

BENNINGTON

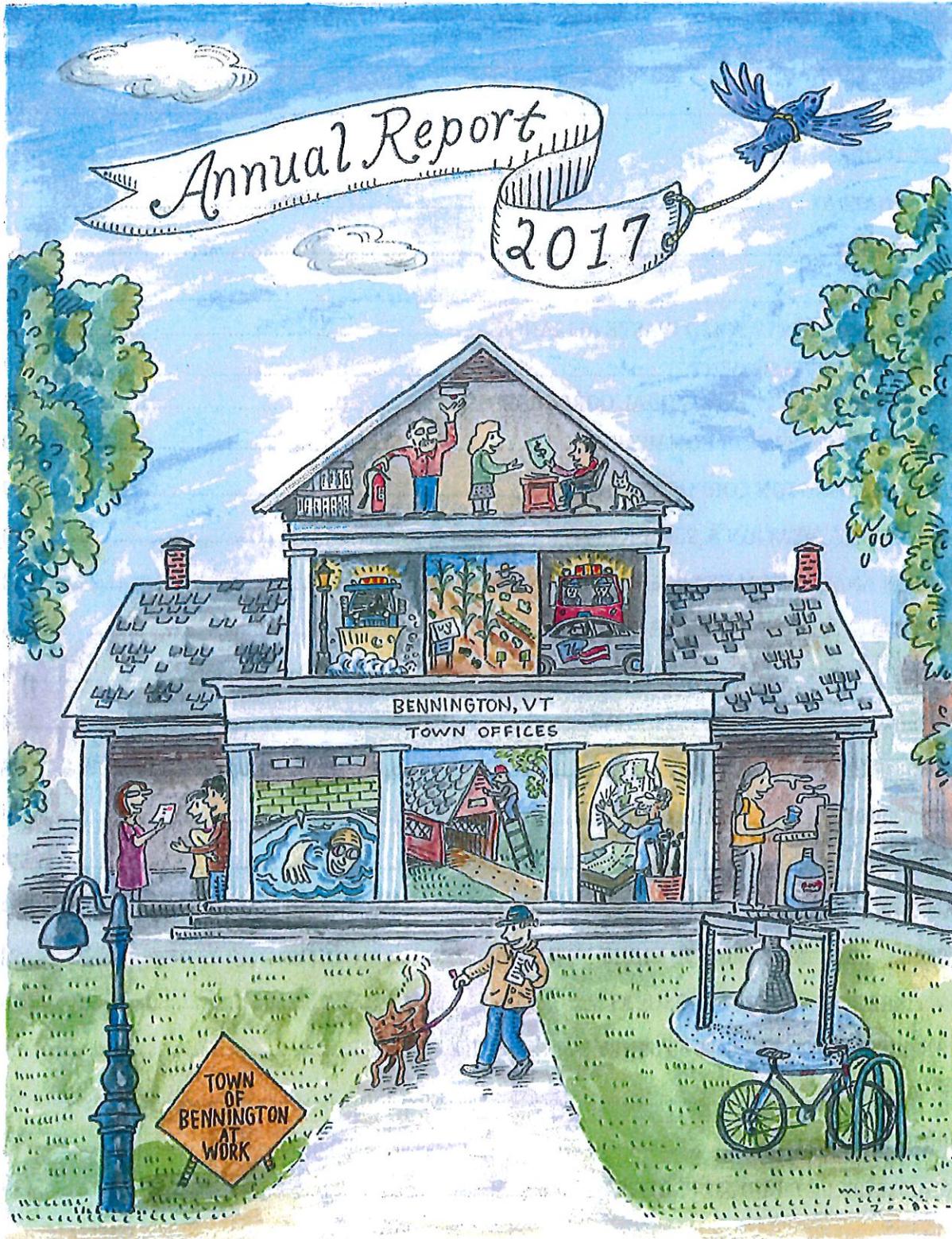


Illustration by Matthew Perry

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EMPLOYEE MISSION STATEMENT PREAMBLE

The role of government is to serve and protect its people; to provide a quality of life which is environmentally safe, community oriented, and visionary. Furthermore, government can help to make its citizens' lives rich in educational, cultural and social opportunities. In the Town of Bennington that role extends to administrative and fiscal services, police, fire, water, sewer and highway maintenance and construction, recreation, health, housing, planning and community development.

Our mission is to provide the necessary municipal services in an atmosphere that is helpful and caring, yet professional and efficient.

We must have a commitment to excellence, take pride in our work, have a desire to succeed, have a sense of community, and a belief that a responsive government is the foundation for success.

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Select Board

Thomas H. Jacobs, Select Board Chair

2017 was an interesting year for the Bennington Select Board with Chad Gordon and Carson Thurber taking their seats on the board on April 1st.

Seven wonderful citizens, Jonathan Cohen, Robert Ebert, P. Lynn Green, Michael Keane, Daniel Malmberg, Sean-Marie Oller and Robert Plunkett were appointed to the Charter Review Committee. They spent about six months meeting regularly to review the Bennington's Charter in its entirety. Since the Charter had not seen such a comprehensive review in many years it was a monumental undertaking for this dedicated committee. The committee presented its final report for the Select Board's consideration. I expect that the board will offer the Charter revisions to the Bennington voters in the summer of 2018. This important document provides a guide and direction for the governance of our community.

One of the biggest challenges for the board and one of the biggest wins was the effort to gain designation of a portion of our downtown as a Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) District. Having a TIF will allow redevelopment opportunity to be enhanced in the downtown. With a TIF, a portion of the tax revenue generated by the enhanced value of a redeveloped project (i.e. the Putnam Block) would be used to pay down any bond voted by the town for the infrastructure improvements in the TIF district. It's a terrific tool in our redevelopment arsenal.

The new Public Works garage on Bowen Road will allow the various Public Works Department to be housed under one roof. The property previously used by the Highway Department on Orchard Road and Depot Street will be sold or leased for more productive benefit.

While we have many challenges going forward, our Select Board is so thankful to have the support of the town's management and support team. The Select Board's charge to itself is to give Bennington a great return on the citizenry's investment. We have a wonderful town that we can make even more special in 2018 and beyond.

Boards and Commissions

The following list of the Town of Bennington Boards and Commissions includes a brief description of the duties of each office and those positions that will be available in March and May 2018.

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS - An elected position with a salary currently set at \$1,400. per year with terms of three years. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month plus the Annual Town meeting each year, and any special meetings which may be required. Select Board Members are empowered by statute and charter to determine policy, finances, ordinances and general direction of Town business, appoint the Town Manager and members of Boards and Commissions.

(elected 3-year term)

Donald A. Campbell	3/2018
Jim Carroll	3/2018
Jeanne Connor	3/2019
Thomas H. Jacobs	3/2019
Jeannette Jenkins	3/2019
Chad Gordon	3/2020
Carson Thurber	3/2020

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD - The Development Review Board hears and decides upon permit applications regarding development in the Town of Bennington including, Variance Requests, Conditional Use Requests, Site Plans, Design Plans, Planned Unit Developments, Planned Residential Developments, Subdivisions, and Appeals of the Zoning Administrator's decisions. Board members will be expected to attend at least one training session annually to develop and maintain the skills and knowledge necessary to perform their powers and duties on the Board.

(appointed to 3-year term)

Charles W. Copp	5/2018
Barry Horst	5/2018
Daniel Malmborg	5/2019
Jane Griswold Radocchia	5/2019
Ron Alderman	5/2020
William Barney	5/2020
Charles N. Kokoras	5/2020

FOREST FIRE WARDEN - An appointed position by the State of Vermont with Town Approval with a term of 5 years.

(appointed to 5-year term)

VERMONT TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN - Matthew G. Hathaway	06/30/19
VERMONT DEPUTY TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN - Henry Higgins	06/30/19
VERMONT DEPUTY TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN - Position Vacant	06/30/19

HEALTH OFFICER - An appointed position by the State of Vermont with Town Approval with a term of 3 years.

(appointed to 3-year term)

HEALTH OFFICER - Larry D. McLeod	03/31/2019
DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER - Kevin J. Goodhue	07/31/2019

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of three years and requires expertise or qualifications in the fields of architecture, historic preservation, etc. Meetings are held twice per month. The Historic Preservation Commission is empowered by ordinance to act in the preservation and identification of Bennington's historic sites and structures; oversee the survey and review of historic sites eligible for the National Register, educate and advise other boards and commissions as well as the general public with regard to historic preservation matters.

(appointed to 3-year term)

Anne G. Bugbee	3/2018
Michael P. McDonough	3/2018
Jeffrey Goldstone	3/2020
Joseph H. Hall	3/2020

HOUSING AUTHORITY - An autonomous body appointed for terms of five years by the Select Board which acts as the Board of Directors for Housing Authority properties (Willowbrook, Brookside Apartments, Beech Court, and Walloomsac Apartments) and oversees the staff and sets policies for operation.

(appointed to 5-year term)

Scott Fox	3/2020
Kristi L. Pepoon, MSW, AAP	3/2018
Nancy V. Messina	3/2019
Sharyn L. Brush	3/2022
Sandra Bessette	3/2021

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

(elected 2-year term)

Position Open	1/31/2019
Susan Beal	1/31/2019
Shannon Behan	1/31/2019
Barbara Bluto	1/31/2019
Marlene Driscoll	1/31/2019
Deborah Giroux	1/31/2019
James Gulley, Sr.	1/31/2019
Michele Hogan	1/31/2019
Albert Krawczyk	1/31/2019
Brian Maroney, Jr.	1/31/2019
James Marsden	1/31/2019
Anne Mook	1/31/2019
Mary A. Morrissey	1/31/2019
Marjorie Robinson	1/31/2019
David B. Shaffe	1/31/2019

BOARD OF LISTERS - An appointed position with a term of two years. Meetings are held once or twice per month or as needed. The Listers inspect properties, approve assessments developed by the Assessor's Office and hear and act upon appeals by property owners.

(appointed to 2-year term)

Position Open	3/2018
Carol L. Holm	3/2018
Robert W. Ebert	3/2019

TOWN MODERATOR

(elected to 3-year term)

Jason P. Morrissey

3/2019

PLANNING COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of four years. Meetings will be established when the Commission meets. This is a five-member board. The Planning Commission drafts, revises, updates and upholds the provisions of the Town Plan; makes recommendations to the Select Board regarding amendments to the Zoning Bylaw, sign ordinance, and subdivision regulations; actively participates in the preservation of historic sites and agricultural lands; and is charged with the overall planning of Bennington.

(appointed to 4-year term)

Nicholas T. Lasoff

5/2018

Kenneth Swierad

5/2019

Robert W. Ebert

5/2020

Charles W. Copp

5/2021

Michael P. McDonough

5/2021

REGIONAL COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of two years. The Regional Commission, part of a county-wide planning commission charged with development of the overall regional planning policies, is empowered to develop budgets, employ staff and assist in development of a regional plan.

(appointed to 2-year term)

Daniel Monks

3/2018

Position Open

3/2019

TOWN SERVICE OFFICER - An appointed position with a term of one year. The Town Service Officer acts as an agent for the Town and operates a voucher system to provide housing and meals to transients in emergency situations.

(appointed to 1 year term)

Position Open

4/14/2018

Notes:

Manager's Message

We, in Bennington's government, work hard to provide the services our residents deem necessary, police and fire protection, highway maintenance, recreation opportunities for people of all ages, and municipal water and sewer services, where feasible. We also work to improve opportunities for jobs, housing, and viable and sustainable economic development through responsible land use planning principles.

This year's Report introduces the new Municipal Report Card, our new, more focused department reports. You will find the department reports highlighting accomplishments and outlining goals for the coming year. It features more comparative analysis and is more directed in its content. We hope to use this to identify success measures that are meaningful for the staff and the public. Those key areas are customer service, operations and resources, and economic and community vitality.

As I have done in the past, I would now like to outline the proposed FY2019 fiscal year budget, to be voted on March 6, 2018. The Town budget presented to the voters this year is increasing \$234,970.00 or 1.86 %. Considering all other revenues, the combined property tax rate, based on last year's Grand List, would increase by \$0.0099. These calculations include the Bennington Free Library, \$470,000.00, the John McCullough Library in North Bennington, \$22,000.00, North Bennington Recreation, \$6,000.00, Lake Paran, \$2,700.00, and the Bennington Rescue Squad, included in the General Fund budget for the first time, at \$150,000.00, all are included as line items in the budget following reviews of their requests and subsequent approval by the Select Board. The Agencies on the ballot this year, with the exception of the Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse (BCAACA), are all requesting the same amounts as last year. The BCAACA is seeking an additional \$2,500.00 and is on the ballot by petition for \$5,000.00. The total amount requested by the agencies on the ballot is \$129,300.00. If the Agencies on the ballot are all approved, it will add an estimated \$0.0126, bringing the total increase to \$0.0226. The Town staff and Select Board worked very hard to present a budget that is as balanced with the projected revenues as possible. I believe we have succeeded. We now ask the voters for their support.

I note that the ballot this year includes a petitioned Charter change proposal. This proposal asks the voters to amend our Charter by creating a first step towards a mayoral form of government. Please read the proposed amendment carefully and consider its impact before voting. It proposes to change Bennington's form of government dramatically.

We also have two open Select Board seats. The filing date is January 29, 2018 at 5 pm.

I am pleased to report that the new Public Works Facility at 78 Bowen Road, purchased with voter-approved bond monies, is now occupied. It is the new home of the Bennington Highway and Water Departments. We plan to celebrate its completion with a community open house this Spring.

I have been very fortunate to work with many talented people, staff and Board members. We all work hard to find solutions that are in the best interest of the residents of Bennington. Thank you all, and a special thank you to the community for your support and patience throughout the year.

Respectfully
Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager

Town of Bennington

Goals for 2017

	Didn't meet goal	Met goal	Reason
Provide a safe Community			
1. Increase officer involvement in the local schools		X	4 Officers in schools
2. Create an effective body worn camera program		X	Implemented
3. Continue drug enforcement		X	See statistics
4. Improve recruitment and retention in the Fire Department		X	Program in place
5. Implement new radio frequency to improve ground communication & firefighter safety		X	Implemented

Provide opportunities for recreation			
1. Continue to improve youth programs		X	Berkshire Y offering summer programs
2. Continue to improve Senior programs	X		New group in place to help
3. Increase participation at the Rec Center		X	See statistics
4. Continue to develop pathways and trail systems		X	Interim Ninja Pathway; White Rocks trail parking

Encourage new development and growth			
1. Assist in Putnam Block redevelopment		X	\$200,000 loan;1.0 million CDBG
2. Provide an efficient and effective permitting program		X	See statistics
3. Encourage new developments to improve grand list		X	See Permitting report

Enhance the quality of life			
1. Continue project catalyst		X	Now merged with ACT
2. Develop downtown parks / green spaces		X	Park at 336 designed
3. Complete the Pleasant St. Enhancement Project	X		Vtrans & utilities delay

Improve Infrastructure			
1. Continue lead service line replacements (10 Min.)		X	36 Completed
2. Continue Wastewater Treatment Facility upgrade		X	Bond passed; design begun
3. Continue road paving (10 Miles Min.)	X		8 Miles completed PFOA project prevented, completion of more miles
4. Continue sidewalk replacement (2500 lin. Ft. Min.)		X	2,770 lin. Ft. completed

Statistics

	2016	2017
Police Department		
Criminal arrests	684	721
# of offenses	981	1048
# of calls	8,833	8,476

Fire Department		
# of calls	204	205
# of structure fires	12	0

Highway Department		
Miles paved	15,175	8
Lineal feet sidewalk	3,702	2,770
Lineal feet storm drain	1,754	3,500

Water/ Sewer Department		
Waterline / Hydrant repairs	35	21
Lead line service replaced	5	36
Manholes repaired	75	70
Sewer mains cleaned televised (lin. Ft)	20,180	1,200

Recreation		
# of participants at Center	40,469	43,789
Non-member pool users	18,541	22,492

Permitting		
# of permits issued	120	204
Estimated cost	\$11,592,210.00	\$47,580,585.00

Police

Paul J. Doucette, Chief of Police

Officers made 721 criminal arrests for a total of 1,048 offenses in 2017. Officers responded to 8,476 calls for service, issued 4,092 Vermont Civil Violation Complaints and issued 2365 warnings for observed violations. Officers from the Bennington Police Department investigated 447 motor vehicle crashes: 400 crashes involved property damage only, 46 crashes involved personal injury and 1 crash involved a fatality.

Officer Robert Murawski and K-9 Gracie successfully completed the K-9 Tracking Course at the Vermont Police Academy. Officer Murawski and Gracie are currently working together on patrol. In 2018, Officer Murawski and Gracie will attend narcotic detection training.

Patrol officers have been trained and are now carrying electronic control devices. Each officer was issued a body camera and modern video recording systems were installed in all marked patrol units. Officers received additional first aid training and are carrying tourniquets and Narcan.

During 2017, three full-time employees joined the Bennington Police Department. Dustin Lynds joined the Department and attended the 104th Basic Course for Police Professionals graduating in November of 2017. Kimberly Coonradt joined the Department as a dispatcher. Benjamin Cassavaugh joined the Department and is currently training to achieve his certification as a law enforcement officer in the State of Vermont. In the upcoming year, Lt. David Dutcher will retire from the Department and we will conduct a promotional process as well as another hiring process.

All members of the Bennington Police Department continue to receive training in a variety of topics. During 2017 members of the Department participated in 2,995 hours of training. Our goal is to train and retain the members of the Bennington Police Department. Training is needed to secure the future of the Bennington Police Department.

During 2018, members of the Bennington Police Department and Bennington Police Association will conduct several community based events. We have been reviewing needs of our local youth within the Town of Bennington. We identified the need for a bicycle safety event and the importance of youth having access to quality bicycle helmets at no cost. We will be presenting another New Experience Camp in the summer of 2018. Our Department and Association recognize the need for local youth to be engaged with law enforcement officers in a positive manner. We look forward to working with local businesses, schools and stakeholders to make our events successful.

As always, I welcome questions, comments or suggestions and am I always looking for feedback on how members of the Bennington Police Department can improve the quality of life for members of the Bennington community.

Fire

Chief Steve Crawford

During calendar year 2017, members of the Bennington Fire Department responded to 205 calls for service resulting in 1,204 volunteer hours. Bennington Fire Department members assigned to our fire prevention team instructed fire safety and prevention methods to 1,789 youth as well as 379 adults. A total of 1,129 volunteer hours of service were dedicated to fire safety and prevention alone.

The Bennington Fire Department had some great accomplishments in 2017. We were able to replace all of our self-contained breathing apparatus to new 4500 PSI units from Scott. These units are more efficient and have the latest safety technology. We have also purchased new responding software for "Who's Responding," allowing the fire department technology to see which members are responding to calls for service. The software also provides an array of features to help with our emergency response to the Bennington community.

As members of the Bennington Fire Department look into the future, our goal is to continue to serve the Bennington community with a high standard of excellence. Volunteer firefighters have served this community for over 100 years! The Bennington Fire Department will look for the support of the community in our effort to purchase a new ladder truck as our current ladder truck reaches 21 years of service. We have formed a truck committee that is working on building a truck for the future needs of Bennington. The Bennington Fire Department has the only ladder truck in southern Bennington County.

It is truly an honor to be the Bennington Fire Chief and leader of a great organization. The amount of time Bennington Fire Department members give to the community for training, calls for service, and prevention and safety efforts is extraordinary. Looking at the current times, and the world as it is, we are fortunate to have the dedicated members allowing the Town of Bennington to maintain this volunteer organization.

Department of Public Works

R.J. Joly, Public Works Director
Larry Gates, Assistant Public Works Director

HIGHWAY

The Highway Department is made up of a crew of 14-Laborers, 2-Working Foreman, a Public Works Director and an Assistant Public Works Director. The department manages and maintains 128 miles of roads, 13 bridges, 475 catch basins, 40 miles of sidewalks, and hundreds of miles of ditches, culverts, and swales. The Highway Department is also responsible for downtown sweeping, sidewalk blowing, trash removal, and roadside mowing.

2017 Top Accomplishments

- Paved over 8 miles of road
- 2,770 linear feet of concrete curb and sidewalk installed
- Moved into a new public works facility at 78 Bowen Road / and all excavation needed
- Painted Papermill Covered Bridge
- Installed 3,500 linear feet of storm drainage in streets that never had any
- Rebuilt Emmons and Mt. Anthony Roads after July 2nd, thunderstorm damage on West side of town.
- Installed Ninja Bridge beams for decking to be installed by others.
- Built the White Rocks Trail Parking lot
- The River Walk Way Park, between North and School Streets, paving and improvements
- Awarded 2-Class 2 paving project grants (Berard Street / South Benmont bridge membrane project)

2018 Priorities

- Peppermill Bridge replacement
- Install 9.5 miles of pavement
- Install 2,500 linear feet of curb and sidewalk
- Replace and install new storm drainage in all areas of new road construction
- Keep ahead of VTRANS with manhole rebuilds, culvert replacements, and water line replacements on Rt7, Rt67 and Rt9 paving projects

Water

The Water Department has a four-man crew, plus a Working Foreman. Together they are responsible for supplying clean drinking water to approximately 13,250 users through 62 miles of water mains and 3,700 connections. The crew also runs and maintains the Water Filtration Plant in Woodford, six pumping stations and five water tanks throughout town. Additionally, they maintain and flush bi-annually approximately 500 Fire Hydrants. This year the Water Department saw two longtime employees, Terry Morse, Water Resources Superintendent and Mark White, Water Foreman both retire. The Town then merged Water,

Sewer and Highway Departments to form the Department of Public Works. RJ Joly, Highway Superintendent was promoted to the DPW Director. Water Operator Tony Onorato was promoted to Water Foreman and Larry Gates was promoted to Assistant DPW Director. Together the DPW Director and Assistant Director will oversee the Water and Wastewater Departments.

2017 Accomplishments include

- Total line/hydrant repairs 21
- Lead line replacements 36
- Water system bacteria samples taken 219
- Total Water Produced 560 Million Gallons
- Average Gallons used per day 1.53 Million Gallons
- Dewey Street Phase 3 Line Extension
- PFOA line extensions began

2018 Goals

- Complete the PFOA water line extensions
- System wide digital mapping (Utility Cloud)
- Continue Lead line change outs
- Complete the transition into our new facility at 78 Bowen Rd
- Train two new operators
- Work with and stay ahead of VTRANS paving project with valve replacements on Route 9, Route 7 and Route 67

Sewer

The Wastewater crew is a five-man crew plus a Laboratory Technician and a Chief Operator. Together they are responsible for treating 13-Billion gallons of wastewater collected each year through 67 miles of sanitary sewer mains ranging in size from 4-inches to 36-inches. They are also approximately 1,300 manholes and five pumping stations to maintain. This last year a lot of their attention had been focused on the repair and/or replacement of the Rotating Biological Contactors (RBC's). With the passing of the \$9.85 million-dollar bond we now have the money to completely replace all 30 RBC's and do the much-needed upgrades to the thirty-year old Wastewater Plant.

2017 Accomplishments include

- Sewer manholes rebuilt 70
- Sewer lines cleaned/televised 1,200 LF (linear feet)
- Total wastewater treated 1.3 Billion Gallons
- Average gallons per day treated 3.57 Million Gallons
- Average % BOD/Solids removed 91% BOD/92% Solids
- Replaced two RBC's
- Cleaned Secondary Digester

2018 Goals

- Replace 30 Rotating Biological Contactors
- Begin construction on the Treatment Plant upgrade
- Replace Grit Pumps
- Rebuild approximately 80 manholes ahead of the VTrans State paving projects for Route 9, Route 7 and Route 67

Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance

Arlington, Bennington, Dorset, Glastenbury, Manchester, Pownal, Rupert, Sandgate, Searsburg, Shaftsbury, Stamford, Sunderland, and Woodford

Solid Waste Implementation Plan and the Universal Recycling Law: In December of 2015, the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance adopted a solid waste implementation plan or "SWIP" to comply with both the Universal Recycling Law (Act 148) and the materials management plan developed by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. The SWIP describes how the member towns will increase recycling, reduce the amount of materials sent to landfills, and provide outreach program for residents, schools, businesses and institutions to assist them in recycling. The Alliance provides information on their website (www.bcswavt.org) and Facebook page as well as in local newspapers.

School and Business Outreach: This past year, the Alliance provided outreach to Burr and Burton, Pownal Elementary and Stamford Elementary schools including assisting Pownal Elementary with on-site composting. The Alliance provided outreach to over 40 businesses on ways to increase recycling, manage food scraps, and properly dispose of hazardous materials.

Funding and Grants: The member towns provide most of the funding for programs. From July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 the Alliance received over \$25,000 in grants from the Agency of Natural Resources and from the Agency for Agriculture and Markets for sales of compost bins and for household hazardous waste events. The Alliance also received \$4,000.00 from the High Meadows Fund to assist the towns of Pownal, Searsburg, Shaftsbury and Stamford in starting food scrap collection at their transfer stations.

Programs and Events: The Alliance sponsors and supports many programs to assist residents, businesses, schools and institutions to properly dispose of materials. The following are some of our major programs.

- Household Hazardous Waste Events: The Alliance held two household hazardous waste (HHW) events in the spring and fall of 2017. The spring event was sponsored by the Town of Bennington and held at the Bennington Transfer Station. The fall event was managed by the Bennington County Regional Commission and held at the Dorset School. Over 400 households participated in the two events. In 2018, the Alliance will again hold two events for the 13 Alliance towns. One will be held in Bennington on May 12, 2018 and the second at the Dorset School on September 15, 2018.
- Electronics Collections: The Vermont E-Cycles program provides for free disposal of electronic devices including computers, monitors, printers, computer peripherals, and

televisions, regardless of brand, age, or condition, for consumers, charities, school districts, and small businesses. Free collection locations in Bennington County include the Bennington, Northshire (Dorset), Pownal, Searsburg, and Sunderland Transfer Stations and other sites listed at <http://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid/product-stewardship/electronics>. The Dorset School also holds annual E-Waste Collection events.

- **Fluorescent Bulbs:** Vermont has also implemented a plan to accept used fluorescent bulbs and compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL's) at various retail. These bulbs contain mercury, which is a hazardous substance. Residents can dispose of bulbs at several hardware stores and other retail establishments and at several of the transfer stations. More information is available at <http://www.bcswavt.org/programs-and-projects/fluorescent-bulbs/>.
- **Paint Collections:** PaintCare Inc. is a non-profit organization established to assist paint manufacturers to plan and operate paint stewardship programs in the United States, including Vermont. Both latex and oil-based paint have been collected at HHW events and at special PaintCare events, and several local hardware stores accept paint. To find a location, residents may visit <http://www.paintcare.org/drop-off-locations/>.
- **Battery Recycling:** Primary (alkaline) batteries and rechargeable batteries are now accepted at many retailers and at the Bennington, Northshire, Sunderland and Pownal Transfer Stations. You can find locations at: <http://www.bcswavt.org/programs-and-projects/battery-recycling/>. For more information, visit Call2Recycle at <http://www.call2recycle.org/what-can-i-recycle/>.
- **Textiles:** The Bennington, Northshire, Sunderland, Shaftsbury and Pownal transfer stations have textile boxes where residents can donate clothing and shoes. Boxes are also located throughout the Alliance area. Visit www.bcswavt.org for locations. Goodwill in Bennington also accepts clothing donations as well as other household items, books and used electronic devices. Visit them at <http://www.goodwill-berkshires.com/>.
- **Leaf and Yard Waste, Food Scraps and Other Organics:** All transfer stations accept leaf and yard waste, clean wood and food scraps. Visit <http://www.bcswavt.org/programs-and-projects/transfer-stations/> for information on your transfer station.
- **Construction and Demolition Debris:** All transfer stations accept construction and demolition debris from builders and do-it-yourself homeowners. The TAM Pownal facility also accepts construction and demolition debris from residents and businesses.
- **Prescription Drugs:** Prescription drugs should be properly disposed when they are no longer needed as they can make their way into water sources and can pose a hazard in the home. The Bennington Police Department, the Manchester Police Department, the Bennington County Sheriff and Southwestern Vermont Medical Center accept prescription drugs. Go to <http://www.bcswavt.org/programs-and-projects/disposing-of-prescription-drug/> for more information.

Community Development

Zirwat Chowdhury, Director

In 2017, with the task of economic development contracted to the Bennington County Industrial Corporation (BCIC), the Office of Economic and Community Development was reconfigured into the Office of Community Development. The Office of Community Development coordinates and directs the municipality's efforts in improving the quality of life in Bennington. It works closely with community partners to create and provide a nourishing environment- including better and more affordable housing, food, education, training, and indoor and outdoor recreation for infants, youth, adults, and seniors. Following is a summary of its activities in 2017:

Revolving Loan Program: Administration of the Town's Revolving Loan Program, which provides financing to businesses and individuals with limited access to commercial lines of credit, with the aim of nurturing small businesses and improving the housing stock. The loan program also provides competitive, low-interest funds for downtown businesses.

New Loans in 2017:

Bennington Revolving Loan Program (BRLP):	\$ 76,000
Town-Wide Housing Loan Program:	\$142,500
Bennington Economic Development Fund:	\$ 10,000

YMCA-Partnership: Partnered with the Berkshire-YMCA for the first time in 2017 to provide a children's summer camp at the Recreation Center. Enrollment at the 2017 summer camp was nearly three times higher than in previous years, and all four camp counsellors were hired locally.

Community Development Block Grants: Assists community groups in applying for community development block grants administered by the State and provides reporting to the State on grants awarded.

New CDBG in 2017:

Putnam Redevelopment Project (\$1,000,000)

ACT-Partnership: Like many towns and cities across the United States, Bennington is also facing the challenges of an opioid crisis. In 2016, the Office of Economic and Community Development spearheaded Project Catalyst to use local resources to target high-risk populations that have demonstrated active substance use. The goal of Project Catalyst was to reduce substance abuse, positively impact youth, and reduce blight across the community. With the reorganization in 2017 of the Alliance for Community Transformations (ACT), a community-driven, collaborative effort that addresses Substance Use Disorder and focuses on youth advocacy and support, the Office of Community Development decided to disband Project Catalyst and redirect its resources and efforts towards ACT.

Bennington County Industrial Corporation

Summary of Contract Activities

The Town of Bennington and the Bennington County Industrial Corporation (BCIC) entered into an agreement for BCIC to provide economic development activities on behalf of the Town commencing July 1, 2017. The report below summarizes some of the highlights of that work.

Business Visitations and Support

BCIC staff have visited with 30 business since July 1. The director of the Vermont Training Program accompanied BCIC staff on ten of the visits to discuss VTP grant applications. Two local companies have received VTP grants in the final half of 2017: NSK Steering Systems was awarded \$208,000 in July, and Energizer was awarded \$76,000 in December. In September, BCIC received a \$17,500 award from the Agency of Administration's Building Communities Grants program on behalf of Knock-Out Victory, a local mixed martial arts studio and youth fitness collaborative. The grant was awarded to offset construction and fit-up costs for its new facility.

Workforce Development

BCIC's Workforce and Education Committee is leading the region's workforce efforts with a variety of programs that develop and retain talent at all age levels: internship and certification programs for adults; the Reality Fair, Sophomore Summit, and Emerging Leaders program for high schoolers; the Shires Challenge and Seedlings program for elementary and middle school students; and the community-wide Career Week program held in April. In July, a Northshire chapter of the BCIC Workforce and Education Committee was established as part of BCIC's ongoing effort to increase its presence regionally. The Northshire committee is co-chaired by Pauline Moore, economic development coordinator for the Town of Manchester, and Wendy Morse of the VT Department of Labor who also co-chairs the Southshire chapter.

Entrepreneurial Support and Facilitation of Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

A \$15,000 grant from the Vermont Community Foundation in June (with a supplementary \$1,500 grant in December) has been used to support BCIC's entrepreneurial programming this fiscal year. In October, BCIC staff co-hosted an Open House at Williams Financial for individuals interested in the Ice House Entrepreneurial Program. The eight-week program welcomed twelve participants, with most living in Bennington and most under 40 years of age. The program completed its first iteration with classes at CCV and a final meeting and celebration at the Lightning Jar on December 18. The program's Steering Committee has secured the services of another facilitator for the spring.

Regional Economic Development Capacity and Coalition Building

The Regional Economic Development (RED) Group, convened and supported by BCIC staff since February 2017, continues to meet monthly to discuss regional data and directions for Bennington County and Southern Vermont as a whole. In October, the US Economic Development Administration accepted an application for grant funding to support the creation of a Comprehensive Economic Development Zone for Southern Vermont, allocating \$70,000 to support staffing and consulting capacity for the process.

Historic Preservation Commission

Zirwat Chowdhury, Director of Community Development

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) members serve the Development Review Board, Select Board, and Planning Commission in an advisory capacity, and in so doing, help to coordinate activities that are important to Bennington's preservation goals for its historic and archaeological resources. As a participant in Vermont's Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, the HPC has the ability to promote the value of historic resources in local community development efforts. Through partnerships at the local, state, and federal levels, the CLG program can provide grants and technical assistance to the HPC for a range of activities that encourage preservation of our historic and archaeological resources. The Commission works with Bennington's Director of Community Development, Zirwat Chowdhury, who serves as its Secretary.

The Bennington HPC maintains a page on the Town of Bennington website. The Commission's webpage provides home-owners, residents, and developers with information and guidance for Bennington's historic downtown architecture, streetscapes, and historic resources. The resources on the website encourage the preservation of Bennington's architectural history and enable property owners to understand their historic buildings better and make informed choices in planning design changes to their buildings. The site includes the HPC's preservation manual, *Time and Place in Bennington: A Handbook for the Central Bennington Historic District*.

The Bennington HPC website can be viewed at: <http://benningtonvt.org/boards-commissions/hpc/>

Better Bennington Corporation

John Shannahan, Director

The mission of the Bennington Downtown Alliance is to lead and support public and private efforts that promote and enhance downtown as the vital commercial and cultural heart of the community. While that mission may be brief in words, it's broad enough to put us in the lead position as we partner with so many individuals and organizations that, at times, it's difficult to remember we're just a small not-for-profit representing the concerns of the downtown community.

Before I share some of the highlights of the past year, it's necessary to first say thank you to the numerous, dedicated volunteers whose efforts, time, talent, and financial support make every single thing we do possible. I would love to name each one of them, and share with you everything they do behind the scenes to keep our community beautiful, inviting, and exciting, but I would have to publish a book.

That said, 2017 was a year with some enormous advancements. Most everyone is aware that downtown Bennington received the TIF designation, a powerful tool for future development. You also know that the purchase of the Putnam block was completed and is now slated for redevelopment in 2018. Those two things alone will have a major impact on downtown with hundreds of additional people living and working downtown.

We've been a leading member of the Bennington Area Arts Council since it's rebirth. As their financial agent from the beginning, we have always believed our involvement and support would lead to a stronger and more diverse community that is known for its cultural assets. I am pleased to share that the National Center for Arts Research at SMU agrees; in 2017 they named Bennington as the 3rd most arts vibrant community, with populations of less than 50,000, in the United States. That designation puts us in the top 5% of all cities in the country; something all our residents need to recognize and be proud of.

As funds have allowed, we've been creating a community boardroom. Once completed we will have a professional meeting space for up to 20 people that will be available for corporate and organizational meetings in downtown. We also reached our fundraising goal for the Park at 336! Groundbreaking will be taking place this spring thanks to the support of all those who contributed. Our events continue to grow, and each year attract new and more diverse crowds.

Malls, once Main Street America's biggest competitors, are closing all over the country, however, most Main Streets have survived. So too will they survive the effects of on-line shopping, especially when they continue to get the support of their local leaders and citizens. While Bennington has seen its share of challenges it continues to grow with a net gain of 4 new businesses in 2017. The shift is more toward food, beverage, entertainment, and professional services than retail, but we can definitely still boast that we have a bookstore, toy stores, men's clothing, interactive gaming, fine dining, chocolate shop, musical instrument shops, jewelry, eyeglasses, cafes, breweries, VT products, art supplies, gift shops, computer, galleries, salons, live equity theatre... See where I'm heading with this?

Parks and Recreation & Senior Center

Tracy Knights, Director

The Recreation Center is located on 655 Gage Street. It is the administrative office for the Town of Bennington Parks & Recreation Department. The center is a municipal facility and is supported by the town of Bennington taxpayers. The Bennington Senior Center is located

at 124 Pleasant Street. It provides a variety of programs for seniors and is the home of the Meals and Wheels Program.

The membership or daily fee at the Recreation Center entitles the user to the six lane, 25-yard heated pool, sauna, showers and weight room at the Recreation Department.

The Recreation Center's Rec Trac computer system recorded 43,789 visits from members and patrons paying the daily fee. The visit count doesn't include the numerous people who come for free swims, school groups, day cares and swim teams or swim meets. Membership and daily fees totaled \$85,613.00.

The swimming pool is also used by members and non-members for many programs, therapeutic and recreational swimming opportunities. Adaptive physical education classes, day cares, school groups, swim teams and special programs are a few examples of groups who pay for private swimming time. The pool is maintained at a comfortable temperature to suit the needs of the variety of ages who use it. A total of 22,492 people which are not members or didn't pay a daily fee used the swimming pool from January through December, 2017. These visits are not recorded in the Rec Trac system. Average of 5,524 people visiting the center per month.

The weight room is equipped with an 8 Station Universal machine, Hack/Leg Press machine, Peck Deck machine, Olympic benches, free weights, dumbbells, steppers, rowers, treadmills, stationary bikes, elliptical machine and a Hip Flexor machine. Ages 12 years and older are welcome to use the weight room during building hours.

Water Exercise Class, swim lessons, Lifeguard Training Courses, and birthday parties are a few examples of programs offered by the Recreation Department for a minimal fee. A total of \$16,414.00 was brought in from these programs and other miscellaneous sales.

The Recreation Center offers the pool and a multi-purpose room for children's birthday parties for a fee of \$50.00. The fee includes reserved pool time on Saturdays from 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m., a certified lifeguard, and the room which can be used for cake, ice cream, pizza, games, etc. If the pool is already booked for a party or event, and the room is available, it can be rented for \$20.00 per hour. There were 39 pool parties booked for 2017 totaling \$1,950.00.

Various youth and adult leagues held practices, games and tournaments at Willow Park, Beech Street and Memorial Park fields. Special events include the Egg Hunt, sport camps, memorial softball tournaments, benefit tournaments, national qualifiers, horseshoe tournaments, 4th of July Celebration, Cycle Cross, Cross Country Running and BMX races are all held at the Willow Park site. The Pavilion at Willow Park, located off East Road, and the Jim Ross Pavilion is rented out for reunions, weddings, picnics, etc. The pavilions can be rented out from April through October. Rental fees are based on the number of people using the facility. The total of rental fees were \$2,460.00.

The Recreation Department continues to work with a variety of non-profit organizations and athletic leagues helping coordinate, schedule, run or participate in local events.

Thank you for your continued support of the Parks & Recreation Department.

Sollwan and Mary Alexander Sleeman Memorial Fund

This Fund was created in September, 1998, in concert with the Richard A. Sleeman family from funds historically collected to complete the Recreation Center (formerly owned by the YMCA). As custodian of the funds, Richard A. Sleeman preserved them and helped established this Fund to assist the Town with accessibility issues at the Recreation Center. The Fund guidelines follow below.

1. *This memorial fund is for the exclusive use of the Bennington Community Recreation Center located on Gage Street in Bennington, Vermont.*
2. *Special consideration will be given to benefit the handicapped through capital improvements, equipment, or tuition for those in need as it relates to the Recreation Center.*
3. *The Fund will be expended on a ten (10) year annuitized basis for the uses noted above.*
4. *Dr. Richard Alexander Sleeman, Professor, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams, Massachusetts, represents the Sleeman Family.*

The original Fund contained \$52,156.27. During this year, \$0.00 was expended at the Recreation Center. Interest earned was added to the Fund leaving a reserve fund balance of \$6,654.03.

Notes:

Permitting, Planning & Code Enforcement

Larry McLeod, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal
 Kevin Goodhue, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal

Permit Type	2016 Permits	Dollar Volume	2017 Permits	Dollar Volume
Single Family Dwelling	2	\$270,000.00	6	\$960,000.00
Duplex	0	\$0.00	2	\$260,000.00
Mobile Homes	10	\$323,000.00	9	\$267,000.00
Apartments	1	\$75,000.00	1	\$4,750,000.00
Apartment Renovations	7	\$131,000.00	8	\$176,000.00
Condominiums	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Residential Renovations	16	\$238,600.00	26	\$933,200.00
Residential Additions	7	\$243,500.00	9	\$475,750.00
Commercial Construction	5	\$6,658,500.00	6	\$8,139,500.00
Commercial Renovations	19	\$2,209,000.00	12	\$25,204,000.00
Industrial Construction	1	\$15,000.00	1	\$450,000.00
Industrial Renovations	1	\$1,000.00	4	\$670,000.00
Garages	10	\$257,000.00	8	\$249,500.00
Sheds	26	\$38,050.00	24	\$70,850.00
Decks	11	\$57,800.00	18	\$78,050.00
Institutions	9	\$928,000.00	9	\$4,553,500.00
Signs	16	\$50,360.00	31	\$42,935.00
Use and Zoning	8	\$1,000.00	9	\$0.00
Subdivisions	3	\$0.00	7	\$0.00
Septic Systems-New/Repair	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Home Occupation	2	\$2,000.00	1	\$0.00
Propane Tank/Storage Tank	1	\$2,000.00	4	\$56,000.00
Boilers/Furnaces, A/C, RTU's	6	\$46,400.00	0	\$0.00
Tents	5	\$9,500.00	3	\$7,900.00
Handicap Access/Ramps	1	\$1,500.00	4	\$8,700.00
Concrete Slabs	2	\$6,000.00	0	\$0.00
Cell Towers	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Solar Installations	1	\$28,000.00	1	\$227,700.00
Camps	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Demolition	0	\$0.00	1	\$0.00
Totals	170	\$11,592,210.00	204	\$47,580,585.00

Health Officer

Larry McLeod, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal
Kevin Goodhue, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal

The Health Officer is the Town Official who is responsible for Public Health Problems in Town. Health Officers have the power of the Vermont Commissioner of Health and are agents of the State Health Department. Health Officers have the authority to enforce any of the Vermont Health regulations in their town. The Select Board is the local Board of Health with the Health Officer serving as the secretary and Executive Officer for Bennington, North Bennington and Old Bennington. The responsibilities of the Health Officer can be wide ranging, however, most of the time is spent in the following categories:

Rabies Management

We received and investigated 47 reported animal bites to humans in 2017, 29 from dogs, 16 from cats, 1 rat, and 1 bat. This compares to 52 in 2016, 46 in 2015, 38 in 2014, 33 in 2013, 46 in 2012, 41 in 2011, 36 in 2010, 32 in 2009. Many thanks to the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center Emergency Department for their prompt and accurate bite reports.

Rental Housing

We investigated numerous complaints pertaining to Rental Housing Health Code issues. The Vermont Rental Housing Health Code is a State-wide uniform code that specifies the minimum standards for all rental housing. As the Building Inspectors and Fire Marshals for the town, we can now include the Health Code Requirements in all of those type inspections.

Other Public Health Issues

The balance of time was spent investigating such matters as garbage complaints, inadequate water supplies, rodent/roach/bed bug complaints, lead, mold and asbestos concerns from tenants in rental housing.

Another persistent health concern is dry scraping and power washing of exterior paint containing lead. We remind all residents that this practice is illegal in the State of Vermont. We were successful in obtaining voluntary compliance with almost all public health problems this year and appreciate the cooperation from all involved. Please feel free to contact us regarding any questions or concerns you may have.

Planning

Daniel W. Monks, Permitting Director

The Planning Commission, along with the Planning Department, performs municipal planning functions for Bennington, including the development of the Town Plan and Land Use and Development Regulations.

In 2017, the Planning Department developed, with the help of White & Burke and Michael McDonough, Planning Commission Chairperson, an application for a Tax Increment Financing District focused upon the Designated Downtown. The application was approved

in November of 2017 by the Vermont Economic Progress Council. TIF District revenue will help to fund important public infrastructure necessary to support private development in the Downtown.

In 2017, the Planning Commission completed the development of a Hazard Mitigation Plan; worked with the BCRC to develop a revised Energy Section of the Town Plan to meet the requirements of Act 174; began meeting with local governmental, educational, health care, business, and non-profit institutions and organizations to gain insight into their perspectives, needs, plans, etc.; reviewed several solar energy projects; and continued its support of numerous ongoing efforts to construct trails, bike paths and sidewalks. In 2018, the Planning Commission intends to: support BCRC's effort to develop a Bennington County Cultural Plan; work with the Select Board regularly to better coordinate Commission and Select Board efforts; continue meeting with local governmental, educational, health care, business, and non-profit institutions and organizations; develop updated regulations regarding telecommunications facilities; and consider the development of a form-based code for Bennington.

The Development Review Board is responsible for reviewing and issuing land use permits for all significant development within the Town. Among the projects reviewed in 2017 by the Development review Board were: a medical clinic, food pantry and offices operated by Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services at 121 Depot Street; an addition to Kaman Composites at 25 Performance Drive; a new Honda dealership at 751 North Bennington Road; a new Tri-State Credit Union building on Washington Avenue; a new consolidated Department of Public Works facility at 78 Bowen Road; and the redevelopment of the Hotel Putnam; Courthouse and Winslow Buildings in downtown Bennington.

Board of Listers

John M. Antognioni, Assessor

With no reassessment activity in 2017, this office sent 113 Change of Appraised Value notices to property owners on May 18, 2017. These notices were sent to owners of property in which a material change had occurred from April 1, 2016 to April 1, 2017. The Board of Listers had 57 property grievances, 3 of which were forwarded to the Bennington Board of Civil Authority. Two appeals from 2017 are currently outstanding.

The Town of Bennington's grand list for 2017 of all properties was \$1,020,560,725. The State's Equalization Study for 2017 (effective January 1, 2018) shows Bennington's common level of appraisal at 94.62 percent and our coefficient of dispersion at 14.76 percent. The common level of appraisal is essentially a measure of how close local assessments are to sale prices. The coefficient of dispersion measures uniformity of assessments for all grand list properties, and is the average deviation of a group of ratios from the town-wide median expressed as a percentage of the median. The 2017 Equalization Study used sales data from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017.

Robert Ebert was reappointed to the Board of Listers by the Select Board in 2017, joining Carol Holm.

Town Clerk

Cassandra Barbeau, Town Clerk

This past spring and summer, I was pleasantly surprised with what appeared to be a brisk real estate market. Both property transfers and mortgage refinancing transactions kept us busy in the office for a good portion of the year. Remember, property sales can be found on our website at <http://benningtonvt.org/departments/town-clerk/property-transfers/>. This page is frequently updated to keep you informed as to who your neighbors are.

Just as things started to slow down with real estate this fall, we were dealing with two unexpected elections. One for our Wastewater Facility Bond and the other for the Act 46 School Merger issue. While I would consider turnout light for both, it was nice to see such support for the much-needed repairs to our infrastructure on the Bond vote. As for the school merger, with only two Towns voting in favor, and two against, only time will tell how that will play out at the State level.

Finally, following up on last year's report regarding the changes to Vermont Vital Records law, H. 111 passed into law last spring. Beginning July 1, 2018, all vital records, (birth, death and civil marriage) after January 1, 1909 will be moved to a Statewide electronic database.

What this means to you:

- Certified copies of certificates can only be issued to family members, legal guardians, and certain court-related parties and legal representatives.
- Requesters must complete an application and show acceptable identification.
- Town clerks will enter the application information into the statewide system.
- Requests will be tracked with the statewide system in order to prevent fraud.

As with any new procedure, I expect there to be a learning curve and bugs to deal with. Internally, with our office and with the Department of Health, it will streamline several processes. For the general public, it will mean a little extra time and the completion of an application and required identification. While for some it may be considered a burden, I hope most will realize it is being done to ultimately protect you and your loved ones' records. These new rules associated with the law will enhance the safety and security of vital records and provide greater protection against identity theft. Please be patient with us as we navigate through these required changes.

As always, please reach out with any questions and concerns regarding the office at (802)442-1043 or cbarbeau@benningtonvt.org.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON
OFFICE OF THE TREASURER
205 South Street
Bennington, VT 05201
8/11/2017**

Joan Pinsonneault, Treasurer

Cash Flow and Account Balances as of June 30, 2017

	<u>06/01/17 -</u> <u>06/30/17</u>	<u>07/01/16 -</u> <u>06/30/17</u>
CASH FLOW:		
Beginning Balance	\$3,749,124.70	\$2,005,838.55
ADD:		
Interest	\$865.62	\$15,945.69
Various Town receipts	\$816,531.50	\$31,081,274.96
Bond Anticipation Note	\$0.00	\$2,200,000.00
Total available cash	<u>\$4,566,521.82</u>	<u>\$35,303,059.20</u>

**The Tax Anticipation Line of Credit for borrowing purposes was not drawn on during the fiscal year 2016-2017

SUBTRACT:

Disbursements:		
Payroll Warrants	\$537,182.83	\$6,984,524.77
Vendor Warrants	\$1,189,874.35	\$22,708,398.72
DPW wire payment to escrow for facility purchase	\$0.00	\$1,696,569.08
Bank wireout service charge	(\$30.00)	\$0.00
Prepaid checks	\$3,973.50	\$866,755.15
Vendor payments	\$20,387.96	\$230,810.05
Deposit slip charge	\$0.00	\$157.40
Bank Analysis Fees - Fraud Protection & Positive Pay	\$219.87	\$930.72
Total Disbursements	<u>\$1,754,342.26</u>	<u>\$32,490,879.64</u>
Cash Balance on June 30, 2017	<u><u>\$2,812,179.56</u></u>	<u><u>\$2,812,179.56</u></u>

Operating Accounts

	<u>INTERST</u>		<u>BALANCE</u>
	<u>06/01/17 -</u> <u>06/30/17</u>	<u>07/01/16 -</u> <u>06/30/17</u>	<u>6/30/17</u>
<u>Chittenden Bank:</u>			
MBA Affiliate Dep *9633	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$190,000.00
MBA Depository *7505	\$865.62	\$15,945.69	\$2,076,482.39
General Fund Checking Acct *0543	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Payroll Checking Acct *0551	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$35,000.00
Flexible Spending Acct *8912	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
DPW Facility Acct *9452	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500,697.17
	\$865.62	\$15,945.69	\$2,812,179.56

Notes:

Agencies

The following agencies received monies in the amount shown from the Town of Bennington's General Fund in FY 2018:

Bennington Free Library - \$457,750.00
Bennington Rescue Squad - \$207,460.00
Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless - \$25,000.00
Bennington Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice - \$21,600.00
John G. McCullough Free Library - \$18,000.00
Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) - \$15,210.00
Sunrise Family Resource Center - \$15,000.00
Bennington Project Independence - \$11,000.00
The Tutorial Center - \$10,000.00
Bennington Free Clinic - \$7,500.00
BROC - Community Action in Southwestern Vermont - \$7,500.00
Southwestern Vermont Council On Aging, Inc. - \$7,500.00
Green Mountain Retired and Senior Volunteer Program - \$7,200.00
Vermont Center For Independent Living - \$7,000.00
North Bennington Recreation - \$6,000.00
Project Against Violent Encounters - \$5,000.00
Paran Recreations, Inc - \$2,700.00
Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse - \$2,500.00
Turning Point Center of Bennington - \$2,500.00

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2017 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
BENNINGTON FIRE FACILITY
130 RIVER STREET – 3RD Floor
BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

MONDAY, MARCH 06, 2017

MINUTES

MODERATOR: Jason Morrissey

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Jacobs – Chair; Michael Keane – Vicè Chair; Jim Carroll; Justin Corcoran; Donald Campbell; Jeanne Conner; Jeannie Jenkins; Stuart Hurd, Town Manager; Cassandra Barbeau, Town Clerk; Dan Monks, Zoning Administrator & Assistant Town Manager; Joan Pinsonneault, Treasurer; Mike McDonough, Economic & Community Development Director; Michele Johnson, Human Resources & Contracts Administrator; Keith Whitcomb, Bennington Banner; BNN News; CAT-TV; (145) Citizens; Linda E. Bermudez – Recording Secretary

Absent: *None*

At 7:00 P.M., **Jason Morrissey** called the meeting to order.

Congressman Peter Welch was introduced and asked to lead the Pledge of Allegiance which was recited by all.

Congressman Welch discussed how current times in Washington, DC are tough and the country is now divided over many subjects. The challenge is that the framework is broken. It is a joy to represent Vermont because we have a tradition of fairing problems. There is nothing so wrong with America that what's right, can't fix.

Congressman Welch opened up for questions. Adrienne (Bennington resident) asked if signing petitions make a difference. Congressman Welch stated it does.

Another Bennington resident (unidentified) asked for his thoughts on oil pipelines. Congressman Welch stated we need to move forward with renewable energy as much as we can.

Another Bennington resident (unidentified) asked what happens when the Federal Administration doesn't agree and the head of the EPA doesn't believe in global warming. Congressman Welch stated it is a real challenge. Your concerns are real and the divisions are significant but this is your democracy. It is important for you to keep an eye on us and stay involved. Let's do what we can and let's do it together.

Jason Morrissey then read the Town warning:

-WARNING-
TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2017 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The residents of the Town of Bennington qualified by law to vote in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) in said Town on Monday, March 6, 2017, at 7:00 p.m., or immediately following the Bennington School District's Annual meeting should that run over, to transact the business specified to be done from the floor.

If you are a resident of the Town of Bennington, intend to be present at the meeting and are hearing impaired, arrangements will be made for a sign interpreter to be present at this meeting. For necessary arrangements, please contact Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager at the Bennington Town Offices, 205 South Street, P.O. Box 469, Bennington, VT - (802) 442-1037 no later than Friday, February 17, 2017.

Following the completion of such business, the Meeting will stand adjourned to Tuesday, March 7, 2017, at The Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance). The Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. for the election of officers and voting on all ballot articles specified. However, those on the checklist to vote in the Village of North Bennington shall vote for the election of officers and on all ballot articles at the North Bennington Village Office on Main Street in North Bennington. The Bennington Fire Facility above mentioned, is hereby established as the central polling place for those on the checklist to vote in said Bennington. Residents of Bennington and North Bennington may register to vote at the Town Clerk's Office, 205 South Street, Bennington, Vermont. Eligible residents registering on Election Day must do so at the polling place where they will cast their Town Meeting ballot.

Mr. Morrissey then reminded those present that the only binding decisions from the floor this evening are for Article #1 and Article #2.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED FROM THE FLOOR

Monday, March 6, 2017

7:00 P.M.

ARTICLE 1. TOWN REPORT: *To hear the report of Town Officers and to take appropriate action thereon.*

Motion: **Motion from the floor (Jacquie Prue) to accept the Town Report as submitted. Motion was seconded by the floor (Aaron Sawyer). Motion passed unanimously (verbally).**

ARTICLE 2. SELECT BOARD MEMBERS COMPENSATION: *To determine what compensation shall be paid to the Town Select Board Members.*

It was discussed that the compensation for the FY'17 budget was set at \$1,400 per year (per member) and was level funded and set for the same in FY'18.

Motion: Motion from the floor (Bob Black) to approve Select Board compensation as submitted. Motion was seconded by the floor (Aaron Sawyer). Motion passed unanimously (verbally).

ARTICLE 3. OTHER BUSINESS: *To transact such other proper business when met.*

Michael Thompson, North Bennington wanted to have a non-binding resolution read and voted upon this evening that designates Bennington as a town of inclusivity of all humanity. Laura Block, Christopher Gagne, Mary Garisch, Tom Hailey, Bob Block, Jeannie Rainer & Vicky Lampron stepped forward to each read a section of this resolution.

Jason Morrissey stated that the resolution put forth this evening voids Federal law and therefore is found to be non-germane.

Mary Garisch stated the Moderator must state this as a non-binding and is advisory only.

Joe Hall stated sanctuary cities are contrary to Federal law; that should be the end of the discussion.

Mr. Morrissey again stated the resolution was non-germane and suggested the resolution be amended to remove a provision contrary to Federal law.

Motion: Motion from the floor (verbally) to adjourn. Motion was seconded by the floor (verbally).

Motion was DEFEATED (verbally).

Meeting discussion continued.

Jim Carroll questioned the definition of a sanctuary city. Mr. Morrissey stated his position was not to have an opinion but to simply moderate the meeting.

A resident who wished not to identify herself stated she understood that Federal government makes laws and then the States can make their own. If the Federal government enforces theirs then we back off and follow them.

The Town Manager stated that the last three lines are beyond the Town's power and parview. He suggested amending the non-binding resolution to strike the last three lines.

Kiah Morris stepped forward to remind everyone that this is a non-binding resolution. It would not engage local law enforcement. They are not asking for those changes to take place, it is just an expression of the will of the people. People have a right to be heard.

Jeff Vickers stepped forward and stated this was a very one-sided vote this evening. There was great support present, however those who may oppose had no warning this resolution would be read and/or voted upon. Therefore, those who would oppose are not represented.

Motion: Motion from the floor (*verbally*) to amend resolution as presented by the Town Manager to strike the last three lines of the Inclusivity of all Humanity Resolution. Motion was seconded by the floor (*verbally*). Motion passed (*verbally*).

Will Stuart identified himself as a Bradford Street resident. He read a statement regarding the noise, pollution, traffic and vibrations he experiences at this house due to the tanker trucks filling up at Morgan Springs. He stated he has complained multiple times to the Town Manager and Terrance Morse, Water Resources Superintendent but has seen no help. Mr. Stuart asked why the revenues were not included in the town report. He feels the Town Manager is constantly hiring others to do his work. He would like to see a Mayoral system of Town government. You must go so Bennington can grow.

Kate Trafton identified herself as a Sunrise Family Center Board member. It is a pleasure to serve and give back. Their organization has served over 800 families. Please vote Yes for article #14.

Forest Wyman Director of the Bennington Rescue Squad stated this is the first time their organization was on the ballot. They are a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year critical care support organization. There is currently no direct funding from Bennington. Please vote Yes on article #17.

Richard Dundas stepped forward on behalf for the Bennington Free Clinic. This organization is primarily volunteer; however they do need funding to support such things as medications and lab tests for those who use the clinic. Please vote Yes.

The Manager wanted to clarify some questions raised earlier. The Town of Bennington sells approximately 100,000 gallons of water per day from a 2.1 Million gallon per day facility. There is no danger to our water supply by selling this water. We are looking into different solutions for some of the complaints of noise etc. that have come in. This includes the development of an off-site loading location. The revenue generated by the sales are used to mitigate the water rates each year. Last year the water sales totaled approximately \$65,000.

The Manager continued by noting that the Rescue Squad is on the ballot every year regarding tax-exempt status. This support saves them just over \$16,000 each year. Additionally, the Town of Bennington Police Dispatch handles all of their 6,000 calls per year. If they were to handle these calls themselves or contract out it would be much more expensive. The Town has been very supportive of this organization.

Pat Kinney stated he was a former Town employee. He questioned how many bonds the Town has. He agreed the Highway Department needs a new facility but questioned if it should be in a swamp. Mr. Kinney also questioned if the Town could get more money for the water it sells.

The Manager stated the Bond for the DPW Facility would be incorporated into this year's budget and have no impact on taxes this year or in the future.

The Manager continued by reading a resolution regarding Multiple Myeloma Month.

Mary Morrissey then stepped forward to read a similar resolution adopted by the State of Vermont

recognizing March 2017 as Multiple Myeloma Month.

Jan Bopp stepped forward and identified himself as a Multiple Myeloma survivor. He lives each day with great gratitude. There is hope. He then encouraged all adults to get the protein test.

Mary Gerisch stepped forward and noted that only the amendment to the Inclusivity of All Humanity resolution was accepted. The resolution itself was not voted upon.

Motion: Motion from the floor (verbally) to accept the Inclusivity of All Humanity resolution as amended and approved. Motion was seconded by the floor (verbally). Motion passed (verbally).

Maryanne St. John stepped forward on behalf of BROCC. They helped 1700 individuals in different ways such as fuel assistance, weatherization, housing, food, tax preparation, healthcare etc. We are grateful for community's support in the past. Please vote Yes on article #10.

Cathy Aliberti stepped forward on behalf of Green Mountain RSVP. They work to match volunteers with non-profit organization including museums & hospitals as well as provide transportation to doctor appointments, assist in tax preparations, and coordinate meals on wheels' recipients. Please vote Yes on the ballot.

Andy Laportain stepped forward on behalf of Council on Aging. They work to keep seniors independent and include such services as counseling (both mental and financial), personal care, healthcare insurance and meals on wheels. Please vote Yes on article #11.

Resident who refused to identify herself spoke of snow plow issues. She cannot shovel her driveway because she is now too old. It then becomes icy. She feels it is not necessary to plow the sidewalks. People can just walk over it. If the Town feels they need to plow sidewalks can they redirect the snow?

Michael McDonough stepped forward to commend those present tonight. We were able to do something that Washington hasn't. There was a passionate issue on the floor and although we disagreed, we were able to find resolution and move forward. We should be proud.

Gail, Bennington resident, stepped forward on behalf of the Visiting Nurses and Hospice. She had been a recipient of their services. This organization does great work and comes in during desperate times. Please support them and vote Yes.

**BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED BY BALLOT
TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2017
THE POLLS TO BE OPEN FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M.
AT THE POLLING PLACES SPECIFIED ABOVE**

**SELECT BOARD ELECTION. Two Select Board Members
residing in the Town shall be elected for terms of three (3) years.**

ARTICLE 1. Shall the Town appropriate for the next fiscal year, July 1,

2017 through June 30, 2018, the total sum of \$12,450,600.00 consisting of the following: \$3,996,990.00 for the laying out, maintaining, and repairing of the highways and bridges of the Town; and \$8,453,610.00 for the payment of the following: Any indebtedness not otherwise specifically provided for, interest on indebtedness, legally authorized State and County taxes, the prosecution and defense of the common rights and interests of the inhabitants of the Town, and for other necessary incidental expenses?

The proposed budget includes \$60,000.00 for fire equipment, \$20,000.00 for parking improvements, \$5,000.00 for regional economic development, and \$402,750.00 for healthcare reserve and workers compensation insurance, any unexpended portion of which will be reserved to subsequent years for that purpose.

YES
NO

ARTICLE 2. Shall the bonds of the Town of Bennington in an amount not to exceed \$3.2 million be issued for the purpose of purchasing and renovating a public works facility at 78 Bowen Road in the Town of Bennington?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 3. Shall the Town of Bennington grant tax exempt status as provided in T.32 §3840 to the Bennington Rescue Squad, Inc. for its property #49514600 for the tax listing years April 1, 2017, through and including March 31, 2022?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 4. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$2,500.00 for Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 5. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$2,500.00 for Turning Point Center of Bennington?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 6. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$5,000.00 for Project Against Violent Encounters?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 7. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$7,000.00 for Vermont Center For Independent Living?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 8. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$7,200.00 for Green Mountain Retired and Senior Volunteer Program?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 9. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for Bennington Free Clinic?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 10. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for BROCC - Community Action In Southwestern Vermont?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 11. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, Inc.?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 12. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$10,000.00 for The Tutorial Center?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 13. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$11,000.00 for Bennington Project Independence?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 14. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$15,000.00 for Sunrise Family Resource Center?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 15. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$21,600.00 for Bennington Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 16. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$25,000.00 for Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 17. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2018 General Fund by the sum of \$207,459.00 for the Bennington Rescue Squad?

YES
NO

Jason Morrissey, Moderator asked to close the meeting.

Motion: Motion from the floor to close the meeting. Motion was seconded from the floor *(verbally)*. Motion passed unanimously *(verbally)*.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by:

Linda E. Bermudez
Secretary

Jason Morrissey
Moderator

TOWN MEETING ELECTION -- MARCH 7, 2017 TALLY SHEET

ARTICLE A:	Benn	N. Benn	total
SELECT BOARD (elect 2)			
Mike "Long Shot" Bethel	559	30	589
Chad E. Gordon	732	53	785 *
Michael Keene	581	85	666
Tracy Kramer	180	18	198
Vickie A. Lampron	445	50	495
Carson A. Thurber	1193	87	1280 *

And the said GORDON and THURBER were declared elected.

ARTICLE 1:

BUDGET

YES	1489	160	1649
NO	563	28	591

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 2:

DPW Facility Bond

Yes	1175	138	1313
No	852	46	898

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 3:

Tax Exempt: Benn Rescue

Yes	1600	169	1769
No	481	19	500

And it was so voted

ARTICLE 4:

Benn County Assoc. Against Child Abuse

Yes	1589	156	1745
No	476	29	505

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 5:

Turning Point

Yes	1238	131	1369
No	812	54	866

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 6:

PAVE

Yes	1358	142	1500
No	697	46	743

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 7:

Ctr for Independent Living

Yes	1417	152	1569
No	640	34	674

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 8:

RSVP

Yes	1373	144	1517
No	656	38	694

And it was so voted

ARTICLE 9:

Benn Free Clinic

Yes	1538	169	1707
No	533	22	555

And it was so voted

ARTICLE 10:

BROC

Yes	1156	133	1289
No	876	51	927

And it was so voted

ARTICLE 11:

Council on Aging

Yes	1408	150	1558
No	648	33	681

And it was so voted

ARTICLE 12:

Tutorial Center

Yes	1151	140	1291
No	893	47	940

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 13:

BPI

Yes	1329	146	1475
No	717	42	759

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 14:

Sunrise

Yes	1091	137	1228
No	937	52	989

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 15:

VNA & Hospice

Yes	1495	157	1652
No	548	29	577

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 16:

Coalition for Homeless

Yes	1293	141	1434
No	751	45	796

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 17:

Benn Rescue Squad

Yes	1192	140	1332
No	889	47	936

And it was so voted

Recorded March 8, 2017 at 8:15 AM by *Cassandra Baldwin* Town Clerk

NOTES:

-PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE-

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON
WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY BOND**

The residents of the Town of Bennington are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) in said Town on Monday, October 2, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., for the purpose of a hearing on the proposed \$9.85 million Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) bond to be voted on Tuesday, October 10, 2017, at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) and at the North Bennington Village Office on Main Street in North Bennington. The Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

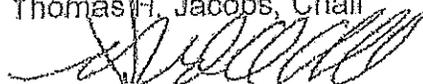
The Article on the ballot reads as follows:

ARTICLE Shall the bonds of the Town of Bennington in an amount not to exceed \$9.85 million be issued for the purpose of upgrading the Town's Wastewater Treatment Facility?

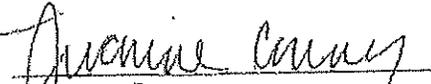
YES
NO

Dated this 28th Day of August, 2017 by the Bennington Select Board:

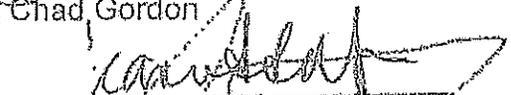

Thomas H. Jacobs, Chair


Donald Campbell, Vice Chair


Jim Carroll


Jeanne Conner


Chad Gordon


Jeanette Jenkins


Carson Thurber

Recorded September 5, 2017 at 10:15 AM


Town Clerk, Bennington, VT

Special Town Meeting October 10, 2017

Pursuant to the foregoing warning, the voters of the Town of Bennington met at 7 o'clock AM and after the votes were counted, the following named articles received the number of votes set opposite the articles designated.

Article: Shall the bonds of the Town of Bennington in an amount not to exceed \$9.85 million be issued for the purpose of upgrading the Town's Wastewater Treatment Facility?

Yes 520

No 209

And it was so voted.

Recorded October 11, 2017 at 8:30 AM by  , Town Clerk

-WARNING-

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2018 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The residents of the Town of Bennington qualified by law to vote in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) in said Town on Monday, March 5, 2018, at 7:00 p.m., or immediately following the Bennington School District's Annual meeting should that run over, to transact the business specified to be done from the floor.

If you are a resident of the Town of Bennington, intend to be present at the meeting and are hearing impaired, arrangements will be made for a sign interpreter to be present at this meeting. For necessary arrangements, please contact Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager at the Bennington Town Offices, 205 South Street, P.O. Box 469, Bennington, VT - (802) 442-1037 no later than Friday, February 16, 2018.

Following the completion of such business, the Meeting will stand adjourned to Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at The Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance). The Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. for the election of officers and voting on all ballot articles specified. However, those on the checklist to vote in the Village of North Bennington shall vote for the election of officers and on all ballot articles at the North Bennington Village Office on Main Street in North Bennington. The Bennington Fire Facility above mentioned, is hereby established as the central polling place for those on the checklist to vote in said Bennington. Residents of Bennington and North Bennington may register to vote at the Town Clerk's Office, 205 South Street, Bennington, Vermont. Eligible residents registering on Election Day must do so at the polling place where they will cast their Town Meeting ballot.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED FROM THE FLOOR

Monday, March 5, 2018

7:00 P.M.

- ARTICLE 1. TOWN REPORT:** To hear the report of Town Officers and to take appropriate action thereon.
- ARTICLE 2. SELECT BOARD MEMBERS COMPENSATION:** To determine what compensation shall be paid to the Town Select Board Members.
- ARTICLE 3. OTHER BUSINESS:** To transact such other proper business when met.

**BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED BY BALLOT
TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2018
THE POLLS TO BE OPEN FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M.
AT THE POLLING PLACES SPECIFIED ABOVE**

SELECT BOARD ELECTION. Two Select Board Members residing in the Town shall be elected for terms of three (3) years.

TOWN CLERK ELECTION. A Town Clerk residing in the Town shall be elected for a term of three (3) years.

ARTICLE 1. Shall the Town appropriate for the next fiscal year, July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, the total sum of \$12,893,030.00 consisting of the following: \$4,087,120.00 for the laying out, maintaining, and repairing of the highways and bridges of the Town; and \$8,805,910.00 for the payment of the following: Any indebtedness not otherwise specifically provided for, interest on indebtedness, legally authorized State and County taxes, the prosecution and defense of the common rights and interests of the inhabitants of the Town, and for other necessary incidental expenses?

The proposed budget includes \$60,000.00 for fire equipment, \$20,000.00 for parking improvements, \$7,500.00 for regional economic development, and \$451,600.00 for healthcare reserve and workers compensation insurance, any unexpended portion of which will be reserved to subsequent years for that purpose.

YES
NO

ARTICLE 2. Shall the Town of Bennington amend the Town Charter to add Section 407 as follows:

§ 103-407. Mayoral form of government

(a) In lieu of a town manager, the voters may adopt a mayoral form of government, by vote at a duly-warned annual meeting, warned pursuant to a petition signed by five percent of the voters or on the Selectboard's own motion. Once a vote in favor of this form of government is successful, the voters shall elect a mayor at the next annual meeting. Once the mayor takes office, the Town Manager system of governance shall end for Bennington.

(b) The mayor shall be responsible for the management of the administrative affairs of the Town, in the same manner and with the same powers and responsibilities as the Town Manager, as stated in statute and this charter.

(c) The mayor shall have the power to make or break a tie, and shall have the power to veto any action of the Selectboard.

(d) The mayor shall serve as the voice of the Town of Bennington, taking responsibility for implementing the policies of the Selectboard, leading the Town toward greater prosperity and a healthy economy, and a better life for all its residents.

YES
NO

ARTICLE 3. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$2,500.00 for Turning Point Center of Bennington?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 4. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$5,000.00 for Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 5. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$5,000.00 for Project Against Violent Encounters?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 6. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$5,500.00 for Green Mountain Retired and Senior Volunteer Program?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 7. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,000.00 for Vermont Center for Independent Living?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 8. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for Bennington Free Clinic?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 9. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for BROCC - Community Action In Southwestern Vermont?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 10. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, Inc.?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 11. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$10,000.00 for The Tutorial Center?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 12. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$11,000.00 for Bennington Project Independence?

YES
NO

ARTICLE 13. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$15,000.00 for Sunrise Family Resource Center?

YES
NO

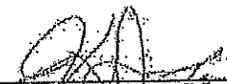
ARTICLE 14. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$21,600.00 for Bennington Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice?

YES
NO

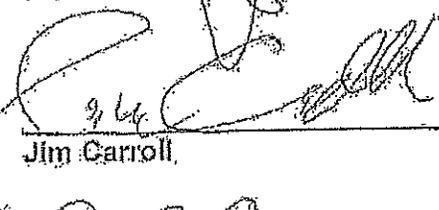
ARTICLE 15. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$25,000.00 for Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless?

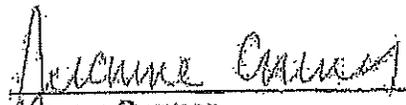
YES
NO

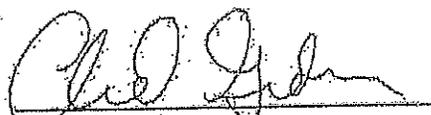
BY THE SELECT BOARD

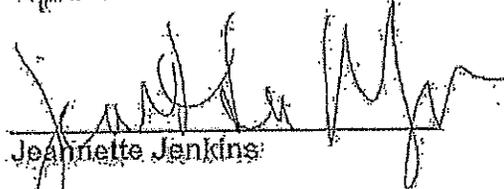

Thomas H. Jacobs, Chair

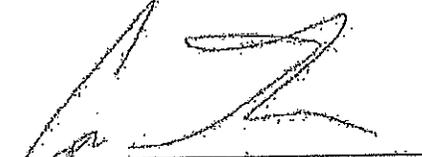

Donald A. Campbell, Vice Chair


Jim Carroll

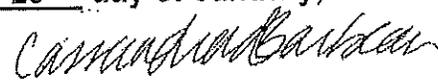

Jeanne Gonner


Chad Gordon


Jeannette Jenkins


Carson Thurber

Dated at Bennington, Vermont this 29th day of January, 2018.

Recorded January 30, 2018 at 8:45 AM by  , Town Clerk

APPENDIX

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Financial Statements and Schedules
June 30, 2017
(With Independent Auditor's Report Thereon)

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

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SECTION II - COMPLIANCE AND INTERNAL CONTROL

Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with <i>Government Auditing Standards</i>	
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Independent Auditor's Report

The Select Board
Town of Bennington, Vermont

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Town of Bennington, Vermont as of and for the year ended June 30, 2017, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Town's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Opinions

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Bennington, Vermont, as of June 30, 2017, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Other Matters

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis on pages 4 - 11, the budgetary comparison information on pages 40 - 44, and the schedule of funding progress on page 45 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards*

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated January 5, 2018, on our consideration of the Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs, P.C.

January 5, 2018

Vt. Reg. #357

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

SECTION I

FINANCIAL SECTION

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017**

The management's discussion and analysis of the Town of Bennington, Vermont's financial performance provides an overview of the Town's financial activities for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017. It focuses on the year-end results and provides an objective analysis of the various funds the Town operates in the conduct of its business from a management perspective. It discusses both the government-wide and fund-based financial statements. Please read it in conjunction with the Town's financial statements, which immediately follow this section.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Town's combined net position was \$24,882,011 at June 30, 2017, an increase of \$1,009,818 from last year.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial section of this report consists of three parts: Managements' Discussion and Analysis (this section), the basic financial statements, and additional required supplementary information. The basic financial statements include two kinds of statements that present different views of the Town. The Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities provide information about the activities of the Town as a whole and present a longer-term view of the Town's finances. Fund financial statements for governmental activities tell how these services were financed in the short term as well as what remains for future spending. Fund financial statements also report the Town's operations in more detail than the government-wide statements by providing information about the Town's most significant funds. The remaining statements provide financial information about activities for which the Town acts solely as a trustee or agent for the benefit of those outside of the government.

Government-wide Financial Statements

The Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities are also referred to as the Government-wide financial statements. These statements report information about the Town and its activities as a whole. These statements include all assets and liabilities using the accrual basis of accounting, which is similar to the accounting used by most private-sector companies. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are taken into account regardless of when cash is received or paid.

These two statements report the Town's net position and changes in net position. You can think of the Town's net position - the difference between assets and liabilities - as one way to measure the Town's financial health, or financial position. Over time, increases or decreases in the Town's net position are one indicator of whether its financial health is improving or deteriorating. You will need to consider other non-financial factors, however, such as changes in the Town's property tax base and the condition of the Town's roads, to assess the overall health of the Town.

The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities, report two kinds of activities:

- Governmental activities - Most of the Town's basic services are reported here, including the police, fire, public works, community development, and recreation departments, and general administration. Property taxes and state and federal grants finance most of these activities.
- Business-type activities - The Town charges a fee to customers to help it cover all or most of the cost of certain services it provides. The Town's water and sewer system and parking facilities are reported here.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017**

Fund Financial Statements

The remaining statements are fund financial statements that focus on individual parts of the Town, reporting the Town's operations in more detail than the Town-wide statements.

- The Governmental Funds - Most of the Town's basic services are reported in governmental funds, which focus on how money flows into and out of those funds and the balances left at year-end that are available for spending. These funds are reported using an accounting method called modified accrual accounting, which measures cash and all other financial assets that can readily be converted to cash. The governmental fund statements provide a detailed short-term view of the Town's general government operations and the basic services it provides. Governmental fund information helps you determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance the Town's programs. The differences between governmental activities (reported in the Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities) and governmental funds are reconciled in the schedules following each of the governmental fund financial statements.
- The Proprietary Funds - When the Town charges customers for the services it provides -whether to outside customers or to other units of the Town - these services are generally reported in Proprietary funds. Proprietary funds are reported in the same way that all activities are reported in the Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities.

The financial statements also include notes that explain some of the information in the statements and provide more detailed data. The statements are followed by a section of required supplementary information that further explains and supports the financial statements with a comparison of the Town's General Fund budget to reported results for the year.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017**

The following table summarizes the major features of the Town's financial statements, including the portion of the Town's activities they cover and the types of information they contain.

Major Features of the Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements

	Government-Wide Statements	Fund Financial Statements	
		Governmental Funds	Proprietary Funds
Scope	Entire Town (except fiduciary funds)	The activities of the Town that are not proprietary or fiduciary. Includes general fund and special revenue funds.	The activities of the Town for which a fee is charged to external users (such as water and wastewater treatment activities).
Required financial statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statement of net assets - Statement of activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balance sheet - Statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statement of net assets or balance sheet - Statement of revenues, expenses and changes in fund net assets - Statement of cash flows
Accounting basis and measurement focus	Accrual basis of accounting and economic resources measurement focus	Modified accrual basis of accounting and current financial resources measurement focus	Accrual basis of accounting and economic resources measurement focus
Type of asset/liability information	All assets and liabilities, both financial and capital, short-term and long-term	Generally, assets expected to be used up and liabilities that come due during the year or soon thereafter; no capital assets or long-term liabilities included	All assets and liabilities, both short-term and long-term; including capital assets
Type of inflow/outflow information	All revenues and expenses during year, regardless of when cash is received or paid	Revenues for which cash is received during or soon after the end of the year; expenditures when goods or services have been received and the related liability is due and payable	All additions and deductions during the year, regardless of when cash is received or paid

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017**

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN AS A WHOLE

This section summarizes information and data as related to the Statements of Net Position as of June 30, 2017 and 2016 and the Statements of Activities for the years then ended.

Government-Wide Statements

The Town's combined net position increased by \$1,009,818 to \$24,882,011 at June 30, 2017. Our analysis below focuses on the net position (Table 1) and changes in net position (Table 2) of the Town's governmental and business-type activities.

**Table 1
Net Assets
(in Thousands)**

	Governmental		Business-type		Total	
	Activities		Activities			
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
Current and other assets	\$ 5,072	4,096	4,179	3,814	9,251	7,910
Capital assets	17,230	15,485	14,990	14,518	32,220	30,003
Total assets	<u>22,302</u>	<u>19,581</u>	<u>19,169</u>	<u>18,332</u>	<u>41,471</u>	<u>37,913</u>
Deferred outflows of resources	1,607	989	-	-	1,607	989
Total assets and deferred outflows	<u>23,909</u>	<u>20,570</u>	<u>19,169</u>	<u>18,332</u>	<u>43,078</u>	<u>38,902</u>
Current liabilities	2,089	1,946	644	480	2,733	2,426
Long-term liabilities	8,010	4,871	7,415	7,721	15,425	12,592
Total liabilities	<u>10,099</u>	<u>6,817</u>	<u>8,059</u>	<u>8,201</u>	<u>18,158</u>	<u>15,018</u>
Deferred inflows of resources	38	12	-	-	38	12
Total liabilities and deferred inflows	<u>10,137</u>	<u>6,829</u>	<u>8,059</u>	<u>8,201</u>	<u>18,196</u>	<u>15,030</u>
Net position:						
Invested in capital assets, net of debt	11,802	12,346	7,115	6,456	18,917	18,802
Restricted	4,289	3,476	-	-	4,289	3,476
Unrestricted	(2,319)	(2,081)	3,995	3,675	1,676	1,594
Total net position	<u>\$ 13,772</u>	<u>13,741</u>	<u>11,110</u>	<u>10,131</u>	<u>24,882</u>	<u>23,872</u>

The Town's liquidity - the ability to pay for its immediate obligations - is measured by comparing current assets to current liabilities. The Town has current assets approximately 3.4 times greater than its current liabilities.

The Town's solvency - the ability to fulfill its total obligations - is measured by comparing debt-to-assets ratio and debt-to-net assets ratio. Debt-to-assets ratio, which equals approximately 43.8%, computes the percent of assets financed with debt. Debt-to-net assets ratio, which equals approximately 73.0%, computes the amount owed for debt on every dollar that the Town has available for use providing programs.

Based on liabilities of \$18.2 million and total assessed property value of \$1,027 million, the Town's total obligations represent approximately \$1.77 per \$100 of 2016-17 assessed property value. Per capita obligations - the amount of total liabilities per person - is approximately \$1,135 for the Town, based on total population of approximately 16,000 as reported in the 2010 Federal Census Report.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017

The Town's capital assets (Table 1), such as infrastructure, buildings and equipment, less outstanding debt used to acquire them, amounted to \$18.9 and \$18.8 million at June 30, 2017 and 2016, respectively. These assets represent the largest portion of the Town's net assets. Although the \$18.9 million of the Town's net capital assets are reported net of related debt, it should be noted that the resources needed to repay this debt must be provided from other sources, since the capital assets themselves cannot be used to liquidate these liabilities.

At June 30, 2017, net assets of \$4.3 million (Table 1) have been restricted by the voters or sources external to the Town to be used for specific purposes.

Table 2
Changes in Net Position
(in Thousands)

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total	
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
Revenues:						
Program revenues:						
Charges for services	\$ 557	528	4,741	4,263	5,298	4,791
Grants and contributions	920	818	-	-	920	818
General revenues:						
Property taxes	10,576	10,220	-	-	10,576	10,220
Other general revenues	1,071	1,179	29	23	1,100	1,202
Total revenues	13,124	12,745	4,770	4,286	17,894	17,031
Program expenses:						
General government	3,267	3,392	-	-	3,267	3,392
Public safety	3,888	3,784	-	-	3,888	3,784
Public works	141	118	-	-	141	118
Community development	101	103	-	-	101	103
Health and welfare	8	8	-	-	8	8
Recreation	1,054	876	-	-	1,054	876
Highways and roads	4,253	3,819	-	-	4,253	3,819
Library	455	426	-	-	455	426
Interest on long-term debt	56	54	-	-	56	54
Water	-	-	2,006	1,829	2,006	1,829
Wastewater treatment	-	-	1,630	1,637	1,630	1,637
Parking	-	-	25	23	25	23
Total expenses	13,223	12,580	3,661	3,489	16,884	16,069
Excess (deficiency) before transfers and adjustments	(99)	165	1,109	797	1,010	962
Transfers	130	130	(130)	(130)	-	-
Increase (decrease) in net position	\$ 31	295	979	667	1,010	962

Net position of the Town's governmental activities (Table 2) increased by approximately 0.8% or \$31 thousand as reported in Table 2 for the year ended June 30, 2017, including net operating transfers from business-type activities of \$130 thousand. The unrestricted net position deficit comprises approximately 16.8% of the total net position of governmental activities at June 30, 2017.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017**

The net position related to business-type activities increased by approximately \$979 thousand for the year ended June 30, 2017.

**Table 3
Governmental Activities
(in Thousands)**

	2017		2016	
	Total Cost of Services	Net Cost of Services	Total Cost of Services	Net Cost of Services
General government	\$ 3,267	2,504	3,392	2,839
Police department	3,581	3,313	3,425	3,172
Fire department	307	302	359	355
Public works	141	127	118	101
Community development	101	101	103	103
Health and welfare	8	8	8	8
Recreation	1,054	935	876	749
Highways and roads	4,253	3,947	3,819	3,532
Highways and roads - Hurricane Irene flood	-	-	-	(105)
Library	455	455	426	426
Interest on long-term debt	56	56	54	54
	<u>\$ 13,223</u>	<u>11,748</u>	<u>12,580</u>	<u>11,234</u>

The costs of providing governmental services (Table 3) amounted to approximately \$13.2 and \$12.6 million for the years ended June 30, 2017 and 2016, respectively. The cost of providing services is offset by charges for services and program-specific operating and capital grants, resulting in a net cost of services amounting to approximately \$11.7 and \$11.2 million for the years ended June 30, 2017 and 2016. The net cost of services is funded by property taxes, investment earnings and grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs.

**Table 4
Capital Assets at Year-end
(Net of Depreciation, in Thousands)**

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total Primary Government	
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
Land and land improvements	\$ 745	747	215	233	960	980
Construction in progress	1,972	280	266	139	2,238	419
Distribution and collection systems	-	-	6,459	6,613	6,459	6,613
Buildings and improvements	2,383	2,499	6,454	6,858	8,837	9,357
Equipment and vehicles	2,617	2,360	1,596	675	4,213	3,035
Infrastructure	9,513	9,599	-	-	9,513	9,599
Totals	<u>\$ 17,230</u>	<u>15,485</u>	<u>14,990</u>	<u>14,518</u>	<u>32,220</u>	<u>30,003</u>

This year, the Town successfully bonded to purchase an existing industrial building to convert to a new Public Works facility. The purchase price, \$1.7 million is part of a \$3.2 million bond. The structure will house the Highway and Water Divisions and most of the equipment. The property will have a fuel depot which will allow bulk purchase of fuel for all Town vehicles. It will also house a new salt/sand shed.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017**

The Highway Department purchased a new single axle dump truck and a new sweeper utilizing the State's Highway Equipment Fund which allows towns to borrow necessary funds at a reduced interest rate and spread the cost over, in this case, 7-10 years. The sweeper replaces the one that caught fire, Insurance funds helped in the replacement.

A two-year study of the Waste Water Treatment Plant and system completed four years ago and recently updated is now being used to guide selected projects and is the basis of the Town's decision to bond for the major facilities needed at the WWTF (Waste Water Treatment Plant). The bond cost has been estimated at \$11 million. The bond vote is scheduled to be held in September 2017. The Town will continue to identify portions of the upgrade which can be accomplished annually thereby reducing the total necessary borrowed funds.

**Table 5
Outstanding Debt, at Year-end
(in Thousands)**

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>		<u>Business-type Activities</u>		<u>Total Primary Government</u>	
	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
General obligation bonds	\$ 4,453	2,295	7,875	8,062	12,328	10,357
Capital lease obligations	975	844	-	-	975	844
Totals	<u>\$ 5,428</u>	<u>3,139</u>	<u>7,875</u>	<u>8,062</u>	<u>13,303</u>	<u>11,201</u>

The Town uses capital lease obligations to finance the acquisition of certain vehicles and equipment.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN'S FUNDS

The Town saw its fund balance improve this year. This year that fund balance improved by \$951,765. Our fund balance at year end is now \$1,591,259.

Reviewing the revenues, we find a positive \$981,215, actual to budgeted, largely due to increased grant revenue (\$389,569 over budget) and increases in other revenue.

On the expenditure side, reimbursable overtime and police special services appear to be overspent but are offset by revenues. The Pathway project cost, showing as over-expended, is offset by grant funds and monies in reserve. Over-expenditures in the Community Development Department are also related to a grant expenditure. The Highway Fund equipment line appears over-expended; however, the major capital purchases, a dump truck and the sweeper were purchased with borrowed funds which provides an offset on the revenue side. Highway project costs show an over-expenditure of \$155,000. Reviewing the projects undertaken indicates that the installation of two retaining walls not anticipated, but required added to our costs. The purchase of the building to house our new DPW facility indicates the use of bond funds. Overall, the Highway Fund remained in the black. Health management fees, a self-insurance fund established by the Select Board as a reserve, show as an over-expenditure when spent to cover costs.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2017**

CONTACTING THE TOWN'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This financial report is designed to provide citizens, taxpayers, customers, and creditors with a general overview of the finances of the Town and to demonstrate the Town's accountability with the funds it receives. If you have any questions about this report or need any additional financial information, please contact:

Mr. Stuart Hurd, Town Manager
205 South Street
Bennington, VT 05201

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Net Position
June 30, 2017

	Primary Government		
	Governmental Activities	Business-type Activities	Total
Assets:			
Cash	\$ 3,244,230	-	3,244,230
Accounts receivable, net	159,923	1,133,296	1,293,219
Property taxes receivable, net	1,375,776	-	1,375,776
Interest receivable	2,691	-	2,691
Prepaid expenses	499,623	39,204	538,827
Notes receivable, current	111,626	-	111,626
Internal balances	(3,006,171)	3,006,171	-
Notes receivable, non-current	2,683,963	-	2,683,963
Capital assets:			
Land and construction in progress	2,717,225	458,480	3,175,705
Other capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation	14,513,273	14,531,992	29,045,265
Total assets	22,302,159	19,169,143	41,471,302
Deferred Outflows of Financial Resources:			
VMERS pension plan	1,607,223	-	1,607,223
Total assets and deferred outflows of financial resources	\$ 23,909,382	19,169,143	43,078,525
Liabilities:			
Accounts payable	\$ 510,450	171,118	681,568
Line of credit	122,113	-	122,113
Accrued liabilities	965,866	12,188	978,054
Deferred revenue	6,745	-	6,745
Accrued landfill post-closure costs:			
Due within one year	35,081	-	35,081
Due in more than one year	463,304	-	463,304
Bonds payable:			
Due within one year	338,427	460,457	798,884
Due in more than one year	4,114,427	7,415,029	11,529,456
Lease payable:			
Due within one year	110,080	-	110,080
Due in more than one year	865,140	-	865,140
Net pension liability - VMERS	2,567,622	-	2,567,622
Total liabilities	10,099,255	8,058,792	18,158,047
Deferred Inflows of Financial Resources:			
VMERS pension plan	38,467	-	38,467
Net position:			
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	11,802,424	7,114,986	18,917,410
Net restricted for:			
Capital projects	906,098	-	906,098
Community development projects	2,795,589	-	2,795,589
Other purposes	586,682	-	586,682
Unrestricted (deficit)	(2,319,133)	3,995,365	1,676,232
Total net position	\$ 13,771,660	11,110,351	24,882,011

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Activities
June 30, 2017

Functions/Programs	Expenses	Program Revenues			Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Assets			
		Charges for Services	Operating Grants and Contributions	Capital Grants and Contributions	Governmental Activities	Primary Government		Total
						Business-type Activities		
Primary government:								
Governmental activities:								
General government	\$ 3,266,923	255,141	508,276	-	(2,503,506)	-	-	(2,503,506)
Public safety:								
Police	3,581,455	163,821	104,824	-	(3,312,810)	-	-	(3,312,810)
Fire	306,755	4,685	-	-	(302,070)	-	-	(302,070)
Public works	141,066	14,510	-	-	(126,556)	-	-	(126,556)
Community development	100,710	-	-	-	(100,710)	-	-	(100,710)
Health and welfare	7,751	-	-	-	(7,751)	-	-	(7,751)
Recreation	1,053,731	118,917	-	-	(934,814)	-	-	(934,814)
Highways and roads	4,253,385	-	-	306,822	(3,946,563)	-	-	(3,946,563)
Library	455,000	-	-	-	(455,000)	-	-	(455,000)
Interest on long-term debt	56,062	-	-	-	(56,062)	-	-	(56,062)
Total governmental activities	13,222,838	557,074	613,100	306,822	(11,745,842)	-	-	(11,745,842)
Business-type activities:								
Water	2,006,189	2,672,895	-	-	-	666,706	-	666,706
Sewer	1,629,747	2,058,640	-	-	-	428,893	-	428,893
Parking	25,080	9,389	-	-	-	(15,691)	-	(15,691)
Total business-type activities	3,661,016	4,740,924	-	-	-	1,079,908	-	1,079,908
Total primary government	\$ 16,883,854	5,297,998	613,100	306,822	(11,745,842)	1,079,908	(10,665,934)	(10,665,934)
General revenues:								
Property taxes					10,576,063	-	-	10,576,063
Grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs					353,697	-	-	353,697
Investment earnings					52,160	29,403	-	81,563
Miscellaneous					664,429	-	-	664,429
Transfers					130,000	(130,000)	-	-
Total general revenues and transfers					11,776,349	(100,597)	-	11,675,752
Change in net position					30,507	979,311	-	1,009,818
Net position - beginning					13,741,153	10,131,040	-	23,872,193
Net position - ending					\$ 13,771,660	11,110,351	-	24,882,011

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Balance Sheet
Governmental Funds
June 30, 2017

	General Governmental Activities Fund	Special Revenue Funds		Total Governmental Funds
		Community Development Fund	Downtown Improvement Commission	
Assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,723,472	520,758	-	3,244,230
Delinquent taxes receivable, net of allowance uncollectible accounts of \$295,517	1,375,776	-	-	1,375,776
Accounts receivable	159,923	-	-	159,923
Interest receivable	-	2,691	-	2,691
Prepaid expenses	499,623	-	-	499,623
Notes receivable, net of allowance for uncollectible accounts of \$28,000	-	2,795,589	-	2,795,589
Due from other funds	-	-	21,190	21,190
Total assets	\$ 4,758,794	3,319,038	21,190	8,099,022
Liabilities:				
Accounts payable	\$ 488,563	1,669	-	490,232
Line of credit	122,113	-	-	122,113
Accrued liabilities	309,564	-	-	309,564
Due to other funds	1,956,596	1,120,953	-	3,077,549
Unearned revenue	6,745	-	-	6,745
Total liabilities	2,883,581	1,122,622	-	4,006,203
Deferred Inflows of Resources:				
Unavailable revenue - delinquent property taxes	283,954	-	-	283,954
Fund Balances:				
Nonspendable	-	2,795,589	-	2,795,589
Restricted	2,343,136	-	21,190	2,364,326
Committed	217,995	-	-	217,995
Assigned	6,069	-	-	6,069
Unassigned	(975,941)	(599,173)	-	(1,575,114)
Total fund balances	1,591,259	2,196,416	21,190	3,808,865
Total liabilities, deferred inflows of resources and fund balances	\$ 4,758,794	3,319,038	21,190	8,099,022

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Reconciliation of the Governmental Funds Balance Sheet
to the Statement of Net Position
June 30, 2017

Total fund balances - governmental funds (from page 14)	\$ 3,808,865
Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the funds.	17,230,498
Deferred outflows of financial resources related to pension activities are not recognized in the funds	1,607,223
Other long-term assets are not available to pay for current-period expenditures and are deferred in the funds.	283,954
Long-term liabilities, including bonds payable, are not due and payable in the current period and therefore are not reported in the funds.	(9,120,413)
Deferred inflows of financial resources related to pension activities are not recognized in the funds	(38,467)
Net position of governmental activities (page 12)	<u>\$ 13,771,660</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances
Governmental Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	General Governmental Activities Fund	Special Revenue Funds		Total Governmental Funds
		Community Development Fund	Downtown Improvement Commission	
Revenues:				
Property taxes	\$ 10,429,857	-	74,508	10,504,365
Permits and licenses	79,981	-	-	79,981
Intergovernmental revenues	1,273,619	-	-	1,273,619
Fees and charges	394,941	-	-	394,941
Fines and forfeitures	28,761	-	-	28,761
Interest	10,161	41,999	-	52,160
Rental revenue	53,391	-	-	53,391
Hurricane Irene grants and assistance	-	-	-	-
Other	657,364	564	-	657,928
Total revenues	12,928,075	42,563	74,508	13,045,146
Expenditures:				
General government	2,569,201	-	-	2,569,201
Public safety	3,547,859	-	-	3,547,859
Public works	141,066	-	-	141,066
Health and welfare	7,751	-	-	7,751
Recreation	1,065,996	-	-	1,065,996
Debt management	338,633	-	-	338,633
Highways and roads	4,022,154	-	-	4,022,154
Project expenditures	-	25,386	-	25,386
Hurricane Irene flood expense	-	-	-	-
Other	2,909,621	625	74,699	2,984,945
Total expenditures	14,602,281	26,011	74,699	14,702,991
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(1,674,206)	16,552	(191)	(1,657,845)
Other financing sources (uses):				
Proceeds from issuance of debt	2,447,971	-	-	2,447,971
Operating transfers in (out)	178,000	(48,000)	-	130,000
	2,625,971	(48,000)	-	2,577,971
Excess of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures and other financing uses	951,765	(31,448)	(191)	920,126
Fund balance, July 1, 2016	639,494	2,227,864	21,381	2,888,739
Fund balance, June 30, 2017	\$ 1,591,259	2,196,416	21,190	3,808,865

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures,
and Changes in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds
to the Statement of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2017

Net change in fund balances - total governmental funds (from page 16)	\$	920,126
Revenues in the statement of activities that do not provide current financial resources (property taxes not collected within 60 days of fiscal year end) are not reported as revenues in the funds. This amount represents an increase in deferred property taxes.		71,698
Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures. However in the statement of activities, the cost of those assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation expense. This is the amount by which capital outlays exceeded depreciation in the current period.		1,499,795
Issuance of long-term obligations is recorded as an other financing source in the governmental funds, but increases long-term liabilities in the statement of net assets		(2,899,172)
Repayment of principal on long-term obligations is an expenditure in the governmental funds, but the repayment reduces long-term liabilities in the statement of net assets.		438,060
Change in net position of governmental activities (page 13)	\$	<u>30,507</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Net Position
Proprietary Funds
June 30, 2017

	Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds			Totals
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Parking Meter Fund	
Assets:				
Current assets:				
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$24,000	\$ 668,049	465,247	-	1,133,296
Prepaid expenses	17,529	21,675	-	39,204
Due from other funds	2,026,493	846,700	183,166	3,056,359
Total current assets	2,712,071	1,333,622	183,166	4,228,859
Capital assets:				
Land and land improvements	18,000	-	465,599	483,599
Distribution and collection systems	8,742,355	1,332,713	-	10,075,068
Buildings and equipment	9,125,252	19,002,234	3,014	28,130,500
Construction in progress	262,667	3,498	-	266,165
Less accumulated depreciation	(7,030,705)	(16,662,299)	(271,856)	(23,964,860)
Total non-current assets	11,117,569	3,676,146	196,757	14,990,472
Total assets	\$ 13,829,640	5,009,768	379,923	19,219,331
Liabilities:				
Current liabilities:				
Accounts payable	\$ 154,368	16,457	293	171,118
Accrued liabilities	-	12,188	-	12,188
Notes and bonds payable, current portion	460,457	-	-	460,457
Total current liabilities	614,825	28,645	293	643,763
Notes and bonds payable, less current portion	7,415,029	-	-	7,415,029
Total liabilities	8,029,854	28,645	293	8,058,792
Net Position:				
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	3,242,083	3,676,146	196,757	7,114,986
Unrestricted - designated	452,588	250,992	45,011	748,591
Unrestricted - undesignated	2,105,115	1,053,985	137,862	3,296,962
Total net position	5,799,786	4,981,123	379,630	11,160,539
Total liabilities and net position	\$ 13,829,640	5,009,768	379,923	19,219,331

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position
Proprietary Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	<u>Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds</u>			Totals
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Parking Meter Fund	
Operating revenues:				
Fees and charges for services	\$ 2,468,204	1,840,626	9,389	4,318,219
Grants	17,000	-	-	17,000
Other	187,691	218,014	-	405,705
	<u>2,672,895</u>	<u>2,058,640</u>	<u>9,389</u>	<u>4,740,924</u>
Operating expenses:				
Administration	631,333	763,061	-	1,394,394
Buildings	61,565	-	-	61,565
Equipment	52,895	10,747	-	63,642
Water systems	188,192	-	-	188,192
Filtration plant	252,293	-	-	252,293
Sewer system	-	56,167	-	56,167
Sewer treatment plant	-	493,809	-	493,809
Parking	-	-	6,903	6,903
Depreciation	635,874	288,632	18,177	942,683
Total operating expenses	<u>1,822,152</u>	<u>1,612,416</u>	<u>25,080</u>	<u>3,459,648</u>
Operating income (loss)	<u>850,743</u>	<u>446,224</u>	<u>(15,691)</u>	<u>1,281,276</u>
Nonoperating revenues (expenses):				
Interest income	27,034	1,776	593	29,403
Interest expense	(168,968)	-	-	(168,968)
	<u>(141,934)</u>	<u>1,776</u>	<u>593</u>	<u>(139,565)</u>
Income (loss) before operating transfers	<u>708,809</u>	<u>448,000</u>	<u>(15,098)</u>	<u>1,141,711</u>
Operating transfers in (out)	(72,000)	(78,000)	20,000	(130,000)
	<u>(72,000)</u>	<u>(78,000)</u>	<u>20,000</u>	<u>(130,000)</u>
Change in net position	<u>636,809</u>	<u>370,000</u>	<u>4,902</u>	<u>1,011,711</u>
Net position - beginning	<u>5,162,977</u>	<u>4,611,123</u>	<u>374,728</u>	<u>10,148,828</u>
Net position - ending	<u>\$ 5,799,786</u>	<u>4,981,123</u>	<u>379,630</u>	<u>11,160,539</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Cash Flows
Proprietary Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds			Totals
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Parking Meter Fund	
Cash flows from operating activities:				
Cash receipts from customers	\$ 2,498,212	1,806,182	9,389	4,313,783
Cash receipts from grants	17,000	-	-	17,000
Other operating cash receipts	187,691	218,014	-	405,705
Cash payments to suppliers of goods or services	(631,581)	(683,190)	(4,969)	(1,319,740)
Cash payments to employees for services	(515,098)	(636,201)	(1,631)	(1,152,930)
Net cash provided by operating activities	1,556,224	704,805	2,789	2,263,818
Cash flows from non-capital financing activities:				
Operating transfers from (to) other funds	(72,000)	(78,000)	20,000	(130,000)
Advances from (to) other funds	(583,116)	214,247	(23,382)	(392,251)
Interest expense (refunding) on short-term borrowings	(168,968)	-	-	(168,968)
Net cash provided by (used in) non-capital financing activities	(824,084)	136,247	(3,382)	(691,219)
Cash flows from capital and related financing activities:				
Principal payments on bonds	(186,564)	-	-	(186,564)
Purchase of capital assets	(572,610)	(842,828)	-	(1,415,438)
Net cash used in capital and related financing activities	(759,174)	(842,828)	-	(1,602,002)
Cash flows from investing activities:				
Interest on cash investments	27,034	1,776	593	29,403
Net cash provided by investing activities	27,034	1,776	593	29,403
Net increase in cash	-	-	-	-
Cash, beginning	-	-	-	-
Cash, ending	\$ -	-	-	-
Reconciliation of operating income to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:				
Operating income (loss)	\$ 850,743	446,224	(15,691)	1,281,276
Adjustments to reconcile operating income (loss) to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:				
Depreciation	635,874	288,632	18,177	942,683
Change in operating assets and liabilities:				
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable and other current assets	30,008	(34,444)	10	(4,426)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	39,599	4,393	293	44,285
Net cash provided by operating activities	\$ 1,556,224	704,805	2,789	2,263,818

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) *Summary of Significant Accounting Policies*

(a) *Financial Reporting Entity*

The Town of Bennington, Vermont (the "Town") is a unit of local government chartered by the State of Vermont. The Town operates under a Select Board - Manager form of government and provides services as outlined in its charter.

The accompanying financial statements of the Town of Bennington, Vermont include all of the financial activity of the general government, special revenue funds, water department, sewer department and parking meter fund. All these components are included because they are under the direct control of the Select Board and the Town Manager. The Town exercises significant oversight and financial interdependence exists. The Town is not a component unit of another reporting entity.

The Town applies all relevant Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncements.

(b) *Basis of Presentation*

The basic financial statements include both government-wide (based on the Town as a whole) and fund financial statements.

Government-wide Statements

The government-wide financial statements (i.e., the statement of net assets and the statement of activities) report information on all non-fiduciary activities of the Town. Eliminations have been made to minimize the effect of internal transactions between funds. Governmental activities generally are financed through taxes, State aid, intergovernmental revenues, and other exchange and non-exchange transactions. Operating grants include operating-specific and discretionary (either operating or capital) grants, while the capital grants column reflects capital-specific grants.

The Statement of Activities presents a comparison between direct expenses and program revenues for each function of the Town's governmental and business-type activities. Direct expenses are those that are specifically associated with and are clearly identifiable to a particular function. Program revenues include charges paid by the recipients of goods or services offered by the programs, and grants and contributions that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular program. Revenues that are not classified as program revenues, including all taxes, are presented as general revenues.

Fund Financial Statements

The fund statements provide information about the Town's funds. Separate statements for each fund category (governmental and proprietary) are presented. The emphasis of fund financial statements is on major funds, each displayed in a separate column. All remaining funds are aggregated and reported as non-major funds, however because the Town has only one non-major fund in each fund type, they are reported in individual columns.

The financial activities of the Town that are reported in the accompanying financial statements have been classified in the major funds described in the following paragraphs.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) **Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

(b) **Basis of Presentation (continued)**

Fund Financial Statements (continued)

Governmental Funds

General Governmental Activities Fund - The General Governmental Activities Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures applicable to the general operations of the governmental agencies of the Town. All general operating revenues which are not restricted as to use by sources external to the Town are recorded in the General Governmental Activities Fund.

Special Revenue Funds - The Special Revenue Funds are operating funds, for which the use of revenues is restricted, generally by Federal and state governments. The Town uses two Special Revenue Funds: the Community Development Fund and the Downtown Improvement Commission.

Proprietary Funds

Enterprise Funds - Enterprise Funds are used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises - where the intent of the governing body is that the costs (expenses, including depreciation) of providing goods and services to the general public on a continuing basis be financed or recovered primarily through user charges. The Town uses three Enterprise Funds: the Water Fund, Sewer Fund, and Parking Meter Fund.

(c) **Measurement Focus and Basis of Accounting**

The Government-wide and proprietary fund financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded at the time liabilities are incurred, regardless of when the related cash transaction takes place. Non-exchange transactions, in which the Town gives or receives value without directly receiving or giving equal value in exchange, include property taxes, grants and donations. On an accrual basis, revenue from property taxes is recognized in the fiscal year for which the taxes are levied. Revenue from grants and donations is recognized in the fiscal year in which all eligibility requirements have been satisfied.

The governmental fund statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under this method, revenues are recognized when measurable and available. The Town considers all revenues other than property taxes reported in the governmental funds to be available if the revenues are collected within one year after the end of the fiscal year. Property taxes are recognized to the extent collected within sixty days of fiscal year end.

Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred, except for principal and interest on general long-term debt, claims and judgments, and compensated absences, which are recognized as expenditures to the extent they have matured. General capital asset acquisitions are reported as expenditures in governmental funds. Proceeds of general long-term debt and acquisitions under capital leases are reported as other financing sources.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) *Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)*

(d) *Budgets and Budgetary Accounting*

The Town uses the following procedures in establishing the budgetary data for the General Governmental Activities Fund reflected in the financial statements:

1. The Town Manager prepares the annual operating budget for the General Governmental Activities Fund for the Town's fiscal year ended June 30th prior to March of the preceding fiscal year. The Town Manager prepares the budget through consultation with the Town's department supervisors. The operating budget includes proposed expenditures and the means of financing them. The Town Manager submits the budget to the Select Board for approval.
2. After the budget is approved, the Select Board publishes a warning in the Town newspaper for a special Town meeting to discuss the budget.
3. Prior to July 1 of the new fiscal year, the annual Town meeting is held and the budget is legally enacted by a general Town vote.
4. Budget revisions must be approved by the Select Board. Appropriations lapse at the end of the Town's fiscal year if not encumbered.
5. Formal budgetary integration is employed as a management control device during the year for the General Governmental Activities Fund.
6. The budget for the General Governmental Activities Fund is adopted on the modified accrual basis. The budgeted amounts are as originally adopted.

(e) *Internal Balances and Transfers*

Internal balances arise primarily as a result of the Town's pooling of cash deposits. Internal transfers represent administrative charges paid by the enterprise funds and community development fund to the general governmental activities fund.

(f) *Capital Assets*

Property and equipment is stated at known or estimated historical cost. Net interest costs, are capitalized on projects during the construction period. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of assets as follows: office furniture and equipment – 5 to 10 years, motor vehicles and heavy equipment – 5 to 15 years, buildings and building improvements – 10 to 40 years, and infrastructure – 10 to 40 years. When assets are retired or otherwise disposed of, the cost and related accumulated depreciation are removed from the accounts, and any resulting gain or loss is reflected in income for the period. The cost of maintenance and repairs is charged to expense as incurred; significant renewals and betterments are capitalized. Deduction is made for retirements resulting from renewals or betterments. GASB No. 34 requires the Town to report and depreciate new infrastructure assets effective with the statement's implementation.

(g) *Cash and Cash Equivalents*

For purposes of the statement of cash flows presented for the proprietary funds, cash equivalents include all short-term highly liquid investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and have original maturities of three months or less.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) *Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)*

(h) *Long-term Debt and Deferred Charges*

In the government-wide financial statements long-term debt and other long-term obligations are reported as liabilities in the applicable statement of net assets. Bond premiums and discounts, as well as issuance costs, are deferred and amortized over the life of the bonds using the straight-line method which approximates the effective interest method. Bonds payable are reported net of the applicable bond premium or discount. Bond issuance costs are reported as deferred charges and amortized over the term of the related debt.

In the fund financial statements, governmental fund types recognize bond premiums and discounts, as well as bond issuance costs, during the current period. The face amount of debt issued is reported as other financing sources. Premiums received on debt issuances are reported as other financing sources while discounts on debt issuances are reported as other financing uses. Issuance costs, whether or not withheld from the actual debt proceeds received, are reported as debt service expenditures. Accumulated unpaid vacation pay is accrued in proprietary funds (using the accrual basis of accounting). The current portion of accumulated unpaid vacation pay is accrued in governmental funds (using the modified accrual basis of accounting). Accumulated unpaid sick pay is paid to Town employees only while employed and is not recorded as the ultimate liability is not subject to reasonable estimation.

(i) *Governmental Fund Balance/Net Assets*

Beginning with fiscal year 2011, the Town implemented GASB Statement No. 54, "Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions." This Statement provides more clearly defined fund balance categories to make the nature and extent of the constraints placed on a government's fund balances more transparent. The following classifications describe the relative strength of the spending constraints:

Non-spendable fund balance is either not in spendable form (such as inventory), or is required to be maintained intact legally or contractually.

Restricted fund balance—amounts constrained to specific purposes by their providers (such as grantors, bondholders, and higher levels of government), through constitutional provisions, or by enabling legislation.

Committed fund balance—amounts constrained to specific purposes by the Town itself, using its highest level of decision-making authority (i.e., Selectboard). To be reported as committed, amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the Selectboard takes the same highest level action to remove or change the constraint.

Assigned fund balance—amounts the Town intends to use for a specific purpose. Intent can be expressed by the Selectboard or by an official or body to which the Selectboard Council delegates the authority.

Unassigned fund balance—amounts that are available for any purpose. Positive amounts are reported only in the general fund.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(i) Governmental Fund Balance/Net Assets (continued)

The Selectboard establishes (and modifies or rescinds) fund balance commitments by passage of an ordinance or resolution. This is typically done through adoption and amendment of the budget. A fund balance commitment is further indicated in the budget document as a designation or commitment of the fund (such as for special incentives). Assigned fund balance is established by Selectboard through adoption or amendment of the budget as intended for specific purpose (such as the purchase of fixed assets, construction, debt service, or for other purposes).

In the general fund, the Town strives to maintain an unassigned fund balance to be used for unanticipated emergencies of approximately 20% of the actual GAAP basis expenditures and other financing sources and uses.

In the government-wide financial statements, net assets are classified in the following categories:

Invested in Capital Assets, Net of Related Debt – This category groups all capital assets into one component of net assets. Accumulated depreciation and the outstanding balances of debt that are attributable to the acquisition, construction or improvement of these assets reduce this category.

Restricted – This category presents external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors or laws or regulations of other governments and restrictions imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation. Restricted resources are used first to fund appropriations when there are both restricted and unrestricted resources available.

Unrestricted – This category includes both designated and undesignated net assets of the Town. Designated net assets include reserves that were established by the Board, which are considered internally designated. Undesignated net assets are not restricted for any project or other purpose.

In the fund financial statements, reserves and designations segregate portions of fund balance that are either not available or have been earmarked for specific purposes. While a separate bank account is not necessary for each reserve fund, a separate identity for each reserve fund is maintained.

(j) Encumbrance Accounting

Encumbrances outstanding at year-end are recorded as a reservation of fund balance in the Town's governmental funds, since they do not constitute expenditures or liabilities

(k) Use of Accounting Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(2) Explanation of Certain Differences Between Governmental Fund Statements and the Government-wide Statements

Due to the differences in the measurement focus and basis of accounting used in the governmental fund statements and the government-wide statements, certain financial transactions are treated differently. The basic financial statements contain a full reconciliation of these items. The differences result primarily from the economic focus of the Statement of Activities, compared with the current financial resources focus of the governmental funds.

Total Fund Balances of Governmental Funds vs. Net Assets of Governmental Activities

Total fund balances of the Town's governmental funds differ from "net assets" of governmental activities reported in the Statement of Net Assets. This difference primarily results from the additional long-term economic focus of the Statement of Net Assets versus the solely current financial resources focus of the governmental fund Balance Sheets.

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance vs. Statement of Activities

Differences between the governmental funds Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance and the Statement of Activities fall into one of the categories listed below.

1. Long-Term Revenue and Expense Differences - Long-term revenue differences arise because governmental funds report revenues only when they are considered "available", whereas the Statement of Activities reports revenues when earned. Differences in long-term expenses arise because governmental funds report on a modified accrual basis, whereas the accrual basis of accounting is used on the Statement of Activities.
2. Long-Term Debt Transaction Differences - Long-term debt transaction differences occur because both interest and principal payments are recorded as expenditures in the governmental fund statements, whereas interest payments are recorded in the Statement of Activities as incurred, and principal payments are recorded as a reduction of liabilities in the Statement of Net Assets.
3. Capital Assets - Capital related differences include the difference between proceeds for the sale of capital assets reported on governmental fund statements and the gain or loss on the sale of assets as reported on the Statement of Activities, and the difference between recording an expenditure for the purchase of capital items in the governmental fund statements and depreciation expense on those items as recorded in the Statement of Activities.

(3) Cash

At June 30, 2017 the carrying amount of the Town's cash was \$3,244,230 and the bank balance was \$3,855,772. Of the bank balance, \$506,654 was covered by federal depository insurance and the remaining \$3,349,118 was fully collateralized.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(3) Cash (continued)

Custodial Credit Risk of Bank Deposits

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the Town's deposits may not be returned to it. At year-end, none of the Town's investments were subject to custodial credit risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that changes in interest rates will adversely affect the fair value of an investment. The Town's investment policy reduces this risk by structuring the investment portfolio so that the operating funds are maintained in demand accounts to meet cash needs for ongoing operations, thus avoiding the need to redeem certificates of deposit prior to maturity, and investing excess, designated, or restricted funds in certificates of deposits when a favorable interest rate is available.

(4) Investments

The Town is not restricted by state statute as to the type of investments that it is authorized to hold. The Town invested primarily in collateralized and insured certificates of deposit during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017.

(5) Notes Receivable – Special Revenue Funds

Notes receivable - Special Revenue Funds consist of loans to individuals and businesses under the Community Development Program of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Such notes are interest bearing at various interest rates between 3.625% and 6.000%; generally require monthly payments over terms ranging from five to fifteen years. The terms of the notes receivable include security interests in personal property or real estate mortgages.

The Community Development Fund's non-spendable fund balance of \$2,614,522 denotes the non-current portion of notes receivable that it is not available to finance the general operations of the fund.

(6) Internal Balances

Internal balances at June 30, 2017 consisted of the following:

Due To	Due From		
	General Fund	Community Development	Total
General Fund	\$ -	1,120,953	1,120,953
Downtown Improvement Commission	21,190	-	21,190
Water	2,026,493	-	2,026,493
Sewer	846,700	-	846,700
Parking	183,166	-	183,166
Total	\$ 3,077,549	1,120,953	4,198,502

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(6) Internal Balances (continued)

Internal transfers for the year ended June 30, 2015 were as follows:

Transfer From	Transfer To	Amount	Purpose
General Fund	Parking	\$ (20,000)	Fund capital outlay
Community Development	General Fund	48,000	Administrative charges
Water	General Fund	72,000	Administrative charges
Sewer	General Fund	78,000	Administrative charges
		\$ 178,000	

(7) Capital Assets

Capital asset activity for the year was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Retirements and Transfers	Ending Balance
Governmental activities:				
Land and land improvements	\$ 814,450	10,340	-	824,790
Buildings and improvements	7,524,487	41,989	-	7,566,476
Equipment and vehicles	7,331,547	779,472	(131,027)	7,979,992
Infrastructure	36,248,443	1,127,971	-	37,376,414
Construction in progress	279,672	1,692,138	-	1,971,810
Totals at historical cost	52,198,599	3,651,910	(131,027)	55,719,482
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Land and land improvements	(67,712)	(11,663)	-	(79,375)
Buildings and improvements	(5,024,855)	(158,758)	-	(5,183,613)
Equipment and vehicles	(4,971,384)	(522,648)	131,027	(5,363,005)
Infrastructure	(26,649,245)	(1,213,746)	-	(27,862,991)
Total accumulated depreciation	(36,713,196)	(1,906,815)	131,027	(38,488,984)
Governmental activities capital assets, net	\$ 15,485,403	1,745,095	-	17,230,498

Depreciation expense was charged to governmental functions as follows:

General government	\$ 49,317
Public safety:	
Police	127,695
Fire	117,619
Recreation	62,556
Highway and roads	1,549,626
	<u>\$ 1,906,813</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(7) Capital Assets (continued)

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Retirements and Transfers	Ending Balance
Business-type activities:				
Land and land improvements	\$ 483,599	-	-	483,599
Buildings and improvements	24,092,841	-	-	24,092,841
Equipment and vehicles	3,079,262	1,065,246	(106,849)	4,037,659
Distribution and collection systems	9,851,387	223,681	-	10,075,068
Construction in progress	139,654	126,511	-	266,165
Totals at historical cost	37,646,743	1,415,438	(106,849)	38,955,332
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Land and land improvements	(250,665)	(18,177)	-	(268,842)
Buildings and improvements	(17,235,624)	(402,636)	-	(17,638,260)
Equipment and vehicles	(2,404,212)	(143,937)	106,849	(2,441,300)
Distribution and collection systems	(3,238,525)	(377,933)	-	(3,616,458)
Total accumulated depreciation	(23,129,026)	(942,683)	106,849	(23,964,860)
Business-type activities capital assets, net	\$ 14,517,717	472,755	-	14,990,472

(8) Long-term Liabilities

Long-term liability activity for the year ended June 30, 2017 was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Amounts Due within One Year
Governmental Activities					
Bonds payable	\$ 2,295,293	2,447,971	(290,410)	4,452,854	338,427
Capital lease obligations	844,160	245,300	(114,240)	975,220	110,080
Governmental activities long-term liabilities	\$ 3,139,453	2,693,271	(404,650)	5,428,074	448,507
Business-type Activities					
Bonds payable	\$ 8,062,050	-	(186,564)	7,875,486	460,457
Business-type activities long-term liabilities	\$ 8,062,050	-	(186,564)	7,875,486	460,457

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(8) Long-term Liabilities (continued)

Bonds payable mature annually in varying amounts through fiscal year 2027, and interest is generally payable semiannually at rates ranging from 3 percent to 6 percent. On May 22, 2017 the Town obtained a \$2.2 million bond anticipation note from Peoples United Bank bearing interest at 1.55 percent. The note, which matures August 15, 2017, was obtained to purchase a new DPW facility and commence renovations prior to the August Vermont Municipal Bond Bank issuance. The note is included in the following schedule.

Maturities of bonds payable are as follows:

	Governmental Activities			Business-Type Activities		
	Principal	Interest	Total	Principal	Interest	Total
2018	\$ 338,427	108,383	446,810	460,457	231,729	692,186
2019	441,137	113,309	554,446	473,618	217,991	691,609
2020	441,135	111,926	553,061	487,174	203,859	691,033
2021	348,824	94,079	442,903	479,376	189,320	668,696
2022	309,405	85,636	395,041	479,376	189,320	668,696
2023-2027	1,333,926	343,415	1,677,341	2,700,065	643,411	3,343,476
2028-2032	1,240,000	193,047	1,433,047	1,717,323	254,910	1,972,233
2033-2037	-	1,116	1,116	1,078,097	87,979	1,166,076
	\$ 4,452,854	1,050,911	5,503,765	7,875,486	2,018,519	9,894,005

All bonds payable are secured by the general revenue raising powers of the Town.

(9) Leases

The Town leases certain equipment under agreements, which are classified as capital leases. At June 30, 2017 equipment recorded under capital lease in the Government-wide financial statements amounted to \$2,432,267. Accumulated amortization amounted to \$1,262,408.

Future minimum payments required under capital leases are as follows:

Year ending June 30,	
2018	\$ 142,361
2019	142,361
2020	142,361
2021	142,361
2022	90,418
Thereafter	508,394
Total minimum lease payments	1,168,256
Less amount representing interest	(193,036)
Present value of minimum lease payments	\$ 975,220

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(10) Line of Credit

The Town has outstanding borrowings of \$122,113 under a line of credit agreement for Recreation Center improvements. The line, which bears interest at 1.95%, matures in July 2018.

(11) Property Taxes

Property taxes attach as an enforceable lien on property as of April 1st. Property taxes for fiscal year 2017 were levied August 17, 2016 and were payable November 10, 2016.

(12) Governmental Fund Balance

The Town's fund balance classifications at year-end are as follows:

	General Fund	Special Revenue Funds		Total
		Community Development	Downtown Improvement Commission	
Non-spendable:				
Notes receivable	\$ -	2,795,589	-	2,795,589
Restricted for:				
Capital Facilities	312,247	-	-	312,247
Downtown improvement	-	-	21,190	21,190
DPW Facility	483,851	-	-	483,851
Employee benefits and insurance	210,087	-	-	210,087
Fire Equipment	313,975	-	-	313,975
Health and welfare	1,060	-	-	1,060
Hunt Street foot bridge	150,651	-	-	150,651
Ninja Pathway	40,222	-	-	40,222
Other purposes	8,734	-	-	8,734
Parks and recreation	112,582	-	-	112,582
Pathway project	110,000	-	-	110,000
Planning and zoning	1,625	-	-	1,625
Police - K-9 Fund	18,151	-	-	18,151
Public Safety	6,669	-	-	6,669
Reappraisal	573,282	-	-	573,282
Committed for:				
Highway Improvements	217,995	-	-	217,995
Assigned for:				
Employee benefits and insurance	5,131	-	-	5,131
Parks and recreation	938	-	-	938
Unassigned	(975,941)	(599,173)	-	(1,575,114)
Total fund balances	\$ 1,591,259	2,196,416	21,190	3,808,865

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(13) *Deferred Compensation Plan and Pensions*

Defined Benefit Plan

The Town participates in the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System (VMERS), a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the State of Vermont. Participants are grouped by department. "Group B" participants consist of all departments except the Police department, which comprises "Group C."

VMERS provides retirement and disability benefits, annual cost-of-living adjustments, and death benefits to plan members and beneficiaries. The Retirement System Division of the Vermont State Treasurer's Office issues a publicly available financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for VMERS. That report may be obtained by writing to Retirement System Division, Vermont State Treasurer's Office, 133 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602.

Plan members in "Group B" are required to contribute 4.875% of their annual covered compensation and the Town is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The current rate is 5.50% of annual covered payroll. Plan members in "Group C" are required to contribute 10.0% of their annual covered compensation and the Town is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The current rate is 7.25% of annual covered payroll. The contribution requirements of plan members and the Town of Bennington are established and may be amended by the Retirement Board, Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System.

Contributions made to VMERS by the Town for the year ended June 30, 2017 amounted to \$307,289. Town contributions to VMERS for the years ended June 30, 2016, 2015, 2014 and 2013 amounted to \$304,349, \$291,155, \$275,095 and \$252,673, respectively. The Town also contributed \$551,559, \$525,294, \$500,280 and \$476,457 for unfunded pension liability during 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2014, respectively. Total covered payroll amounted to \$5,016,689.

Deferred Compensation Plan

The Town offers its employees a deferred compensation plan created in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 457. The plan permits employees to defer a portion of their salary until future years. Under provisions of the plan deferred compensation is not available to employees until termination, retirement, death, or unforeseeable emergency.

(14) *Risk Management*

The Town is exposed to various risks of loss related to general liability, property and casualty, workers' compensation, employee health and accident and environmental liability. The Town purchases commercial insurance coverage for the risks of losses to which it is exposed, exclusive of environmental liabilities which are not covered due to the excessive cost of coverage.

(15) *Commitments*

Solid Waste Disposal

The Bennington Transfer Station is operated under a contract with a waste management company. The Town agreed, as a condition of the contract to indemnify such company from all liability, loss, cost or expense incurred in connection with the operation of the transfer station or other handling of Bennington waste. The contract also indemnifies the Town in the event that liabilities are incurred for which the company is responsible.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(16) Contingencies

(a) Litigation-General

The Town is party to various legal actions which normally occur in governmental operations. The amounts of any settlements under these actions are expected to be within the limits of the Town's insurance coverage and are not likely to have a material adverse effect on the affected funds of the Town.

(b) Landfill Post-Closure Costs

In accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 18, the Town has recorded a liability for the present value of estimated post-closure repair, maintenance and monitoring costs in the statement of net assets amounting to \$498,385. The Town's post-closure costs for the year ended June 30, 2017 amounted to \$5,490.

(c) Federal and State Grants

In the normal course of operations, the Town receives grant funds from various Federal and State agencies. The grant programs are subject to audit by agents of the granting authorities, the purpose of which is to ensure compliance with conditions precedent to the granting of funds. Any liability for reimbursement which may arise as the result of such audits is not believed to be material.

(d) Operating Leases

The Town leases certain equipment under agreements which are classified as operating leases. Future minimum payments required under leases having non-cancelable lease terms in excess of one year are as follows:

Year ending June 30:	
2018	\$ 7,174
2019	4,212
2020	3,540
2020	935
	<u>\$ 15,861</u>

Rent expense under these agreements for the year ended June 30, 2017 was \$9,996.

(e) Contingency – Health Care Benefits

On January 1, 2012, the Town changed the employee health insurance program to a High Deductible Health Plan with a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA). All eligible employees who chose to participate were enrolled in BCBS-VT Plan with a \$500 maximum out-of-pocket expense. The Town is responsible for the next \$2,000 toward the maximum out-of-pocket health expenses for the single person plan. The Town is responsible for the next \$4,500 toward the maximum out-of-pocket health expenses for the two person, parent with child (children) and family plans.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(17) Post Employment Benefits Other Than Pensions

Plan Description.

The Town of Bennington provides under the "Combined Agreement By And Between The Town of Bennington And AFSCME Council 93, Local #490 Police Chapter & Public Works Chapter" through June 30, 2016, post-retirement health care benefits for police union employees who retire from the Town employment after attaining age 55 and have at minimum 20 years of service.

The Town will pay 50 percent of a single premium in effect provided that the employee does not have access to an equivalent health plan until the employees reach age 65.

Annual OPEB Cost and Net OPEB Obligation.

The town's annual other post employment benefit (OPEB) cost (expense) is calculated based on the annual required contribution of the employer (ARC). The town has elected to calculate the ARC and related information using the alternative measurement method permitted by GASB Statement 45 for employers in plans with fewer than one hundred total plan members. The ARC represents a level of funding that, if paid on an ongoing basis, is projected to cover normal cost each year and to amortize any unfunded actuarial liabilities (or funding excess) over a period not to exceed thirty years.

Funding Policy.

The Town's portion of the benefits is funded on a pay-as-you-go basis and included in health care expenditures. Currently no employees are eligible to participate and the Town did not make any contributions.

The following shows the components of the town's annual OPEB cost for the year, the amount actually contributed to the plan, and changes in the town's net OPEB obligation for post-retirement health care benefits:

Annual required contribution	\$ 105,645
Interest on net OPEB obligation	-
Annual OPEB cost	<u>105,645</u>
Contributions made	-
Increase in net OPEB obligation	<u>105,645</u>
Net OPEB obligation, beginning of year	550,652
Net OPEB obligation, end of year	<u>\$ 656,297</u>

Funded Status and Funding Progress.

As of June 30, 2017, the actuarial accrued liability for benefits was \$778,084, all of which was unfunded. The covered payroll (annual payroll of active employees covered by the plan) was \$1,792,645 and the ratio of the unfunded actuarial accrued liability to the covered payroll was 43.4 percent.

The schedule of funding progress, presented as required supplementary information following the notes to the financial statements, will present multiyear trend information in subsequent years about whether the actuarial value of plan assets is increasing or decreasing over time relative to the actuarial accrued liabilities for benefits.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(17) Post Employment Benefits Other Than Pensions (continued)

The projection of future benefit payments for an ongoing plan involves estimates of the value of reported amounts and assumptions about the probability of occurrence of events far into the future. Examples include assumptions about future employment, mortality, and the healthcare cost trend. Amounts determined regarding the funded status of the plan and the annual required contributions of the employer are subject to continual revision as actual results are compared with past expectations and new estimates are made about the future.

Methods and Assumptions.

Projections of benefits for financial reporting purposes are based on the substantive agreement (the agreement as understood by the employer and plan members) and include the types of benefits provided at the time of each valuation and the historical pattern of sharing of benefit costs between the employer and members to that point. The methods and assumptions used include techniques that are designed to reduce the effects of short-term volatility in actuarial accrued liabilities and the actuarial value of assets, consistent with the long-term perspective of the calculations.

The following simplifying assumptions were made:

Retirement age for active employees—Based on the historical average retirement age for the covered group, active plan members were assumed to retire at age 55, or at the first subsequent year in which the member would qualify for benefits.

Mortality—Life expectancies were based on mortality tables from Internal Revenue Service regulations and based on the “RP-2000 Mortality Tables Report” issued by the Society of Actuaries.

Turnover—Non-group-specific age-based turnover data from GASB Statement 45 were used as the basis for assigning active members a probability of remaining employed until the assumed retirement age and for developing an expected future working lifetime assumption for purposes of allocating to periods the present value of total benefits to be paid.

Healthcare cost trend rate - The expected rate of increase in healthcare insurance premiums was based on projections of the Office of the Actuary at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and in conjunction with experience of premium increases obtained by the Town. A rate of 5.6 percent was used.

Health insurance premiums - 2015 health insurance premiums for retirees were used as the basis for calculation of the present value of total benefits to be paid.

Inflation rate - The expected long-term inflation assumption was assumed to equal the increase in healthcare costs.

Payroll growth rate - The expected long-term payroll growth rate was assumed to equal the rate of inflation.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(17) Post Employment Benefits Other Than Pensions (continued)

Based on the historical and expected returns of the Town's short-term investment portfolio, a discount rate of 0.3 percent was used. In addition, a simplified version of the unit credit actuarial cost method was used. The unfunded actuarial accrued liability is being amortized as a level percentage of projected payroll on an open basis. The remaining amortization period at June 30, 2017, was thirty years.

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources

Pension Plan Description and Benefits Provided

A detailed description of the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System (VMERS) is included in Note 13 to the financial statements.

Pension Liabilities, Pension Expense, and Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions

At June 30, 2017, the Town reported a liability of \$2,567,622 for its proportionate share of the net pension liability for VMERS. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2016. The total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation dated June 30, 2016. The Town's proportion of the net liability was based on a projection of the Town's long-term share of contributions to VMERS relative to the projected contributions of all participating members, actuarially determined. This information was provided by VMERS reports provided to the Town.

For the year ended June 30, 2017, the Town recognized pension expense of \$678,874. At June 30, 2017 the Town reported deferred outflows/inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

	<u>Deferred Outflows of Resources</u>	<u>Deferred Inflows of Resources</u>
Net difference between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments	\$ 832,547	-
Changes in proportion and differences between Town contributions and proportionate share of contributions	2,823	38,467
Difference between expected and actual experience	52,746	
Changes in assumptions	412,352	
Town contributions subsequent to the measurement date	306,755	-
	<u>\$ 1,607,223</u>	<u>38,467</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources (continued)

The Town's contributions subsequent to the measurement date which will be recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability in the year ending June 30, 2017. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized in pension expense as follows:

June 30, 2018	\$	326,466
June 30, 2019		326,466
June 30, 2020		465,423
June 30, 2021		143,646
	\$	<u>1,262,001</u>

Significant Actuarial Assumptions and Methods

Interest Rate: 7.95% per annum

Salary Increases: 5% per year

Deaths:

Groups A, B, and C: RP-2000 Tables for Employees and Healthy Annuitants projected 10 years from the valuation date with Scale BB with a 60% Blue collar and 40% White Collar adjustment.

Group D: RP-2000 Tables for Employees and Healthy Annuitants projected 10 years from the valuation date with Scale BB with a 100% Blue Collar adjustment.

The post-retirement mortality assumption was chosen to recognize improved longevity experience after the valuation date.

Spouse's Age: Husbands are assumed to be three years older than their wives.

Cost-of-Living Adjustments to Benefits of Terminated Vested and Retired Participants:

Assumed to occur at the rate of 1.5% per annum for Group A members and 1.8% per annum for members of Groups B, C and D.

Actuarial Cost Method: Projected benefit cost method. The unfunded accrued liability is amortized in installments increasing by 5% per year.

Asset Valuation Method: Invested assets are reported at fair value.

Note - For funding purposes - A smoothing method is used, under which the value of assets for actuarial purposes equals market value less a five-year phase-in of the differences between actual and assumed investment return. The value of assets for actuarial purposes may not differ from the market value of assets by more than 20%. (Not for GASB 68)

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources (continued)
Significant Actuarial Assumptions and Methods (continued)

Inflation: The separately stated assumptions for investment return, salary increases and cost of living adjustments are consistent with an expected annual inflation rate of 3.00% per year.

Long-Term Expected Rate of Return:

The long-term expected rate of return on System investments was determined using best estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net of investment expense and inflation) developed for each major asset class using an econometric model that forecasts a variety of economic environments and then calculates asset class returns based on functional relationships between the economic variable and the asset classes. These best estimate ranges were combined to produce forecasts of the short, intermediate, and longer-term horizons by weighting the expected future nominal rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage. The various time horizons in the forecast are intended to capture more recent economic and capital market conditions as well as other plausible environments that could develop in the future over economic cycles.

Best estimates of arithmetic rates of return for each major asset class included in the target asset allocation as of June 30, 2016 are summarized in the following table:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return</u>
Equity	8.54%
Fixed Income	2.36%
Alternatives	8.35%
Multi-strategy	4.90%

Nominal long-term expected rates of return for these asset classes are equal to the sum of the above expected long-term real rates and the expected long-term inflation rate of 3.0%.

Discount Rate

The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.95%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions will continue to be made in accordance with the current funding policy. Based on these assumptions, the fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments to current System members. The assumed discount rate has been determined in accordance with the method prescribed by GASB 68.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources (continued)

Significant Actuarial Assumptions and Methods (continued)

The following table presents the Town's proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 7.95 percent, as well as what the proportionate share would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percent lower (6.95%) or one percent higher (8.95%):

1% Decrease (6.95%)	Discount Rate (7.95%)	1% Increase (8.95%)
\$ 4,262,508	\$ 2,567,622	\$ 1,148,503

(19) Subsequent Events

Subsequent to June 30, 2017 the Town received advances under a line of credit agreement in anticipation of property tax collections. The line of credit allows for total advances up to \$1.5 million with interest accruing at 1.85%. The line matures December 15, 2017.

On August 2, 2017 the Town issued \$3.2 million of bonds through the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank. The bonds mature in 20 years and bear interest at 3.3 percent.

Management has evaluated subsequent events through January 5, 2018, the date that the financial statements were available to be issued.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Revenues:			
Property taxes:			
General	\$ 6,416,360	6,367,725	(48,635)
Highway	3,458,000	3,458,000	-
Fire	342,430	346,907	4,477
Penalties and interest	265,000	257,225	(7,775)
	<u>10,481,790</u>	<u>10,429,857</u>	<u>(51,933)</u>
Permits and licenses:			
Alcoholic beverages	6,000	6,930	930
Dog licenses	8,500	8,493	(7)
Marriage license	3,000	1,425	(1,575)
Building and zoning permits	40,000	45,138	5,138
Fire permits	4,000	4,685	685
Landfill	10,000	13,310	3,310
	<u>71,500</u>	<u>79,981</u>	<u>8,481</u>
Intergovernmental revenues:			
State shared interests:			
Federal and State Grant	218,000	510,524	292,524
Highway	319,050	306,822	(12,228)
In lieu of taxes	299,000	353,697	54,697
Other	48,000	102,576	54,576
	<u>884,050</u>	<u>1,273,619</u>	<u>389,569</u>
Fees and charges:			
Police sales and services	90,000	104,021	14,021
Police dispatch fees	20,400	20,400	-
Police false alarm fees	8,000	10,639	2,639
Vital records fees	35,000	42,990	7,990
Recording fees	100,000	96,764	(3,236)
Sale of cemetery lots	3,000	1,200	(1,800)
Recreational center charges	20,000	25,013	5,013
Pool membership fees	75,000	86,261	11,261
Senior citizens	20,000	7,643	(12,357)
	<u>371,400</u>	<u>394,941</u>	<u>23,541</u>
Fines and forfeitures:			
Police fines, seizures and forfeitures	21,000	28,761	7,761

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Revenues (continued):			
<i>Interest</i>	\$ 5,000	10,161	5,161
<i>Rental revenue</i>	25,640	53,391	27,751
<i>Gain on sale of assets</i>	12,000	47,225	35,225
<i>Other</i>	74,480	610,139	535,659
Total revenues	<u>11,946,860</u>	<u>12,928,075</u>	<u>981,215</u>
Expenditures:			
General Government:			
Select Board	16,550	15,826	724
Town Manager	219,480	219,839	(359)
Treasurer	15,990	15,876	114
Accounting	230,150	230,550	(400)
Listing	136,350	124,809	11,541
Tax collecting	121,000	117,252	3,748
Town Clerk	193,990	180,222	13,768
Planning and zoning	248,420	240,067	8,353
Economic and community development	196,230	223,532	(27,302)
Plant and equipment:			
Administration	742,070	761,129	(19,059)
Buildings and grounds	417,440	440,099	(22,659)
	<u>1,159,510</u>	<u>1,201,228</u>	<u>(41,718)</u>
	<u>2,537,670</u>	<u>2,569,201</u>	<u>(31,531)</u>
Public safety:			
Police:			
Administration	3,030,150	2,943,512	86,638
Investigation	19,440	12,755	6,685
Training	25,430	17,396	8,034
Communications	25,870	23,690	2,180
Police building	109,310	80,564	28,746
Equipment	156,220	146,970	9,250
Special services	33,370	74,338	(40,968)
	<u>3,399,790</u>	<u>3,299,225</u>	<u>100,565</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures (continued):			
Fire:			
Administration	\$ 58,270	58,480	(210)
Fire fighting	20,650	13,038	7,612
Communications	5,810	4,437	1,373
Machinery and equipment	127,150	115,836	11,314
Buildings	69,720	56,843	12,877
	<u>281,600</u>	<u>248,634</u>	<u>32,966</u>
	<u>3,681,390</u>	<u>3,547,859</u>	<u>133,531</u>
Public works:			
Solid waste management	126,350	104,130	22,220
Cemetery and mini-park	32,900	36,936	(4,036)
	<u>159,250</u>	<u>141,066</u>	<u>18,184</u>
Health and welfare:			
Health officer	8,070	7,751	319
	<u>8,070</u>	<u>7,751</u>	<u>319</u>
Recreation:			
Supervision	422,710	392,189	30,521
Recreation Center	9,700	12,222	(2,522)
Indoor pool	26,450	25,299	1,151
Parks	73,350	75,572	(2,222)
Pathway	1,000	278,333	(277,333)
Buildings	127,400	124,071	3,329
Vehicles and equipment	25,210	42,781	(17,571)
Senior Citizens' Center	99,160	83,230	15,930
Senior Citizens' - building	31,750	32,299	(549)
	<u>816,730</u>	<u>1,065,996</u>	<u>(249,266)</u>
Debt management:			
Principal	353,210	290,410	62,800
Interest - bonds	73,110	48,223	24,887
Interest - Recreation Center improvements	3,960	-	3,960
Interest - tax anticipation note	5,000	-	5,000
	<u>435,280</u>	<u>338,633</u>	<u>96,647</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures (continued):			
Highways and roads:			
Administration and buildings	\$ 1,494,890	1,525,261	(30,371)
Construction and maintenance - town highways	442,500	446,355	(3,855)
Highway projects	733,700	888,569	(154,869)
Installing and maintaining traffic control devices	105,650	129,676	(24,026)
Buildings	33,000	24,940	8,060
Sidewalks	196,500	183,413	13,087
Bridges	121,600	88,371	33,229
Streetlights	115,950	115,338	612
Downtown	71,610	27,180	44,430
Vehicles and equipment	378,710	593,051	(214,341)
	<u>3,694,110</u>	<u>4,022,154</u>	<u>(328,044)</u>
Other:			
Applegate-Willowbrook Pathway	-	2,000	(2,000)
BCA Against Child Abuse	2,500	2,500	-
Bennington Battle Day	15,000	15,000	-
Bennington County Regional Commission	14,840	14,840	-
Bennington Free Clinic	7,500	7,500	-
Bennington Home Health	21,600	21,600	-
Bennington Project Independence	11,000	11,000	-
Bennington Tutorial Center	10,000	10,000	-
Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council	7,500	7,500	-
Bennington Homeless Shelter	25,000	25,000	-
Bennington In Bloom	22,000	22,595	(595)
Bennington In Bloom - Northside Drive	10,000	-	10,000
Capital Facilities	-	19,116	(19,116)
CERCLA	1,370	5,490	(4,120)
Community Garden	-	100	(100)
Conservation of natural resources - tree program	7,750	8,703	(953)
County taxes	80,000	81,964	(1,964)
DPW Garage Project	-	1,716,149	(1,716,149)
Fireworks	6,000	13,159	(7,159)
Flood control program	3,300	930	2,370
Health management fees	-	230,810	(230,810)
Highway Improvements	-	11,005	(11,005)
Holiday celebrations	9,100	9,060	40
Hunt Street bridge	-	37,917	(37,917)
Library administration	455,000	455,000	-
336 Main Street Park	-	225	(225)
Miscellaneous contingencies	20,000	9,970	10,030

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)
<i>Expenditures (continued):</i>			
<i>Other (continued):</i>			
Ninja Trail	-	80,770	(80,770)
North Bennington - recreation	23,700	23,700	-
Planning grant	-	8,586	(8,586)
Police K-9 Expenses	-	6,591	(6,591)
Project Against Violent Encounters	5,000	5,000	-
Project Catalyst	-	905	(905)
Retired Seniors Volunteer Program	7,200	7,200	-
Safety and recognition	-	68	(68)
Seizures and forfeitures	-	9,761	(9,761)
Sunrise Family Resource Center	10,000	10,000	-
Turning Point Center	2,500	2,500	-
Vermont Council on Aging	7,500	7,500	-
Vermont CTR - Independent Living	7,000	7,000	-
Wellness	-	828	(828)
Youth appreciation	-	79	(79)
	<u>792,360</u>	<u>2,909,621</u>	<u>(2,117,261)</u>
Total expenditures	<u>12,124,860</u>	<u>14,602,281</u>	<u>(2,477,421)</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	<u>(178,000)</u>	<u>(1,674,206)</u>	<u>(1,496,206)</u>
<i>Other financing sources (uses):</i>			
<i>Operating transfers in (out):</i>			
Proceeds from issuance of long-term debt	-	2,447,971	2,447,971
<i>Administrative charges:</i>			
Community Development Fund	48,000	48,000	-
Water Fund	72,000	72,000	-
Sewer Fund	78,000	78,000	-
Transfer to Parking Fund	(20,000)	(20,000)	-
	<u>178,000</u>	<u>2,625,971</u>	<u>2,447,971</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures	<u>-</u>	<u>951,765</u>	<u>951,765</u>
Fund balance, July 1, 2016	<u>639,494</u>	<u>639,494</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund balance, June 30, 2017	<u>\$ 639,494</u>	<u>1,591,259</u>	<u>951,765</u>

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

Schedule of Funding Progress for Health Care Benefits

Actuarial Valuation Date	Actuarial Value of Assets (a)	Actuarial Liability (AAL) - Simplified Credit Cost (b)	Unfunded AAL (UAAL) (b-a)	Funded Ratio (a/b)	Covered Payroll (c)	UAAL as a Percentage of Covered Payroll ((b-a)/c)
6/30/2009	\$ -	503,300	503,300	0.0%	1,736,246	29.0%
6/30/2010	-	542,903	542,903	0.0%	1,777,054	30.6%
6/30/2011	-	797,926	797,926	0.0%	1,770,360	45.1%
6/30/2012	-	494,697	494,697	0.0%	1,776,951	27.8%
6/30/2013	-	634,575	634,575	0.0%	1,812,669	35.0%
6/30/2014	-	592,490	592,490	0.0%	1,905,782	31.1%
6/30/2015	-	453,928	453,928	0.0%	1,934,761	23.5%
6/30/2016	-	471,549	471,549	0.0%	1,964,325	24.0%
6/30/2017	-	778,084	778,084	0.0%	1,792,645	43.4%

SECTION II

COMPLIANCE AND INTERNAL CONTROL



**Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and
on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements
Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards***

The Select Board
Town of Bennington, Vermont

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Town of Bennington, Vermont, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2017, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Town of Bennington, Vermont's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated January 5, 2018.

Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or, significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Town of Bennington, Vermont's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Love, Cody ; Company, CPAs, P.C.

January 5, 2018

Vt. Reg. #357

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

Municipal Budget

Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Proposal

DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FY2017	ACTUAL FY2017	BUDGET FY2018	ACTUAL FY18 PRD6	PROPOSED FY2019	FY18 vs FY19 % INC/(DEC)
SELECT BOARD	16,550	15,826	16,550	8,895	16,550	0.00%
TOWN MANAGER	219,480	219,839	225,620	113,783	230,990	2.38%
TREASURER	15,990	15,895	16,520	7,884	16,720	1.21%
ACCOUNTING	230,150	230,550	237,620	113,180	239,990	1.00%
LISTING	136,350	124,809	129,020	60,632	132,790	2.92%
COLLECTIONS	121,000	117,252	121,510	83,169	143,900	18.43%
TOWN CLERK	193,990	180,222	182,290	84,931	187,600	2.91%
PERMIT-PLAN-CODE ENFORCE	248,420	240,067	255,370	126,511	248,040	-2.87%
ECONOMIC & COMM DEV	196,230	223,532	192,010	97,260	202,220	5.32%
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	742,070	761,129	776,670	575,315	786,790	1.30%
BUILDINGS & GROUNDS	417,440	440,099	550,120	263,613	585,680	6.46%
DEBT-B&G	0	0	16,690	15,885	15,640	-6.29%
FLOOD CONTROL	3,300	762	11,410	2,449	6,800	-40.40%
POLICE	3,399,790	3,299,226	3,607,180	1,788,811	3,702,780	2.65%
DEBT-POLICE	50,790	50,787	49,970	48,813	23,170	-53.63%
SOLID WASTE MGMT	126,350	104,130	138,800	52,203	139,630	0.60%
CERCLA	1,370	5,490	4,400	789	4,400	0.00%
CEMETARY	32,900	36,936	32,440	16,444	32,650	0.65%
HEALTH OFFICER	8,070	7,751	8,070	3,875	8,070	0.00%
PARKS & RECREATION	685,820	947,851	521,990	309,555	539,400	3.34%
DEBT-RECREATION	43,960	2,310	43,960	0	41,830	-4.85%
SENIOR CITIZENS	130,910	115,529	143,410	68,481	143,850	0.31%
GRANTS & SUBSIDIES	493,540	617,840	499,660	836,420	666,210	33.33%
HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS	30,100	30,252	30,100	27,849	30,100	0.00%
OTHER IMPROVEMENTS	39,750	31,466	40,250	10,054	40,500	0.62%
MISC CONTINGENCIES	40,000	29,970	40,000	0	40,000	0.00%
DEBT-IRENE BOND	40,000	19,600	126,470	110,800	124,220	-1.78%
DEBT-FIRE BUILDING BOND	25,760	25,762	0	0	0	0.00%
DEBT-TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000	0.00%
COUNTY TAX PAYMENTS	80,000	81,964	80,000	82,009	82,000	2.50%
RESERVE FUND EXPENDITURES	0	367,305	0	118,701	0	0.00%
HIGHWAY FUND	3,694,110	5,732,159	3,741,070	3,386,391	3,531,210	-5.61%
DEBT-HIGHWAY FUND	207,940	180,657	255,920	2,461,950	555,910	117.22%
FIRE FUND	281,600	248,634	350,510	191,679	368,390	5.10%
DEBT-FIRE FUND	61,830	61,828	0	0	0	0.00%
Expenditures Subtotal	11,585,280	14,226,485	11,952,590	8,430,884	12,127,260	1.46%
Debt Management Subtotal	435,280	340,943	498,010	2,637,448	765,770	53.77%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	12,020,560	14,567,427	12,450,600	11,068,331	12,893,030	3.55%
Less Transfer To Parking Fund	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	0.00%
NET OF TRANSFERS OUT	12,000,560	14,547,431	12,430,600	11,048,331	12,873,030	3.56%

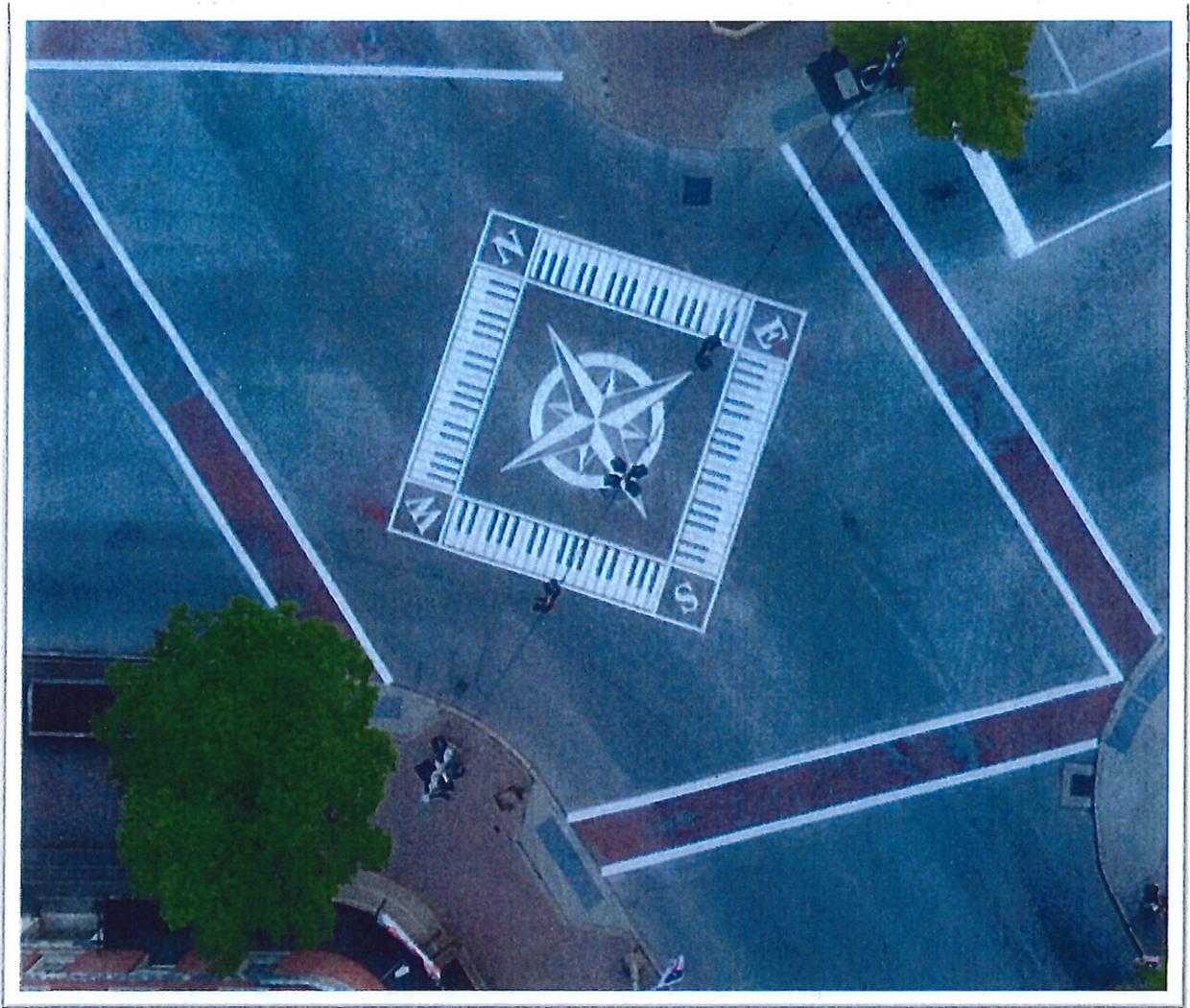


Photo provided by Polly van der Linde

Notes: