

## Significant Activity Report July 13, 2021

### Fire Significant Activity

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, around 00:34 Fire and Police were dispatched to the area of the encampment behind 118 Prospect St for a man in the water (Connecticut River). The nature of the call activated swiftwater rescue teams in Hartford, Lebanon and Hanover. Two HPD officers arrived on scene and were able to locate the man in the water and secure him on shore. PD and Fire were able to walk the man out to a waiting ambulance for transport. All mutual aid swiftwater teams were released. Thank you to both HPD officers for their quick response.

Severe thunderstorms struck the Town of Hartford around 3:00pm on June 30, 2021. These storms brought particularly significant damage to the neighborhood of Quechee Hartland RD and Marsh Family RD. The storm has resulted in numerous trees and powerlines down. Crews from Green Mountain Power, Hartford Department of Public Works, and the Hartford Fire Department worked to restore access and power to the area. Ground Zero was the corner of Marsh Family Road and Davenport Lane. Dozens, perhaps more than 100 White Pines ranging from 2-4+ feet in diameter were either snapped at ~20' above ground or uprooted. It looked like all the 2-3' diameters were largely snapped and the 4+ diameters were uprooted. Very little hardwood damage. There was some structural damage to portions of homes due to fallen trees but no injuries and damage minor. A firsthand witness account said there was an initial gust prior to any rainfall then it just poured with some hail (no size given) and during the heavy rain a noticeable roar of wind and she just saw white pines snapping and falling and took shelter in the basement. All evidence shows a wet microburst with estimated 70-80 mph winds. Severe T-storm warning issued at 224 pm. Damage ~ 3 pm.

Staff assisted the Recreation Dept and Police with the 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities at Kilowatt Park

Station 2 Study update. The dates covered for this period are 2/1/2021 – 6/24/21 (144 days). Station 2 has been open 74.4% of this period. This considering we have had 1-2 vacancies unrelated to vacation or comp department wide during this time period. There have been 188 responses in Station 2's first due area in the 2021 date range shown. This excludes intercepts and mutual aid runs in Hartland, Woodstock, and Pomfret. For the same time period last year there was 104 runs, of note this includes the lull that came with the initial COVID lockdowns but still a substantial increase this year.

This is a summary of our response travel times. These are shown in 90th percentile. If anyone is not familiar with a 90th percentile what it does is orders the responses from fastest to slowest and returns the 9th slowest response out of 10. Or in the case of 188 runs it shows the 170th slowest call out of 188 which for 2021 was 11:07.

In 2020 for the same time period the 90th percentile travel time was 16:40.

When we look only at calls run out of station 2 the 90th Percentile decreases further to 09:16. Of the 188 calls during this time period 126 were responded to from Station 2.

As a department we did 1,273 calls in the first 6 months of 2021 putting us on track to potentially exceed 2,500 runs this year.

## Department of Public Works

On the afternoon of Wednesday, June 30th, a very localized but significant wind event affected several neighborhoods in Quechee. Although there was very minor damage to Town owned infrastructure, many of our roads in that area were blocked by hundreds of fallen trees. Members of the DPW team worked closely with our Public Safety teams and private partners (such as Green Mountain Power) to ensure that our residents had safe access to their homes.

Subsequently, on the evening Monday, July 5th, we experienced a large water main break on Hartford Avenue (US Route 5). Thanks to the swift action of our Water Department and Highway Department, we were able to respond quickly, restore water to our community, provide a safe detour for the traveling public, and minimize damage to the State's infrastructure. We are grateful for the dedication and hard work that the members of our significantly understaffed team provide to our Town.

## Finance Department

1. 2021 Fiscal Year End Close Out
  - a. Provided close out checklist to staff and board chair
2. Providing list of items to Town Manager required to close out fiscal year 2021 and open fiscal year 2022
  - a. Encumbrance requests & reviews
  - b. American Recovery training for board
  - c. Vermont Bond Bank Presentation on Debt Benchmark to board
  - d. Budget Cycle FYE 2022
  - e. Leasing vs Buying – historical information provided following 6/29/21 board meeting
  - f. Provided charging station revenue & expenditures as requested at 6/29/21 board meeting
3. Opening new fiscal year 2022
4. Assisting Department Heads in project funding guidelines and steps
5. Preparing for a State of VT Desk Review of the FEMA COVID Grant we received
  - a. Town Manager and Board Chair will be participating as well
6. Completed Tax Rate Setting & Special Check Run
  - a. Balancing & Preparing Tax Bill Distribution
    - i. **A VERY SPECIAL KUDOS to Dawna Nadeau, Cristina Tardie and Joe Turner**
    - ii. Tax Bills will be mailed on or before July 19, 2021
      1. We will do a media push once they have been mailed to notify residents
7. Cancellation of Invoice Cloud Fees being absorbed by the Town
  - i. Per board motion on 6/29/21 we have requested Invoice Cloud to remove the Town as the payer of all online fees
  - ii. Upon this request being executed by Invoice Cloud we will do a media push to notify residents

## Town Clerk

There has been robust activity in the Town Clerk's Office of late. The Assistant Clerk remains out of the office; staff, residents and visitors to the office are sending her best wishes and a speedy return. I would like to thank the staff and others for their continued support and patience.

### **1. Special Election, Tuesday, August 10, 2021 at the Hartford High School Gymnasium from 7am-7pm:**

Candidate Consent Forms for the two vacant Select Board positions were due by 5pm on July 6, 2021 (candidates had until 5pm on Wednesday, July 7, 2021 to withdraw their names). The following candidates will be on the ballot:

#### **Remainder of a Three-Year Term expiring on March 7, 2023**

Michael Hoyt

Mike Morris

#### **Remainder of a Two-Year Term expiring on March 7, 2023**

Lannie Collins

Mary M. Erdei

Brett Mayfield

Ballots have been ordered. I anticipate receiving the Absentee Ballots no later than July 21, 2021. The remaining ballot supply for election day will arrive later.

**Absentee/Early Ballot Requests:** Voters may request an absentee ballot be mailed to them by:  
1. Calling the Clerk's Office 802-295-2785; 2. Going onto the Vermont My Voter Page to request a ballot for the Special Election; or, in person at the Clerk's Office. Voters may also vote early at the Town Clerk's Office once the ballots are available.

The Election Warning and Voter Checklists have been posted in accordance with State Statute and the Town Charter.

Recording volume remains high and consumes a significant amount of time within the Clerk's Office.

We continue to provide a Notary Services; Marriage Licenses; Certified Copies; Dog Licenses; Green Mountain Passports to a steady stream of visitors to the Clerk's Office since Town Hall re-opened.

We are also seeing an increase in resident call volume and in-person requests for deeds and other information since we re-opened. Our residents are happy to be able to come back into the building.

We are no longer scheduling appointments for attorneys/title searchers, etc. nor are we providing copies to researchers electronically as we did throughout the pandemic. We ask professionals to come to the office to conduct their research going forward.

## **Planning and Development**

The Town was awarded a Vermont Community Development Program planning grant for the Cornerstone Community Center project. Staff will proceed with completing the grant award conditions. Funds are from a federal HUD funding allocation that hopefully will be available in September.

July 19<sup>th</sup> Amtrak Vermonter Train Restart – On July 19<sup>th</sup>, the state and all stations along the route will be celebrating the return of the Vermonter train. People can take a ride on the train from any stop between St Albans and Brattleboro for just \$1. Town staff and the Chamber have been organizing a wonderful celebration including:

- 10:45 guitarist and singer Rob Oxford, people begin to gather
- 11:00 remarks from SB Vice Chair Joe Major and other local train enthusiasts
- 11:37 train arrives and departs within 5 minutes
- 11:45 -12:00 music, complimentary coupons to downtown WRJ food establishments.

Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions Grant -The Town received a grant from the Association to assist the Conservation Commission with the Hartford Salamander data collection.

Historic Preservation Demolition Standards - Staff continued to work with the consultant, Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Commission on drafting standards for inclusion in the Hartford Zoning Regulations.

FY 2021 Closeout - Reviewed and provided information to finance to assist with closing out Fiscal Year 2021.

## **Assessor**

- Created tax year 2021 as billed Grand List and filed it with the Town Clerk
- Rolled tax software systems into tax year 2022
- Assisted in setting the FY 2022 municipal tax rate
- Presented 2021 property values at the Selectboard meeting
- Updated 2021 tax map changes
- Continued weekly processing of homestead declarations and permits
- Worked with finance on state payments for property tax

## **Police Department**

The department's police social worker, Whitney Hussong has returned to the office after having to work remotely during the pandemic. It is great to have Whitney back in the office!

The department assisted with the annual fireworks event which was well attended and was a spectacular show.

Corporal Randy St. Peter witnessed and subsequently arrested a 32-year-old male from Windsor, VT cutting off catalytic converters from vehicles at Upper Valley Honda. He was lodged in lieu of \$2500 cash bail. Catalytic converter thefts have been an ongoing issue throughout New England.

Officers investigated a fatal heroin overdose of a 39-year-old male WRJ resident.

During this reporting period, the department handled 360 incidents with 13 arrests. The breakdown is as follows:

Animal Problem – 8  
Arrest on Warrants – 3  
Assault – 3  
Burglary – 1  
Citizen Dispute – 7  
Death Investigation – 1  
DLS – 1  
Domestic related – 2  
Drug Possession – 2  
Juvenile Problem – 3  
MV Disturbance – 13  
Noise Disturbance – 3  
Stalking – 1  
Suspicious Person or Circumstance – 33  
Traffic Accident – 12  
Trespassing – 3  
Vandalism – 2  
  
All other – 262

### **Parks and Recreation Program and Park Highlights**

- Camp Ventures is concluding Week 4. The campers have enjoyed trips to Silver Lake, an indoor movie, creative rainy-day activities, theater week with character day and a talent show. Overall feedback from parents has been great. After each session we send out a survey to parents to obtain feedback on each camper's experience.
- Independence Day Celebration on July 4<sup>th</sup> went very well. We had a record crowd at the event. This year we planned to open the gates at 7pm. We opened the gates a little after 6:30pm due to traffic buildup. It was reported that this year's foot traffic into the event was heavy and more than in the past. It appeared spectators parked elsewhere and walked into the event. Department appreciated the great collaboration between the Hartford Police Department and Hartford Fire Department. They both were instrumental in making the event safe and well organized. Additionally, we are grateful

to our lead sponsor, McGee Family Used Cars that contributed \$5,000 to the show. Additional sponsors included Jasmin Autobody, VT VA Federal Credit Union, Tip Top Pottery and C&S Pizza.

- Lego Engineering Camp was held the week of 6/28-7/2 with 8 campers. Our June Card Class had 9 participants, Youth Tennis started with 15 participants, Solid Speed & Agility Training started July 7<sup>th</sup> with 43 participants.
- Concerts in the park included Gerry Grimo and the East Bay Jazz Band on June 30<sup>th</sup> (85) in attendance and Chad Hollister performed on July 7<sup>th</sup> with (100) in attendance.
- Park rentals continue to come in with requests across the summer season. The past couple weeks included: Hartford Youth Council – originally scheduled for July 3<sup>rd</sup>, postponed to July 4<sup>th</sup>. Open Door Classes, Upper Valley Nighthawks, MACH-1 Lacrosse, Cantores Softball, HCRS, Anne Bower Tai Chi Classes and the second week of the Cal Ripken Baseball Tournament. We are working with the WRJ VA Employee Association to put on 3 movies that will air at Lyman Point Park and Ashley H. is reserving Frost Park on July 11<sup>th</sup> for a birthday party.
- The Department is busy marketing upcoming events. Jason Tardy and the Panhandlers performances, Hurricane Hill Trail Run, Football Camp and our popular Golden Ticket Scavenger Hunts.
- The safety netting project at Maxfield is near completion. The netting includes 120ft run down the leftfield and rightfield lines of the baseball field. We anticipate the netting itself to be installed and completed July 9<sup>th</sup>. To complete the project, the access gate for the clamshell batting cage will be moved toward the leftfield bullpen.
- Parks staff continue to be busy with general mowing and care of the parks system. Internal projects have been delayed due to staffing challenges.
- Pool project continues to progress. The pool rebar crews have been busy and will continue a couple weeks prior to our first concrete pour.