4/08, the Montpelier City Council suspended all Task Force, Committee, and Advisory Board meetings that are not required by law, through April 22nd.

| Wed., Apr. 22nd | City Council Meeting | 6:30 PM | Remote access information will be available by 4/15 |

Public Health and Safety

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) CITY OF MONTPELIER RESPONSE

This week’s report is coming at the end of the 4th week since the Governor issued a State of Emergency for Vermont. Our new ‘normal’ of social distancing, masks, and staying at home may have started to feel increasingly overwhelming and stressful. The City understands, and we and our employees have been working through the same feelings.

There have been some community resources that have opened up to help you if you are in need of assistance, including:

- The Washington and Northern Orange Counties Regional Response Command Center (WNOC-RRCC) that is now open to receive your calls if you need anything. If you need any support, they are open 7 days a week from 8am-10pm, and are available at: Call line: 802-477-5160 or Text line: 802-477-5130.
- The City has also compiled a list of mental-health resources at https://www.montpelier-vt.org/1155/Coronavirus-Response if that could assist you.

You’ve heard it before, but these are unprecedented times. We will make it through this together.

State Updates:

- As a reminder, the State has passed H.681, An Act Relating to Government Operations in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak, which states that the physical location requirements for public meetings is temporarily waived for the duration of the Governor’s declared state of emergency.
  - During this time, City Council meetings will be conducted solely electronically (currently through the platform Zoom) with options for public participation via online or call-in with a telephone. The City will have the link and number for the remote call-in option on every City Council Agenda- available on our homepage: https://www.montpelier-vt.org/ and through the City’s social media.
- The Vermont Department of Health has released additional guidance on wearing cloth face coverings. They ask that if you need to leave your home for an essential purpose or will be near other people, wear a cloth mask over your mouth and nose. Since COVID-19 may be transmitted by someone who does not have symptoms, a mask helps you protect others. You must still practice social distancing, wash your hands and avoid touching your face. Learn more about how to use and make cloth masks at their website here: https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID-19-VDH-mask-guidance.pdf

General City Updates:

- City Council approved the City’s proposed budget austerity measures to reduce the deficit the City is facing for the last quarter of Fiscal Year 20 at the April 8th Council Meeting. These cuts include:
  - The Voluntary Furlough of 30 employees, saving us an estimated $192,740 gross
The City had 30 non-essential employees volunteer to be furloughed. The City is committed to keeping employees whole, and will continue to provide their health care benefits, fronting the employees their next scheduled merit pay increase in full, and continuing to support their discretionary benefits, such as dental and vision.

- FY20 Department Budget Reductions, including equipment purchases, programs, and projects- saving an estimated $245,000
  - Cuts to budgets include programs, projects, and equipment from the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Source</th>
<th>Title of Cut</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clerk/Office</td>
<td>Dues/Subs/Mtgs</td>
<td>1,815.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Manager’s Office</td>
<td>City MGR Dues/Subs/Mtgs</td>
<td>9,084.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Manager’s Office</td>
<td>Social Justice</td>
<td>9,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance &amp; Technology</td>
<td>IT Other Purchased Services</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire/EMS</td>
<td>Ambulance</td>
<td>52,500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>Parks Assorted</td>
<td>19,497.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning &amp; Zoning</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>3,136.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning &amp; Zoning</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>Streets &amp; Fleet Ops</td>
<td>142,884.00</td>
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</table>

- The Council voted at their April 8th Council meeting to suspend all Task Force, Committee, and Advisory Board meetings that are not required by law through at least April 22nd. They will be discussing this topic again (to either continue the suspension or not) at their April 22nd Council Meeting.
  - This is due to the fact that a quarter of City staff has voluntarily placed themselves on furlough in order to lower the deficit that the City is facing in this last quarter of Fiscal Year 20. This reduction severely impacts the capacity of staff that is remaining on payroll- as many tasks will need to be transferred to them to keep the City moving forward. This limits staff’s ability to fully support Task Force, Committees, and Advisory Board meetings at this time.

**Additional Building Closures and Programs Cancellations:**
- The Recreation Department has closed all City fields and playgrounds – at this time, staff is unable to maintain these facilities, and cannot guarantee their sanitization. The City reminds all residents to not gather in groups in our fields and to practice proper social distancing.

**Responsive and Responsible Government**

**PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING INSPECTIONS**
Due to upcoming furloughs in these two departments we have some updates on services. First, all permitting will continue but with less staff so timing and some processes may be different than you may be accustomed to. Audra Brown (abrown@montpelier-vt.org) will still be the point of contact for all permits but she is limited to 5 hours of work per week. She will issue some permits and forward others to Meredith Crandall for zoning and Chief Bob Gowans for building permits. Meredith (mcrandall@montpelier-vt.org) will be remaining on at her current 32 hour per week schedule and will take over a number of extra functions. We hope to start holding virtual DRB and DRC hearings in May in order for some important projects to continue to be advanced. Chief Gowans
(rgowans@montpelier-vt.org) will be covering the building permits and inspections that Chris Lumbra was handling as he will be furloughed. The Chief may forward some inspections to the Division of Fire Safety if we need additional help. We want to thank the Division for their flexibility and support during this time.

Second, the Community Development Specialist going on furlough so there will not be grant assistance available to businesses and individuals. Kevin typically would write grant applications for various downtown improvement projects but those will need to wait until his return. Existing projects will now run through the Director Mike Miller (mmiller@montpelier-vt.org) .

We believe that considering permits are slow due to the stay at home order that we should be able to manage with a reduced staff. This will help close the gap in our city budget due to Covid-19 response. Please contact Bill Fraser (wfraser@montpelier-vt.org) with questions about the budget. We appreciate everyone’s support and we hope to continue to provide excellent service that everyone is familiar with from our departments.

As Director, I want to thank both the staff who have agreed to be furloughed as well as those who have agreed to remain working. Both decisions have consequences for the staff and their families. I want to extend a special thanks to Chief Gowans for agreeing to take over some of Chris’ workload on top of his usual duties.

POLICE CHIEF SELECTION PROCESS
The initial pool of 19 applicants has been reduced to 9 active candidates. We’re trying to develop next steps given face to face and group restrictions.

THANK YOU
From grateful hearts, we recognize the generosity of these wonderful businesses and individuals!

♥ Birch Grove Baking ♥ Harvest Equipment ♥ Caledonia Spirits
♥ Alla Vita ♥ Tractor Supply ♥ John Bate
♥ Vermont Mutual

THANK YOU!

FROM PARKS & TREES:
Latest COVID-19 guidelines for using Montpelier’s parks:
• STAY HOME: If you don’t feel well, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or have traveled from anywhere named in the Governor's Executive Order, please stay home.
• KEEP YOUR DISTANCE: Give people who aren’t members of your household six feet or more of space AND make sure your pets do the same.
• BRING A FACE COVERING: In case you encounter other people and stop to chat (from a safe distance), bring a face covering.
• LEASH YOUR DOG: We *strongly urge* you to leash your dog, even in off-leash areas. Only let your dog off-leash in Hubbard Park if you can keep them under strict voice control and can leash them quickly if others are approaching. Remember that all other parks require dogs to be leashed at ALL times.
• KEEP IT CHILL: Be smart and cautious when recreating outside to avoid any incidents that could require
medical attention.

- CLOSURES: The Hubbard Park tower remains closed.

These guidelines for recreating are informed by the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation.

HARRIS WEBSTER OFFERS NEXT SOCIAL-DISTANCE-SAFE WALKS ON SPRING WEEKENDS SATURDAY, APRIL 18

Those who have enjoyed past MSAC and Complete Streets Committee walks with Harris, those who heard about them but hadn’t yet jumped on board, and those who have yet to experience these fabulous, planet- and heart-friendly outings, may all rejoice in hearing the news: these MSAC walks will Harris hopes to lead these walks every 1st and 3rd Saturday in April, May and June, 9:00 - 10:30 am. Please RSVP to 223-7399 by the previous Friday at noon to check if there have been changes to the schedule!

(Required: Walkers must adhere to Covid-19 social distancing safety regimens of wearing face masks, walking at least six feet apart, and not participating if you have symptoms or have been in contact with someone who does. Subject to amendment if circumstances require).

Join Harris for his next walk on Saturday, April 18

Walkers will gather at Cumberland Farms on Berlin St. along Route 2, before going along and up Berlin St. to some area neighborhoods, down Wheelock St. and then back to the gathering spot.

For a full list and description of walks, please see attached flier.

SPRING REMOTE CLASSES CANCELLED; MANY MEMBERS DONATING THEIR FEES TO MSAC; SOME INSTRUCTORS OFFERING CLASSES INDEPENDENTLY

MSAC had been gearing up to offer nearly 60 remote online classes starting later this month, but with the staff furloughs in place making a big impact on our capacity to support that, the heartbreaking decision had to be made to cancel those plans despite the significant impact on registrants and instructors. We are touched by the generosity of so many community members who are donating their spring class fees to MSAC rather than request refunds for fees paid in early March. The donations are a boost to us at a time when we had to cancel two major fundraising events due to the pandemic. We are gearing up to promote the many private/independent remote/online classes being offered by many of our 36 Spring instructors, and we will be promoting those regularly in our Sunday night e-letters starting on 4/12. All are invited to subscribe to our e-letter by sending a request to us at msac@montpelier-vt.org.

FEAST SENIOR MEALS AVAILABLE

Although the MSAC facility is closed to the public, FEAST is our top priority right now, and we are still producing meals for anyone age 60+. On Tuesdays and Fridays from noon-1:00, FEAST To-Go meals are distributed in front of the Center at 58 Barre Street with safety protocols in place. We appreciate reservations at least a day in advance, but residents can come without a reservation. Anyone can also inquire about FEAST at Home (Meals on Wheels), by calling 262-6288 or by email. Home delivery eligibility has been loosened during the pandemic, so new people are encouraged to call Jessica if a need exists. The suggested donation is $5-10 for anyone 60 or older, and the fee is $7 for those under 60 or those who don’t fill out a nutrition survey that allows us to get partial reimbursements through federal Older Americans Act funding. Every dollar helps support healthy meals! Current menus can be found on our FEAST webpage by clicking here.
**Sustainable Infrastructure**

**PARKING GARAGE REDESIGN**
The proposed redesign is posted on the city’s website along with information about submitting comments. Click here: [https://www.montpelier-vt.org/1165/State-Street-Parking-Garage](https://www.montpelier-vt.org/1165/State-Street-Parking-Garage)

**DPW STREET & WATER/SEWER DIVISIONS:**
The City of Montpelier’s Street Division accomplished many tasks throughout this week, including late season winter operations. Friday, our crews were out maintaining streets, sidewalks, and dirt roads due to slick conditions. Our staff completed the following list:

- Scraped curb line using small loader to remove bulk of debris before sweeping on Memorial Drive, Berlin Street, River Street, 302, Rte. 2, Lower State Street and Elm Street.
- Street, Sidewalk and Hand sweeping
- Washed equipment and trucks
- Disinfecting trucks as well as the building common areas, hard surfaces and door knobs
- Placed cold patch in potholes throughout the city
- Added dog leash signs on the new bike path
- Finished picking up sand barrels
- Sign repairs
- Dirt road maintenance

Next week our Street Division will focus on basic/daily tasks such as sweeping streets, setting up the street painting machine, placing cold patch in potholes as they arise and assisting our Water/Sewer Division as needed.

The Water/Sewer Division spent the week working on Hydrant Flushing, this will continue through the next couple of weeks. Our crew also completed sewer pump station checks and maintenance, Dig safes and water meter reading.

Next week, hydrant flushing will continue, as well as normal routines such as sewer pump station checks and maintenance, resident concerns and aiding the Street Division as needed.

**STUMP DUMP:**
Montpelier’s Stump Dump will be open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between the hours of 8AM – 12 PM to Montpelier residents looking to dispose of yard waste only (brush, leaves, clippings, and small limbs). The City’s opening of the Stump Dump is in recognition that some residents would like to get out of their homes and tidying up their lawns. It is an opportunity not only to “spring clean” but to also get some healthy exercise at a time when stress is likely to be higher than usual due to COVID-19. Social distancing (in keeping with guidelines issued by the Governor’s office) is easily practiced while dropping off material, and is also consistent with directives on essential services and work.

The Stump Dump will remain closed to all nonresidents, contractors, and deliveries that would typically require a monetary transaction. If there are any questions, residents should call the public works garage at 802-223-9510.

**WRRF:**
Work on the project this week continued to focus on the dewatering equipment and the boiler room as well as new HVAC in the garage building. The new underground chemical line was installed from the Chemical Building to the
Dewatering Room. Next week it is anticipated the second screw press for dewatering will be installed along with the sludge conveyors.

The project development agreement between the City and Energy Systems Group, the design-build contractor, was signed which will allow for preliminary design and application materials for a Combined Heat & Power (CHP) system for direct sale of electricity to the grid generated from methane at the plant. Assuming the application is accepted, the construction project will begin early next year and considered Phase 2 of the current upgrade.

RAILROAD/SHARED USE PATH:
The Washington County Railroad (WACR) has been recently working on reactivating the former Montpelier & Wells River Railroad along the north side of the river between Barre Street and US Rte. 2 (East Montpelier Rd). More specifically, the work area passes through the lower portion of “Sabin’s Pasture” and adjacent to Old Country Club Rd and the new shared use path. In accordance with the City’s lease agreement with the State of Vermont Rail & Aviation Bureau and WACR, DPW staff has been cooperating with the project to the extent requested. Vtrans officials are also actively supporting the project with funding from the state transportation budget. This reactivation project will require short term construction impacts on the new shared use path to include temporary closures for the installation of two new rail crossings of the path and for the construction of drainage structures.

As reported to us, the railroad intends to retain use of the existing rail line located on the southerly side of the river which will ultimately become a siding for storage of box cars and for other freight related rail operations purposes.

The first scheduled path closure will take place during the week of April 20th at the end of Old Country Club Road where work on a new stream crossing will take place. Other path closures will take place in May and further notice and additional information will be provided.

With regard to the COVID-19 work restrictions, railroad projects are considered an essential service and are therefore exempt from the Governor’s stay at home order.

DON’T FLUSH THAT:
Due to the public health crisis, not only is our city seeing a shortage on toilet paper, but many communities are as well. Department of Public Works would like to remind everyone what should NOT be flushed. Flushing items listed below could cause sewer blockages, in which could cause plugged and overflowing toilets, poorly draining sinks and showers, raw sewage backing up through floor drains, manholes overflowing onto the ground or into nearby surface waters, health hazards and nuisance odors, increases in the City’s maintenance costs and costly maintenance and repair bills for YOU.

- Paper towels
- Baby wipes
- Moist towelettes
- Cosmetics and cosmetic wipes
- Cloth or paper napkins
- Shop towels
- Condoms
- Tampons and pads
- Diapers
- Cat litter
- Cigarette butts
- Dental floss
- Latex gloves
- Hypodermic needles
- Facial tissues
- Fats, oils or grease
- Clothing or rags
- Medications (pills or liquid)
- Bandages
- Cotton balls
- Food scraps
- Swiffer pads
- Plastic of any kind
### Upcoming Agenda Items (TENTATIVE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/22</td>
<td>DRB Appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parking Garage Follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ordinance Chapter #13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COVID-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/28-4/29</td>
<td>Strategic Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/13</td>
<td>Ordinances</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tax Stabilization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COVID-19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

William Fraser  
City Manager
Montpelier Walks on Spring Weekends for All Ages!

With Harris Webster

(Required: Walkers must adhere to Covid-19 social distancing safety regimens of wearing face masks, walking at least six feet apart, and not participating if you have symptoms or have been in contact with someone who does. Subject to amendment if circumstances require)

1st & 3rd Saturdays - April, May & June, 9:00 - 10:30 am
Free and open to the public. Please RSVP to 223-7399 by previous Friday at noon to check if there have been any changes in the schedule or destination.

Some walks will involve time walking on paths in the woods, although most walking will be on streets and sidewalks. Walkers may at times have some input into what route they walk.

April 18th:
Gather at Cumberland Farms on Berlin St. along Route 2. We’ll go along and up Berlin St. to some area neighborhoods, down Wheelock St. and then back to the gathering spot.

May 16th:
Gather near the corner of Murray Rd. and Towne Hill Rd. (don’t park on the grass). We will explore the side roads off Towne Hill Rd. as well as Towne Hill Rd. itself and then back to the gathering spot.

May 2nd:
Gather by #10 Loomis St. near Union Elementary School (Parking on Loomis is easy on Saturday). We will explore many off-arterial streets in almost-downtown Montpelier and then back to the gathering spot.

June 6th:
Gather at the east corner of Terrace St. and Bailey St. We’ll explore the hilly area behind the Statehouse and walk up and through the west entrance of Hubbard Park and then back to our gathering spot.

June 20th:
Gather at the flagpole near National Life. Unlike the fall walks, we will walk to a different part of National Life Woods using Rob’s Trails and different nearby streets.

City of Montpelier
Senior Activity Center