

## Weekly Report December 16, 2022

Date	Committee	Time	Location	Links
12/19	Cemetery Commission	12:00 PM	City Manager's Conference Room and Zoom	<a href="#">Agenda and Zoom Link</a>
12/20	Community Advisory Board	6:00 PM	Zoom	<a href="#">Agenda and Zoom Link</a>
12/20	Montpelier Energy Advisory Committee	7:00 PM	Memorial Room and Zoom	<a href="#">Agenda and Zoom Link</a>
12/21	Social & Economic Justice Committee	8:00 AM	Zoom	<a href="#">Agenda and Zoom Link</a>
12/21	Homelessness Task Force	11:30 AM	City Council Chambers and Zoom	<a href="#">Agenda and Zoom Link</a>
12/21	City Council Meeting	6:30 PM	City Council Chambers and Zoom	<a href="#">Agenda and Zoom Link</a>
12/22	Homelessness Task Force Listening Session	12:00 PM	Zoom	<a href="#">Agenda and Zoom Link</a>
12/22	Homelessness Task Force Listening Session	6:00 PM	Memorial Room in City Hall	<a href="#">Agenda</a>

## Improve Public Health and Safety

### COVID-19 Updates:

**Surveillance Report:** The State is using the COVID-19 Surveillance Report as their key public facing COVID data document. Here is the most recent [Weekly COVID-19 Surveillance Report from December 14, 2022](#)

For this seven-day reporting period, the rate of new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 Vermonters is below 200.

- New COVID-19 cases, last 7 days: 71.8 per 100k
  - Weekly case count: 448
- New hospital admissions of patients with COVID-19, last 7 days: 9.62 per 100K
  - 60 total new admissions with COVID-19 (increase from previous week)
- Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by patients with COVID-19 (7-day average): 4.16%

The [CDC's COVID-19 County-level report also has Washington County Vermont](#) as a 'low' community spread level area.

Vermont Department of Health recommendations: [Protect Yourself & Others](#)

CDC recommendations: [COVID-19 by County | CDC](#)

#### COVID-19 Reminders:

- It is now recommended that all children, ages 6 months through 5 years, get the COVID-19 Vaccination. Find vaccination clinics [here](#), or call your preferred pharmacy.
- **Keep up to date with CDC Recommendations!** You can find the CDC's updates regarding COVID-19 on their website [here](#). They have released an updated chart regarding their quarantine and isolation guidelines [here](#)

## Provide Responsible and Engaged Government

#### **Budget update:**

The City Manager's recommended budget was presented to the City Council this week. Budget materials are available on the City's website.

Departmental budget presentation videos will be posted on Friday evening for Council and public review in advance of the December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

*December 21* – Regular Council meeting including budget review

*January 4* – Budget workshop (only if needed)

*January 11* – First public hearing on budget and related items

*January 26 (Thursday)* – Second and final public hearings on budget and related items. Deadline for adoption.

**Charter Changes update:**

We anticipate that two charter changes may be considered this year including local option sales tax and stormwater utility.

<i>Discussion</i>	December 21, 2022
<i>Discussion, Adopt language to file with Clerk (at least 10 days prior to 1<sup>st</sup> PH)</i>	January 11, 2023
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Public Hearing (at least 30 days in advance of voting)</i>	January 26, 2023
<i>20 days prior to election for revisions</i>	February 1, 2023 (if needed)
<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing</i>	February 22, 2023

**Local Options Sales Tax New**

At this week’s meeting, the City Council chose to open a public discussion about whether to implement a 1% local sales tax. The Council has until January 26 to decide whether to add this item to the March ballot. Public hearings are scheduled for January 11 and January 26 on both the budget and items like this. Creation of a local sales tax requires a vote of the public to amend the city's charter and approval of the charter change by the legislature.

Reasons to consider this are that it would generate approximately \$1.5 Million in non-property tax revenue which is equivalent to about 15% of the current property taxes. It also provides revenue from non-residents who are using the City's services.

Reasons for concern about about this are potential impact on local businesses, the regressive nature of sales taxes, and how much will be paid by local residents vs. visitors as well as those with restricted financial resources.

Given the high property tax rate and heavy infrastructure needs, the council felt this was worth a public conversation. We look forward to people engaging on this topic.

**General Business new:**

*Notification to home owners about water pressure.* We are following up on that to determine the best way to communicate this information.

*Shimming around storm drains.* DPW will review the conditions.

*Homelessness Task Force.* I will forward the information from Mr. Towle when it is received.

*Restroom Committee.* Has been appointed and will become active. City staff will have some suggestions for the group.

*Confluence Park.* Will be discussed in January or February.

**Pending Legal**

- *Appeal of Zoning Permit.* Neighbors have appealed DRB approval of a permit to move a barn structure. City is represented by Attorney David Rugh. We are monitoring the case. Filings by appellants challenging the validity of sections of the city’s zoning ordinance have been dropped.
- *Abdo Banfield v. City of Montpelier.* A decision has been rendered in the Abdo Bandfield case. In the original application, the property owner at 25 Cliff Street, Mr. Foelsche, was installing an access drive for some solar panels on his property. By state law, solar facilities are regulated by the Public Utility Commission (PUC) under 30 V.S.A. § 248 and are exempt from local zoning. The City therefore limited its review to the temporary access road needed for building the solar installation. The City Zoning Administrator approved the project and issued an administrative permit for the temporary access road which was appealed to the DRB by a neighbor, Ms. Bandfield. Following a public hearing on the matter, the DRB also approved the issuance of the permit. Ms. Bandfield then further appealed construction of the access road to the Environmental Division of Superior Court. In his decision, Judge Walsh determined that the access road is part of the solar facility which had been approved by the PUC and thus not subject to review under the scope of the City’s zoning authority. As a result, the City’s zoning permit is void, Ms. Bandfield’s appeal is dismissed for lack of subject matter jurisdiction in the Environmental Division, and Mr. Foelsche can proceed with his project.
- *Ferry et al v. City of Montpelier.* This case, concerning non-citizen voting, was argued in the Vermont Supreme Court on Wednesday October 27<sup>th</sup>. Case is pending decision from the Court.

**Montpelier Police Department Updates (NEW):** The Montpelier Police Department is excited to share that they are down to three vacancies with three candidates registered to attend the 115th basic police academy class in Feb. 2023. After 18 weeks of training they will officially join the department and begin their field training with veteran officers of the Montpelier Police Department.

**Create More Housing**

**Country Club Road Project**

Our consultants will make a full presentation to the Council and community on January 18<sup>th</sup>. This will be followed by three public forums on January 28<sup>th</sup> (on site), February 2<sup>nd</sup> (at City Hall) and February 9<sup>th</sup> (on line).

**Improve Community Prosperity**

**\*\*The Community Services Department weekly newsletter can be found at the end of this report, beginning after strategic plan items. \*\***

## Build and Maintain Sustainable Infrastructure

**\*\*The Department of Public Works weekly newsletter can be found at the end of this report, beginning after strategic plan items. \*\***

## Employment and Personnel Announcements

**City Council Seeking District 2 Applications Update:** Applications have closed for the vacant District 2 seat. The City Council, at their meeting of December 21<sup>st</sup>, will consider the two applicants – Pelin Kohn and Merrick Modun – for appointment to fill this seat until the March town meeting date. The remaining one year of this term will be filled by election in March.

**Finance Director Update:** We identified a final candidate and are currently checking references and background. We hope to make a formal offer and announcement within the week.

**Police Chief Update:** I am pleased to announce the appointment of Eric Nordenson as the next Police Chief for Montpelier. Mr. Nordenson currently serves as Deputy Chief. He is a 25 year veteran of our Police Department and has risen from Patrol Officer, Corporal, Sergeant, Captain and Deputy Chief to, now, Chief. He will assume his official duties on December 21<sup>st</sup>. He is well known in the community and has earned the full support and respect of both the department and city leadership team.

**Public Works Staffing:** Public Works has now filled all but one (water/sewer) position and an engineering position created by the promotions of Kurt Motyka and Zach Blodgett. This is a substantial improvement.

### **Municipal Job Openings**

Visit the City website for more information: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/Jobs.aspx>

**FT Police Department- Officers:** The Montpelier Police Department has three police officer vacancies, if you have ever considered a career in law enforcement, now may be your time. To apply: <https://www.policeapp.com/Entry-Level-City-of-Montpelier-VT-Police-OfficerJobs/2921/>

**FT Water/Sewer Truck Driver Level 1:** The person filling this position will work with a water and sewer crew performing skilled work in the construction, maintenance and repair of water distribution, raw water distribution, wastewater collection and wastewater transmission systems.

**MSAC Seeks AmeriCorps member for September 2022:** Calling all gap year students, recent college grads, and young professionals! MSAC is looking for a new Aging in Place Coordinator to serve MSAC's mission of being a gathering place of healthy aging, lifelong learning and delicious meals for older adults. This is a dynamic role where the member will be

working to create a vibrant intergenerational community that offers a little help to the older adults who need and deserve it. Prospective candidates can apply through the AmeriCorps portal: <https://vhcb.org/our-programs/vhcb-ameri-corps/positions>

**Parks Seeks a Community Conservation Steward**

The Montpelier Parks Department seeks an environmental leader who will serve alongside their team in continuing their efforts to plan conservation projects and perform physical service activities for the City’s natural areas. **Our VHCB AmeriCorps position begins on a rolling basis and ends August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023.** Prospective candidates can apply through the AmeriCorps portal: <https://vhcb.org/our-programs/vhcb-ameri-corps/positions>

**Reminders**

**ORCA MEDIA**

ORCA Media supports the City of Montpelier by live streaming videos to local TV and on YouTube. Recently, Comcast changed the government channel to 1085.

- Click here to see City Council Meetings: <https://www.orcamedia.net/series/montpelier-city-council>
- Click here for Live Stream: <https://www.orcamedia.net/series/live-stream-events>

Thank you,



William Fraser, City Manager

*Council Meeting Agenda Schedule and Strategic Planning Items on following pages*

## Upcoming Agenda Items (*TENTATIVE*)

<b>12/21</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Charter Change discussion</li> <li>• Meet with Legislative Delegation</li> <li>• District 2 Council Appt.</li> <li>• CVSWMD appointment</li> <li>• Net Zero Building Policy</li> <li>• Outdoor structure?</li> </ul>	<b>1/11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First PH Budget</li> <li>• First PH Warning</li> <li>• Adopt Charter Language</li> <li>• First PH Bonds if needed</li> <li>• Homelessness Plan?</li> <li>• Call special election for Mayor</li> </ul>
<b>1/18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country Club Road</li> </ul>	<b>1/26 Thursday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> PH and adopt Budget</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> PH and adopt Warning</li> <li>• PH on Charter Changes</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> PH Bonds</li> <li>• Review petitions</li> </ul>
<b>2/8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Manager's Review</li> <li>• Fireworks?</li> <li>• Confluence Park</li> <li>• Potential Ordinance re: building violations and zoning permits?</li> </ul>	<b>2/22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country Club Road Site</li> <li>• PH on Charter Changes</li> <li>• ADA update</li> </ul>
<b>3/7</b>	City Meeting Election	<b>3/8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational Meeting</li> </ul>
<b>3/22</b>	•	<b>4/12</b>	•

? = Date is tentative, may shift to a different date

### Pending Items:

- Potential nuisance violation hearing
- City Plan – summer 2023
- Outside Agencies/Community Fund Policy – spring 2023
- Casella re: leachate – spring 2023

# CURRENT PENDING STRATEGIC PLAN ITEMS

Topics from the FY22-23 City Council Strategic Plan for Future Council Agendas:

Month	Tentative Topic(s)
December	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>**BUDGET**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Master Plan (Summer 2023)</li> <li>• Homelessness Plan (January)</li> <li>• Barriers to Housing (in City Plan)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: items in the recently approved plan update have not yet been scheduled</i></p>



## Community Services Department Report | Week of December 12 – 16th

### Senior Activity Center Office Hours This Week:

- Monday – Wednesday | 8:30am – 3pm

### Recreation Department Office Hours:

- Monday – Wednesday | 8:30am – 4pm

Parks & Trees inquiries can be fielded at either office.

Offices will be closed on December 26<sup>th</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup> for the holidays.

### Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC) News

Become a Sustaining Contributor to MSAC! Help us reach our goal of 25 NEW monthly contributors by the end of the year! Donate now: [bit.ly/MSACDonate](http://bit.ly/MSACDonate)

- It's Appeal Season! MSAC is seeking donations for a new Sustaining Contributor category of giving. We're looking for folks who can give monthly to help support our Meals on Wheels program and supplement meals for the neediest older adults in our community. Donations will also support MSAC's programming, which provides connection and well-being.
- \$10 a month helps ensure our greatest needs are supported (and annually costs less than all the coffee and tea you buy per month!). But think of this: if 4 people gave \$33 a month, those four people would help cover the food cost for one of our Meals on Wheels recipients.
- To learn more about how you can give, visit <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/746/Donate>.



**Winter Class Registration:** Winter class registration is now open to the public. Download the registration and class description forms on our classes' page: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/751/Classes>. Or you can sign up for our newsletter: contact [mwilson@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:mwilson@montpelier-vt.org) to subscribe. Registration ends on Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Congregate Meals Return to MSAC:** Dine in with MSAC this Thursday afternoons. The Woods Lodge in Northfield has with packed lunches each Thursday at noon for the month December. There are a limited number of meals per week, call ahead to reserve a spot: **802-262-6288**. Supported by Community Action's Everyone Eats Program. See below for our December Menu:



Winter on supplied us of so please Capstone

The MSAC Ukulele Players joined us at this past week's meal for holiday carols. We all enjoyed the Sausage Pasta Bake made by the Woods Lodge!

<u><a href="#">December Congregate MENU</a></u>	<u><a href="#">Woods Lodge Catering:</a></u>
<u><a href="#">December 22<sup>nd</sup></a></u>	<u><a href="#">Meatloaf Dinner</a></u>
<u><a href="#">December 29<sup>th</sup></a></u>	<u><a href="#">*Offices Closed*</a></u>

Note: There are vegetarian options available every week, however they will be determined week-to-week based on supply. Contact FEAST Manager Eli Mutino for details: 802-262-6288.

## **Montpelier Recreation News**

- **Registration:** NO REGISTRATIONS OVER THE PHONE! Please deliver registration forms either:
  - in person at the Recreation Center
  - by mailing forms and payment to 58 Barre Street, or
  - using [our online registration platform](#)

Extra registration forms and a locked drop box are located in the side vestibule of 58 Barre Street (the Senior Activity Center) for after-hours use.

- **2022-23 Pickleball Open Gym**

- The Montpelier Recreation Center offers two indoor courts. We encourage 6 players per court with a 12-player max. Open gym is for adults (18+). Please bring your own paddles. The Recreation Department will supply balls to play on open gym days. All levels are welcomed. See below for days and times.
- Find us on [playerlineup.com](http://playerlineup.com). Search: "Montpelier Rec Center PB"
- Hours are for the Winter Session (November 2022 – March 2023)
- Open Gym Schedule (based on skill level)
  - **Beginner:** Mondays - 1:30 – 3:00 pm | Wednesdays - 9 – 10:30 am
  - **Intermediate:** Mondays & Thursdays - 9 – 10:30 am
  - **Advanced:** Wednesdays - 1:30 – 3:00 pm | Fridays - 9 – 10:30 am
- Open Gym Fees:
  - **Walk-Ins:** Montpelier Residents: \$4; Non-Montpelier Residents: \$6
  - **Punch Cards (22 visits):** Montpelier Residents: \$30; Non-Montpelier Residents: \$45

- **2023 Winter/Spring Noontime Basketball**

- **Are you ready to shoot some hoops?** Register now for 2023 Winter/Spring Noontime Basketball in the Recreation Department gym at 55 Barre Street. Basketball is held on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 11:45am – 1:15pm starting January 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- The walk-in fee is \$4 for residents and \$6 for non-residents. Register at the Recreation office. Season fee is \$90 for residents and \$135 for non-residents.

- **2022 Open Gym at the Recreation Center**

- Join us at the Rec Gym this winter for open gym hours! Hours are posted on our website at <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/915/Rec-Center>. The Recreation Department gym is located at 55 Barre Street
- **Open Gym:**
  - K-8 Resident \$1.50 / Non Resident \$3

- 9-12 Resident \$2 / Non Resident \$4
- Adult Resident \$3 / Non Resident \$6
- Family Resident \$6 / Non Resident \$12



2022

- **Capital Kids Afterschool Program (Winter Semester)**

- The Capital Kids Afterschool Program is open for the Winter semester starting on Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, and running through March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Learn more: [www.montpelier-vt.org/1186/After-School-Childcare](http://www.montpelier-vt.org/1186/After-School-Childcare)

- **Youth Basketball (Winter 2022-23)**

- Youth Basketball registration for the Winter 2022-23 season is now open for grades K-2 and 3-6. Sign up online at [bit.ly/MontpelierCSRegistration](http://bit.ly/MontpelierCSRegistration). Or download the registration form on our website: [www.montpelier-vt.org/939/Registration-Forms](http://www.montpelier-vt.org/939/Registration-Forms). Drop it off to the side entrance lock box at the Senior Activity Center (58 Barre Street, Montpelier).

## Montpelier Parks

- **Draft Management Plan Update from the Montpelier Parks Commission:** The Montpelier Parks Commission is requesting the public’s feedback on their draft management plans of Hubbard Park and North Branch River Park. **The plans are available now** and can be found on our website: [bit.ly/MPParksPlan22](http://bit.ly/MPParksPlan22)
  - Submit your feedback to our Parks Commission any time before or after the meeting: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/464/Parks-Commission>

## Community Services Department News

- **Winter Program Guide is now available for download.**
  - Go to the Montpelier CS website for more information and to download our latest program guide: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/944/Community-Services-Department>