



I'm a third generation Richmond resident. I grew up here on the family farm on Huntington Road. I'm currently serving in the Army National Guard in the rank of CW3 (Chief Warrant Officer 3). I'm working for a Richmond building company as a site supervisor. I've got deep roots within our community. I would like the honor of being your voice on the selectboard for the next two years. I'm open minded and look forward to the opportunity to discuss issues with any of our town residents.

Here are a few issues that I believe are currently on most of our minds.

- 1) Our police department.**
 - a. I would like to see the Hinesburg police chief continue being a joint chief for both our communities.
 - b. We need to hire more Richmond police officers to build our department back up.
- 2) Our open spaces within town need to remain open to the public.**
 - a. Richmond should not build any housing on town owned land.
 - b. I believe it would become a burden of the town to become a landlord.
 - c. We all need safe open parks that we can take our children to.
- 3) Our roads need to be a safe place for everyone to use.**

I look forward to working with everyone on future issues as they come up.
 Thank you! Matt

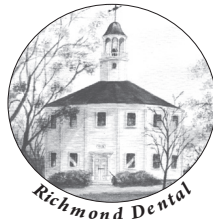
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Huntington Selectboard

Reported by Paul Susen

The Huntington Selectboard met on January 15, 16, 22 and 29. Topics for discussion and/or action included proposed amendments to land use regulations, Town Meeting, highway operations, current budget, VT Alert, professional auditor report, document storage at the Library, collaboration between UVM and the Planning Commission, education tax rates, alcohol license and correspondence.

Approval Process for Land Use Regulations

At a public hearing on proposed changes to the Land Use Regulations, residents commented on procedural options through which the regulations could change; what constitutes qualified expertise; the balance between preservation of natural resources and property utilization; and the floor area for accessory dwelling units.

As to process, the Selectboard decided to use its authority to make modifications to the land use regulations, acknowledging that the public could appeal its decision and force a vote by Australian ballot through the petition process. The threshold required for the number of certified signatures on an appeal petition was initially stated to be 17, then revised to 71 and finally confirmed to be 85 by the Town Clerk (5% of the voter checklist). The petition would need to be submitted to the Town Clerk within 21 days after the date the Selectboard passes a formal motion. This reporter notes that were a petition to be rendered official, that this timetable would not allow enough time to warn a vote on the proposed changes in the land use regulations through ballot at the upcoming March Town Meeting.

After discussion and some disagreement, the amendment to Section 5.06 Preservation of Significant Natural Resources was passed with one member in opposition. The amendment to Section 5.08 Accessory Dwelling Units passed without opposition. If no petition to appeal the decisions occurs, these changes will go into effect after the 21-day waiting period. Were an appeal petition to be certified by the Town Clerk, the changes would not go into effect without majority support of Huntington residents by ballot at a future election.

Discussion ensued on whether the rules for voting amendments to the Land Use Regulations should be changed to require unanimous action. The position taken by a Board member was that any such change in the rules, however, would not be binding on future selectboards.

Town Meeting & Budget Issues The Selectboard passed the required motions to warn the March 5 Town Meeting and to support the narrative and financial reports which will be circulated to residents. The Selectboard members divided up their respective responsibilities as to presenting the various articles. Lister Susan Gulrajani will present a status report on the town-wide property reappraisal under Article 2.

Supply chain obstacles affect all of us, directly or indirectly. In this case, the problem has to do with replacing trucks on a schedule which avoids costly repairs for aging vehicles. At Town Meetings, voters approve the purchase of trucks, but when the trucks take several months or more than a year to arrive, repair costs on the existing vehicle increase significantly.

The Fire Warden has given permission to the Highway Department to collect and burn the debris from the recent windstorm, one truckload at a time. The Road Foreman reported that substantially more sand has been used this winter than scheduled. The Selectboard moved to enable the highway department to purchase a one-ton truck for an amount not to exceed \$120,000.

Missing Sign A Selectboard member inquired about the missing speed radar sign which was on the right-side Main Road before the final

curve heading north into the village. The wind from the recent storm ripped the sign from its base and it landed in a snow pile. The sign is now in the Town Garage being fixed so it can be re-attached to the base. Good fortune may have saved the panels and electronics.

The year 2023-2024 budget is within overall projections for revenues and expenses. On the revenue side, the sale of the highway truck at \$40,000 was reported in the fiscal year after the associated expense was recorded. Traffic enforcement fine receipts have been \$10,000 less than anticipated. Fire department repairs are over budget by about \$2,000 and the Chittenden County tax bill was about \$1,000 more than expected. Legal expenses which had been budgeted for \$6,000 have only cost \$300.

Professional Audit RHR Smith & Company, with headquarters in Buxton, Maine and licensed in Vermont, is contracted to be the professional auditors for the Town of Huntington. Managing Partner Ron Smith, CPA & CFE, reviewed the results of the FY22-23 audit. With no material findings, Smith stated that he had high confidence in the financial data assembled by Town Treasurer Andrea Ogilvie. The financial status of the Town of Huntington was graded as a B. Two ways to possibly increase this rating would be to increase the minimum contingency general fund balance (now set at \$125,000) and/or to pay down additional debt. Research will be done on what options exist for emergency bank loans and what is counted as existing funds which could be borrowed.

Offsite Town Document Storage The Library Trustees have identified a secure area and established a formal policy for storage of town documents in the basement of the Union Meeting House. The access process is defined in the policy. Access to these documents would be by advance request through Library staff and during normal business hours.

UVM Student Work Huntington resident Amy Seidl, PhD, Co-Director of the University of Vermont Environmental Studies Program, has offered to have her students work with the Planning Commission on climate adaptation and resilience strategies. This collaborative scientific exercise could be used in the development of updates to the Town Plan.

Act 127 & Its Effect on Taxes Act 127 was enacted in Vermont in 2022. The effective date of the law is July 1, 2024 (fiscal year 2024-2025). Legislators intended to improve equity between school districts across the state. The means to enact this improvement was to change the formula weights by which pupils are counted. The weights were adjusted to reflect the need for increased funding to support students from less affluent communities, students whose native language is not English, and students who reside in rural areas of the state. Of course, if the pupil weights for some students are increased, the pupil weights for other students will decrease in relative terms. As the net effect of this formula change was projected to have a large impact on local homestead property rates in some educational districts, especially those with a higher than median per capita income, a cap of 5% (before the town common level of appraisal factor is applied) was established for the increase in local homestead property taxes for each of five years beginning in fiscal year 2025.

What does any of this have to do with the Selectboard? It received a letter from the state of Vermont advising of the changes described above. A portion of the property tax bill residents pay is based on spending that the town has voted on the floor at Town Meeting, which usually is the budget recommended by the Selectboard.

The other portion of the property tax bill is based on the budget, recommended by the Mount Mansfield School Board, and voted by

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BEHIND EVERY PROJECT IS A
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Richmond Selectboard

Reported by Mark Aiken

The Richmond Selectboard kicked off its meeting on February 5 with some financial audit discussions. Cathy Markovich, firm director of RHR Smith and Company, gave a presentation of the fiscal year 2023 audit that her firm conducted, saying that it seemed Richmond's finances seemed properly recorded as required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. She noted the detail that her report goes into – while required – is far beyond what most people would read or sift through. She noted that Richmond town management easily answered any and all questions her firm had as they prepared their report.

“All of the fund balances for all of your major funds (including all the non-majors) was \$3,511,102 for the end of the year,” Markovich said. “And all of the categories, revenues, and expenditures are classified appropriately.”

Following the audit presentation, Richmond Finance Director Connie Bona reviewed financial reports for the second quarter of fiscal year 2024. Town Manager Josh Arneson noted a \$161,000 savings on the personnel side of the police department and also noted increased spending on fire department salaries due to flooding events.

Hillview Heights Subdivision Approval Next, Selectboard members approved access permits for a hammerhead turnaround and the road name for a Hillview Heights subdivision despite objections from Richmond residents Bradley Holt and Jason Pelletier who had also raised concerns at a prior meeting. Holt contended that the town's permitting authorities were biased in favor of the developer. Richmond's Zoning Administration Officer Tyler Machia said that the application seemed consistent with state and local regulations, and therefore Board members voted to approve the application.

Recreational Parking Advisory Committee Update The Board listened to a parking update from Recreational Parking Advisory Committee members John Cohn, Chuck Gilroy, and John Rankin in which they raised concerns about overnight parking in various parking zones.

Funding for Youth Mental Health Support Stefani Hartsfield of Hartsfield Health Systems Consulting spoke on behalf of the All Together

Now program which provides mental health support for youth for a five-town area. She said Jericho donated \$3000, Bolton gave \$1000, and Huntington will be voting on whether to donate \$2500 on Town Meeting Day. The Selectboard unanimously approved a donation of \$3000 from the town's Community Wellbeing budget for the initiative.

Baseball Field Repairs Boardmembers approved funds to repair the baseball fields at Volunteer Green, which would be an approved FEMA expense.

Australian Ballot Discussions and Meeting About Policing The next two agenda items did not require a vote. First, Board Chair Jay Furr explained that the town's attorney advised that presentations about Australian ballot Town Meeting items are okay, provided they are based on facts. The attorney advised against a table where printed materials are handed out. Meanwhile, Furr said that the arrangement with Hinesburg providing policing services for Richmond is working, but the difficulty lies in budgeting since no one knows when the situation will terminate. Arneson said he will get the ball rolling for further meetings and discussions on this topic.

Planning and Zoning Update Planning and Zoning Director Keith Osborne gave his monthly update, covering topics like secondary access to the Buttermilk development project at the former Richmond Creamery and problems with the Jolina Court intersection. Board Chair Furr referenced discussions about housing at Browns Court and housing elsewhere. Osborne concluded by noting that storm water is becoming an important issue in Richmond. He said he available to talk and welcomes discussion and questions at his office.

Richmond Rescue Second Quarter Update Selectboard members reviewed second quarter numbers from the lifesaving Richmond Rescue, adding that Rescue squad members can fit car seats in cars, and they have backcountry rescue capabilities.

Finally, Board members scheduled their upcoming Monday, February 19 meeting to the day after, since Monday was a holiday. They reviewed and approved minutes, warrants, and purchase orders, and adjourned their meeting.

of Act 127 might be an item of conversation with the local legislative delegation.

Other Business The Selectboard signed the Certificate of Mileage to be reported annually to the Vermont Department of Transportation, with no changes from 2023 (43.15 Class 2 and Class 3 miles of road maintained by the town; 2.88 miles of Class 4 road not maintained by the town). It also approved the optional IRS rate of reimbursement for town employees conducting official business in personal vehicles at \$0.67 per mile.

Vermont Emergency Management launched the VT Alert system in 2013. VT Alert notifies the public about emergency situations. The operation is described at <https://vem.vermont.gov/vtalert>. The Huntington Selectboard voted to approve designated individuals to serve as the town officials with authority to submit alerts to the system.

The Selectboard members constitute the Liquor Control Board. This Board voted, as it does annually, to approve the Liquor and Tobacco license for Beaudry's Store.

The Board received correspondence from a resident expressing displeasure with traffic enforcement, zoning and communication. Enclosed with the correspondence was a thumb drive capturing video. The resident also spoke with a Selectboard member regarding the complaints. Board will consider the concerns and respond.

Huntington

continued from previous page

ballot on Town Meeting Day. This year and for the next five years, because of Act 127, unless the law is amended, the budget set forth by the Mount Mansfield School Board will not have a direct corresponding effect on education taxes. The Mount Mansfield School Board can pass budgets, using the new pupil counts, which would normally exceed a tax increase of 5% but because of the cap, the tax increase would “only” be 5% (again before the town common level of appraisal is applied which varies across the five towns). The corollary is that the Mount Mansfield School Board can pass budgets which, using the former pupil weights, would have driven a budget substantially lower than an increase of 5%, but due to the new pupil weights in the district, education taxes will bump up against the 5% cap anyways.

As noted above, the common level of appraisal factor affects that final number. That factor, which is provided by the state, decreased again for Huntington, which has an inverse effect on taxes. Huntington has the lowest common level of appraisal rate in the five towns in the district, so that any increase in the education tax rate will have a larger effect for Huntington than the other four towns. The Huntington Selectboard has considered the possibility that the consequences

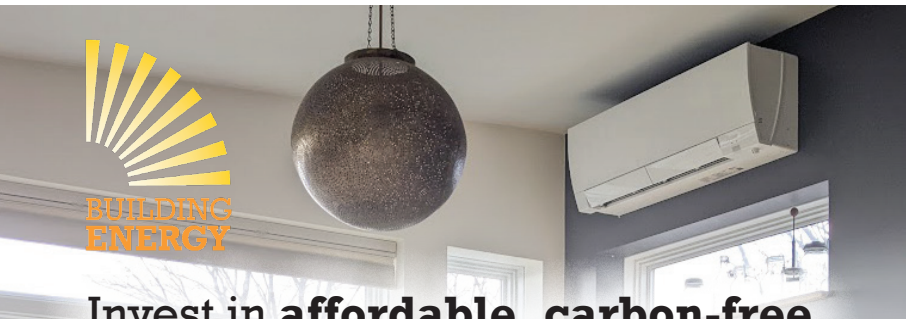


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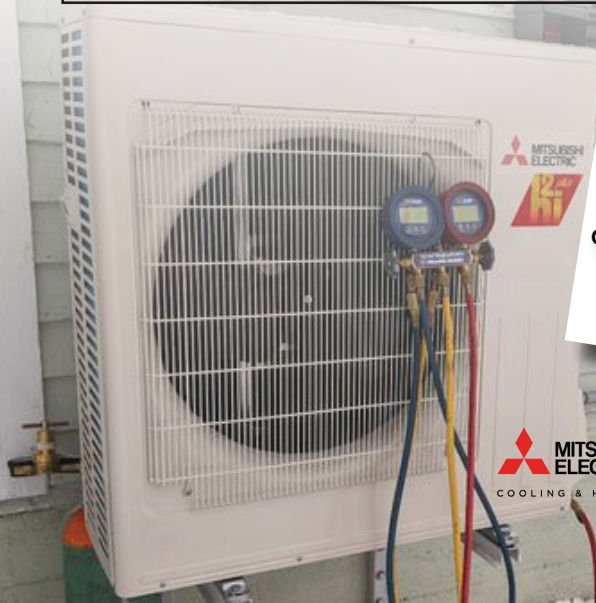
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MMUUSD Board

Reported by Diane Wester

School Board Meeting, January 22, 2024

The January meeting agenda was revised in order to be able to discuss Act 127 and its impact on the proposed school budget. Act 127 says the per pupil budget may be capped at a 5% spending increase, but may be no more than 10% increase without State examination. MMUUSD has proposed a budget within the 5% increase for student spending, but under 10% including (pre-planned) capital expenditures. The tax rate under this new law would remain the same.

Community Member Kevin Unrath of Jericho expressed his concerns about the workaround MMUUSD is trying to do in order to be able to turn a bad situation (lack of funding from the State) into a useful one.

He found the Community Communication letter to be "incorrect at best."

Board Member Kevin Campbell offered the following comments: "The money needs to come from somewhere. The Board has been struggling for over a decade to find ways to fund this work without putting significant burden on or local taxpayers. ...in the past (these costs) have been shared by the State through capital fund, matching... (etc.)"

Paraphrasing his comments farther: "...As a steward of the school district, does one take the opportunity forced on the district – to the possible detriment of other parts of the state? The budget vote on Town Meeting day will show the direction the Town wants the Board to pursue. The legislature could make changes in the law between now and then and the budget would have to be reworked.

"There are so many things the State could do to fix this," he added.

All agreed the budget would have gone up at any rate, with double-digit increases in health care insurance costs, and this year's portion of the contracted salary increase. Even with

the salary increase, the district remains in the middle/lower end of salaries in the state.

The budget also includes two additional personnel originally paid for by COVID (ESSER) funds in the past few years – money which is now gone. As statewide programs for students who need the most help are full, or have closed, the District has taken more of this education "in house" to provide for care.

Changes in Personnel MMUUSD has chosen Jenn Cote, currently Principal at Underhill Central, to be the new Director of Special Education. Cote received her Masters of Education in Special Education from Saint Michael's College. Cote also served as a special educator in the district for 10 years.

Jon Milazzo has been appointed Clerk of MMUUSD until Town Meeting Day as Pat Straughan has resigned.

There continues to be several openings on the Board. Please contact your local representative if you are considering serving.

School Schedule MMUUSD will change its scheduled early release date from April 10 to April 8 in order to accommodate the anticipated traffic for the Eclipse. It is scheduled to begin at 3:26 pm, and it was judged wise to have the students off the buses and in their homes on this date.

For vacation planning purposes – currently the last day of school is June 18 – barring any more snow days.

Complying with the Laws Testing results for PCB's at BRMS and CHMS will be available in about two months.

The new Vermont Clean Water act demands Storm Water Mitigation plans for each of the schools – and the grants applications have already been written to ask for 90% State funding to enact these plans. The Act is meant to keep polluted run-off out of rivers, streams and lakes.

2024 Governor's Institutes Programs Announced



Students from the 2023 Governor's Institute of Vermont's Health and Medicine Institute practice loading a fellow student into an ambulance. Photo credit: Matthew Bingnot

The Governor's Institutes of Vermont (GIV) has opened applications for the 2024 offerings of their residential summer programs. Passionate Vermont ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students are invited to apply for the experience of a lifetime.

GIV Institutes take place on Vermont college campuses and give their attendees the opportunity to dive deep into a topic of interest for an intensive one to two weeks. Each Institute is focused around a career-oriented topic including Arts, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Environmental Science and Technology, Global Issues and Youth Action, Health and Medicine, Mathematical Sciences, and Technology and

Design. New for this year will be two sessions of the Health and Medicine Institute to accommodate the high demand for career pathways in the health care sector.

At GIV, students learn from industry professionals, participate in hands-on projects, and explore career options - all while having fun and making friends. The programs are designed to be affordable to all Vermont families with scholarships that allow students to pay as little as \$10 to attend.

GIV has served more than 13,000 Vermonters over 40 years, and looks forward to welcoming 550 young people in the summer of 2024. To learn more about GIV's 2024 summer Institutes, visit <https://giv.org> or email hello@giv.org with any questions. Students can visit www.giv.org to apply to fill out a simple application now. The deadline is March 31.

The Governor's Institutes of Vermont is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. More than 75% of GIV students need financial assistance each year. If you are in a position to give, call 802-865-4448 or visit www.giv.org/support

Here's a Chance to Meet New Town Office Personnel at Town Meeting

Huntington Town Administrator Adam Argeropoulos

In mid-February, Huntington welcomed a new Town Administrator. Adam Argeropoulos, a resident of the town, recently began learning the many details of town administration, from roads and bridges to grant writing to emergency management and ever so much more.

Selectboard chair Dori Barton explained that the Board was looking for the right fit and for that, “patience and perseverance” was necessary. The response to the job postings elicited applications from across the state and country, but the Board decided to keep the position open “until filled.” She said, “From the beginning of this process we thought the perfect candidate would be someone from Huntington.” Barton explained that the willingness of retired Town Administrator Barbara Elliott to provide support as needed for a smooth transition made this possible.

Argeropoulos, who goes by Adam Argo, has been around and about in town for two years, building a house in the woods on Taft Road where he lives with his fiancée Rachael Chicoine and their six-month-old son Charlie. Chicoine grew up in Huntington, attending Brewster-Pierce School, CHMS and graduating from MMU. Her parents John and Pam and brother Kacy all live in Huntington. Adam Argo and Rachael Chicoine met online during COVID. As they have both begun new jobs, are finishing work on the house (while living in it) and are busy with their young son, Argo speculates that they might wait until 2025 to get married.

Living in Vermont for 20 years, Argo grew up in Manchester, New Hampshire. His mother still lives in the house where her grandparents lived. After college, he came up to Vermont to ski and liked it so much, he stayed. Along the way, he earned a Masters degree in Foundations of Education.

Argo is enthusiastic about the town, recently remarking about the lovely changing face of Camels Hump as he drives home up East Street. With the little house in the woods comes an opportunity to explore the great outdoors – and the property backs up to the trails for the Camels Hump Nordic Ski Area (CHNSA), a nonprofit Nordic ski organization with a mapped and maintained trail network that ranges throughout this eastern part of Huntington, courtesy of the landowners nearby. The family has a season membership to CHNSA.

A path in the woods behind his house metaphorically led to the Huntington Town Office. Argo ran into his neighbors, Lawton and Amy Redman, and they shared their love for their town. He mentioned that he would like to get more involved in the community. A few days later, he was at the local store when Amy Redman walked in and told him about the town’s ad for the job. She encouraged him to apply. Argo explained, “The more I thought about it, the more I wanted to do it.”

And, the commute (about a mile and a half) is also very appealing.



He has a number of relevant skills he brings to the new position, including competently operating an excavator (don’t tell the Road Foreman) from his work on landscape installation. There will be a learning curve, but Argo is confident he is ready for the challenge. He is looking forward to getting to know Huntington better – especially Brewster-Pierce School preschool in a few years – and it will be a thorough education as Elliott tutors him in the details of the position.

“We found the best candidate with the right skill set living here on Taft Road,” Barton enthused, speaking for the Selectboard. “We’re incredibly excited to have Adam on board.”

—Profiles by Heidi Racht

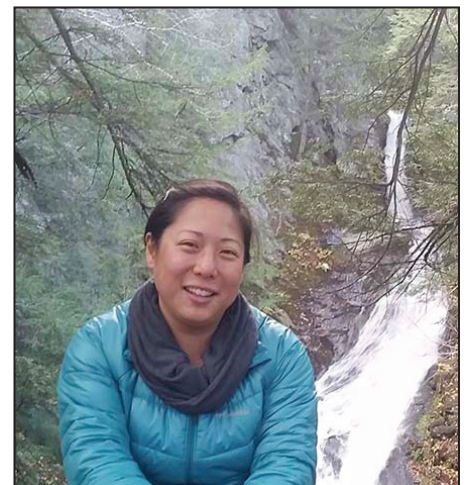
Richmond Assistant Clerk Adriana Hashinaga

Last year, around this time, Adriana Hashinaga saw an ad for a part-time job in the Town Clerk’s Office. Richmond Town Clerk Linda Parent was looking for a new assistant, as long-time office fixture, Martha Laing was retiring after Town Meeting. After spending several years as a stay-at-home mom, Hashinaga was looking for part-time work. The timing was perfect. She is in the office three mornings every week supporting Parent’s varied tasks and is the friendly face at the counter ready to take your tax money or issue a dog license.

Hashinaga began life in Peru and the family moved back to Brazil when she was a toddler. She describes her family as Japanese-Brazilian. The family moved to the US when she was 12 years old, settling in New Jersey. Hashinaga can speak Portuguese and Spanish, but says she is not tri-lingual as her skills are not currently practiced.

After attending Long Island University, she found work in an oceanography research lab in Louisiana where she met Richmond native Henry Bush. They worked their way north to Maryland. Henry Bush then took a position with NRG Systems in Hinesburg where he is a Senior Mechanical Engineer and they moved back to Richmond.

The office work is varied with seasonal tasks like elections and ballots, dog registrations, taxes, marriage licenses, but there is also a rhythm to the work. Land records are a continuous part of the office routine and Parent has delegated this – logging in, indexing, recording and digitization – to Hashinaga. “It is satisfying work,” Hashinaga said. She has



also enjoyed meeting the residents and learning about the community and its history, as Parent is a lifelong resident and everyone knows her. Many stop in to chat.

Part of being the Assistant Town Clerk is filling in for the Town Clerk in her absence, but Hashinaga notes that Parent is not out of the office very much. She remarked, “I had my first solo day a few weeks ago,”

The schedule works fine for this busy mom of Sofia, 15, and James, 12. Both are active and her afternoons are spent as chauffeur and “youth sports spectator.” She found time to learn to ski – downhill and Nordic – and has “learned to enjoy winter.”

Hashinaga describes her work in the Town Clerk’s Office as “The best job. There is always something new.”

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Local References • Free Estimates

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Richmond to Vote on \$9.8 Million for Town Center Renovation

Explanation from the Town Center & Library Building Committee

This year's Richmond Town Meeting ballot includes an article that would authorize the Town to borrow up to \$9.841 million to renovate the Town Center building for town offices. A committee formed by the Selectboard has been working to investigate alternatives to house the town offices since 2019. The Committee solicited community participation, worked with architects, site planners, engineers, local/state/federal zoning regulators, and others to gather recommendations, evaluate multiple options, finalize a preliminary renovation plan and develop a cost for the project. Some of the conclusions the committee reached include:

- This renovation plan creates an essentially "new" building inside the existing, structurally-sound, envelope.
- HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems will be brought up to code and meet energy-efficiency standards. It includes adding missing ventilation and cooling and upgrading the building's air-quality to current standards.
- Existing windows will be replaced with new energy-efficient windows that will also restore the historic appearance of the building including restoring the windows at ground level.
- Fossil-fuel based heating system will be

replaced with high efficiency electric heating and cooling

- Interior work spaces will be reconfigured for more efficiency, keeping all town services on the second floor and moving the Police Department to the third floor. Office and meeting spaces will be upgraded to meet current and future technology needs.
- Fire alarm system will be brought up to code and a sprinkler system added
- The iron fire escape will be replaced with an enclosed stairwell which meets code
- An inadequate roof structure, flooding issues and poor insulation in the 1953 Post Office addition will be addressed

The estimated cost of the proposed renovation is \$9.841 million. The Selectboard has multiple options on how they might borrow the funds necessary to complete the project. The choices range from a 30-year bond to a more conventional 30-year loan or even a 20-year loan. Bond repayment has a fixed principal payment and declining interest payments over the term while a note is more like a typical mortgage with roughly the same principal and interest payments each year. Bonds typically have lower overall interest payments over the term,

but have substantially higher annual payments in the early years of repayment. For example, over a 30-year bond period, the tax increase would be \$96/\$100,000 of property value in the first year and would decrease over time. If financed with a 20-year loan, the tax increase would be \$93/\$100,000 of property value and would remain the same each year, but would reduce total interest paid by \$2 million over 20 years, because of the reduced term.

Both Town and Post Office services will be affected by construction. Selectboard meetings may be moved to the Library Community Room. Construction may be phased to allow some services to remain in the building and the remote and hybrid methods practiced to deliver town services and meetings that were used during COVID may also be used. The Postmistress is aware that Post Office services will be affected but feels that this can be accommodated. Tenants are aware that their access to the building will be affected. Money is included in the project estimate to pay for relocation of the PO and town services.

Another feature of the plan is the replacement of a fossil-fuel based heating system with high efficiency heat pump technology and upgrading the old, single-pane windows with modern double-pane windows as well as adding insulation

will significantly improve the energy efficiency of the building. While solar is not included in the proposed bond cost at this time, reinforcing the roof structure for the post office will allow for adding solar panels to the roof of the post office in the future. The Committee is exploring alternative ways solar might be financed.

The site plan improves the flow of traffic in the parking lot and maintains the same number of parking spaces. It provides a safer walking flow between Town Center, Post Office and Library and relocates handicap parking for the Library and Town Center to eliminate safety issues. Finally, it creates a more welcoming street-scape and adds some green space for community activities.

For information, site plans and design documents, go to

<https://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-meetings/town-center-and-library-buildings-committee>

If you have questions or would like more information, you can contact any member of the committee:

Jeff Forward, Chair
Josh Arneson
Laurie Dana
Dave Healy
Jake Marin
Amy Wardwell



Cochran's Annual Nordic Event

The annual race will be held on Sunday, March 31, at Cochran's Ski Area, with start times: 11 am Kids, 12:30 pm Adults.

Vermont's own Nordic Olympian and World Cup Competitor Ben Ogden will be there racing and playing in the snow.

It is described as a festive and competitive citizens Nordic Ski Cross Race for all ages. Hilarious, challenging and loads of fun.

The ven includes uphill, downhill, slalom gates, jumps, and obstacles, all on one pair of skis.

A bonus is a free pancake feast with hot Slopeside Syrup for all competitors.

The event will have an interval start with five people starting together together every minute. A shorter course is available for kids, 12 years and under.

Prizes will be given for top three in all age categories.

And, the event will culminate with an Elite 8 Head to Head. Stick around and line the course with spectators to see the fastest eight women and fastest eight men challenge go head to head.

Cost is \$25 per person. Register on-line: <https://cochranskiarea.com/nordicx/>

For more information, contact: Pennie Rand at mrand@gmavt.net or 802-373-7204.

Northern Resonance to Perform at P.M. Sundays

Northern Resonance, the Scandinavian string trio that makes newly composed folk music into enormous soundscapes, will perform at Richmond's P.M. Sundays on March 17, at 4 pm. The concert will be presented by Valley Stage at the Richmond Congregational Church.

Northern Resonance performs with previously untested combination of instruments: viola d'amore, hardanger fiddle, and nyckelharpa that takes folk music in a new direction.

Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$27.50 day of show. Seniors (65+) and children 16 and under are \$17.50 in advance and \$20 day of show.

For more information about this concert and all Valley Stage events, visit www.valleystage.com.



Land Trust Farmer Land Stewardship Award

Applications for the 2024 Eric Rozendaal Memorial Award will close on February 29, the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) announced.

This new timeline is a change from past years when the award application cycle ran from January 1 through June 30.

The \$5,000 award recognizes land stewardship, innovation and service to community. Farmers who are actively working on or managing a commercial farm operation in the state, are residents of Vermont, and have not received this award in the past are encouraged to apply.

A selection committee consisting of leaders in the Vermont agricultural community will review and score the applications and select a winner. The award will be announced at the Vermont Land Trust's annual meeting in the fall.

About the Award Now in its sixth year, the Eric Rozendaal Memorial Award was created to honor the life and legacy of Eric Rozendaal, a thoughtful and enterprising farmer known to many as the face of Rockville Market Farm in Starksboro, who built community with those around him.

Farmers can learn more and apply online at vlt.org/eric.



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March 3: Worship with guest preacher Caitlin Purinton
March 10: Worship with Communion & Rev. Katelyn Macrae
Spirit Spark by Phyllis Modley
March 17: Worship with Rev. Katelyn Macrae
March 24: Palm Sunday Worship & Brunch with
Revs. Katelyn Macrae & Doug Wysocky-Johnson

Pastor Katelyn Macrae
802-434-2053
website: **www.rccucc.org**



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WHERE? Huntington
Town Garage
FROM? 9 am to noon
PRICE? \$20 per shot

Microchipping available.

- APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE.
(huntingtonvt.org or richmondvt.gov for link).
 - WALK-INS WELCOME.
 - ALL LEASHED DOGS AND CONTAINED CATS WELCOME.
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REMEMBER: 2024 DOG REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS APRIL 1



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Sunday Worship Service will now be held
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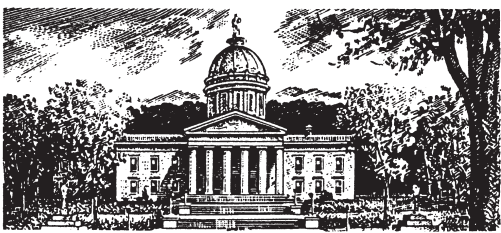
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State House News

Rep. Theresa Wood

The Legislature is considering S.18 – an act related to banning certain flavored tobacco products and e-liquids. In December of 2018, the US Surgeon General took a very unusual step by releasing an advisory emergency statement about electronic cigarettes referring to the issue as an epidemic and expressing the need for rapid action to avoid a population health disaster. The trigger was the astounding 78% increase over one year in e-cigarette use by high school students and 47% increase of middle school students. All IN ONE YEAR!

Several years ago, the Legislature addressed this growing epidemic of vaping among our young people. Using a public health approach, laws were passed that raised taxes on e-cigarettes to equal traditional cigarettes, the internet sale of all e-cigarettes and tobacco paraphernalia was banned, and the legal age for buying and using cigarettes, electronic cigarettes and other tobacco products was raised from 18 to 21. However, use among youth continues to rise.

Flavored e-cigarettes have proliferated on the market, with one study identifying more than 15,500 distinct flavors available to consumers – twice as many as ten years ago. Tobacco companies are targeting youth with flavors like tutti frutti, cotton candy and gummy bear. According to the Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 28% of high school students in this state now use some form of tobacco. After many years of decline of traditional tobacco use, the increase is driven predominantly by e-cigarette use, with one in every two Vermont high school students reportedly trying an e-cigarette.

Tobacco remains the leading preventable cause of death nationwide. In Vermont, it is estimated that 1,000 adults die from smoking every year. Vermont spends \$404 million a year on health care costs directly caused by smoking.

Nicotine's effect on brain development leads adolescents to heavier daily tobacco use, a stronger nicotine addiction, and more trouble with quitting. Just one e-cigarette cartridge can contain nicotine that equals more than 20 packs of cigarettes; and some youth are using more than one cartridge a day!

The Center for Disease Control reports that Vermont has a higher smoking rate than New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and even Texas. Our high school smoking rate is higher than the national average (9.3% vs. 7.6%). Our adult smoking rate is higher than the national average (15.8% vs. 14%). Our smoking during pregnancy rate is at 17%, the third highest in the country, trailing only West Virginia and Kentucky. The tobacco industry spends \$15.8 million per year on marketing in Vermont.

S.18 proposes to end the sale of all flavored e-cigarettes and menthol tobacco cigarettes. The bill has already passed the Senate and has passed the House Human Services Committee. It will be taken up by the full House for a vote in February.

This will be a significant step towards reducing tobacco use. Please note that smoking cessation products are exempt from this ban. Removing these flavored tobacco products from the market is a critical

component to a comprehensive strategy to reduce initiation and lifelong addiction and lowering future healthcare costs in Vermont.

Rep. Jana Brown

One of the most exciting climate bills of this legislative session, H.289 Renewable Energy Standard (RES), is moving to the House floor for a vote right around the time this legislative update will be published. This bill is a top climate priority, a big step forward in meeting our carbon reduction goals, and the product of a summer working group and robust stakeholder engagement process with all of Vermont's utility companies.

The Legislature passed Vermont's existing renewable energy standard in 2015, and that set the state on the path to cleaner electricity from renewable sources such as hydro, solar, and wind. With the landmark climate legislation Global Warming Solutions Act in 2020, carbon reduction goals were written into state law: 40% below 1990 emissions levels by 2030 and 80% below by 2050. With unprecedented federal investment from the Inflation Reduction Act and rapidly advancing renewable energy technology, we now have the environment in which to achieve real climate progress over the next decade. By moving up the target dates and the pace of the RES, we can ensure our electricity gets cleaner as our reliance on it for heat and transportation grows over time.

This new Renewable Energy Standard brings on more new, clean, affordable renewable energy faster, and it is structured in a way that works for Vermont's large and small utilities. H.289 increases the amount of new renewable energy Vermont utilities are required to provide to customers, from 10% of the electricity delivered by a given utility to 30-40% by the early-mid 2030s. All utilities will be required to get 20% of the energy they provide from small and medium-sized new renewables built in Vermont. This new standard moves Vermont to 100% renewable electricity while maintaining flexibility for different utilities to reduce costs and foster innovation as they meet the bill's requirements. Green Mountain Power and Vermont Electric Coop will be required to get 100% renewable by 2030, with other utilities not already at 100% renewable are required to hit that mark by 2035. The bill also includes a backstop or "alternative compliance payment" in the event a utility cannot procure all the renewables they need at a reasonable price.

H.289 allows rooftop net-metering and on-site group net metering for multiple customers (as long as there is some direct energy usage happening at the site), but the bill does phase out "offsite" or "virtual" net metering. H.289 does require an analysis of potential programs that could replace offsite group net metering for low and moderate income Vermonters and a report is due to the Legislature in 2025.

The updated Renewable Energy Standard in H.289 is part of our ongoing work to build the cleanest, most cost-effective and reliable grid possible via energy efficiency, storage, and other load management strategies. This bill represents an important step forward and has buy-in from all of Vermont's utilities.

Rep. Theresa Wood

Washington-Chittenden
Chair, House Human
Services Committee

1461 Perry Hill Road
Waterbury, VT 05676
(802) 585-5202
twood@leg.state.vt.us

Rep. Tom Stevens

Washington-Chittenden
Chair, General, Housing and
Military Affairs

12 Winooski Street
Waterbury, VT 05676
595-0429 (cell)
tom@stevensvermont.com
tstevens@leg.state.vt.us

Rep. Jana Brown

Chittenden 1
Member, House Education
Committee

PO Box 66
Richmond, VT 05477
434-2854 / 999-4333
jbrown@leg.state.vt.us
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Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY 24, 25 & 26: Snowshoe Ramble and Demo Days, 10 am to noon. February 24: Richmond’s Volunteers Green, co-hosted by the Senior Center and Recreation Committee. February 25 at Huntington Community Forest, meet at the Brewster-Pierce School. February 26 at Bolton’s Smilie School. Regardless of the amount of snow, the events will go on; snowshoes are available. If you have your own snowshoes, bring them so there is equipment available to those individuals without them. Dress appropriately for the weather.

FEBRUARY 25: Will Patten Ensemble, 4 pm to 5 pm, Westford Music Series monthly concert series. Free-will donation. Pie raffle for extra fun as usual.

MARCH 16: STOP the BLEED and HANDS ONLY CPR Workshop for Community, Brewster-Pierce Memorial School. Registration is required to attend. Both topics will be offered in each session. Session 1 will start at 8:30am and Session 2 will begin at 10am. Sessions will be a little over an hour and no certification will be awarded but the hope is community members will feel empowered to help others in emergency situations. Instructors from the UVMCMC Stop the Bleed program and Richmond Rescue

will lead the sessions. Snacks and free on-site childcare will be provided by the Brewster-Pierce School PIE. Email: wilcox@mmuusd.org with questions.

MARCH 10: Community Concerts @ First presents Va-et-Vient, First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, 39 Main Street, 3 pm. An all-female Addison County trio that celebrates the many colors found in music from several French cultures. The group includes Carol Reed (voice, guitar, & mandolin), Suzanne Germain (voice and percussion), and Lausanne Allen (voice, fiddles, flute, penny whistles, harmonica, & mandolins). Tickets are available online and at FCCEJ office (802-878-5745). \$20 suggested donation, free for 18 and under.

MARCH 13: EGGSTATIC! (for kids), 10 am to 11:30 am, Birds of Vermont Museum, Sherman Hollow Road, Huntington. Eggs are amazing structures with multiple functions. Why do they look and work as they do? How are eggs adapted for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife? Ages 6-10. Open for 8 participants, \$15-\$35. <https://birdsofvermont.org/event/eggstatic-for-kids/>

MARCH 16: Open Mic Night at Huntington Town Hall, 7 pm

Deadline for Submissions

The Power of Perspective: A Shifting Point of View. The Birds of Vermont Museum seeks art that speaks to both humans’ and birds’ perspectives and experiences. How might a change in perspective alter people’s understanding of the lives and needs of the birds who share our world? How does your art reveal a point of view? Art in any media, by new or returning artists, of any age, may be submitted. Include name, email, town, and a brief description of each piece (type, media, when made).

Due by Monday, March 18, 11:59 pm.

Submit up to three (3) works using the online form at <https://tinyurl.com/bovm-art-2024>.

Complete details at <https://birdsofvermont.org/2023/12/05/call-to-artists-perspective/>

Warmth: A Group Poem

Conversation with a good friend next to the wood stove

Warm hot chocolate with marshmallows and a candy cane

Wasp in the lamplight in the January night

Think warm thoughts

Perhaps the real reason the cat’s in my lap

A mug of hot tea with honey and milk

Cold hands, warm heart.

We love the snow, but 10 degrees warmer would be much appreciated!

Snuggled inside a sleeping bag

Within and without

Cold night

Good friends

Community

Home

Pie à la mode

My dog is my favorite heating pad

Below zero?

We will be warm and merry and fill the hall with music and laughter!

Grateful for VEC linemen restoring power after the storm

A broad smile across the parking lot

Embrace the cold

Cold fingers, puffy mittens, hot cocoa, blazing fire in woodstove...

...hot sand, palm trees, beach sun – in my imagination!

The rabbit burrowed under the branches and leaves and thought: “Ahhhh.”

This is the latest group poem from the last Open Mic Night at Huntington Town Hall on January 20. Attendees were invited to respond to the prompt warmth on a piece of card and toss it into a box over the course of the evening. At the end of the evening, cards were pulled and read at random at the mic resulting in the group poem. Local nonprofit, Friends of the HPL (Huntington Public Library) benefited from the donations made at the door.

The next Open Mic Night at Huntington Town Hall is on Saturday March 16. Doors and sign-ups at 6:30 pm, show starts at 7 pm. Donations at the door will benefit a local organization.

To be added to the email list to be notified of future events: openmicnighthuntington@gmail.com

Regular Meetings can sometimes be held in physical locations. Remote options remain in place.

Go to the town’s website for the meeting link.

SELECTBOARD:
Huntington: 1st & 3rd Mondays, 6:30 pm, Zoom meeting.
Richmond: 1st & 3rd Mondays, 6:30 pm, Town Center

SCHOOL BOARD:
MMMUSD: 1st & 3rd Mondays, 6:30 pm. Meetings will rotate among the MMMUSD schools. Check the website for specifics: www.cesu.k12.vt.us.

PLANNING COMMISSION
Huntington: 2nd & 4th Tues, 7 pm, Zoom meeting.
Richmond: 1st & 3rd Wed, 7 pm, Town Center

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
Huntington: 3rd Tues, 7 pm, when required. Zoom meeting.
Richmond: 2nd & 4th Wed, 7 pm, Town Center.

WATER & SEWER COMMISSION
Richmond: 1st Mon., Town Center

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Richmond: 2nd Tues, 7 pm, Town Ctr
Huntington: 2nd Thursday, 6:30 pm, Zoom.

RECREATION COMMITTEE
Richmond: 1st Tues, 7-9 pm, Town Center Mtg Room
Huntington: 1st Wed, 6 pm, Rec Field or Community Church.

RICHMOND TRAILS COMMITTEE **Richmond:** 3rd Tues, 7 pm, Town Center Meeting Room

RICHMOND LAND TRUST First Thursday. Monitor Barn Annex. All are welcome. Dan Martin, (4231).

TOWN HALL COMMITTEE
Huntington: 4th Thursday, 7 pm, Huntington Town Hall.

LIBRARY
Richmond: Trustees, 1st Thursday in January, March, April, June, September & November, 6:30 pm. 434-3036.

Huntington: Board of Trustees, days vary, Zoom meeting and Huntington Public Library, 434-4583.

HUNTINGTON ENERGY COMMITTEE 3rd Wed, 7 pm, Zoom meeting.

COMMUNITY GROUPS:
May Not be Meeting.
Call for information.

Hale and Hearty Seniors Club: 2nd Wed. Holy Rosary Parish Hall, 6 pm., Sept.-May.

HHCT (Huntington Historic and Community Trust): 1st Thurs, Huntington Public Library, 7:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Howl Women’s Land Monthly Business Meeting, 2nd Sunday of each month. 10 am. All women welcome 434-3953.

Richmond Drop-Off Center

Open all year Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 8-3:30. Located on Route 117 (80 Roger’s Lane).

Worship

Call for information.

Community Church of Huntington: Sunday morning Worship & Sunday School, 9 am. Communion: 1st Sunday. Senior Luncheon 3rd Tuesday (434-3155).

Richmond Congregational Church, United Church of Christ: 20 Church Street., 434-2053. Sunday Worship and Sunday School, 10 am.

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church: Religious Education Classes: Sat. 9-10:15 am, CHMS, Richmond. Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sat. 3:15 pm. Masses: Sat. 4 pm, Sun. 8:30 am.

Community Alliance Church: 190 Pond Road (overlooking CVU), Hinesburg. Sunday, 9 am, Sunday school for all ages, with adults and teen electives; Scott Mansfield, 482-2132, www.hinesburgcma.org

Jericho United Methodist Church: Rte. 15 in Jericho Corners. Sunday Worship and Church School 9 am winter and summer; Bible/Prayer Study Tues 7:30 pm. Rev. Kirk Thompson, 899-4288.

Jericho Congregational Church: on the green in Jericho Center Circle; Senior Pastor Dave Coons; Youth Pastor Pete Anderson; Sunday services 10 am livestream on Facebook page. Sunday Youth Group: 6:15 pm. 899-4911 / www.jccvt.org

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church: 273 Vt Rte 15 (near Browns Trace) Jericho, 899-3932, Rev. Arnold Thomas, pastor. Worship Service: 9 am (nursery care provided), Sunday School & Bible Study: 10:30 am. www.goodshepherdjericho.org

Mount Mansfield Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship: 195 Vermont Route 15, Jericho, (the red barn across from Packard Road) 9:30 am services second and fourth Sunday (September to June). All are welcome.



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IS YOUR VOICE**

**VOTE
March 5**

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keith@jkpropertymaintenance.net



Richmond
VERMONT

Town of Richmond - Community Volunteer Search 2024

The Richmond Selectboard is seeking volunteers to join their neighbors on the following Boards, Commissions and Committees, beginning in June. Further information is available via e-mail – dwardwell@richmondvt.gov or by calling Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager at (802) 336-2092.

Application may be viewed/downloaded at <https://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-meetings/vacancies-committees-commissions>

Please submit your application to: Volunteer Search, P.O. Box 285, Richmond, VT 05477, by email to dwardwell@richmondvt.gov or by placing it in the drop box outside the Town Office by April 10, 2024 for most committees, unless another date is specified below.

- Water & Sewer Commission applications are due May 31, 2024.
- Development Review Board (DRB) applications are due by May 15, 2024.
- Andrews Community Forest Applications for Conservation Commission Representative and Trails Committee Recommendation are due by March 8, 2024.
- Delinquent Tax Collector applications are due by February 28, 2024 for Selectboard appointment after Town Meeting Day.

Applications will then be reviewed by the respective committees, with the exception of the DRB which will not review applicants prior to appointment by the Selectboard. The Selectboard will make appointments at their May 20, 2024, meeting for terms to begin in June.

Selectboard will consider appointments to vacant positions throughout the year.

View **SHADED** terms that are **EXPIRING in 2024 or currently VACANT**:

<https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/General/boards-meetings/vacancies-committees-commissions/2024/01/ShadedTerms2024.pdf>

Water & Sewer Commission – Meets 1st and 3rd Mondays at 6 pm. (**TWO** 2-year terms, seats to be filled by people who are customers of the water and/or sewer system. A customer is defined as a person who owns a property which is connected to the water or sewer system) letters are due May 31, 2024. Applications will be reviewed by the Water and Sewer Commission. The Selectboard will make appointments at their June 17, 2024 meeting for terms to begin in July.

Development Review Board (DRB) – Meets 2nd Wednesday at 7 pm; (**TWO** 3-year terms and **TWO** Vacant-Alternate terms ending in 2026). Letters are due by May 15, 2024. Applications will not be reviewed by the DRB. The Selectboard will make appointments at their May 20, 2024 meeting for terms to begin in June. Conduct public hearings regarding most major land development and commercial projects and permit appeals.

Andrews Community Forest Committee – Meets 4th Monday at 6 pm; (**ONE** 3-year term, **ONE** 3-year term for a seat filled by a Conservation Commission representative, and **ONE** 3-year term for a seat filled by a Trails Committee recommendation. Applications for Conservation Commission Representative and Trails Committee Recommendation are due by March 8, 2024). Provides general goals, objectives, and administrative details for the management of the parcel to the Selectboard.

ARPA Committee – Meets TBD; (**FIVE** 1-year terms, and **ONE** 1-year term for Business Owner seat). Conducts community outreach and makes recommendations to Selectboard on how to spend the American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Conservation Commission – Meets 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 pm; (**TWO** 4-year terms). Develop planning tools for local natural resources and working on proposals to utilize the conservation reserve fund.

Parking Advisory Committee – Meets 2nd and 4th Monday at 6-8 PM; (**TWO** 2-year terms). Examines and works on improving parking for recreational activities.

Planning Commission – Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 7 pm; (**TWO** 4-year terms). Work includes the major revision of zoning and subdivision bylaws.

Recreation Committee – Meets on the 1st Tuesday at 7 pm; (**ONE** 3-year term, **ONE** Huntington Resident 2-year term, **ONE** Bolton Resident 2-year term, **ONE** Vacant term ending in 2026). Overseeing and designing a variety of diverse recreational programs accessible to all residents.

Town Center and Library Building Committee – Meets on Thursdays prior to Monday Selectboard meetings at 6:30 or 7 pm; (**ONE** Vacant open-ended term). This committee is focused on long term uses and capital projects for the Town Center and Library buildings.

Trails Committee – Meets on the 3rd Tuesday at 7 pm; (**SIX** 3-year terms, **ONE** Vacant term ending in 2026). Develop and manage the trail and path network in Richmond, including making connections to neighborhoods.

Transportation Committee – Meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 5:30 pm; (**THREE** 2-year terms). Focuses on transportation and parking issues.

Gardening Committee – Meets TBD; (**ONE** Vacant term ending in 2026). The scope could include maintenance of landscaping on Volunteers’ Green, Browns Ct., Round Church Green, and at Town welcome signs. Future scope may include creating a community garden on municipal property.

Housing Committee – Meets 4th Wednesday at 5:30 pm; (**THREE** 2-year terms, **TWO** Vacant-Alternate 2-year terms). Advises the Selectboard, the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board, and Town Staff on the housing needs of the Town of Richmond.

4th of July Parade & Fireworks Committee - Meets 3rd Thursday at 7 pm from January -August; (All interested persons please apply to 1-year terms) The Committee plans and conducts the Fourth of July fireworks and activities.

*Other Volunteer Openings:

- Deputy Town Health Officer: 1 opening for a 2-year term
- Service Officer: 1 opening for a 1-year term
- Animal Control Officer: 1 opening for a 1-year term
- Emergency Management Director: 1 opening for a 1-year term
- Energy Coordinator: 1 opening for a 1-year term
- Tree Warden: 1, 1-year term and 1 Deputy for a 1-year term
- Town Fence Viewer: 2 openings each for a 1-year term
- Inspector of Lumber, Shingles and Wood: 1 opening for a 1-year term
- Weigher of Coal: Multiple openings each for a 1-year term
- Richmond Rescue Board of Directors-Liaison/Representative: 1 opening for a 1-year term
- Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Board of Directors: 1 opening for Alternate to fill a vacancy with term expiring in 2025.
- Delinquent Tax Collector: 1 opening for a 1-year term
- Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations Policy Board: 1 opening for a 1-year term

Application may be viewed/downloaded at
<https://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-meetings/>

Business Beat

by Gina Haddock

DARTCC-Keeping Our Pets Safe During a Disaster

Vermont has the highest per capita of pet owners in the United States. It's estimated that three out of four households have a pet. But what happens to our cherished family members should a natural disaster strike? After



Kitty recently arrives at the shelter in her cage

last summer's flooding, the idea of having an emergency plan has become a real consideration for many people.

Fortunately, CVDART (Central Vermont Disaster Animal Response Team) has been helping pet owners to shelter their pets in an emergency. Bolton resident Deb Shelby began volunteering at CVDART in 2018 but it did not take long for her to see that using technology to streamline the process for care of animals in an emergency shelter situation was important. "On average it takes about ten pages of paper to document one pet. Not only that, but a paper copy does not let a volunteer easily share information. During the chaos of an emergency, it's important that everything be as streamlined as possible," Shelby told the Beat. "I've been writing web applications and developing mobile apps since 1993. I felt that now it was time to use some of my skills to do some real good for the community." Fortunately, Shelby is not only a passionate animal lover but she's also a techie. After doing three years of research, she found that temporary pet emergency shelters were using paper to manage animal care during disasters.

In March 2022 Shelby founded the nonprofit DART Command Central. The mission of DARTCC is to help volunteers focus on pet care, not paperwork. Starting a company and building a production ready computer application can be a long road. This summer, Shelby was selected into the Bubble Immerse Program that supports participants learning how to build a fully functional app in the no-code platform

with the support of the Bubble team and mentor volunteers. Being selected to receive support from Bubble is a highly selective process and Shelby went on to receive the Community Favorite Award when she made her presentation in front of a panel of judges in NYC in October 2023. Bubble will be used for prototyping, testing new features, training, and getting user feedback that is key to our development process.

How would the computer application that is designed specifically for pets who need temporary shelter work? The software entitled DARTCC (Disaster Animal Response Team Command Central) is designed to track three phases of the sheltering experience—the before, the during and the after.

The "before phase" trains volunteers how to set up, manage and educate the community about disaster preparedness. If an emergency is declared the pet owner would come to the designated shelter in their community with their pet. A trained volunteer would do an intake on the animal. It's important to note that every pet parent should have an emergency kit ready for their animal should they need to exit their home quickly. Check out the www.Vermontdart.org web site for specific information on what to pack. During the intake, things such as medications, contact info, and any other vital information would be recorded. The pet would now be registered as present in the emergency shelter.

In the "during phase" the pet would be under the care of the trained volunteer staff. Think of it as the Red Cross for pets. Pets receive the needed care such as feeding, walking, medication and wound care, if needed, and other necessary support. In fact, should a friend or family member be able to come to the shelter to walk the pet, this action would be documented so that the whereabouts of the animal are known at all times.

The "after phase" happens after the emergency has passed when the pet is ready to be reunited

with his or her family. All care information is documented into a report and given to the pet owner and can be sent to their veterinarian if needed.

In the summer of 2022, a Beta version of the application was developed by Shelby and in the summer of 2023, it was put to practical use when Barre experienced major flooding. Over 26 days there were 72 pets that were assisted by volunteers who donated 1,700 hours. One very fortunate cat even received lifesaving care because of the careful tracking and sharing of information. Volunteers noted in the DARTCC Shelter Module that the cat had not been urinating as expected which can often be the sign of a blockage in an animal. Happily, care was given so that this pet recovered and was safely returned to the owner.

While the emergency sheltering of pets is moving in a positive direction here in Vermont, much work still needs to be done. "We need to develop several other modules such as scheduling and finance that will make for a smoothly run system and an app that can be shared across the country. Also, our volunteers are wonderful but we will eventually need to hire some paid



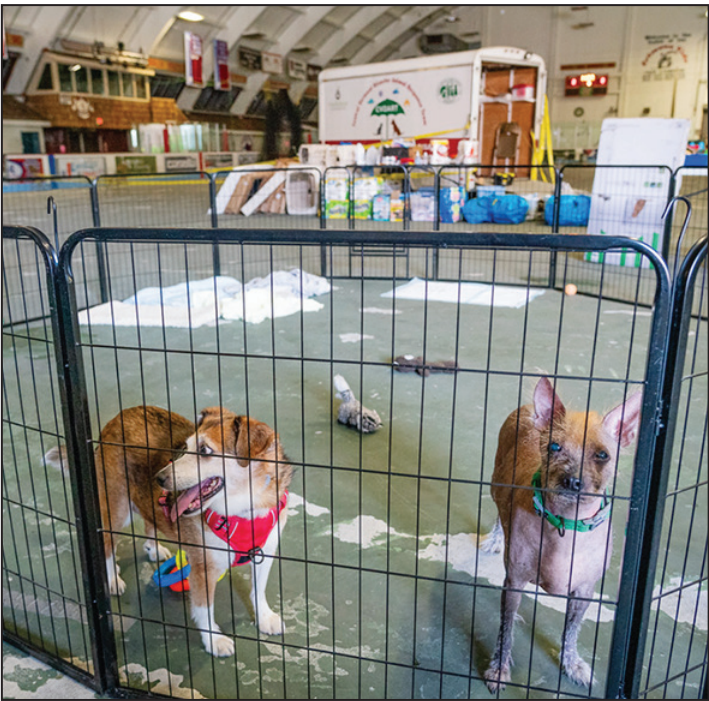
Deb Shelby with her loyal companion Sadie.

Currently we have \$100,000 in support of our program but we estimate that it will cost approximately \$260,000 to complete the Shelter Module. The goal for 2024 is one million dollars so that we can properly staff this program with grant writers, community outreach and computer support," Shelby explained.

"Utilizing our existing funds we will produce an operational app that can be used during a deployment early this summer. While this will not be the complete Shelter Module, it has the core functionality needed to run a shelter. We will continue to develop more features as we secure more funding. There is interest in DARTCC both nationally and internationally."

A key goal is to make this application available for free to any volunteer who would like to use it around the country and in, fact the world. Shelby is clearly a woman on a mission. She has spread the word during various presentations around the country. In May 2022 Shelby presented the Shelter Module to the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs conference and in October 2022 she presented to the Vermont Emergency Managers conference. Shelby's goal is to grow DARTCC into a national and international operational platform for volunteers who manage emergency pet shelters.

There is nothing like having a plan in place to bring us some peace of mind. Our pets bring us so much joy. We owe it to them to keep them safe.



Pets may need sheltering but they still get to play. Two pups enjoying their play area.

staff. We are very grateful to our individual donors and have received some very significant grants from State Farm and Irving and Phyllis Millstein Foundation for Animal Welfare Ltd.

For information about volunteering or being a corporate sponsor or donor, contact Deb Shelby at deb@dartcc.org. You can learn more at www.dartcc.org.



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Go to DETAILS below for all schedules, online links.

ACTIVITIES - Outdoors: Casual walks. *Hiking over til spring.*
Inside: Table tennis; pickleball; corn hole; bowling; ice skating.
Games, crafts: Canasta; mah jong; cribbage; needle arts.
Coffee and chat: Meet and make friends - all three towns.
Learning, improving: Spanish and French conversation;
memoir writing; on-line writers' group - *any kind of writing.*
Music-making: Ukes R Us; Sing-along at Richmond Terrace.
Wellness: Bone Builders; Feldenkrais; on-line weight loss
support group.
Story Circle: Share life's stories on-line.

And a recipe exchange and occasional cookie swap!

DETAILS: See our email newsletter. Not receiving it? Join the mail
list on our website cscvt.org, write to CSC, P.O. Box 508, Richmond
VT 045477, or contact Martha Nye at 802.503.8155

Questions? Get answers! Chat with a senior volunteer from your
own town! Call Martha at the number above to set it up.

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**Community
Senior Center**

All Things Human

by Demaris Tisdale

Denying Our Human Destructiveness

*"A great civilization is not conquered from
without until it has destroyed itself within."*

Caesar and Christ, Epilogue
— Will Durant (1885-1981)

It begins in childhood. Children's play is
fantasy as they pretend to be parents and
prepare to be adults.

The goal, of course, is to accept reality and
develop the skills and capabilities the child
needs to manage the real world. This includes
managing our human limitations and innate
aggressions.

Unfortunately we humans don't have a good
sense of either our limitations or our aggress-
siveness. Saying no is extraordinarily difficult
because we don't like to be limited and we don't
like to set limits. Children engage in games and
activities that provide skills they need as they
grow and mature. They experience their games
as reality as they engage in their illusions. And
we adults reinforce them. "You're such a big
boy," we tell them. The process aims to help
loosen family ties and enable the child to sepa-
rate from their parents.

There was a policy of tight control of the borders
for many years until the 1960s. The problem
began then when Lyndon Johnson allowed more
and more people to illegally enter the country at
the southern border. Over and over the country
granted amnesty with the promise of controlling
the problem. And over and over again it became
obvious there was contempt for the law and no
limits were set.

The recent Census Bureau report stated that the
"world got a lot more crowded in 2023." The
report also stated that "Population growth in
the U.S. is expected to continue to be fueled by
immigrants in the new year, adding one person
every 28.3 seconds" ... and "more states saw

population gains in 2023 than in any year since
the start of the COVID-19 pandemic." Our in-
ability to control our country's borders hampers
us as we try to meet the country's needs.

Many of us experience compassion and a
desire to help those who look for a better life.
But when the rules are ignored and there aren't
legal limits, the people already here experience
anger and frustration. The unresolved problems
of homelessness, lack of adequate services and
overcrowded schools become untenable and
we need to face the reality of limits. When we
reach the point where our actions lead to more
harm than good, we must recognize the limits.
We need to face the fact that we can't serve all
the people on the planet, and the planet can-
not sustain unlimited growth. With more than
335 million people, the United States is now
the third most populated country in the world
behind China and India. A number of cities are
overwhelmed with problems.

Despite making strides in recent years to protect
our fragile environment, the impact of such
growth has had severely negative impacts on
environmental advances, including serious
threats to large lakes and obvious changes that
lead to more extreme weather patterns. We are
now living in the sixth mass extinction.

When capitalism supports loose immigration
laws, the result is lower wages for workers
and bigger profits for companies' owners and
shareholders.

Congress has failed over and over again to fix
the immigration problem. Neither party has
been strong enough to take the necessary steps.
They permit the influx, promise amnesty, and
display total contempt for the laws. It's as if we
are confused about our national identity and the
values once held by our country.

The planet is like an organism with its need to
support balanced growth. We are the stewards
of that organism and we must display the care
and love to maintain it. Continued exploitation
at the current level is not sustainable.

RICHMOND VOTERS

**Learn about the \$9.841 million ballot item
to fund renovating the Richmond Town Center**

The 1907 Town Center and 1953
addition need extensive reno-
vations to address safety, energy
efficiency and flood resiliency.



The proposed plan will:

- Create an essentially new building inside the existing, structurally-sound, envelope.
- Upgrade HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems to code.
- Improve ventilation, energy-efficiency and air quality.
- Replace 100-year-old windows with new energy-efficient ones that maintain the historic façade.
- Improve safety by upgrading fire alarms, adding sprinklers and creating an enclosed stairwell for egress.
- Reinforce and insulate the Post Office roof.
- Improve flood resiliency in the Post Office and basement.
- Reconfigure and upgrade work spaces to maximize efficiency.
- Preserve flexible spaces for tenants or future town use.

What is the Property Tax Impact?

The vote authorizes the Selectboard to borrow **no more** than \$9.841 million. If it passes, the estimated property tax increase is \$96 or less per \$100,000 of property value, based on current Interest rates and grand list. The Selectboard will continue to explore financing and grant options that might reduce the final cost.

For more information:

Go to <https://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-meetings/town-center-and-library-buildings-committee> or contact Jeff Forward, Chair at forward@gmavt.net or 802-735-3026 with questions or to schedule a tour.



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