

CITY OF MONTPELIER
CAPITAL CITY OF VERMONT

City Manager's Weekly Report – 3/26/10

UPCOMING MEETINGS ...

- ❖ **“Current Events” Committee Meeting:** Gwen has scheduled this meeting for Thursday, April 1st, at 6:30 P.M. in the Memorial Room.

FOR YOUR CALENDARS ...

- **City Council Goal-Setting Session:** Monday, April 5th, at 5:15 P.M. in the Police Department's Community Room.

ENCLOSURES ...

- ✓ A copy of Mia Moore's CVSWMMD Update that she presented to Council on March 24th.
- ✓ Montpelier Parks Commission Meeting Minutes for February 16th, 2010.

STATUS REPORTS ...

Berlin Pond:

As you may also have read in the paper, Chief Facos advises us that at the Court Hearing on Thursday afternoon regarding Berlin Pond, Judge Crawford ordered the State's Natural Resources Board be added as a co-plaintiff, indicating he couldn't go forward with the case without hearing from the State. He squashed the two subpoenas by the defendants, the Sanborn's, to have a Fish and Game Warden and a Department of Environmental Conservation employee testify. Attorney Howland argued successfully that their testimony would be irrelevant. The matter is potentially scheduled to come back before the Court sometime in mid April .

Upcoming Meetings:

April 5	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 Planning Grants/TIF's Regional Shared Services First Public Hearing – Vendor Ordinance Amendments Appointments to Tree Board
April 28	Events Policy Zoning Appeals Fee

Not much else to update since you all met on Wednesday night. Have a good weekend ...

Bev

To: Montpelier City Council, Mayor Hooper
From: Mia Moore, Montpelier Representative to CVSWMD Board of Supervisors
Re: CVSWMD Update
Date: March 24, 2010

Good evening, I'd like to take a few minutes to brief you on current events at the District. As you know, CVSWMD is in a transition period and Mayor Hooper requested that I come to give an update on that transition.

Here's where things stand:

- Donna Barlow-Casey has left the district after 14 years of service to become the Director of Vermont Technical College's Center for Sustainable Practices. It's a dream job for her, one that I'm sure was very difficult to pass up. The District is taking this opportunity to become a little leaner by restructuring central staff and has created a General Manager position by combining the Executive Director and Administrative Manager position. We will be working with Vermont League of Cities and Towns to recruit and hire a new General Manager, and Leesa Stewart, formerly the District's Administrative Manager, is Acting General Manager.
- Janice Walfren resigned her position as Chair of the Board of Supervisors and is stepping down from representing Plainfield altogether to take a seat on Plainfield's planning committee. The upcoming April meeting is the traditional time for the District to welcome new representatives and nominate members to committees and chair positions, so we will be electing a new Chair on April 7.
- As of mid-February, the District no longer operates any trash drop-off depots. The transition to town management of the depots went surprisingly smoothly, and all the towns that hosted a District depot have made arrangements with local haulers to maintain operations themselves. These haulers have even hired on several of the District's former depot staff.
- Cabot and Strafford are in the process of leaving the District, and Northfield has warned a special meeting to determine whether or not to stay with the District. Leesa is working with Northfield in anticipation of their vote to demonstrate the benefits of staying with the District. Calais has been working with their rep, Bill Powell, to decide whether or not to make a move toward leaving. Barre Town is in a wait-and-see period. We're working on a Fiscal Year 2011 budget that assumes assessment & surcharge income from roughly 57,000 residents in the District, taking the loss of the two towns into account and conservatively estimating the loss of one big town and one little town just to be safe.
- As for upcoming programming, the District just released the schedule for hazardous waste collection days for 2010 and is planning special collections for e-waste, bulky materials, scrap metal, and clothing to name just a few. We are a resource for District residents who are interested in diverting their household food scraps via green cones, Green Johannas and composting. Our school organics program continues to grow – nearly 100% of District schools have implemented some sort of food scrap diversion program, most of them participate in our pick-up cycle while some of the small ones use green cones or partner with local farms. As for our business organics program, we've just added new customers and fully intend to operate that program through Fiscal Year 2011. The digester project at Vermont Technical College, of which the District is a founding partner, is completing its first phase, the feasibility study phase. It's determined that the project is feasible, and the District is no longer moving forward as a partner in the project but we are working to maintain a relationship and would be happy to provide a portion of the food scraps needed to run the digester.
- In the medium- and long-term, these are all very exciting projects for the District and alone are reason to remain a member of the District. Additionally, District leadership is working out a budget that would maintain all these services at a reduced per capita assessment, while continuing to subsidize the organics pick-ups for businesses within the District. While the immediate situation is a bit rocky, I am confident that we will come through this period stronger and more productive for our towns.
- We are actively recruiting district reps from Hardwick, Plainfield, Tunbridge, Washington, Williamstown and Woodbury; if you've got a friend in one of those towns who you think would be interested, please have him or her contact Barb Baird, the District's Administrator at administration@cvswmd.org

Montpelier Parks Commission Minutes
February 16, 2010
Montpelier Police Station Community Room

Commissioners present: Ethan Parke (chair), Stephen Bosserman, Cara Robeck, Leigh Seddon

Park staff present: Geoff Beyer, (Director)

Budget:

The current year's budget was reviewed. There are a few line items in the current expenditures that are unexplained. Geoff will contact Sandy to find an explanation. Next year's budget is incorporated into the budget that will be voted on at town meeting and includes an increase in vehicle repair and a decrease of \$2000 in capital improvements.

January Minutes will be circulated on e-mail for approval. Ethan will circulate any changes to be made.

Updates:

- A film crew filmed a revolutionary war reconstruction in the park in January and there were no park conflicts or complaints.
- A section of the trail to East Montpelier was closed last month because of a clay slide.
- Lack of snow means some areas are not being groomed that normally would be. Trails that are being groomed are in good shape. U32 and Montpelier high and other groups have been using the trails to ski in the park.
- There has been almost no snowmobile activity.
- Pond is in good shape and people are skating on it.
- Community Ski Program is functioning. There are boots and skis that can be used for free from the shed up at the parks office. The program needs ski poles.
- One of the Department of Labor trainees was fired by DOL for bad work habits and a couple, who have been very helpful, are finishing their training.
- Two high school trainees are coming in for outhouse project.
- A parks map update is happening and it will be available as be part of trail finder online program, Geoff is trying to also find time to work on the Parks website, including a trail conditions update and photos.
- Geoff does not know if the conservation fund has voted yet to pay the city back for the MacAvoy property. He will check.
- Outhouse project is going well. It is being funded by outside sources and the kids are learning great skills. Geoff is looking into doing two composting outhouses this year at new shelter and 7 fireplaces. He would like to wait to do the Old Shelter until we see how the first two work.
- Fruit trees: There is a grant opportunity for an orchard (6-100+ trees). Geoff is wondering about cutting out some of the trees that are growing too large and

obstructing the view from the tower and putting in some fruit trees in that area. They would need to be protected from deer when they are young.

- House maintenance issues: half of floors were refinished over a decade ago, the others haven't been done at all in decades. Ceilings are in need of work and should be sheet rocked. Leigh requested that Geoff put together an itemized list of the maintenance needs of the house.
- Onion River Sports Snow Mountain Biking Race, "The Frozen Onion" wants a short exception to the rule that they would have to be on trails that are bike permitted year round. They would also like to be allowed, for safety reasons, to use a very short section of winter only trail by the new shelter (through the swamp).
 - Vote: The route of the race as described by Geoff can include about 100 yards on the winter-only walking path that goes through the swamp by the New Shelter, all agreed.
- Geoff brought in a design for signs at the Hubbard Park Drive entrance and the State House path. The State House path sign will probably be smaller and will be built first.
- Salary research: The parks commission would like to figure out what a fair salary would be for Geoff regionally and within the city pay structure. Ethan is looking into the step salary and merit increase programs in the city and will talk to City Finance Director Sandy Gallup. We will also look again at the Vermont Parks and Recreation Association Survey (Cara will call VPRA for more information about job descriptions and compensation levels, Betsy Orselet). Recent hires in the city with lower experience and without as much of a supervisory role are being paid at or above Geoff's current salary. Commissioners would like to schedule a meeting with Bill Fraser (late March, early April) to discuss this once we have done more research. Leigh will see what he can find online from NH and ME.
- It was Stephen's last night as commissioner and he was thanked for his work.