

**CITY OF MONTPELIER
CAPITAL CITY OF VERMONT**

City Manager's Weekly Report – 3/12/10

UPCOMING MEETINGS ...

- ❖ **ORCA Media Hosts Open House at City Hall:** Monday, March 15th, at 5:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers to show interested citizens the new camera set-up for televising city meetings.
- ❖ **Development Review Board Meeting:** March 15th meeting has been **CANCELLED**.
- ❖ **“Montpelier Alive’s” Economic Restructuring Committee Meeting:** Tuesday, March 16th, at 2:00 P.M. in the City Manager’s Conference Room.
- ❖ **“Montpelier Alive’s” Design Committee Meeting:** Thursday, March 18th, at 5:00 P.M. in the City Manager’s Conference Room.

ENCLOSURES ...

- ✓ Fire Chief’s December 2009 Activity Report
- ✓ Memo from Bill Krajieski, NEMC, to the Reappraisal Committee with an update of their progress and timeline\
- ✓ Memo from Finance Director
- ✓ Memo from City Manager re: Police Negotiations

STATUS REPORTS ...

Railroad:

Tom McArdle and I met with Trini Brassard and Joe Flynn from VTTrans as well as representatives of Pomerleau Real Estate, Citizens Bank, Montpelier Beverage building owner and the Vt Association of the Blind on Thursday morning. We reviewed the two areas where lease cancellations had occurred and discussed potential solutions or alternatives. Nothing was finalized but it appeared that the state will not close down these uses while other options are being developed.

Concern for Stone Cutters Way continues though. VTTrans has asked if the city would be interested in owning the turntable park and a 24 foot right of way along the road. We do not know why this specific proposal is being put forward nor do we know their overall plans or thoughts with regard to this area. I am going to ask for a meeting about this topic before making any recommendation to you about whether we accept their proposal.

I have not yet written to the Surface Transportation Board because I want to be sure that I accurately understand what is being proposed by the Railroad and what the city is asking of the Board. If we are going to raise issues with a federal agency we should be certain of our facts and our request.

Reappraisal:

Please see the enclosed memo from Bill Krajieski of NEMC. He outlines the status and the upcoming schedule. The reappraisal committee met last week and is making plans for release of public information in conjunction with the schedule. Be sure to note that 100% of the residential properties have been visited and measured and that they have been able to make interior inspections on 78% of them so far, this is a very high entry rate. They are making a final push for interior inspections which assures the greatest accuracy of the project.

Police Negotiations:

Please see the enclosed memo which is confidential under the provisions of 1 VSA 317 (c) (15) pertaining to collective bargaining.

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Master Plan:

The current Master Plan for the city will expire on July 13, 2010. To remain eligible for a variety of state grants and to retain our status in any Act 250 applications pending before the state, we need to have a current Master Plan. The Planning Commission has been making very good progress toward finalizing the Master Plan update, and we expect to have an approved draft to you by early May, with the required report from the Planning Commission. When you receive the draft from the Planning Commission, the state statute (Chapter 117, Title 24, §4385) requires that you post a hearing "no less than 30 nor more than 120 days" after receipt. Since we are a municipality greater than 2,500 in population, you will need to hold two public hearings, both of which can be posted with the first warning.

You may decide to change the plan once it is submitted to you, but any changes should be made no later than 15 days prior to the scheduled hearing. If "substantial changes are made in the concept, meaning, or extent" of the proposed plan after the first hearing, then another hearing will need to be warned with at least 30 days notice. If substantial changes are made, then it needs to be resubmitted to the Planning Commission, who will have to write another report on the impact of the changes prior to the final public hearing. After the final public hearing, the City Council can adopt the plan.

The vision and goals of the proposed Master Plan were presented to you in August of 2008, and received your endorsement. Since that time, the enVision stakeholders and their committees have been working to identify targets and strategies that will move the city toward the goals you endorsed. They have developed recommendations in all of the areas of concern to the city: Economics and Livelihoods, Governance, Infrastructure and the Built Environment, Natural Environment, and Social Systems and Human Development. This is obviously a big project, and has taken a lot of time. The recommendations have been reviewed by the department heads and city staff, by the enVision Steering Committee, the Conservation Commission, and the Planning Commission.

Municipal Planning Grant:

There is a new round of Municipal Planning Grants available – the application deadline is April 30, 2010. I would like to propose that we apply for \$15,000 to hire a consultant to help us with a few critical technical aspects of bringing the new zoning into compliance with the Master Plan and preparatory work for the Tax Increment Financing application we are contemplating. One of the central issues to both of these projects concerns district boundaries. There was a lot of debate during the Growth Center application about the boundaries of the Growth Center and the existing zoning boundaries. We need to look at all the boundaries we have established to make sure that they reflect the interests of the citizens and the development constraints before we update the zoning. We also need to identify the boundaries that would be applicable for Tax Increment Financing, taking into consideration proposed projects such as the development of Sabin's Pasture and the new District Energy plant.

District Energy:

We continue to work with Veolia with regard to potential ownership and operations models. The Senate Institutions Committee has asked that we meet with them on Thursday afternoon at 3:30 PM to brief them on the project and some of the possible concepts. In preparation for that meeting, we are meeting with the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services and his staff at 10:00 AM on Thursday morning.

ICMA Northeast Regional Summit:

The ICMA Northeast Regional Summit will be held on March 25 and 26 in Baltimore, Maryland. This is a two day training session and business meeting for ICMA members in the Northeast region (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, MD, DE, DC). You may recall that you approved my candidacy for ICMA Northeast Regional Vice President. The first round of interviews for the position will be held at this meeting.

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Zoning Investigations Guidelines:

As you know, an inquiry was made about how the city initiates zoning enforcement or review. Gwen and Clancy are preparing a written set of guidelines (similar to our property inspection guidelines) so that this process will be clearer for all in the future.

Goals/Objectives/Priorities session:

We decided on April 5 at 5:15 PM (with April 7 as the back up date) for the first goals and/or objectives development session. You said that you would like some of the department heads present to participate in this process.

Finance Department:

As you know, the Finance Department has been struggling with increased work load from grants, capital projects, stimulus money and other issues. Additionally, we are taking seriously the the Citizen's Review Committee and the related Cota Report and seeking to implement the recommended changes and practices. We have come to the conclusion that we need to make some staffing changes in order to accomplish all that is necessary. I have enclosed a memo from the Finance Director outlining the need for a Staff Accountant position and a job description for that position. I have approved this and we will begin recruitment. As discussed during the budget sessions, we will make this work with existing funding. This also opens the door to potential additional restructuring in conjunction with the Treasurer's office.

City Hall Rental Policy/Events Policy:

I am meeting again with Lost Nation Theater this week to continue work on the City Hall Rental policy.

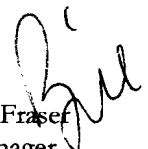
Insurance:

As per your request, we are researching "key officials" insurance policies. While our efforts are not yet exhaustive, we are not finding that this sort of thing generally exists for municipal officials.

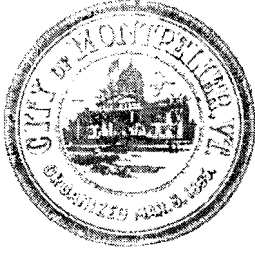
Upcoming Meetings:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| March 24 | Solid Waste District – Update from Mia Moore, City's Rep
Conservation Commission – Kris Hammer
ADA Issues – presentation on City's obligations, grievance process,
provision of service statement |
| April 5 (or 7) | 5:15 P.M. Goals/Objectives/Priorities Session |
| April 14 | 58 Barre Street (Report from Committee)
Carr Lot Update
District Energy Update
Auditorium Rental Policy
ANR Enforcement – Steve Stitzel |
| April 28 | Events Policy |

William Fraser
City Manager



B.K, FKZ
bcw



To: Chief Gesualdo Schneider
From: Glenn A. Moore Assistant Building Inspector
Date: March 4, 2010
Re: December 2009 Activity report

Building Inspector/ Health Officer Activity report for 12/01/2009 to 12/31/2009

December saw one serious structure fire, the Montpelier Senior Center, which resulted in serious structural damage. Due to the quick and professional response by the Fire Department, structural damage was limited but severe. The building is under orders to remain vacant and the damaged floor ceiling assembly is to be demolished. A working fire sprinkler system would have limited the damage to the immediate area of origin with little to no structural damage.

Two domestic fire sprinkler systems were permitted and installed; one in a new home under construction and the other in a home that had been damaged by a fire. The new home system is fed from a well by a multi speed smart well pump the other is supplied by a water storage tank in the house. The storage tank option was chosen due to the cost of excavation in the street for a new water line.

City Building Permits issued-----18 (includes State construction permits)
Total value of permits----- (does not included renewals) -----\$311,115.00
Total permit fees collected for issued permits----- \$1,261.61
Permit fees waived (energy improvements, sprinklers) -----\$24.00

Public Buildings

State construction permits ----- 9
State inspections----- 8
Field plans reviews-----1
State construction inspections-----15
Phone calls with architects/contractors/building owners--- 15
Meetings with contractors or property owners---4

Inspections with Community development-----2
Construction inspections in single family, approximately— 20

Health Officer Activities:
No heat complaints ----- 4

B.I.I.,
F4I
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To: Chief Gesualdo Schneider
From: Glenn A. Moore Assistant Building Inspector
Date: March 5, 2010
Re: February 2010 Activity report

Building Inspector/ Health Officer Activity report for 02/01/2010 to 02/28/2010

One existing commercial building sprinkler system was completed this month. The building was refitted for a new tenant; the sprinkler was not required by City or State Code. The owners' decided to sprinkler because of City Tax Credits, reductions in the cost of construction, and possible insurance savings.

City Building Permits issued-----15 (includes State construction permits)
Total value of permits----- (does not included renewals) -----\$226,380.00
Total permit fees collected for issued permits----- \$1,379.50
Permit fees waived (energy improvements, sprinklers) -----\$283.50

Public Buildings

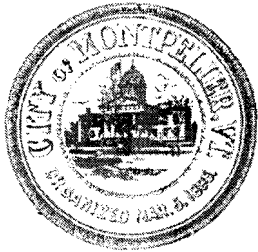
State construction permits ----- 12
State inspections----- 7
State construction inspections-----22
Phone calls with architects/contractors/building owners--- 10
Meetings with contractors or property owners---4

Inspections with Community development-----2
Construction inspections in single family, approximately----15

Health Officer Activities:

No heat complaints ----- 2
Animal bites ----- 0

Bill, FYI
JCS



To: Chief Gesualdo Schneider
From: Glenn A. Moore Assistant Building Inspector
Date: March 4, 2010
Re: January 2010 Activity report

Building Inspector/ Health Officer Activity report for 01/01/2010 to 01/31/2010

Significant time was spent inspecting, writing reports, meeting with lien holders, prospective buyers, electricians and State and City officials on one 9 unit rental property. This property had numerous fire and health code violations that dated back to 2006. This property has recently generated multiple no heat and no power complaints also. The lien holder of the property took the property back and has sold it to an owner who has history of correcting problems in a timely fashion.

City Building Permits issued-----13 (includes State construction permits)
Total value of permits---- (does not included renewals) -----\$112,615.00
Total permit fees collected for issued permits----- \$508.00
Permit fees waived (energy improvements, sprinklers) -----\$0.00

Public Buildings

State construction permits ----- 8
State inspections----- 7
Field plans reviews-----1
State construction inspections-----9
Phone calls with architects/contractors/building owners--- 15
Meetings with contractors or property owners---3

Inspections with Community development-----3
Construction inspections in single family, approximately— 19

Health Officer Activities:

No heat complaints ----- 3
Animal bites -----3

Cancel
than
Friday
packet

Memo

To: Reappraisal Committee
From: Bill Krajieski
CC: City Manager, City Assessor,
Date: March 9, 2010
Re: Reappraisal progress and timeline

OVERALL PROGRESS

As of Friday, March 5, 2010, all residential homes and all apartment buildings have been measured and photographed. The last group of properties, commercial, has had 114 measured with 161 remaining. The last major area is the downtown area and we expect to begin there in the next 10 days.

Notices requesting inspections will be sent to the remaining residential homes and apartments on Friday the 12th. There are approximately 400 mailers going out in this last residential group. There will be one more mailer for commercial inspections later this month.

Income and expense mailers were sent to commercial owners last month. The response has been outstanding.

Data entry is an ongoing function. We are keeping pace with field work as it comes in. I have begun the process of constructing the valuation model and initial analysis of sales. I expect preliminary model data to be passed to the Assessor within the next thirty days.

ENTRY RATES

As of Friday, March 5, 2010

Overall

1878 of 2664 have been inspected for an entry rate of 70.5%

Single family dwellings

1,557 of 1,996 have been inspected for an entry rate of 78.0%

One to four family dwellings

1,769 of 2,478 have been inspected for an entry rate of 71.4%

Apartments

40 of 72 have been inspected for an entry rate of 55.5%

Commercial

69 of 114 have been inspected for an entry rate of 60.5%

TIMELINE

The contract calls for the completion of the City's abstract (grievance Grand List) by June 24, 2010. Grievance notices need to be mailed by that date. In order to meet this date we will need to have our job completed a week prior to this. The following is a preliminary timeline based on the completion date.

April 26 – all preliminary values to Assessor for review and approval. The Assessor will be given segments of completed work before this date for review and approval.

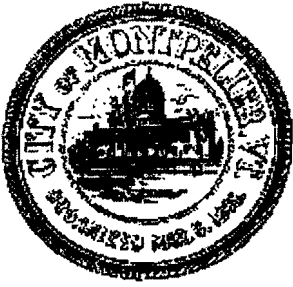
May 14 – create booklet and send to printer

May 21 – booklet mailed to property owners for informal hearings with NEMC

May 31 thru June 5 – informal hearings with NEMC. There will be three hearing officers. We will run hearings on at least 3 evenings and on Saturday. This schedule will allow for about 500 hearing slots. We expect 10-15% (300-450) of the property owners to appeal in the informal phase. We can add dates on after the 5th if needed.

June 7 thru 21 – review of informal appeals by NEMC and Assessor. Roll and balance values to NEMRC billing system.

June 24 – issue ~~grievance~~ notices *of valuation*



City of Montpelier, Vermont
"The Smallest Capital City in the United States"

DATE: March 9, 2010
TO: William Fraser, City Manager
FROM: Sandra J. Gallup, Finance Director
SUBJECT: Staff Accountant position for the Finance Office

Finance Department is experiencing an increase in accounting responsibilities and requirements. The recent focus on the City's financial management resulted in recommendations for additional processes and procedures to provide a high level of financial control. Some of the added responsibilities and requirements are:

- Document City's Financial Control procedures
- Increase review of requisitions/invoices & check warrant reports
- Document process for financial review of organizations submitting proposals to the City
- Document process for accepting or rejecting low bids
- Establish and document change order approval & processing procedures
- Work with the Audit Committee for FY10 auditor selection
- Revise vendor disbursement procedure write up – add detail
- Work with Audit Committee to review purchasing policy and vendor disbursement procedures
- Implement a Purchase Order System
- Reconcile the Capital Asset sub-ledger to the General Ledger- monthly

In addition to the request for increased controls our work load in the Finance Department continues to grow due to:

- New Health Reimbursement Arrangement – record daily transaction, establish new policies, new procedures, savings analysis and reporting
- Continue Software implementation with new Human Resource module – leave time record improvements
- Grants Management for the usually high volume of state and federal grants. Many are federal grants which bring numerous financial responsibilities that need to be met.
- Added city programs (District Energy, Reach Grant, Senior Center, 58 Barre St, MontpelierNet).
- GASB 54 and new audit requirements (Financial Controls Documentation, GASB 54 Fund Balance Reporting, fixed asset accounting, community development loans receivable analysis)
- GASB 45 – new post-employee benefit liability reporting requirement
- Capital Projects increase: The number of Capital Projects has increased 33% since FY 2005.

Also, the finance staff is undergoing many health and retirement related issues which makes assigning current and future work responsibilities difficult.

Summary: We need to add to our staff to assure that we can meet all our Department's responsibilities.

Recommendation:

I recommend hiring a full-time staff accountant as soon as possible. The proposed job description is attached. The starting salary for this position would be \$41,256 - \$45,485, depending on education and experience.

Initially, part of the funding for this position will come from savings in the Accounting Clerk position's due to an upcoming disability. Also, some savings could be achieved as we reduce our reliance on outside contracted accounting services.

In the longer term, employee retirement(s) and adjustments to current employees job responsibilities could provide the additional funding needed for this position.

Handwritten signature and initials. The initials "OK" are written in the upper left of the signature area. Below them is a large, stylized signature that appears to be "W. M. [unclear]". A long diagonal line extends from the top right of the signature area across the page.



**CITY OF MONTPELIER
JOB DESCRIPTION
STAFF ACCOUNTANT
FLSA Designation: Non-exempt
Pay Classification: 18**

Nature and Scope of Position

The Municipal Accountant is a key position in the Department of Finance reporting to the Director of Finance and Administration. The position requires knowledge of fund accounting, and abilities in independent judgment and decision-making. This position's duties will include calculation, input and verification of data on a regular basis as well as overseeing basic accounting functions and maintaining financial records. Responsibilities include providing financial information to the City Treasurer, city departments, grant managers.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Oversee all aspects of the computerized general ledger accounting system.
- Prepare monthly and quarterly budget reports and other financial reports as directed.
- Assist the Director of Finance and Administration in the development and revisions to the City of Montpelier Financial Procedures and Internal Control Manuals.
- Co-ordinate year-end audit and work with internal and external auditors.
- Assist in the implementation of a detailed budgeting system for department heads, city manager and city councilors.
- Supervise the Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable operations.
- Manage municipal grant financial records. Provide support to grant managers.
- Maintain employee health reimbursement arrangement and flexible spending accounting records.
- Maintain the City's Debt Management records including Lease Purchase Agreements.
- Assist the Director of Finance and Administration in the implementation of a Purchase Order system.
- Provide Backup to Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and Payroll, as necessary.
- Prepare Capital Projects monthly reports.
- Monitor Construction Projects Change Order processing.
- Assist the Director of Finance and Administration with insurance claims processing.
- Reconcile capital asset sub-ledger, monthly.
- Prepare monthly bank reconciliations.

- Work with Unifund (financial software company) and the City's IT staff to resolve any normal maintenance issues with the accounting software program and procedures.
- Coordinate and research special projects as needed and perform any other duties assigned by the Director of Finance and Administration.
- Knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and governmental standards and/or fund accounting
- .Basic knowledge of computerized accounting.
- Thoroughness, accuracy and strong analytical ability.
- Ability to work independently to complete work and special projects on time.
- Ability to organize data into a usable format using Microsoft Office suite. (EXCEL, MICROSOFT WORD, and ACCESS).
- Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing.
- Ability to operate as part of a team.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with other employees.

Education, Training and Experience

Background in Fund Accounting or Accounting Degree. Experience in Payroll, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and General Ledger as well as general office operations. Proficient in Microsoft Excel and Word (Access would be helpful). Experience with computer accounting software and networks. Experience in governmental accounting is preferred.