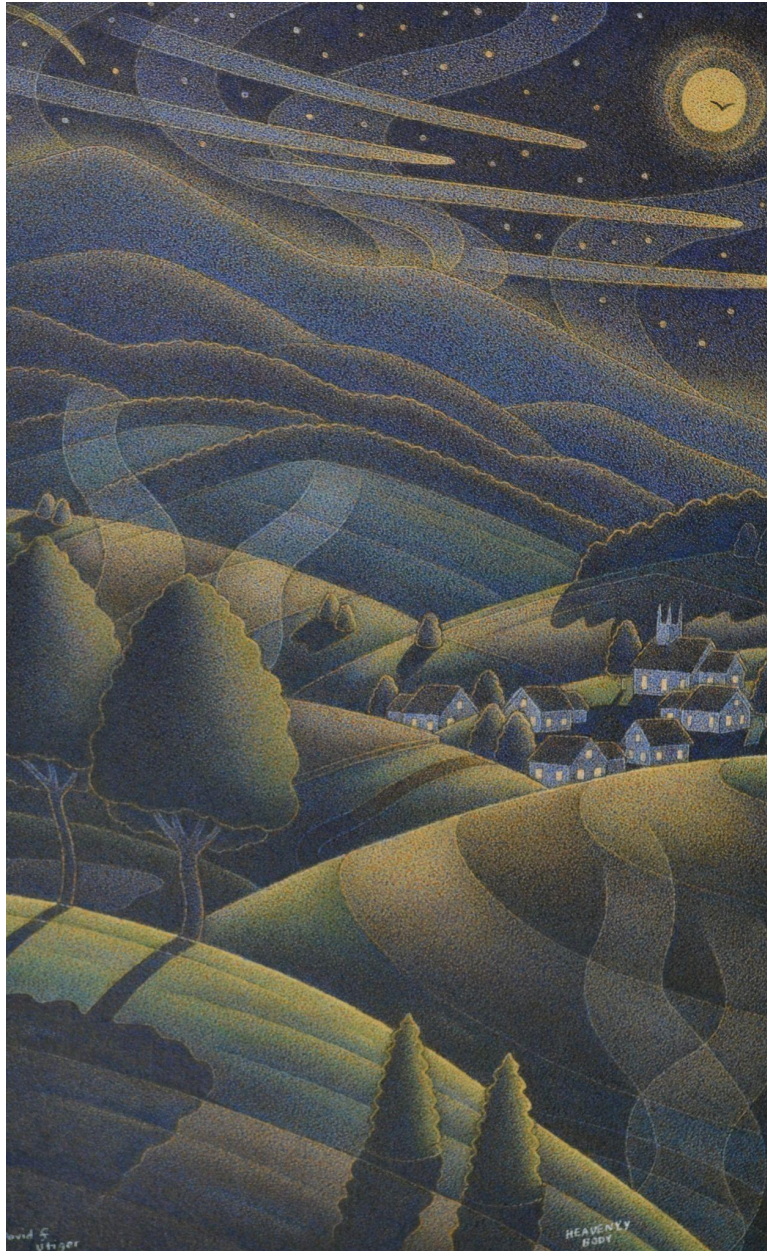


2023  
Annual Report

Town of Peru, Vermont  
Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023



Town Report also available online at [peruvt.org](http://peruvt.org)  
Please note Town Meeting occurs on Tuesday March 5, 2024

## Table of Contents

<b>Community Information.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Peru Town Meeting 2024 – WARNING.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Elected Town Officers.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Select Board Appointed Town Officers.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Other Town Positions.....	7
<b>Select Board Report.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Clerk’s Report.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Audit Report.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Board of Listers Report.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Zoning Administrative Officer’s Report.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Cemetery Commissioner’s Report.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Peru Cemetery Commission Balance Sheet.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>First Constable’s Report.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Fire Department Report.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Fire Warden Report.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Road Commissioner’s Report.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Animal Control.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Peru Fair Scholarship Report.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Peru Fair Report.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Londonderry Solid Waste Group.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Green Mountain National Forest.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Southern Vermont Communications Union District.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Taconic &amp; Green Regional School District.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Town of Peru, Budget.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Town of Peru General Fund - Statement of Revenue, Expenditures, Appropriations and Changes in Fund Balance.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Balance Sheets.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Special Funds, Statement of Revenues, Expenditures &amp; Changes in Fund Balance.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Statement of Taxes Raised &amp; Distributed.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Statement of Delinquent Taxes.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Funding Requests to the Town of Peru.....</b>	<b>31</b>
South Londonderry Free Library.....	31
My Community Nurse Project.....	32
Protect Against Violent Encounters.....	33
Mountain Valley Health Council.....	34
Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad.....	35
Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire.....	36
VT Center for Independent Living.....	37
Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging.....	37



Center for Restorative Justice.....	38
Neighborhood Connections.....	39
Neighborhood Connections - Mountain Town Connector.....	40
Green Up Vermont.....	41
The Collaborative.....	42
Burr & Burton Letter from Headmaster.....	43



Artwork courtesy of David Utiger.

## **Community Information**

### **Peru Town Office**

402 Main Street  
P.O. Box 127 Peru, VT 05152

Open: Tues & Thurs 8:30am – 4:00pm  
802.824.3065  
[clerk@peruvt.org](mailto:clerk@peruvt.org)

### **Emergency Numbers**

Fire:	911
Rescue:	911
State Police:	(802) 722-4600
Mountain Valley Medical Center:	(802) 824-6901
First Town Constable, Mike Gayda	(802) 238-4991
Animal Control Officer, Pat Salo	(802) 688-4020
Fire Warden, Chuck Black	(802) 824-6793

### **Schools**

Flood Brook Union School	(802) 824-6811
Burr & Burton Academy	(802) 362-1775
Burr & Burr Mountain Campus	(802) 824-4846
Green Mtn. Union High School	(802) 875-2146

### **Peru Post Office**

Window Service:	Monday-Friday	9:30am-12:30pm & 1:30pm-4:30pm
	Saturday	8:30am- 11:30am
Access to PO boxes 24 hours 7 days a week		

### **State Officials**

Governor's Action Line	(800) 649-6825
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### **Vermont State Legislature**

#### **Senators:**

Brian Campion	(802) 828-2228	e-mail: <a href="mailto:bcampion@leg.state.vt.us">bcampion@leg.state.vt.us</a>
Richard Sears	(802) 828-2228	e-mail: <a href="mailto:rsears@leg.state.vt.us">rsears@leg.state.vt.us</a>

#### **State Rep:**

Mike Rice	(802) 828-2228	e-mail: <a href="mailto:mrice@leg.state.vt.us">mrice@leg.state.vt.us</a>
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### **U.S. Officials**

#### **Senators:**

Bernie Sanders, Burlington office	(800) 339-9834
Peter Welch, Burlington office	(802) 863-2525

#### **Congress:**

Becca Balint, Burlington office	(802) 652-2450
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**Peru Town Meeting 2024 – WARNING**

The legal voters of the Town of Peru are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Peru Town Center on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at the hour of 10:00AM to act on the following articles:

Article 1: To elect a Town Moderator

Article 2: To hear and act on the reports of the Town Officers.

Article 3: To elect all Town Officers as the law directs.

Article 4:

- A) To see if the town will vote a tax to defray the expenses of the town for the fiscal year of July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, as set forth in the budgets submitted in the 2023 Town Report, subject to such modifications as this meeting may vote.
- B) To authorize the selectmen to set the rate on the 2024 Grand List to meet the budgets voted
- C) To establish the date of payment of such taxes. Previous years dates July 1- September 30.

Article 5: To see if the town will vote to accept the provisions made by law for payment of taxes to the Town Treasurer.

Article 6: Shall the voters vote a sum of money to the following organizations which serve the community?

• South Londonderry Free Library	\$1,200.00
• My Community Nurse Project (petition)	\$2,500.00
• Project Against Violent Encounters	\$ 150.00
• Mountain Valley Health Council	\$3,000.00
• Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad	\$5,250.00
• Visiting Nurse Assn. of VT/NH	\$2,700.00
• VT Center for Independent Living	\$ 140.00
• SW Vermont Council on Aging	\$ 200.00
• Center for Restorative Justice	\$ 300.00
• Neighborhood Connections	\$3,540.00
• Green Up Vermont	\$ 50.00
• The Collaborative	\$ 750.00
• Peru Cemetery Commission	<u>\$5,000.00</u>

TOTAL	\$24,780.00
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Article 7: Shall the voters approve a veteran’s exemption to include an amount up to \$30,000? The State of Vermont currently provides a maximum exemption of \$40,000 with the first \$10,000 provided by the state. The total exemption is deducted from the appraised value of the parcel.

Article 8: To transact any other business that may properly come before this meeting.

Dated at Peru, Vermont, January 22, 2024  
Jon Mowry, Charles Black, Alex Sheets  
Peru Select Board

## **Elected Town Officers**

**Moderator:** Gary Ameden 2024

**Town Clerk:** Melinda Beebe 2024

**Treasurer:** Cheryl Fox 2026

**Select Board:** Jon Mowry, Chair 2024  
Chuck Black 2025  
Alex Sheets 2026

**Lister:** Jay Reichman 2024  
Rebecca Williams 2025  
Jack Pennypacker, Chair 2026

**Auditors:** Josh Witkin 2024  
Ruth Ann Barrick 2025  
Heidi Healy 2026

**Cemetery Commission:**  
William Crandall, Chair 2024  
Jeremy LaPan 2025  
Ivanna Reed 2026  
Carl Holcomb 2027  
Beth Knox 2028

**First Constable:** Mike Gayda 2024

**Second Constable:** Josh Witkin 2024

**Delinquent Tax Collector:** Tracy Black 2024

**Grand Juror:** Ivanna Reed 2024

**Trustee of Public Funds:** Josh Witkin 2024

### **Justices of the Peace\*:**

Gary Ameden, Tracy Black, Ivanna Reed, Karen Utiger, and Olivia Rukat

\*Terms: February 1, 2023 thru January 31, 2026

## Select Board Appointed Town Officers

### Term Expires

#### Planning Commission:

LJ Petra	2024
Mike Gayda	2024
Lucas Hughes	2025
(vacant)	2025
Andy Dahlstrom	2026
Jim Jordan	2026

#### Zoning Board:

Peter Bradford, Chair	2024
David Utiger	2025
Charles Howard	2025
Chuck Black	2026

**Zoning Administrator:** William Goodwin

**Sexton:** Carl Holcomb

**Town Service Officer:** Melissa O'Brien

**Health Officer:** Mike Gayda

**Deputy Health Officer:** Josh Witkin

**Road Commissioner:** Chuck Black

**Emergency Manager:** Chuck Black and Mike Gayda

## Other Town Positions

**Assistant Town Clerk/Treasurer:** Rhonda Kilburn

**Road Foreman:** Wayne Blanchard

**Road Crew:** Brian Bills

## Select Board Report

The Peru Select Board has been busy as usual this year keeping up with the Town business and maintaining the buildings. The main capital improvement project for the year was the completion of the new roof on the Town Garage to correct a long-standing problem with leaking. From here, we will move on to solving ventilation problems and replacing damaged sheetrock before reinsulating the roof. Thanks in large part to the organization and leadership of Barbara Petra and Jane Worley, the new playground installation at the North Road Town Park was completed last spring.

We have seen a couple of important transitions in the Town Office this year. We would like to thank both Donna Williams who served many years as the Town Treasurer, and Barbara Petra who completed her third stint as Assistant Clerk and Assistant Treasurer. They have both been invaluable in keeping things running smoothly in the office and welcoming visitors. We will miss them. At the same time, we would like to welcome Cheryl Fox who was elected Town Treasurer last Town Meeting and has done an outstanding job managing the transition, and Rhonda Kilburn who has replaced Barbara as Assistant Clerk and Assistant Treasurer. Stop by the Town Office on Tuesday or Thursday and say hi!

The Select Board recently decided to hire a professional audit of the Town's finances as it has not been done for many years, and the transition to a new treasurer seems like an appropriate time. The audit will take place this year and will be paid for from the remaining ARPA funds that the Town has available.

The Board hired GSK Engineers from Bennington this year to create some alternative designs for the intersection of Hapgood Pond and Main Street to create more green space and parking in the Village, slow traffic, and improve flow. Some informational meetings have been held and consideration is ongoing. Plans are available to view in the Town Office. Some discussion has also been held on other traffic control strategies such as speed dips instead of the humps we currently install seasonally.

Please remember that each year, Town offices open up and volunteers are always needed to fill them. The Select Board currently meets at 6:30 PM on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, and we always love to have residents attend.

The Peru Select Board  
Jon Mowry  
Chuck Black  
Alex Sheets



## Clerk's Report

### Vital Statistics: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Marriages: 2  
Births: 3  
Deaths: 1  
Burials: 5

### Liquor Licenses: May 1, 2023 – April 30, 2024

Type	Cost	Quantity	Total
First Class Outside Consumption	20	3	\$60
First Class Restaurant/Bar	\$115	5	\$575
Outside Consumption*	\$20	1	\$20
Special Events - Manufacturer*	\$35	3	\$105
Tobacco	\$0	1	\$0
Second Class*	\$70	0	\$140
Third Class - Restaurant/Bar*	\$1,095	5	\$5,475
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$6,375</b>

\*THE TOWN OF PERU DOES NOT RECEIVE ANY PORTION OF THIS FEE

## **Audit Report**

The town auditors conducted our audit of fiscal year 7/1/2022 - 6/30/2023 by reconciling bank statements throughout the year and using the audit checklist provided by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. This checklist provides a thorough approach to examining the internal controls and the accounts of all town officers and all other persons authorized by law to draw orders on the town treasurer.

In our opinion, the financial statements presented in the Town Report present fairly the financial position of the Town of Peru as of June 30, 2023.

Josh Witkin, Ruth Ann Barrick, Heidi Healy

## **Board of Listers Report**

**GRAND LIST:** Each year, the primary role of the Listers is to maintain a fair and equitable Grand List for the purposes of taxation. The Listers establish a Grand List specifying the value of each taxable property as of April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Preliminary Grand List must be filed with the Town Clerk on or before June 4<sup>th</sup>. Grievance hearings must begin no later than June 19<sup>th</sup> and the final Grand List must be lodged with the Town Clerk by July 25<sup>th</sup>. This year there are 721 parcels in Peru, including 395 structures with land (including residential and commercial properties), 271 condominiums and 54 parcels with open land. No parcel formally grieved their assessments this year. All concerns were resolved at our pre-grievance level

**EQUALIZATION STUDY RESULTS:** Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, it has become a seller's market. This year (4/1/23 – 3/31/24) has continued to be a seller's market with sales well above the appraised values. Sales trends are measured by the state using two statistical measures, the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) and Coefficient of Dispersion (COD). Each is measured by a three year running average. Last year, our CLA was 78.24 and our COD was 18.88%. This year the CLA is 67.79% and our COD is 23.83%. A CLA below 100% indicates that our town appraisal values are less than fair market value. A high COD indicates that some taxpayers are paying more than their fair share, and some are paying less than their fair share. The threshold for a reappraisal is 20%. Since our COD is above 20%, we are required by the state to carry out a town-wide reappraisal. We have contacted the New England Municipal Resource Center, who conducted our last reappraisal in 2015 to initiate the process. They have agreed to conduct the town-wide reappraisal beginning in the summer of 2024. It is expected to be a two-year process. A contract was signed by the Select Board.

**USE VALUE APPRAISAL PROGRAM (CURRENT USE):** Owners of agricultural and forest land may be eligible to have land taxed at the lower "use value" rate by enrolling in the Current Use Program. At least 25 acres are required for enrollment, excluding a 2-acre house site. We currently have 36 parcels enrolled in the Current Use program. For additional information and to file an application electronically, please go to <http://tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/curent-use>

**HOMESTEAD DECLARATION AND PROPERTY TAX ADJUSTMENT CLAIM (FORM HS-122):** By Vermont law, property owners whose homes meet the definition of a Vermont homestead must file a Homestead Declaration each year., 32 V.S.A. Statute 5410. Many people file their Homestead

Declaration at the same time that they file their Vermont Income Tax return. However, if you apply for an extension or if you are not required to file a Vermont Income Tax return, the Homestead Declaration must still be filed. Penalties apply after the April deadline. For additional information and to file electronically, please go to: <http://tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/homestead-declaration>.

**VETERANS EXEMPTION:** Veterans who own their home and declare a Vermont homestead may be eligible for a property tax exemption. We currently have one veteran registered for this exemption. For additional information and requirements, please go to: [www.veterans.vermont.gov](http://www.veterans.vermont.gov).

**BOARD OF LISTERS:** As a board, we must abide by changing state statutes and fixed and constrained timetables. We are here to assist you with any questions or concerns that you may have. The Board of Listers meets on Wednesday morning at 9:00AM. If you have any questions or concerns about the appraisal of your property, feel free to call, stop in, or send us a letter with your concerns. Most issues are handled in April or May by a Pre-Grievance process. If you wish to formally grieve the assessed value of your property, please submit a letter in May describing the basis for your Grievance. The formal Grievance Day will be held in the first two weeks of June.

**FINALLY, ANOTHER PLEA TO THE PERU COMMUNITY:** Normally, the Board of Listers is comprised of three members. Currently, there are two listers who take care of regular business, one of whom may not be able to run this year. If you would like to offer your services for this vital role, which is a paid position, please consider volunteering.

The Board of Listers  
Jack Pennypacker, Chair  
Jay Reichman  
Rebecca Williams

### **Zoning Administrative Officer's Report**

During 2023, a total of seventeen land use applications were received. One of these applications was non-residential so it was referred to the Planning Commission for site plan review. Five applications included requests for variances, and these were referred to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The remaining applications were reviewed by the Zoning Administrator alone.

Zoning Permits were issued in the following categories:

6 New Single-Family Dwellings, 6 Additions or Alterations, 2 Accessory Buildings, 1 Private Educational Institution, 1 Primitive Camp, 1 Driveway requiring a variance.

The Zoning Administrator worked with the Planning Commission and the Bennington Regional Planning Commission on amending the Peru Zoning Bylaws. Once finalized the zoning bylaw amendment:

- Clarify many grey areas from the old bylaws.
- Update various sections dealing with state regulations that have changed, including those dealing with the environment, flood zones, and affordable housing.
- Include new uses that were not considered in the existing bylaws.
- Combine the Village and the Historic Districts,
- Put the district dimensional requirements, permitted and conditional uses into table to make the application process easier.
- Make online resources available to applicants, including Geographical Information Systems, and links to town and state documents.
- Enable the ZA to do two lot subdivisions and make small amendments to commercial and conditional use permits, saving the applicant's and the board member's time.
- Allow applicants to apply for waivers when appropriate.
- Allow the town to hire experts to help the boards with complicated applications.
- Tighten the rules on highway access to protect the lives of Peru's citizens and emergency service personnel.
- Give the town a new, easier to use, set of regulations for subdivisions and PUDs, while also promoting the goals found in the Peru Town Plan.
- Clarify the rules on development on steep terrain.

Zoning Administrator, Will Goodwin, can be reached by emailing [zoning@peruvt.org](mailto:zoning@peruvt.org), or by calling 802-824-3065. He is at the Peru Town Offices most Thursday afternoons.

### Cemetery Commissioner's Report

The maintenance of Peru's three cemeteries, the Village Cemetery, North Cemetery and Stone Cemetery has been ongoing through the year consisting of mowing/trimming grass, removal of leaves, filling in grave depressions and gravestone maintenance. There were five burials this last summer.

The commission decided to put a portion of the money that is ear-marked to get the new part of the Village cemetery surveyed for burial lots, into a short-term CD to gain more interest on the money.

There are still a number of lots available in the current Village cemetery, but we will discuss getting all or a portion of the new Village cemetery surveyed this summer to ensure we will have lots available for years to come.

The next meeting for the commission will be May 4, 2024 at 7PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
William Crandall, Chairman  
Peru Cemetery Commissioner

### Peru Cemetery Commission Balance Sheet

Checking Account Balance, July 1, 2022 \$ 22,207.57

#### RECEIPTS:

Interest	\$ 5.22
Dividends	\$ 2,380.39
Plot Purchase	\$ 2,100.00
Perpetual Care	\$ 2,100.00
Town Appropriation	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
Total Receipts	<u>\$ 11,585.61</u>

#### DISBURSEMENTS:

Maintenance	\$ 8,720.25
Total Disbursements:	<u>\$ 8,720.25</u>

Checking Account Balance, June 30, 2023 \$ 25,072.93

#### Assets Owned:

Berkshire Bank Municipal NOW (Checking Account)	\$ 25,072.93
Mutual Funds and Stock (at Market Value)	<u>\$ 181,579.33</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 206,652.26</u>

Note: All Revenue over Expenditures in the Checking Account are dedicated to Perpetual Care.



### **First Constable's Report**

This is my fourth year acting as Constable with help of my assistant Constable Josh Witkin. Outside of a few noise calls associated with short term renters, I am happy to report that Peru has remained relatively quiet during these times. I would also like to remind us all to drive prudently and slowly, particularly on Hapgood Pond Road and in town.

Please feel free to phone me or text at 802.238.4991 if you require assistance.

Cordially,  
Mike Gayda

### **Fire Department Report**

The fire dept. responded to 60 calls in 2023. The calls break down as follows; 2 DHART LZ setup, 8 mutual aid requests, 10 motor vehicle accidents, 26 still alarms (automatic fire alarms), 1 chimney fire, 1 electrical fire and 4 tree on the wires calls, 3 tree in the road calls, 2 brush fires, 2 structure fires, and 1 vehicle fire.

Through our fundraising and donations the Fire Company purchased \$3495 of new equipment and donated it to the town. A heartfelt thank you to the Thrifty Attic and the Bromley Village Ass. for their continued support.

Chuck Black, Fire Chief

### **Fire Warden Report**

42 burning permits were issued in 2023. As a reminder, only untreated wood is burnable under VT statute.

Chuck Black, Chief/Fire Warden

### **Road Commissioner's Report**

This year was spent doing routine maintenance and some small repairs caused by this summer's and early winter flooding. Thankfully, Peru was spared the catastrophic damage suffered by our neighboring towns. We continue to seek out state grants to improve our water run off from the roads, with the overall goal being to improve water quality. Finally, a big thank you to Wayne Blanchard and Brian Bills for the job they do.

Chuck Black  
Road Commissioner

## Animal Control

The State of Vermont requires that **all** dog/wolf-hybrid owners license their pets. Current rabies vaccination certificates are required at the time of licensing.

Total licenses sold 2023: 93

Revenue to Peru:	\$ 799.00*
Revenue to State VT	<u>460.00</u>
<b>Total Revenue 2023</b>	<b>\$ 1,259.00 *Including late fees</b>

2023 Fees:	<u>Before April 1<sup>st</sup>:</u>	<u>After April 1<sup>st</sup>:</u>
Neutered/Spayed	\$ 12.00	\$ 17.00
Unaltered Male/Female	\$ 20.00	\$ 25.00

Puppies must be registered by six months of age. New dogs to households may be registered any time without a late fee assessed.

Please be advised that Peru has an Animal Control Ordinance. Section #3 prohibits animals from roaming and Section #4 prohibits animals against creating a nuisance. Our Animal Warden, Patrick Salo cell # 802-688-4020, should be contacted to handle any complaint regarding problem animals, if your dog has gone missing or if a stray has been seen.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rhonda Kilburn  
Assistant Town Clerk

### Animal Control Officer

The Animal Control Officer is responsible for the enforcement of the Vermont State Laws pertaining to animals. The officer responds to complaints of violations of Animal Control laws by telephone and police dispatch. The officer also investigates complaints of vicious, diseased, neglected or abused animals. Impounded animals are cared for at the officer's kennel. Unclaimed animals are carefully evaluated before being placed for adoption.

The Animal Control Department makes every effort to ensure that all functions of the department are carried out in the most economical manner with cost savings in mind, while providing the highest degree of professional service to the townspeople and providing assistance to the community so that animals and people can co-exist safely and peacefully.

Unlicensed dogs: The Animal Control Officer is responsible for the enforcement of the dog licensing laws. A dog without tags will be considered unlicensed and unvaccinated and fines may be issued.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Salo  
Animal Control Officer  
200 VT Rte. 30, Bondville, VT 05340  
Phone: (802)297-1032 Cell: (802)688-4020

### **Peru Fair Scholarship Report**

The Peru Fair Scholarship Fund is fortunate to have received continued funding from the success of the Peru Fair. In 2023 the Peru Fair contributed \$21,000.00 to the Scholarship Fund. The current balance on 1/4/2023 as reported by Berkshire Bank is \$42,923.78. This balance will decrease by \$19,000.00 as January checks were mailed on 1/05/24 to the schools for the Upperclassman and one graduating High School student. The final balance once those checks clear will be \$23,923.78.

In 2023 the Peru Fair Scholarship was pleased to award \$1000 to each of the 24 recipients, which represented 6 high school graduates and 18 upperclassmen. The high school graduate awards were mailed to their respective schools in August 2023 and the upperclassmen awards were mailed in January 2024.

While it is hard to know the exact number of participants on a year-by-year basis, it appears as though the number of recipients is expected to remain the same for the 2024 school year. The Peru Fair Committee continues to evaluate potentially raising the amount of the scholarship amount taking into consideration the balance in the bank coupled with the number of students expected to graduate over the course of the next 3-5 years.

Laurie Gayda - Peru Fair President



## Peru Fair Report

About 6000 people attended this year's Peru Fair held on September 23. As a result, we are pleased to report that a contribution of \$21,000 was made to the Peru Fair Scholarship Fund, enabling each full-time Peru student pursuing a higher education beyond high school to receive a scholarship of \$1,000 per year.

In spite of a threat of rain, it turned out to be a perfect fall day and a big success for attendees and vendors alike. Attendance was comparable to last year's record turnout. None of this would have been possible without the volunteer efforts of over 70 area residents and the support of numerous local businesses.

We always welcome new volunteers and committee members. In addition to raising funds for the educational advancement of our young people, the Fair is a wonderful catalyst for bringing the Town together in a common pursuit. We will be working toward another successful fair in 2024.

Laurie Gayda - Peru Fair President

### PERU FAIR FINANCIAL REPORT 2023

#### Receipts

Balance on Hand 01/01/2023	<b>\$7,648.195</b>
Exhibitors Fees	\$12,768.6
Gates (includes some Wagon Sales)	\$35,995.46
Wagon Sales	\$3618.99
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>\$60,031.24</b>

#### Disbursements

Stationary/Website/Bank Fees	\$989.08
Advertising	\$0.00
Postage/Post office box	\$74.00
Entertainment	\$6,375.50
Bus/Transportation	\$8,597.50
Sanitation	\$1,380.00
Wagon	\$3,298.75
Security	\$7,021.09
Setup	\$3,489.57
Donation to Scholarship	\$21,000.00
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$52,225.49</b>
<b>Cash on Hand</b>	<b>\$7,805.75</b>

Ruth Ann Barrick - Peru Fair Treasurer

## **Londonderry Solid Waste Group**

2024 Transfer Station Stickers are available and required to access the Londonderry Transfer Station. You can purchase one at any of the five-member town offices in person or on-line from [londonderryvt.org](http://londonderryvt.org).

In 2023, 420.23 tons of trash, 855.37 tons of construction/bulky waste, 75.45 tons of food scraps, and approximately 703.02 tons of recyclables were collected at the Transfer Station and transported to the landfill or in the case of recyclables sent through the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) to separate the various materials like glass, plastic, cans. There have been several times over this past year when people put trash and other non-recyclables in the recycling containers. This can contaminate the whole 30 yds. If in doubt, please ask the attendant.

The July flooding event took its toll on businesses and households alike. The Transfer Station collected flood debris from July to September and did not charge for disposal. The EPA helped with collection of hazardous waste by hiring a contractor to dispose of those items.

A new backhoe was purchased in 2023 to replace the old one that had over 10,000 hours on it. Over the last few years, the old backhoe required frequent and costly repairs. The purchase will mean the elimination of lots of downtime waiting for parts and service.

The Take It or Leave It Bay at the transfer station is a popular spot for giving new life to items no longer wanted or useful to the donor. This not only keeps items out of the trash, saves landfill space but offers free items for the taking. Unfortunately, the bay was closed for a short time due to trash or unusable items being left there. Please follow these simple rules:

NO Electronic Devices

NO Bedding

NO VHS Tapes

NO Broken or Unusable Items

NO Clothing/Shoes -bring to Thrifty Attic or put in textile bin in plastic bags.

ALL ITEMS should be in good, clean workable condition. When in doubt, please ask an attendant.

Beginning January 1, 2024, Screw-based Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs (CFLs) and Four Foot (4'ft) General Purpose Linear Fluorescent Tubes will be banned from sale in Vermont. For more information contact: Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation- Mercury Education & Reduction Program [www.mercvt.org](http://www.mercvt.org).

The Londonderry Group ran two Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events in 2023. The 2024 dates will be the 1st Saturday in June and the 1st Saturday in October. The October 2023 collection was during a totally rainy day with 100 cars attending. Replacing toxic containing products with more eco-friendly products will help reduce the toxins in our homes and environment.

If you have questions, want to join the Londonderry Group's email list to receive alerts about special collections (hazardous waste & electronics), or if your school or business is interested in learning about ways to handle solid waste, organics, recyclables, and other materials please contact [recycle@londonderryvt.org](mailto:recycle@londonderryvt.org).



## **Green Mountain National Forest**

The employees of the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) depend heavily on support from many municipalities, volunteers, partners, and contractors. The Forest would like to take this time to thank you and your community for the support and interest that you have shown in helping with the management of the approximately 400,000-acre GMNF. Receiving several million outdoor recreation enthusiast visits annually, these visitors seek enjoyment in a natural setting while providing critical benefit to our local economies. The GMNF is proud to be a part of Vermont and your town. It is truly one of Vermont's treasures and the largest contiguous public land area in the state. Forest staff work hard to achieve quality public land management under a sustainable multiple-use management concept to meet the diverse needs of all people -- people in your town as well as all of the visitors who come to Vermont every year. This has been another exciting year for us, and we have worked hard to support new opportunities on the National Forest that benefit the people and communities that we serve. The following is a brief summary of what happened in your National Forest throughout the past year:

### **Our New Office**

We are excited to report that we now have a new Forest Supervisor's Headquarters located at 4387 U.S. Route 4 East in Mendon, Vermont! Our visitor center will be staffed and open to the public over the winter months on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM. In the spring, we will be open Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM. Our employees have recently transitioned from a full-time virtual work schedule to working out of the new office and are available should you need to reach them. You can always call our main office number (802) 747-6700 and press 9 to search our employee directory or to make an appointment with a member of our staff. Our permanent mailing address is: USDA Forest Service, Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forests, 4387 U.S. Route 4 East, Mendon, Vermont 05701. Please visit the staff directory link here for a current list of our employees: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/contactus/gmfl/about-forest/contactus>

## **Southern Vermont Communications Union District**

The Southern Vermont Communications Union District (SoVT CUD) has had a very busy, and successful fourth year.

In September 2022, SoVT CUD and its partner, Consolidated Communications Inc. (CCI) were awarded a \$9,009,085 Act 71 Construction Grant to fund Phase 2 of fiber network construction in SoVT CUD territory. After Phase 1 was completed at the end of 2022, construction of Phase 2 began in early 2023 and was consistently ahead of schedule. To date, the Construction Grant has funded the passing of over 6,000 homes with fiber, including 1,300 that were unserved. Dozens of fiber distribution hubs (FDH) across all 14 member towns have been released for customer sales.

Phase 2 remained on track to be completed before the end of 2023, providing over 95% of homes in Bennington County with access to fiber optic internet service. With the wrap up of Phase 2, SoVT CUD has focused its efforts on providing service to the hardest to reach addresses that constitute Phase 3 of network construction.

In August 2023, SoVT CUD and CCI held a ribbon cutting event at Bromley Mountain in Peru to celebrate the near completion of the fiber network in Bennington County. The event was attended by Senator Peter Welch, and other local and state officials. There has been significant media coverage of SoVT CUD's success, including a segment from Greater Northshire Access Television (GNAT) and NBC Channel 5.

SoVT CUD is now focused on the approximately 20 hardest to reach addresses that constitute Phase 3. These addresses are primarily located in Arlington and Pownal and are unserved according to state data. The CUD has begun initial outreach to these property owners to assess the status of their internet service and build a finalized list of Phase 3 addresses to be covered under the CUD's universal service plan.

The CUD has greatly benefited from our partnership with the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC). The administrative assistance and expertise in navigating the public funding arena provided by Community and Economic Development Specialist Jonathan Cooper and Regional Planner Callie Fishburn has been invaluable. The CUD is especially indebted to BCRC's ability to keep us grounded in the broad development efforts of the region.

More information can be found on the website: [sovtcud.net](http://sovtcud.net)

## **Taconic & Green Regional School District**

Our full annual report is available at your Town Clerk's office or online at [www.brsu.org/page/annual-and-town-reports](http://www.brsu.org/page/annual-and-town-reports). We hope you will read about the important issues facing our nine town district and give us your thoughts, especially regarding the possible regional middle school. When you get to the section on the budget, please note that Vermont has income sensitivity that reduces the property tax on primary residences for many people. Income sensitivity can also reduce renters' taxes.

We are trying something new for the Annual District Meeting, which will be held at Manchester Elementary Middle School on February 27th. From 6 to 6:30 p.m. we are hosting an informal get-acquainted time with board members and some of our Senators and Representatives. There will be refreshments. From 6:30 to 7, board members will be at several tables to discuss specific issues like the proposed district-wide middle school. At 7, the formal meeting begins, with floor votes including the election of the District Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer.

As always, voting on the budget, reserve funds, and high school tuition will be by Australian Ballot on Town Meeting Day, March 5th. You will not automatically receive an absentee ballot. If you want to vote by mail, you must request a mail ballot from your Town Clerk. Please read the Annual Report for detailed information as you consider the budget and the other issues listed in the Warning.

Developing a budget was only one of our tasks. Last year, the legislature considered some bills that would have severely limited high school choice, in reaction to a U. S. Supreme Court decision that most of us think was wrong. District leaders appreciate the time our legislators spent conferring with us and avoiding a bad outcome. The issue will return this year. Other issues include the poor performance of the Agency of Education, including its delay in enforcing the antidiscrimination rules that took effect in 2022. Locally, a board committee is hard at work studying the possibility of a regional middle school and welcomes everyone's input.

If you want to know more about how we operate or comment on our work, please attend one of our meetings either remotely or in person. We also welcome comments and questions by letter or email. We meet at least monthly. We begin at 6:30 p.m. and aim to end by 8:30. There is a ten minute public comment period at the beginning. Agendas, minutes, and information on how to attend remotely are available on the Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union website - [www.brsu.org/page/meeting-calendar](http://www.brsu.org/page/meeting-calendar).

Herbert G. Ogden

Board Chair

## Town of Peru, Budget

	Actual 22/23	Authorized 23/24	Proposed 2024/25
Income			
3000 · REVENUE			
315-Long View Cash Bond			
316 · State of VT- Current Use	26,703.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
318 · Penalties on Delinquent Taxes	11,416.78	9,000.00	9,000.00
322 · Beverage License	611.00	550.00	600.00
324 · Dog License&Marriage Lic	934.00	850.00	850.00
326 · Zoning Permits	4,753.35	1,500.00	3,000.00
328 · Hunting/Fishing Licenses	0.00	25.00	25.00
332 · Town Clerk Fees	17,902.50	10,000.00	12,500.00
334 · Rental of Equipment	135.00	75.00	75.00
336 · Rental of Facilities	75.00	75.00	75.00
338 · Highway- State of VT	60,094.49	40,000.00	55,000.00
340 · Interest Earned	15,685.63	4,300.00	10,000.00
344 · Misc Income	170.00	750.00	500.00
346 · Green Mountain Forest	57,340.73	40,000.00	<u>50,000.00</u>
Total 3000 · REVENUE	195,821.48	127,125.00	161,625.00
Surplus to be applied to tax rate	255,000.00	155,000.00	250,000.00
(To Be) Raised by taxes	536,664.26	705,150.00	<u>620,485.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	791,664.26	987,275.00	1,032,110.00
4000 · ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES			
400 · Town Clerk	15,938.25	17,600.00	18,000.00
401 · Treasurer	14,643.97	15,500.00	15,500.00
402 · Asst Town Clerk	10,808.50	13,300.00	13,300.00
403 · Asst Treasurer	5,967.50	4,100.00	4,100.00
404 · Select Board	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
405 · Auditors	675.48	1,500.00	1,500.00
406 · Listers	2,483.34	4,000.00	4,000.00
407 · Planning Commission	660.00	3,000.00	2,500.00
408 · Memberships / Training	5,929.00	7,000.00	7,000.00
408.5 · Consulting	2,256.25	400.00	2,500.00
409 · Legal Services	1,957.50	3,000.00	3,000.00
410 · Town Report & Delivery	2,059.22	1,500.00	2,400.00
411 · Town Meetings	0.00	250.00	250.00
412 · Election Expense	0.00	300.00	300.00
413 · Comp & Liability Insurance	15,516.50	25,000.00	25,000.00
414 · Admin Misc/Travel	34.06	500.00	500.00
415 · Zoning Board of Adjustment	182.00	500.00	500.00
416 · Zoning Administrator	5,558.00	6,000.00	7,500.00
417 · Zoning Board/Administrator Misc	0.00	100.00	100.00
418 · Delinquent Tax Collector	9,187.61	12,000.00	<u>10,000.00</u>
Total 4000 · ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	98,857.18	120,550.00	122,950.00

4200 · OFFICE EXPENSE			
420 · Tax Bills	968.00	450.00	1,000.00
421 · Document Books	923.93	1,000.00	1,000.00
422 · Dog Tags & Registration	88.55	125.00	125.00
423 · Paper, Envelopes & Supplies	1,610.78	1,000.00	1,700.00
424 · Postage	1,216.94	1,500.00	1,500.00
425 · Office Misc/Supplies	0.00	800.00	800.00
426 · Bank Fees	181.00	100.00	200.00
428 · Media/Advertising	550.00	1,200.00	<u>1,200.00</u>
Total 4200 · OFFICE EXPENSE	5,539.20	6,175.00	7,525.00
4300 · OFFICE EQUIPMENT EXPENSE			
432 · Copier Expense	907.69	1,000.00	1,000.00
434 · Computer Expenses	15,088.32	11,000.00	15,000.00
436 · Equipment, furniture & fixtures	595.65	4,200.00	1,000.00
438 · Miscellaneous	124.60	250.00	<u>250.00</u>
Total 4300 · OFFICE EQUIPMENT EXPENSE	16,716.26	16,450.00	17,250.00
4400 · TOWN CENTER UTILITIES			
440 · Electricity	1,630.48	2,000.00	2,000.00
442 · Telephone/Internet	978.14	1,500.00	1,500.00
444 · Heating Fuel	5,204.64	4,000.00	6,000.00
446 · Furnace Maintenance	0.00	750.00	750.00
447 · Security Monitoring System	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
448 · Propane	125.00	300.00	<u>300.00</u>
Total 4400 · TOWN CENTER UTILITIES	7,938.26	9,550.00	11,550.00
4500 · TOWN CENTER JANITORIAL			
450 · Janitor Services	2,540.00	2,500.00	3,000.00
453 · Supplies	64.69	200.00	<u>200.00</u>
Total 4500 · TOWN CENTER JANITORIAL	2,604.69	2,700.00	3,200.00
4600 · TOWN CENTER MAINTENANCE			
463 · Supplies	225.68	500.00	500.00
464 · Capital Improvement/Maintenance	2,614.12	10,000.00	<u>5,000.00</u>
Total 4600 · TOWN CENTER MAINTENANCE	2,839.80	10,500.00	5,500.00
4700 · COMMUNITY HOUSE MAINTENANCE			
473 · Supplies	0.00	150.00	105.00
474 · Electricity	296.94	500.00	500.00
475 · Capital Improvement/Maintenance	0.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
476 · Propane	316.25	350.00	<u>350.00</u>
Total 4700 · COMMUNITY HOUSE MAINTENANCE	613.19	16,000.00	15,955.00
4800 · TOWN GARAGE			
480 · Electricity	1,903.54	2,300.00	2,300.00
481 · Heating Fuel/Propane	2,738.45	4,000.00	4,000.00
482 · Supplies	346.47	500.00	500.00
484 · Uniform(contract services)	2,407.32	2,400.00	2,400.00



485 · Capital Improvement/Maintenance	(7,068.69)	14,000.00	14,000.00
486 · Telephone	664.16	700.00	<u>700.00</u>
Total 4800 · TOWN GARAGE	991.25	23,900.00	23,900.00
5100 · PAYROLL TAXES/BENEFITS			
512 · Soc Sec/Medicare Tax	21,153.61	16,000.00	25,000.00
517 · VT Dept of Employment & Training	0.00	250.00	250.00
518 · County Tax	0.00	40,000.00	<u>30,000.00</u>
Total 5100 · PAYROLL TAXES/BENEFITS	21,153.61	56,250.00	55,250.00
6200 · GENERAL SERVICES			
626 · Landfill	48,833.63	35,000.00	65,000.00
628 · Street Lighting	2,083.78	3,500.00	2,500.00
634 · Constable Expense	79.08	400.00	400.00
636 · Animal Warden	5,010.34	3,500.00	6,000.00
638 Recreation Director			<u>9,200.00</u>
Total 6200 · GENERAL SERVICES	56,006.83	42,400.00	83,100.00
7000 · HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT			
700 · Gasoline	496.92	750.00	750.00
701 · Oil	1,890.80	3,000.00	3,500.00
702 · Diesel	27,627.08	30,000.00	30,000.00
703 · Small Tools	1,401.80	1,000.00	1,000.00
704 · Radio Repairs	0.00	500.00	500.00
705 · Street Signs	1,164.17	2,000.00	2,000.00
706 · Truck #1-Maint/Repairs	11,747.69	4,500.00	7,500.00
708 · Truck #2-Maint/Repairs	4,497.46	4,500.00	7,500.00
710 · Chipper Maint./Repairs	0.00	500.00	500.00
710.5 · Truck #3 Maint/Repairs, Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00
712 · Grader-Maint/Repairs	153.09	8,300.00	7,500.00
714 · Sander-Maint/Repairs	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
716 · Small Equip-Maint/Repairs	351.80	500.00	500.00
716.5 · Sweeper-Repairs/Maintenance	2,497.89	2,500.00	3,000.00
717.5 · Lawn Mower	167.46	500.00	500.00
718 · Backhoe-Maint/Repairs	768.50	6,000.00	6,000.00
719.5-Roadside Mower/Maint/Repair	1,745.76	2,000.00	<u>2,000.00</u>
Total 7000 · HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT	54,510.42	67,550.00	73,750.00
7200 · SUMMER ROADS (CLASS 2&3)			
721 · Culverts	3,232.80	8,000.00	4,000.00
722 · Cal Chloride	2,223.32	7,000.00	5,000.00
723. Crushed Stone	1,758.00	5,000.00	4,000.00
724 · Resurfacing Crushed Gravel	15,105.00	22,000.00	22,000.00
725 · Contract Services	2,556.67	7,500.00	6,000.00
726 · General Maintenance	791.79	2,000.00	2,000.00
727 · Labor -1st Employee	28,262.12	33,000.00	33,000.00
727.5 · OT Labor-1st Employee	441.90	600.00	600.00

728 · Labor -2nd Employee	21,359.00	24,000.00	24,000.00
728.5 · OT Labor-2nd Employee	0.00	500.00	500.00
729 · Equipment Rental	0.00	1,500.00	<u>1,000.00</u>
Total 7200 · SUMMER ROADS (CLASS 2&3)	75,730.60	111,100.00	102,100.00
7400 · WINTER ROADS (CLASS 2&3)			
741 · Plow and Chains	5,826.61	4,000.00	4,000.00
743 · Contract Services	0.00	1,250.00	1,000.00
744 · Sand	42,108.00	37,000.00	41,000.00
745 · Salt	31,573.40	40,000.00	40,000.00
746 · Labor -1st Employee	27,338.88	28,000.00	28,000.00
747 · Labor-2nd Employee	21,337.80	22,000.00	22,000.00
748 · Overtime -1st Employee	5,391.18	9,500.00	9,500.00
749 · Overtime-2nd Employee	2,658.48	6,500.00	6,500.00
750 · General Maintenance	571.16	500.00	<u>500.00</u>
Total 7400 · WINTER ROADS (CLASS 2&3)	136,805.51	148,750.00	152,500.00
7700 · BRIDGES			
775 · Materials	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
776 · Construction	0.00	2,500.00	<u>2,500.00</u>
Total 7700 · BRIDGES	0.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
7900 · HIGHWAY			
791 · Bereavement	0.00	300.00	300.00
792 · Health Insurance	47,539.12	50,000.00	58,000.00
793 · Retirement	7,945.80	13,000.00	10,000.00
794 · Vacation Days	7,897.28	6,500.00	8,000.00
794.5 · Holidays Paid	4,517.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
794.8 · Sick Days	1,664.46	3,000.00	<u>3,000.00</u>
Total 7900 · HIGHWAY	69,563.66	77,800.00	84,300.00
8000 · MISCELLANEOUS			
800 · Approp -Comm Agencies	21,890.00	22,000.00	24,780.00
803 · Select Board Discretionary Fund	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
805 · Reappraisal	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
807 · Highway Surfacing	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
808 · Fire Engine Fund	40,000.00	42,000.00	42,000.00
810 · Highway Equip Fund	75,000.00	75,000.00	75,000.00
811 · Peru Park Reserve Fund	5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00
818 · Document Restoration & Pres.	3,972.00	2,100.00	4,000.00
852 · Town Tree Maintenance	62.75	3,000.00	<u>2,000.00</u>
Total 8000 · MISCELLANEOUS	204,424.75	207,600.00	211,280.00
9000 · FIRE DEPT			
901 · Fire Dept. Insurance	3,996.75	9,000.00	6,000.00
902 · Radios and Dispatch	18,132.00	18,500.00	18,500.00
903 · Assoc. Dues and School Fees	0.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
904 · Engine and Equipment Maint	3,343.46	7,000.00	7,000.00

906 · Propane	1,127.69	3,000.00	2,000.00
907 · Misc. and Supplies	60.39	500.00	500.00
908 · Capital Improvement/Maintenance	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
909 · Payroll	10,708.76	16,000.00	<u>12,000.00</u>
Total 9000 · FIRE DEPT	37,369.05	66,500.00	58,500.00
 Total Expense	 791,664.26	 987,275.00	 1,032,110.00

**Town of Peru General Fund - Statement of Revenue, Expenditures, Appropriations and Changes in Fund Balance**

**TOWN OF PERU SPECIAL FUNDS**

Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances June 30, 2023

	Highway Equipment	Highway Resurface/Bridges	Fire Engine Equipment	Peru Park Reserve Fund	Re-Appraisal	Restoration & Preservation	TOTAL
<b>REVENUE</b>							
General Fund Annual Appropriations	\$75,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,000.00	2,100.00	\$177,600.00
Interest Income	35.55	47.13	15.81	0.59	18.52	1.78	119.38
Grant Received				7,773.00			7,773.00
Clerk Recording Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,260.00	2,260.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>75,035.55</b>	<b>50,047.13</b>	<b>40,015.81</b>	<b>13,273.59</b>	<b>5,018.52</b>	<b>4,361.78</b>	<b>187,752.38</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>							
Playground Equipment & Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,354.99	0.00	0.00	15,354.99
Resurfacing Material		12,800.00					12,800.00
Digitized Maps	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>12,800.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>15,354.99</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>28,154.99</b>
Revenues in Excess of Expenditures (Deficit)	75,035.55	37,247.13	40,015.81	(2,081.40)	5,018.52	4,361.78	159,597.39 (2,081.40)
Fund Balance July 1, 2022	173,416.45	238,377.62	76,963.68	7,359.50	91,172.70	7,776.58	595,066.53
Fund Balance June 30, 2023	\$248,452.00	\$275,624.75	\$116,979.49	\$5,278.10	\$96,191.22	12,138.36	\$754,663.92

## Balance Sheets

**Town of Peru**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**As of June 30, 2023**

	General Fund	Special Fund	Peru Cemetery	Total
<b>Assets:</b>				
Cash	\$604,244.70	\$754,663.92	\$25,072.93	\$1,383,981.55
Petty Cash	150.00	0.00	0.00	150.00
Delinquent Taxes Receivable	16,167.35	0.00	0.00	16,167.35
Prepaid Expenses	869.76	0.00	0.00	869.76
Stock/Mutual Funds	0.00	0.00	181,579.33	181,579.33
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$621,431.81</b>	<b>\$754,663.92</b>	<b>\$206,652.26</b>	<b>\$1,582,747.99</b>
<b>Liabilities:</b>				
Accounts Payable	\$387.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$387.25
Transfer Station	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
Payroll Liabilities	11,371.60	0.00	0.00	11,371.60
Unexpended ARPA Grant	86,368.05	0.00	0.00	86,368.05
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>98,176.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>98,176.90</b>
<b>Fund Balance:</b>				
Appropriated	0.00	754,663.92	206,652.26	961,316.18
Unappropriated	523,254.91	0.00	0.00	523,254.91
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>523,254.91</b>	<b>754,663.92</b>	<b>206,652.26</b>	<b>1,484,571.09</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$621,431.81</b>	<b>\$754,663.92</b>	<b>\$206,652.26</b>	<b>\$1,582,747.99</b>



## Special Funds, Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Changes in Fund Balance

TOWN OF PERU, GENERAL FUND		
STATEMENT OF REVENUE, EXPENDITURES, APPROPRIATIONS & CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE		
	Year Ending June 30, 2023	
		ACTUAL
REVENUE		2022-23
300	Taxes	\$552,422.39
316	State of VT Current Use	26,703.00
318	Penalties Delinquent Taxes*	11,416.78
320,322,324	License/ Dog, Beverage\Marriage	1,589.00
326	Zoning Permits	4,753.35
332	Town Clerk Fees	17,902.50
334	Rental of Equipment	135.00
238	Hunting/Fishinglicenses	0.00
336	Rental of Facilities	75.00
338	State Aid Highways	60,094.49
340	Interest Income	15,685.63
344	Misc. Income	170.00
346	Green Mountain National Forest	57,340.73
Total Revenue		748,287.87
EXPENSES	(See itemized accounts)	
400-418	Administration	98,857.18
420-438	Office/Equipment	22,255.46
440-487	Total Buildings	14,987.19
512-519	Taxes and Assessments	21,153.61
626-638	General Services	56,006.83
700-796	Highway & Roads	336,610.19
803	Discretionary Funds	3,000.00
852	Town Tree Maintenance	62.75
901-910	Fire Department	34,819.05
Total Expenses		587,752.26
RESERVE ACCOUNTS		
805	Reappraisal	5,000.00
807	Highway Resurface Fund	50,000.00
808	Fire Engine Fund	40,000.00
810	Highway Equipment Fund	75,000.00
811	Peru Park	5,500.00
818	Document Restoration & Pres.	3,972.00
Total Reserve Accounts		179,472.00
WARNING ARTICLES		
800	Appropriations Community Services	21,890.00
Total Expenditures		789,114.26
Ending Fund Balance, June 30, 2023		<u>\$523,254.91</u>

## Statement of Taxes Raised & Distributed

### TOWN OF PERU

#### STATEMENT OF TAXES RAISED AND DISTRIBUTED

Fiscal Year: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

##### Grand List:

Municipal Grand List	2,249,433.14	
Municipal Tax Rate	0.3135	
	<u>705,197.29</u>	
Credit	-1,608.00	703,589.29
	Resident	
Education Grand List	422,548.07	
Education Tax Rate	1.7264	
	<u>729,486.99</u>	
Credit	-142,359.97	587,127.02
	Non-Resident	
Education Grand List	1,732,426.67	
Education Tax Rate	1.7779	
	<u>3,080,081.38</u>	
		<u>3,080,081.38</u>
		4,370,797.68
State adjustment based on final education Grand List		-142,357.97
Post Grand List adjustments (late-filed HS122, errors & omissions, etc.)		<u>-256,884.13</u>
		3,971,555.58

##### Distribution of Taxes:

State Education Peru School District	3,387,437.22
General Fund	<u>584,118.36</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$3,971,555.58</b>

## Statement of Delinquent Taxes

### STATEMENT OF DELINQUENT TAXES

Year Ended: June 30, 2023

Balance: 7/1/2022	47,863.32
Collected	<u>-31,695.97</u>
Balance: 6/30/2023	16,167.35

## Funding Requests to the Town of Peru

### South Londonderry Free Library

To the Selectboard and Residents of Peru,

This past year the South Londonderry Free Library has had many successes. We have worked hard to secure funding to expand our services as the community is responding positively to our programming and resources. We set a sign-up record for the Summer Reading Program, with 41 local children participating. Children's art programs are now hosted on a monthly basis, thanks to a grant from the Stratton Foundation. Six children's STEAM activity backpacks have been added into our collection thanks to the Winnie Belle Learned grant. We have offered more discount passes to local attractions/museums than any other year prior, which have been checked out frequently. New art exhibits have also brought in an influx of new visitors.

This year the Library served 3,305 residents and visitors, had 98 new members join, lent out 3,613 books, 1,214 audio/e-books, added 854 books to our collection and obtained 144 borrowed books from other libraries. Beyond books, we continue to provide indispensable technology services to all, such as 24/7 access to Wi-Fi, public computer access, printing/copying capabilities, and general tech support. Both residents and visitors to this area stayed connected using our Wi-Fi and computers 550 times throughout the year.

We are requesting \$1,200 from the Town of Peru to help cover our general operating costs. Thank you for your consideration in continuing financial support to the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lauren Roppolo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lauren" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Roppolo".

Lauren Roppolo – Director/Librarian

## My Community Nurse Project

Dear Select Board Members, Peru

My Community Nurse Project is a registered 501c3 agency providing home visits to residents of the 6 mountain town communities, including Peru. It is beginning its 5<sup>th</sup> year of community service, with one full time advanced practice nurse (Regina Downer RN, MS) and one part time nurse (Kathy Shuster, RN, MS). Both have extensive knowledge and experience in community health.

The nurses provide home visits to community residents, focusing on wellness checks, assessment of health care needs, assistance with medication management and medical appointments, patient advocacy and assessment of home safety. Both nurses foster a relationship with each client based on care and trust, with the goal of optimum health, safety and wellness.

This service is available in Peru, Londonderry, S. Londonderry, Andover, Weston and Landgrove.

**There is never a charge for services.**

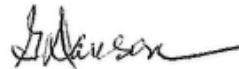
The community nurse model is based on a nursing model dating back to early 1900's in Vermont, known as "parish nursing". Parish nurses visited families as needed and were funded by churches and towns. MCNP is proud to be the first community nurse project in southwestern Vermont.

This project is funded by the generous donations of community members and two mountain towns. 94% of all donations go toward direct client care. The nurses do not have an office. Our overhead expenses are minimal. Won't you please consider donating to this agency of care and advocacy? We graciously request funding of \$2500 for the year 2024. In 2023, the nurses completed 85 home visits to residents of Peru.

Thank you for your kind consideration,



Regina Downer, RN MS  
Nurse Advocate, MCNP



Gloria Dawson, MSW,  
Board Chair

## Protect Against Violent Encounters

Town of Peru;

PAVE believes that everyone deserves to experience healthy love. It is a core part of our mission to strive to promote a community and a world, where we all can experience the joy of healthy love.

With over 10 Million Americans affected by Domestic Violence a year, striving for a community where non-violent love is the norm, can be daunting. But we persist, because we believe our goal is not only possible but necessary.

Over the last year, PAVE has been able to help survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence reclaim their lives after fleeing abuse. We have been there at the moment of crisis; **fielding over 500 hotline calls** and **providing 4221 nights of emergency shelter**. We have been there as survivors start to stabilize and heal; helping to obtain **16 housing assistance vouchers**, and over **50 Protection Orders**.

PAVE also has been present before violence takes place, with the hope that through education we can promote healthy forms of love and stop the cycle of Domestic Violence before it even starts. PAVE has provided over **900 youth in Bennington County** with preventative education and helped train over **200 community partners on topics** related to Domestic & Sexual Violence. Our Advocates have dedicated themselves tirelessly to spreading the message of non-violent love at community events and in their day to day work with survivors.

We are requesting level funding for the coming year in the amount of \$150.00.

PAVE expresses their gratitude for the support and dedication the Town of Peru has shown to survivors of Domestic & Sexual Violence.

With appreciation,

*Lindsay Brillon*, M.Ed. LSW

Executive Director  
Project Against Violent Encounters



## Mountain Valley Health Council

Dear Members of the Select Board,

Since its inception to its current configuration as an integral part of the North Star Health network, our Health Center has played a major role as a Primary Care Provider in this community, addressing the medical needs of thousands of patients over the years in a caring, compassionate manner. For many years the Town of Peru has been generous in supporting the Mountain Valley Health Council (MVHC). Your support has made it possible for us to sustain our founding vision of treating all patients from our mountain towns, regardless of their ability to pay. On behalf of the entire Board, I am writing first and foremost to express our deep gratitude for your continuing support that has helped to make all this possible.

Today, the Health Center employs a total of 20 staff members with 2 doctors, 2 nurse practitioners, 6 nurses, 2 medical assistants, 1 phlebotomist, and 7 administrators. But it is not enough. Even with our fabulous staff, we are not yet able to meet the growing demand for care. As you, your family or your friends may know from your own direct experience, confirming appointments for our existing patients can be challenging, and often we have not been able to accept new patients. We are literally outgrowing our usable space and are at the outer limits of what we can ask of our dedicated staff.

Together with our partners at North Star Health, we have identified two critical objectives for the next 5 years: **increasing access and expanding services**. To achieve these objectives, we need to address two key constraints: space and staffing. We need more of both, and that is what we are setting out to do with the community's active support. When completed, our shared vision is a Health Center that is a "one-stop shop" for all primary health care needs in our community, regardless of ability to pay. Specifically, we are setting out to build a Health Center that will:



- Be open 7-days a week;
- Be able to accommodate same-day appointments; and
- Offer expanded services in wellness, care coordination, family medicine, and behavioral health.

To achieve this vision, we are already starting to work on ways to make better use of our existing space. Based on the pressing need to reconfigure the space in the Health Center, the MVHC and North Star Health envision a three-phase project.

- **Phase I** is happening immediately thanks to the generosity of a bequest from a local donor whose family has a long history of support for the Health Center. With that support, we are creating two additional examination rooms to accommodate the growing demand for more appointments. This work will be completed by early 2024.
- **Phase II** is actively being planned. We are redesigning and reconfiguring 1500 square feet of the existing Emergency Bay area to create at least two more exam rooms and additional space for our care providers. The initial total cost estimate is \$450,000. Our goal in 2023 is to raise \$200,000 to get this project underway in the first quarter of 2024. Based on firm cost estimates, we hope to raise the balance and to complete this phase by late 2024.
- **Phase III** is significantly more ambitious. We envision a larger expansion and reconfiguration of the existing building to accommodate the ever-growing need for dedicated space for providers, offices, meeting space, consultation rooms, and more. This will happen in 2025 – 2026.

We are now requesting that the Select Board again include \$3000 for MVHC in its annual budget submission for approval on Town Meeting Day. Funds from each town will be earmarked first and foremost for the "emergency relief fund" that supports residents in our catchment area who are struggling to pay for their medical care. This could include funding office visits, prescription costs, co-pay requirements, gas cards to remove impediments to travel for medical appointments. Any unexpended funds would then be used to advance our shared vision for the future of our community Health Center.

We look forward to continuing a long tradition of community service and community engagement, with the continuing support of the mountain town Select Boards and broader community. Thank you for your consideration.

On behalf of the MVHC Board, Clinic staff and the wider community of our patients and their families,

Michael Morfit  
President

## Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad

Dear Selectboard,

The Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad is proud to provide emergency medical services to the Town of Peru, as well as the towns of Landgrove, Londonderry, Stratton, Weston, Windham and Winhall.

We responded to 647 calls this year which is slightly lower than last year's record breaking number of calls. We remain the only all-volunteer rescue squad in the state of Vermont that doesn't charge patients for our transports or services. Our dedicated volunteers don't receive any compensation for the time they spend providing patient care, and this is the primary reason our yearly assessments to the towns we serve are so low.

Even with our slight decrease in calls, our expenses continue to rise. This is due to the increased costs for medical supplies, diesel fuel and equipment. Our expenses this year totaled \$196,168.21. This year we are asking all of the towns for a 5% increase over the amount that they gave last year. This is a \$250.00 increase over the \$5,000.00 given by Peru last year.

This year we are asking the Town of Peru for \$5,250.00

We appreciate your support and look forward to serving your community in 2023.

Sincerely,

The Executive Committee of LVRS



## Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire

Dear Council Members and Citizens of Peru;

We at the Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire (VNH) would like to offer our heartfelt thanks for the opportunity to have our appropriation request included in 2024 funding. **VNH respectfully requests 2700. This represents level funding from last year's request.**

As an integral part of the community healthcare system in Peru, VNH serves to breach an otherwise significant gap in the community's continuum of care. Last year, VNH provided 21 visits to 1 residents of all ages and at all stages of life. VNH is also the foremost team of hospice and home health experts for over 140 communities in Vermont and New Hampshire. We deliver nursing, hospice and rehabilitation services at home with proven effectiveness, integrity and compassion. Just as local families have counted on us since 1907, you can count on us today.

Having our patients maintain their independence is key. Our nurses, therapists and social workers provide assessments, medical care and education to assist people in leading a more self-sufficient life. This includes patients who are frail, elderly and disabled, people with terminal illness, those recovering from major surgery or illness and children with chronic medical needs. They all benefit by receiving the care they need in the familiarity and comfort of home.

Town funding is what allows us to bring down the cost of services provided to those in need. With adequate town funding, we are able to provide an affordable option for home healthcare in the community. To continue meeting these needs, we urge the Town of Peru to budget continued financial support of Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire.

On behalf of the people we serve, we thank you for your consideration of this request.

With kind regards,

*Anthony Knox*

Anthony Knox  
Community Relations Manager  
[aknox@vnhcare.org](mailto:aknox@vnhcare.org)  
(603) 790-3172

## VT Center for Independent Living

Dear Ms. Beebe and voters:

The Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL), a statewide, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities, respectfully requests funding from the Town of Peru for our FY'24.

Annual support from over 140 cities and towns across the State helps VCIL assist Vermonters with disabilities achieve dignified and self-determined lives. VCIL works to serve individuals who can benefit from our direct services as well as to educate and inform members of the community about disability related issues and independent living. Direct services are available to residents of Peru in a number of ways. Peer counselors work with residents in their homes or other locations; small grants for adaptive equipment; Meals on Wheels for people with disabilities under the age of 60; Home Access modifications; individual and systems advocacy and programs for youth. Information, Referral and Assistance is available to all residents by calling VCIL's I-Line, at 1-800-639-1522 (Voice and TTY).

We are requesting \$140.00 from the Town of Peru to help more people with disabilities in the coming year. Enclosed you will find a summary of VCIL's programs and services for the town and a copy of our FY'24 budget.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Sarah Launderville  
Executive Director  
[slaunderville@vcil.org](mailto:slaunderville@vcil.org)

## Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging

Dear Town Officials,

This is a request from the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging for \$200.00 in funding in your FY25 budget. This is the same level of funding we requested and received last year. If approved, this funding will be used to help support the work we do on behalf of Peru residents.

The enclosed document provides a brief description of the services the Council on Aging provided to older Vermonters in your community over the last year and is designed for use in your town report. Please contact me if you have any questions about any of this information.

We sincerely appreciate the past support that we have received from the town of Peru, and we hope that we can, once again, count on support from your community.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Rosemary Greene,  
Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging

## Center for Restorative Justice

Dear Select Board,

On behalf of The Center of Restorative Justice (CRJ), I am writing to request funding for our agency in the amount of **\$300** for the upcoming year. CRJ is very grateful for the support it receives from the town and looks forward to continuing to serve the residents of Peru in the year ahead.

I have also enclosed an annual report. If you have any questions or need any additional information, I can be reached at 447-1595 or email [leitha@bcnj.org](mailto:leitha@bcnj.org). CRJ is very grateful for your continued support.

Thank you very much.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leitha Cipriano", followed by a long horizontal flourish line.

Leitha Cipriano  
Executive Director

## Neighborhood Connections

Dear Select Board:

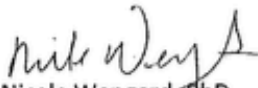
Neighborhood Connections, Inc. is a community-based nonprofit serving nine towns, including Peru. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of the people of southern Vermont's mountain towns through advocacy, education, and social services. We offer an array of health and social services, including counseling and case management, exercise and educational programs, and transportation. Our organization is proud to support the community through thick and thin, a commitment that became even more evident in the aftermath of the flooding this past July.

In response to that crisis, we were here. While providing emergency case management services, financial grants, and mental health support, we worked closely with relief agencies to ensure access to shelter, food, water, cleaning supplies, and other resources. We continued to deliver our regular agency services alongside our disaster relief efforts.

Unsurprisingly, flood relief emerged as a top service this year, second only to transportation. Despite the challenges, our two professional social workers tirelessly provided thousands of case management, advocacy, and counseling sessions, free of charge, to anyone in our service area. To sustain and expand our impact, we request \$2,000.00 from the town of Peru for our general operating budget, the same amount generously provided last year. Your continued financial support is crucial in maintaining access to case management, community programming, transportation, and swift crisis response.

Support from the town of Peru has been instrumental in the past, and we are so grateful for the collaborative spirit that defines our community.

With sincerest gratitude,



Nicole Wengerd, PhD  
Executive Director

## Neighborhood Connections - Mountain Town Connector

Dear Select Board:

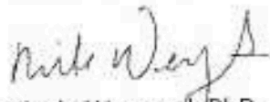
The Mountain Town Connector, Neighborhood Connections' transportation program, has provided nearly 1500 rides since its launch in 2021. These rides to essential services are accessible to anyone in our transportation service area at no cost to the rider. As a bonus, we offer "door through door" service and the opportunity to be linked to other resources if needed, ensuring our neighbors are always well cared for.

The popularity of our program is evident in the over 1200 ride requests we have received year-to-date, an increase of over 200% since last year. Our expansion efforts in response to this growth have included procedural updates and hiring additional staff, allowing us to fulfill more ride requests and increase group rides and social activities. Because of this, so many of our neighbors have been able to get where they needed to go this past year with the help of our accommodating staff and drivers.

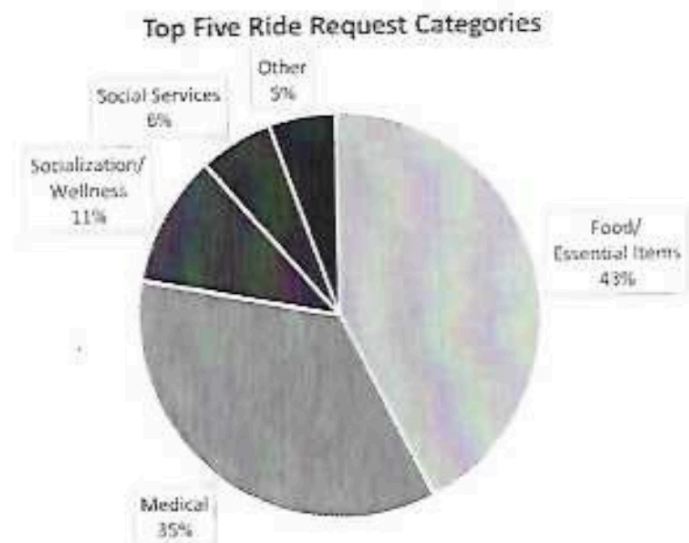
The long-term viability of the Mountain Town Connector requires collaboration and support from the communities we serve. Most of our program has been financed thus far by grantors who believe in the importance of transportation access in rural communities like ours, and we will continue to seek this support. Our long-term sustainability goal also includes securing 20% (or \$22,000) of our program's budget directly from town appropriations. As 7% of our ridership is from Peru, we kindly request a \$1,540 contribution from the town's budget to sustain our efforts.

Thank you for your continued support.

With sincerest gratitude,



Nicole Wengerd, PhD  
Executive Director





## Green Up Vermont

Dear Residents of Peru

**Thank you** for your past appropriation to Green Up Vermont in support of Green Up Day. We had a great turnout with a 20% increase in volunteers (23,500) who picked up 348 TONS of trash and 15,000 tires from our roads and waterways. This amazing community service and sense of pride keeps our towns not only looking good, but also safe, healthy, and economically vibrant places to live.

Your help is crucial in sustaining this mission of clean environments and teaching our youth to care about and get involved in their communities. Your annual contribution is so appreciated and makes a real impact.

**As Green Up rolls into our 54th year, we are again requesting your support for the usual \$50.00 appropriation.**

The amount requested is based on town population and funds go directly back into your town in the way of supplies, educational tools for your schools, and local promotion for Green Up Day.

<i>Population</i>	<i>\$ Request</i>
• 0- 1,000	\$50
• 1001 - 2000	\$100
• 2001 - 3000	\$150
• 3001 – 4,000	\$200
• 4,001 up	\$300

This past Green Up Day we saw the resurgence of gatherings which really gave an amazing boost to communities. Let's keep building strong communities by working together.

Mark your calendar for **Green Up Day 2024, May 4th** - its bound to be out-of-this-world! Also look for information about our very special VT Top to Bottom Green Up as we try for a Guinness Book of Records record.

I am honored to serve your community and look forward to working with you again.  
Thank you so very much!

Kate Alberghini, Executive Director  
802-522-7245 • [greenup@greenupvermont.org](mailto:greenup@greenupvermont.org)

## The Collaborative

Dear Peru Residents,

Your support for The Collaborative and the 2024-25 budget is appreciated. Since our beginnings in 1999 as a small after-school program, we now offer a diverse array of individual, youth, and family programs focused on preventing youth substance use, supporting working families, and creating a healthy community. In the town budget, we are seeking funds to further The Collaborative's mission by supporting substance-free middle and high school youth and childcare programs for working families.

We are excited to share a significant shift in our mission, aligning with Surgeon General Vivek Murthy's warning about the serious consequences of isolation. Our new logo and mission, "Empowering Healthy Youth, Families, and Communities through Acceptance, Resilience, and Engagement," reflect our commitment to addressing the epidemic of isolation.

**Acceptance:** Through programs like Resilience Through Understanding (RTU) and student empowerment groups, we celebrate differences and create a safe space where every individual feels valued and understood.

**Resilience:** Mentoring and RTU initiatives equip youth with tools to navigate life's challenges, promoting healthy skills and instilling inner strength to resist the allure of substance misuse.

**Engagement:** Community events, afterschool and summer camp programs bring diverse groups together, fostering connections that serve to deter isolation and its harmful consequences.

We are honored and inspired by the 360 RTU participants from 8 schools that are participating in over 50 virtual, asynchronous, and in-person substance misuse and healthy alternative programs. These programs are primarily led by community volunteers who recognize the value of this education in our community. With a focus on healthy choices, this project allows for our young people to pick their unique path toward a healthier future. Our afterschool program meets daily providing a safe supervised space with time for homework, projects, healthy snacks, and free play. Our mentor program has students meeting with an adult mentor weekly to encourage great social and recreational connections.

**We are requesting your approval of \$750** in your town's budget to assist The Collaborative in continuing to provide services to our community. We appreciate your involvement!

Sincerely,  
Maryann Morris  
Executive Director

## Burr & Burton Letter from Headmaster



Burr & Burton  
Academy

OFFICE OF THE HEADMASTER

December, 19, 2023

Dear Sending Towns:

The Board of Trustees of Burr and Burton Academy has approved sending town tuition at \$20,966 for the 2024–2025 school year, a 4.9% increase. Our tuition for private pay individuals (i.e., non-sending towns) will be \$23,589.

In reaching this figure, the board sought first and foremost to maintain affordability to our sending towns. The Vermont tax commissioner estimates that statewide education spending will increase 12% and overall taxes will increase 18%. We hope our tuition increase of 4.9% will help offset these onerous figures. Our tuition remains well below that of any of the other historic town academies as well as many public high schools.

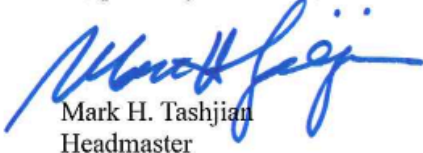
We also are deeply committed to the quality of education, and our costs will necessarily increase. We are supporting the faculty and staff in efforts to offset inflation not only in their lives, but in the face of skyrocketing healthcare costs, which are estimated to increase by 16% statewide this year. Our faculty and staff are the lifeblood of this school, and offering meaningful salaries and benefits allows us to attract and retain the absolute best teachers we can find.

We will also continue to keep a sharp eye on managing expenses so each dollar spent has maximum impact.


As always, our tuition does not cover the total cost of a BBA education. We supplement tuition revenues with private fundraising of \$1.5–\$2.0 million as well as an endowment draw of approximately \$1 million. In addition, we raise money privately for all capital projects so the beautiful facilities that serve all students come at no cost to taxpayers. No public debt, no public bonds.

Since 1829, Burr & Burton Academy has served the Northshire communities in partnership. We appreciate the support, and we do everything we can to continue to be a school that is a point of pride and worthy of support from all of you.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark H. Tashjian  
Headmaster



Charley Stevenson  
Chair of the Board of Trustees



