

Town Of Hartford
Town Staff
Significant Activity Report, March 15 – 28, 2017

TOWN MANAGER HIGHLIGHTS

- Respectfully submitted for your consideration.

- I had a meeting with Cathy Hazlett from Health Connections of the Upper Valley to discuss flavored tobacco and some possible courses of action for the Town. I will come to the Selectboard in early May with some proposals about a way ahead for the Town. These will include restrictions on advertising, limitations on sales of adult paraphernalia, and restricting sales in certain areas. I will also propose limitations on marijuana distribution centers. As part of the meeting, I was informed that the organization is no longer going to exist after the summer.

- The Charter changes approved by the voters in November have been approved by the House. We are working to understand the way forward with respect to the Local Option Tax. The changes voters approved this March are at the legislature and will be acted upon this session. Rep. Christie informed that law requires action on Charters before other activity.

- I had a call this week with the folks who manage Welcome and Info Centers for the state. The purpose was to understand the history of the center here in Hartford. The Town receives a \$33K grant annually from the state to contribute to the cost of running the center. The state will also purchase office and cleaning supplies. We will need to tighten down a bit how we purchase items for the center. I have a meeting scheduled this week with our folks to discuss this and the way ahead. We will also schedule a meeting between us and the two state agencies who have an interest in the center. More to follow.

- We have scheduled a visit to the Wilder Well this Thursday at 5PM. As of now the Chair and Vice-Chair have signed up for the visit, there is room for another board member. We have also reached out to the board for visits to the Transfer Station on April 8th or 15th in the morning. I think several of you have expressed an interest and these time do coincide with the Composting Workshop.

- The Finance Director and I continue to work on understanding our Electric Bills and our Solar Energy agreements. I sat down with a rep from Green Mountain Power with the bills and it is still not clear. It appears that the bills reflect what they know, but don't reflect the full credit for our use of solar. Much more work to do on this.

- Reminder the Floor Meeting is this Saturday, April 1st at 10 AM. I look forward to seeing everybody at the gymnasium that morning.
- I wanted to follow up on an update I sent you on the Hartford Diner a few weeks ago. The judge has rendered his decision. The owner is directed to remove all remnants of the Diner Building and the retaining wall by November 15, 2017. The owner's engineer is to revise the plans in accordance with most of the Town's comments filed post-hearing by April 7th. The Town was awarded \$20,000 in attorneys' fees and costs for the owner's contempt. The owner is to pay the Town \$14,000 now, and will receive a credit of \$6,000 as an incentive to complete the removal work by November 15th. We still have the issue of the revoked tax sale that we are working, but this is a step in the right direction. I have no idea what action the owner might take in response to this finding.
- The Pocket Park project is out for bid. After some value engineering, the project came back well within the cap approved by the Selectboard. We will have the proposals back by the 4th of April and should award the project shortly after that. This should allow construction to start in early May and complete not later than the end of July. We do not plan to lose any of the grant money. We had some great feedback on the plans from Tim Schaal. I expect some press reports in the next couple of days via TV5 and the Vermont Standard as we spoke to both of those organizations today. I do have a copy of the plans in my office should anybody like to see them. We continue to work with Simon Pearce for the ability to keep the stairs down to one set on that side of the park. If we cannot come to an agreement, we will move the stairs completely inside the Town Property line.
- The Municipal Manager's meeting, hosted by Vital Communities, is scheduled for April 4th at the Lebanon City Hall. The Fire Chiefs from Hartford, Hanover and Lebanon will be present to discuss their ongoing and future collaboration. This event is a closed meeting attended by the Board Chairs and Managers from Hartford, Hanover, Norwich and Lebanon.
- We are working hard to finish up a few things that were undone at the end of the building construction and to clean up those dents and dings that have occurred in the Town Hall since it opened. As the building came to completion, there were some things that were dropped to include: walls for the Assessor workspace, pieces of furniture, ADA access, and signage. There is money remaining in the building renovation funds for these items. We'll keep working to ensure the building remains a place the citizens can be proud of.
- This Thursday, the Town and Breadloaf are receiving an award as a recipient of the 2016 Vermont's Greenest Building Awards for the Municipal Building.

- Listed below are those highlights pulled from each Department Head's report. Further under are the full highlights from each Department.

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

- We are in the final phases of the revaluation. Property values should be available soon. We are reserving rooms for discussions on the values with property owners and possible grievances.
- Purchasing Policy has been staffed internally for comment. Finance Director and I are reviewing the comments. The Policy should be in front of the Selectboard for review/comment within the next couple of months.
- Fire Department members attended the Live Burn Training in the Norwich acquired building this weekend. Crews had the opportunity to practice fire attack, ventilation and search & rescue operations under a controlled live fire condition.
- IT assisted with temporary office relocations at Police Department and Transfer Station by moving computers and telephones.
- MG Electric will be visiting the West Hartford Library to provide an estimate for installing a smoke and carbon monoxide detector in the facility.
- Regional Plan Update – Regional Planning Commission public hearings on April 12th in Bethel and April 13th in Thetford for proposed changes to the Energy, Healthy Communities (new), and History and Development, Working Landscapes (new), Definitions and Implementation sections. The Hartford Planning Commission public meeting to review sections held on March 27th.
- Hartford Village Designation – Presented Village Designation application to the State Downtown Board which approved it on March 27th.
- I draw your attention to the Police Update in this report. We are extremely proud of the work of our officers and their ability to react to a variety of situations, handle each professionally and treat everyone with dignity and respect, even the ones on the other side of the law.
- The waste water department has prepared a bid for two new blower replacements at the WRJ wastewater treatment plant. These blowers will replace two blowers that were state of the art technology when the plant was upgraded in 2010. They have been extremely problematic since their installation. The new blowers will be similar

to the positive displacement blower that is the spare blower at the plant that has had no issues since it was installed. The two blowers are estimated to cost \$35,000 each and the total project with installation will likely cost \$90,000 - \$100,000. Funding for this work is proposed to come from the wastewater capital reserve.

- DPW staff contacted the surveyor of Wallace Road to obtain the final survey plans for use in preparing the formal layout and acceptance of Wallace Road. We anticipate bringing this before the Selectboard once the snow melts and the remaining property pins are set.

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Assessor:

- Kevin Stuart has completed New Lister Training.
- Field Review of all parcels has begun. Vision will be conducting this review of all parcels as a quality control measure. This will entail Vision field staff driving all roads and reviewing basic information of all parcels. Estimated to take about two weeks.
- Information on commercial properties has been gathered and work to estimate values is well underway. Vision's commercial appraiser will be in town this week reviewing properties.
- Office continues to work on map changes, sales, homestead recordings and updates.

Finance:

- Completed February Financial Close Outs; reviews with Department Heads have been scheduled.
- Completing Bank Reconciliations for February, no issues.
- Working with the Treasurer, Financial Software Support Team and the staff to ensure a smooth transition of services to Mascoma Savings Bank. Plan to be transitioned by Mid-April.

Fire:

- Engine 3 is scheduled for repairs next week. A new turbo has been ordered and tester for the charge air cooler.
- Fire Department prepared for the upcoming storm. The Town EOC was setup but not staffed pending any need to open. Crews handled the snow conditions and the EOC was not needed during the event.
- The Gear/Hose Claim is being processed by the manufacturers. The gear is expected in April.
- Attended a meeting with the Health Officer regarding the Shady Lawn Motel and the requirements from the States Attorney. Fire Marshal will be conducting a fire safety evaluation of the property.
- Round two of department physicals continue this week. Each employee will meet with the Town Physician to discuss the results of the previous testing. A formal "fit for duty" letter will be sent after the evaluations.
- Attended the HCC Board Meeting.
- VLCT arranged a waste disposal company to dispose of the contaminated gear/hose. All contaminated equipment has been taken for disposal.
- Met with Rec. Department to discuss the installation of local smoke/carbon monoxide detectors at West Hartford Library. This was at a request of the Library board.
- Members attended training at NH Fire Academy on Friday. Crews participated in live fire exercises at the NH Fire Training building with Hanover and Lebanon Fire Departments.
- Attended the Regional Mutual Aid Meeting-Springfield, VT.
- Received an invitation from Chittenden County LEPC speak on Harrison Ave Fire.
- Chief Cooney attended the New England Division of Fire Chief's Conference on Thursday and Friday in Quincy, Massachusetts. The conference was held at NFPA Headquarters. On Thursday, Boston Fire Commissioner Joseph Finn discussed the "epidemic" of cancer within the Boston Fire Department. He discussed the current science and products of combustion found modern building contents. Discussion continued on processes to protect firefighters from these types of exposures and

limit the incidence of cancer. He believes cancer will over shadow cardiac disease as the leading cause of firefighter deaths in the next 10 years. The afternoon Commissioner Finn recounted the events that occurred during the Back Bay fire where two Boston firefighters were killed and their lessons learned. On Friday, the Deputy Chief of Operations and the Assistant Chief of EMS for the Orlando Florida Fire Department recounted the events of the Pulse Nightclub shooting. The discussion focused on their response to a large active shooter event and discussed lessons learned with the audience.

Information Technology:

- Attended installation of replacement HVAC controller at White River Water Treatment Plant. Discussed with installer how the controller works, what may have caused the failure, and measures that can be taken to prevent future failures.

Parks and Recreation:

- The Department is grateful for the collaboration with the Harford School District this past winter season. Our programs rely heavily on the use of the school buildings for all our recreational programs and special events. We appreciate the efforts of the schools staff and administration for opening the doors for our usage without hesitation during this past winter program season.
- The Parks & Recreation Community Survey continues to be circulated throughout the community. We plan to close out the survey the end of March. At that point, we will begin analyzing and cross tabulating the results. A summary of the result will be developed for presentation.
- The First Annual Egg Scramble scheduled for April 15th received a \$150 sponsorship from Mascoma Savings Bank and \$50 sponsorship from Bob's Service Center. The Egg Scramble is our version of an egg hunt for pre-school through grade 5 and will be held on the Dothan Brook School field.
- The Hartford Tree Board hosted a Tree Walk at Dothan Brook School on March 18th.
- Youth Lacrosse began March 20th with 108 participants enrolled.
- Spring Hunter Education Course had 13 students pre-enrolled and ends Thursday.

- The Department rented a van to take 13 teenagers to the Sky Zone Trampoline Park in Manchester, NH on March 23rd. The program is part of our Teen Adventure Getaways.
- The Department registered 45 adults who attended the Boston Flower Show March 23rd. The show is held at the Seaport World Trade Center in Boston and we took a Premier Motor Coach to the show. This year's theme is Superheroes of the Garden.
- Ongoing registrations for:
 - o Green Mountain Rock Climbing Clinics
 - o Liz Barker's, "Let Your Yoga Dance" program on March 29th.
 - o Nelly Ferland's, Zumba.
 - o Brett Mayfield's, Nihon Aikijujutsu.
 - o All baseball/softball levels. T-ball, rookies, minors and majors.
 - o Slots are still available for April Camp Ventures, April 17-21.
 - o Camp Ventures Summer Program already has session 2 full. All other sessions are filling up fast.
- Department has started the summer job application process. Open positions include: Camp Counselors, Lifeguards and Park Maintenance.
- Our seat count since January 1, 2017 is at 958 participants who have registered for programs. This accounts for individual registrations for the past 3 months of programs.
- Public skating sessions had an attendance of 2,788 visits for the 16/17 season averaging 66 skaters each public skate session. 303 skates were also rented during public skating generating \$1,515 dollars for the season. This is the first year for rental skates at the arena.
- Jay McDonough recently completed the academy training and is now a Certified Youth Sports Administrator. An elite group of professionals and committed to raising the professionalism in youth sports. National Alliance of Youth Sports. 9 exams and hours of training that started at the NNRPC and followed by on-line training.
- WABA ice operations finished March 19th with the Pot o' Gold Tournament. We hosted 26 games over a 3 day weekend. Teams from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, and New Hampshire were in town participating in the tournament. It is no doubt that this event brought a tremendous amount of tourism dollars to the Hartford and Upper Valley Region. The youth tournament was hosted by the Woodstock Hockey Association utilizing WABA, Champion Rink and Union Arena.

- We have shut down the chillers and completed the ice removal process at the arena. It will take several days to clean the floor and dry it out so we can begin using the facility for spring sports.
- Refrigeration system performed well this season. Nevertheless, we still need to address the system controls, compressor B, brine system valves, fittings and the refrigeration room replacement. These items will be included in the end of season report.
- Vermont Commercial Refrigeration will be on site within the next week to complete shutdown procedures and assess system needs for the 2017/2018 season.
- Members of the Parks & Recreation Department met with Jeff Moreno from the school's Athletic Department to review and finalize the schools spring usage of our sport fields for baseball/softball, lacrosse and the Parks & Recreation Department programs.
- Spring time is often considered the most demanding part of the park maintenance season. Projects, general cleanup and the start of turf care comes all at once putting huge demands on the department to get the parks into shape following the winter season. The recent snow and cold weather will certainly delay access to the fields and may impact opening season play for many of our sport programs.
- Turf care RFP due on March 24th. They will be reviewed and hope to have a vendor selected soon to schedule our spring application of broadleaf controls and fertilizer.
- Department attended the Vermont Recreation & Park Association Meeting on March 16th. Meeting was held in Montpelier. Guest speaker was Karen Horn from VLCT. Topic covered Advocating for Parks & Recreation at the State Government Level.
- Department continues to be involved in weekly HCC Block Party committee meetings. The Block Party is scheduled for June 7th 5pm to 8pm at Lyman Point Park.
- The Tree Board met on March 21st. Topics discussed included the upcoming Arbor Day Tree and Shrub Sale on May 6th, evaluation of the March 18th Tree Walk, Tree Identification Project, participation in the White River Thursday Market and discussed attendance at the Vermont Arbor Day Conference on Thursday, May 4th.

Planning and Development:

- Quechee Pocket Park – Construction Bid Process initiated on March 14th. Six general contractors and 2 subcontractors attended pre-bid meeting on March 23rd. Bids due April 4th.
- GMEDC VCDP Planning Grant – Continued to work with GMEDC on grant closeout.
- Planning Commission/ Zoning Board of Adjustments – Completed application review and prepared draft Findings of Fact for new Subaru dealership off Sykes Mt. Ave., and site plan changes to Bergeron Landscaping on RT 14, for March 29th Zoning Board of Adjustment and April 3rd Planning Commission meetings.
- Sykes Mt Ave and RT 5 Sidewalk/Bike Lane Projects –Working with property owners/engineers on alignment and easements.
- Currier Street Extension TIF project – Began planning with DPW, developer and developer contractor on utility improvements in street.
- Downtown Program/Historic Preservation State Conference – Working on preparations Annual Conference in WRJ on June 8th.
- Statewide Resilience Workshop at Echo Museum in Burlington – Participated in two-day workshop, sponsored by the High Meadows foundation, for committees working on resilience projects. Hartford is part of a project focused on the Ottauquechee River watershed and water quality, working with TRORC and the towns of Hartland, Woodstock, Bridgewater, Barnard, Pomfret, and Plymouth.

Police:

- March 13th – Patrol officers responded to reports of disorderly man threatening to harm himself and others at a business along Route 4 in Quechee. Responding personnel located the man in his vehicle a short distance away and transported him to DHMC for medical assistance.
- March 14th – Patrol officers assisted Lebanon Police & Vermont State Police with a family violence incident that originated on the interstate and ended in Hartford.

- March 14th – Patrol officers responded to a report of vandalism to a vehicle parked along the 100 BLK of Hollow Drive. Unknown suspects shattered windows and dented quarter panels on the unattended truck. The incident remains under investigation.
- March 15th – Patrol officers responded to a head-on collision involving non-life threatening injuries along Route 4 in Quechee. Traffic was diverted for more than an hour while Fire Rescue personnel removed a motorist trapped in one of the vehicles.
- March 16th – Patrol officers assisted by Fire Department personnel completed an emergency drill at Hartford Memorial Middle School.
- March 16th – The Police Social Worker attended the regular meeting of the Special Investigations Unit Executive Board.
- March 17th – Patrol officers assisted the Windsor Police with a burglary in progress at a residence on Route 44 in West Windsor. Suspect was located and apprehended on foot near the scene.
- March 17th – Patrol officers reunited a disoriented Alzheimer patient with his family after the man went missing from his home in West Hartford.
- March 19th – Patrol officers assisted an elderly pedestrian in distress after attempting to walk from Pomfret to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center to visit a hospitalized family member. Transported to family members home, where she was further assisted by Hartford Fire Department paramedics.
- March 20th – Patrol officers assisted by Fire Department personnel completed an emergency drill at Hartford High School.
- March 22nd – Several members of the Police Department attended the Hartford Community Coalition Substance Abuse Prevention Sub-Committee planning meeting.
- March 24th – Patrol officers and detectives completed an investigation into a non-suspicious, untimely death at a private residence on Barrister Drive.
- March 25th – Patrol officers assisted Probation and Parole with locating a Hartford woman wanted for a probation violation.

Public Works:

- Highway department responded to the March 14 nor'easter that deposited roughly 16"-20" in Hartford. Staff performed well despite having both 1 ton trucks out of commission for the storm. Five staff members from the water and wastewater departments assisted the highway department at times during the storm and with cleanup activities.
- The highway department extended a hiring offer to fill an empty highway position that was vacated earlier this winter.
- Two highway staff attended a Safety Awareness Training and another 2 attended Lock-out Tag-out training class.
- Staff prepared a memo to the Town Manager in response to a driveway permit request on Stage Coach Road close to I-89 onramp.
- Staff continued to coordinate completion of the Quechee pocket park design. The project was put out to bid on March 15 and a pre-bid was held on March 23. Six general contractors and two landscape subcontractors attended the pre-bid meeting. The bid opening is April 4th.
- Staff continues to push the downtown storm sewer project forward to include meeting with the Town attorney to prepare construction easements for the work.
- The Solid Waste department is promoting backyard composting workshops to be held on April 8 and April 15. A primary goal of Act 148 is the removal of food scraps from the waste stream. Led by a local master composter, these compost sessions will teach you how to turn your spoils into soil! The Town has obtained a grant to provide free kitchen collection containers to Hartford residents.
- Solid waste staff discovered mold in the basement of administration building. The solid waste office has been moved into the former education building next door until the mold can be remediated or other plans are made for housing the administrative staff.
- The controller for the heating system at the WRJ wastewater plant failed on March 17 and was confirmed to need replacement. A new controller was received, programmed and installed on March 21. The plant maintained enough residual heat to stay above freezing during this period. The Town IT Manager helped Town staff diagnose the problem and helped the technician install the new controller.

- Wastewater staff used their camera to televise the sewer service at 241 South Main Street that is under reconstruction. It was confirmed that the existing building sewer service is 4" pipe. Public works continues to recommend that the building owner replace this undersized building service to accommodate the new use and connection of over 30 apartment units.
- Water staff has prepared a supplemental request to replace approximately 1000' of additional water mains in the vicinity of new water main for the new Quechee Hartland Road tank. Staff is determining whether this will meet funding program eligibility requirements before bringing it to the Selectboard.