

From: London, Sarah
Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2016 5:31 PM
To: 'Erin Mansfield' <emansfield@vtdigger.org>
Subject: Your request

Erin, attached please find records in response to your request dated June 14, 2016. Certain potentially responsive records are under review by the AGO for whether they are relevant to pending litigation, and therefore exempt, pursuant to 1 VSA 317(c)(14). I have withheld those records at this time. In addition, submissions of the Governor's weekly report from ACCD have been withheld as executive privileged communications pursuant to 1 VSA 317(c)(1) and (4).

If you feel records have been withheld in error, you may appeal to the Governor's Chief of Staff, Darren Springer.

Thank you,
Sarah

Sarah London
Counsel to the Governor
802-828-3333
sarah.london@vermont.gov

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, December 20, 2013 8:09 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Seldon

Any intel from Seldon visit yesterday?

And PS - VTel is now wading in to the quagmire that is e911...

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2013 11:27 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Cc: Camp, Lori
Subject: Kyle Midura - 12PM Here

Broadband –

- We are delighted at the progress that we have made in achieving the Governor's goals.
- 99% of Vermont locations have access to high-speed internet. There is about 1% that have specific projects identified.
- There are just a handful of addresses that don't have a solution in place
- Shout out to the private sector providers: FairPoint; Comcast, VTel, Verizon, AT&T etc. EC Fiber has also helped reach our goal.

How'd we do it?

- Team approach; responding to directive of the Governor
- Excellent mapping that has allowed us to find solutions for some of the most remote parts of the state?

VTel:

- Large development projects like this often have delays
- We are working closely with VTel to assist where we can

Cellular:

- Our cellular coverage in this state has been steadily improving. (maybe make it personal by saying that you see improvement b/c you travel around VT so much?)
- Capex layouts by carriers have been enormous and we appreciate the improvement that they have made to our cell landscape, but we still have work to do.
- We still will make this a priority post-2013. It is important for our residents; visitors to the area; business community, etc.

Kiersten Bourgeois | Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
802-828-5220 office | 802-793-4899 cell | 802-828-3383 fax
accd.vermont.gov

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2013 10:18 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb
Cc: Porter, James
Subject: FW: E-911

Just an FYI. Looks like we've got the CovCo conundrum addressed, but here's our next challenge.

From: Michel Guite [mailto:mguite@vermontel.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2013 10:02 AM
To: Tucker, David; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Diane Guité; Porter, James; Robert Meyers
Subject: E-911

David,

Trying to get update on Vermont E-911 views of Vonage, Google, Apple FaceTime, Skype, Bria, WeChat, and other voice and videoconference carriers who use VOIP, but are not fully part of the costly Vermont E-911 program.

Is there a time to speak by phone, to hear your views? Might a call at 2.00 p.m. today or tomorrow on the VTel bridge, at 802-885-7070, be possible?

Thanks,

Michel Guite
President
Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.
354 River Street
Springfield, VT 05156
Phone: 802 885-7000
Mobile: 914 572-7664
E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, December 04, 2013 6:10 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Porter, James; Allen, Susan; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Valley News

Thanks... Appreciate it

Sent from my iPhone

> On Dec 4, 2013, at 4:21 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>

> Just a heads - up:

>

> Chris Fleisher is doing a broadband story and asked me to confirm the 99% figure - which I did. Stressed that it was for fixed & wireless, but not sure he got it. Told him that the 1% equaled fewer than 3k and all but a handful had a solution in place.

>

> He said that he's talked to some vt residents that insist that they don't have a solution. I encouraged him to refer to bbvt.org to get a feel for what data we have, etc and to call me w detailed questions - most of which I suspect will have to do w VTel timing. We also may need to reiterate at some point that wireless is a solution, offers high speed at competitive rate, etc

>

> The inquiry came to VTA and vcgi initially, but I think we are ok.

>

> Thx - Kiersten

>

> Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2013 1:09 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Broadband

Cool, thanks.
Hope your meter goes well.

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2013 1:06 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Re: Broadband

Yes. I will be finishing a metering at pavilion.

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 989-0569

"Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

If you are available at 5 w/ Jeb.

From: Spaulding, Jeb
Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2013 9:17 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Re: Broadband

How about 5:00?

Jeb Spaulding, via mobile
Secretary of Administration
State of Vermont

On Dec 3, 2013, at 8:55 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Hi Jeb – I just sent Jim Porter an email on that very topic. Let me know when you want to chat. I am fairly tied up today with non-telecom stuff, but I am available after 3.

We also have a very interesting E911 issue that just landed on our desks. I'll talk to Jim this AM and we'll brief you and Liz shortly.

Hope that you had a good Thanksgiving.

Thanks,
Kiersten

From: Spaulding, Jeb
Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2013 8:07 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Re: Broadband

Thanks, Kiersten. We should talk in the next day or two about follow-up work from the workgroup.

Jeb Spaulding, via mobile
Secretary of Administration
State of Vermont

On Dec 3, 2013, at 7:37 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Hi Jody –

Thanks for the email. According to our data (which you can also access at broadbandvt.org), your address will be served by VTel. Let me reach out to them directly for you and see what their timeline is for serving your home.

Should you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to shoot me an email or give me a call at 802.793.4899.

I will let you know when I hear back from VTel.

Have a nice day,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois | Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
802-828-5220 office | 802-793-4899 cell | 802-828-3383 fax
accd.vermont.gov

From: Spaulding, Jeb
Sent: Monday, December 02, 2013 6:51 PM
To: 'Jody Horan'
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: RE: Broadband

Jody,

I am sorry to be slow in responding to your e-mail. I appreciate your frustration and realize my dirt road and goat path comment was not appropriate or accurate. Sorry for that.

I am hopeful that my colleague, Kiersten Bourgeois, will look into your particular situation and let you know what options are currently available and when better ones should be expected.

Thank you got getting in touch.

Jeb Spaulding, Secretary of Administration
State of Vermont
Pavilion Office Building
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609

People are our greatest asset

From: Jody Horan [<mailto:jodyhoran>]
Sent: Friday, November 22, 2013 8:19 PM
To: Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: Broadband

Hi, Jeb. My husband and I were listening to Vermont This Week, and the discussion turned to the great success of reaching all but a tiny number of homes. Governor Shumlin just said there were fewer than 5 homes with no solution. The quote from you was that the only homes (5?) with no solution were at the end of remote dirt roads or on a goat path.

We happen to live just off VT Route 5, with our farm on the border between Thetford and Norwich: 24 Stevens Road in Norwich. Our phone line comes from Thetford - we're the end of that line; we're less than 1/4 mile from the last Route 5 pole in Norwich. For years, we've been told we're in a black hole and ECFiber won't get to us from the south or from Thetford, and the best we can do is a Verizon hotspot that at least is better than dial up. We are not isolated, except from Broadband.

Any thoughts? No one has ever asked us if we have Broadband access - we have initiated calls to ECFiber and Fairpoint. Any thoughts?

Thanks!

Jody & David Horan

Miller, Lawrence

From: Gray, Laura
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2013 5:16 PM
To: Gray, Laura
Subject: AFTERNOON MEDIA CLIPS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

TIMES ARGUS/RUTLAND HERALD:

Vt., Entergy talk on nuke decommission

The Associated Press

MONTPELIER - Gov. Peter Shumlin and other top state officials are in talks with the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant's owners about how to dismantle the site and handle spent fuel after the plant closes late next year.

Officials tell The Associated Press that Shumlin, Attorney General Bill Sorrell, Public Service Commissioner Chris Recchia and others met with high-ranking Entergy Corp. officials Wednesday and plan to meet again Dec. 2. It's the first time state leaders have met with the company to discuss decommissioning since the closing was announced in August.

The goal is to reach a deal on plans for decommissioning Vermont Yankee. The state wants to restore the site to a condition as close as possible to before Vermont Yankee opened so that it can be re-used.

Vt. agency makes recycling recommendations

The Associated Press

MONTPELIER - Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources is offering some guidance on the implementation of the state's new recycling law.

The law, passed last year, requires statewide recycling by July 2015 and diverting food scraps from landfills by July 2020.

The agency presented a report to the Legislature on Thursday in which it recommends requiring all municipalities to join a solid waste management district; leveling the playing field for all commercial haulers collecting municipal solid waste; establishing a grants/loans program to support private/public sector capital investments; and implementing a "pay-as-you-throw" system.

Vt. approves spending money for rail upgrade

The Associated Press

MONTPELIER - Efforts to bring back passenger rail service to western Vermont are a big step closer to reality.

On Thursday a special legislative committee authorized the Agency of Transportation to spend federal grant money to upgrade the rails from Rutland 20 miles north to Leicester.

In September, state officials announced the U.S. Department of Transportation was providing an \$8.9 million grant to help pay for improvements along a 20-mile stretch north of Rutland. Those funds and another \$9 million that has already been authorized will be used for the project.

Once the project is complete, all but 12 of the 75-mile stretch between Burlington and Rutland will have been upgraded. State officials could apply as soon as January for grants to upgrade the final 12 miles.

WCAX:

St. Johnsbury Academy teacher faces child porn charges

By WCAX News

ST. JOHNSBURY, Vt. - A St. Johnsbury Academy teacher is facing child pornography charges.

The Vermont attorney general says Jose Bruzual has been charged with five counts of possessing child pornography. According to court documents, Bruzual obtained and distributed child pornography over the internet using peer-to-peer file sharing programs.

At his arraignment, Bruzual pleaded not guilty to the charges. The court ordered Bruzual held on \$35,000 bail, that he surrender his passport and additional conditions prohibiting access to children and the internet. Bruzual was also served a no trespass order prohibiting him from entering the St. Johnsbury Academy campus.

Bruzual is the 20th person the Vermont attorney general's office has charged with possessing child pornography since April of 2010.

Vt. leads 45 states in cell 'cramming' settlement

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) - The state of Vermont says it's leading 45 states in an effort to end mobile phone "cramming," which takes place when unauthorized third-party charges appear on a customer's mobile telephone bills.

Attorney General Bill Sorrell announced Thursday that AT&T Mobility, Sprint and T-Mobile will no longer charge customers for premium text messages, which account for the majority of third-party charges on cellphones and for the overwhelming majority of cramming complaints.

The Federal Trade Commission defines cramming as when a company adds a charge to a phone bill for a service the customer didn't order. Cellphone and landline cramming is estimated to cost about \$2 billion per year.

Sorrell says premium text messaging has some benefits like for charitable giving, but it's a major contributor to the cramming problem.

Leahy votes to limit Senate filibusters

By WCAX News

WASHINGTON - Frustrated by dozens of filibusters on judicial nominees, Democrats exercised the so-called nuclear option voting Thursday to change a decades-old rule in the U.S. Senate.

The rule required a 60-vote majority to assure a yes-or-no vote on presidential nominees to the courts, cabinet departments or other agencies. It was designed to give the minority party more influence. But Democrats say Republicans have abused the power by blocking votes on President Obama's nominees.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vermont, says he has always looked skeptically on changing Senate rules. Leahy said, "I have always believed in the Senate's unique protection of the minority party, even when Democrats held a

majority in the Senate."

But Leahy voted for the change, saying, "As a result of Republican obstruction of nominees, the Senate has failed to do its job for the courts and for the American people."

Sanders highlights differences in life expectancy

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) - Vermont U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders is highlighting a new report from an arm of the National Academies that says Americans in some neighborhoods have lower life expectancies than people living in countries like Ethiopia and Sudan.

Sanders, chairman of the Senate subcommittee on aging, held a hearing Wednesday to discuss the disparities in life expectancy between regions of the United States and even neighborhoods within cities.

He cited a report by the Institute of Medicine that found Americans have shorter life expectancies than people in 16 other high-income countries.

Sanders cited poorer parts of the United States, including some rural counties and inner city neighborhoods, saying parts of Boston and Baltimore have a lower life expectancy than Ethiopia and Sudan.

Vt. Health Connect website goes down for upgrade

By WCAX News

MONTPELIER, Vt. - The Vermont Health Connect website is down for an upgrade.

The site goes down every day from midnight until 6 a.m., but a scheduled upgrade took the site offline starting at 8 p.m. Wednesday night. It was back up briefly before noon Thursday, but then went down again.

There have been other prolonged upgrade outages, but this is the longest one to date.

Vermont Health Connect did not tell us what this upgrade is intended to address, but there is a message on the site alerting users about the maintenance.

VPR:

State Says Only 3,000 Vermonters Still Without Broadband Service

By STEVE ZIND

The state will fall short of its goal of universal broadband coverage by the end of 2013, but Governor Peter Shumlin says there's still reason to celebrate.

Shumlin announced 'over 99 percent' of locations in Vermont now have access to broadband. The state says only 3,000 addresses remain to be served.

Expanding broadband in Vermont has taken millions of dollars in state grants, major investments by service providers and most of all \$174 million in federal money.

Officials say the federal figure represents the highest per capita U.S. government investment in broadband in any state in the country.

The state and federal money was used largely in the form of grants to help providers bring broadband to the most hard to reach areas of Vermont.

On Wednesday, the administration invited a roomful of broadband and wireless service providers including Fairpoint, Comcast, Verizon, AT&T, Sovernet, VTel and ECFiber, along with state officials to illustrate the collaborative nature of Vermont's broadband expansion effort.

Officials say making grants available to providers to expand existing service, including DSL, fiber, and wireless broadband, has been the most efficient and quickest way to bring broadband to all Vermonters.

Vermont Telecommunications Authority Executive Director Chris Campbell says even after everyone has broadband, the challenge will be to make sure the network continues to meet increasing demands for speed.

"We've been very, very focused on that, 'get everybody something goal' and it's no small feat, but expectations rise over time. So I think it's going to be a question of what is the expectation that the state has," says Campbell.

Vermont is currently ranked 17th in the nation according to one survey and a significant percentage of the state's broadband is DSL, which is not as fast as some other technologies.

Proponents of a fiber-optic system, like Irv Thomae of ECFiber, a community owned service provider say fiber technology is better suited for future demands.

"We fervently believe that high bandwidth in rural areas, on the back roads, is essential to the Vermont economy in the 21st century," Thomae told the group.

Administration Secretary Jeb Spaulding says the state is sure of its claim that only 3,000 of the 295,000 addresses in Vermont remain without service. He says some people may not be aware broadband is available to them.

"We are confident that there's coverage available in over 99 percent of the addresses that are out there. If there are individual circumstances that are causing issues, we need to address those," Spaulding said.

Officials say broadband, including wireless broadband plays a critical role in economic growth, public safety and in energy conservation through the use of smart meter technology used by power companies.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Gray, Laura
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2013 7:24 AM
To: Gray, Laura
Subject: MEDIA AND BLOG CLIPS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 (FINAL)

WCAX:

Duxbury school approves 24/7 security cameras

By Ali Freeman

DUXBURY, Vt. - It's a vote that's been in the works for months. Should a Duxbury school be allowed to run its surveillance cameras around the clock? Emotions were running high at the Harwood Union Middle/ High School Wednesday, as the board voted to run security cameras 24/7 inside and out on school grounds. Many students showed up saying they are not on board with the plan.

"Having monitors on the school, especially the doors, I think after school hours is important. If we aren't going to have people here, we need to know who is coming in and out of our schools," said Nina Sklar, a Harwood Union Sophomore.

Sklar says she understands why the school wanted to put cameras outside the school but she is one of many students who says putting them inside is not okay.

"It doesn't feel very good, I don't want people watching me. These cameras, I don't even know where all of them are. So I don't know. It doesn't feel good. It does feel like an invasion to me," said sophomore Anna Van Dine.

But Wednesday night, the school board voted 6 to 1 in favor of running surveillance cameras once reserved for after school hours, 24/7 inside the school. Board members say the decision comes after vandals caused massive damage last spring flooding parts of the school. Advocates say the added hours are all about boosting security.

"The reason I'm in favor of it is one of safety. It really doesn't have anything to do with watching you. It has to do with who may else enter your building," said Brigid Scheffert, the Washington West Supervisory Union Superintendent.

But many students, parents, and teachers argued the non-stop surveillance sends a bad message.

"What are we teaching them when we turn the cameras on them? Are we teaching them about trust?" asked Gretchen Stahl, a Harwood teacher.

"It will be unfortunate that we will be surveying our staff and students during school hours when all they are doing is walking through our school doors – and have a desire to come here and learn," said David Goodman, a school board member.

In addition to the board members in favor of keeping the cameras on during the school day -- local law enforcement voiced its support -- explaining how the cameras can provide huge leads in certain cases.

For those with concerns about being watched all the time -- the superintendent says the footage will only be accessed by school officials investigating a specific incident. The footage will be on a 30-day loop -- and

anything older than a month will be deleted.

"They would be locked, no one else would be sitting around eating popcorn and watching videos of students in the corridor that day," said Deborah Hunter, the school board chair.

In addition to feeling uneasy about the cameras being turned on full-time first thing Thursday morning, many students say they were also upset claiming they had little say in the final decision.

"I understand the pros and the cons of either side -- but I am very disheartened that the school didn't ask the students what their opinions were," said Sklar.

Allen Gilbert of the Vermont ACLU says he feels this decision is a mistake. He says it comes without firm policies protecting the students, and the 24/7 monitoring sends the wrong message and believes it will not accomplish what he the school wants them to.

Police chase ends in I-89 crash

By WCAX News

COLCHESTER, Vt. - A police chase that started in Grand Isle ended with a crash on Interstate 89 in Colchester.

Police say a pickup towing a trailer ran from a traffic stop and a chase ensued. Police say the driver struck multiple cruisers during the chase. It ended when the driver tried to drive across the median and was cut off by a DMV truck.

Police have not yet released the man's name or what might have led him to run from police.

Police: Scare at Bradford school was false alarm

By Adam Sullivan

BRADFORD, Vt. - Some tense moments at Bradford Elementary School Wednesday, but it turned out to be a false alarm.

Police were called early Wednesday afternoon for a report of a possible explosive device in the school. Authorities were able to quickly determine the device was a homemade battery-operated lantern made by a student. Officials say if anything, the incident served as a good emergency response drill.

"The learning experience today is following through with how these things should be taken care of. And I believe the school administration, the school faculty, the Bradford Fire Department and my police department followed through the way that they were supposed to," Bradford Police Chief Jeff Stiegler said.

The school was not evacuated during the incident and district officials say at no time was there any risk to students or staff.

BURLINGTON FREE PRESS:

Experts discuss improved school safety

Joel Banner Baird

At the Vermont school-safety training conference Wednesday, a hefty percentage of attendees were packing

heat.

Yet no one could make guarantees against an attack by a determined, armed shooter.

Advance planning shifts the odds in favor of surviving such an assault, Vermont State Police Captain Rob Evans told a crowd Wednesday afternoon at the Sheraton Burlington in South Burlington.

“If they’re dedicated and committed to getting into a school, there’s not a lot you can do to stop them,” said Evans, who works closely with the state’s School Crisis Planning Team. “The best thing we can do is slow them down.”

And the best way to do that?

Imagine the worst, he said. And, with help from the greater community, consider the options at your disposal.

He presented three of those options — run, hide and fight — during a short, video. Embedded in the Hollywood action-film trimmings was a chilling reminder: No matter how far an act of violence might progress, it behooves us to envision how it might be stalled.

It’s an approach used successfully by the military and the commercial airlines industry, guest speaker Jeff Nolan, a Burlington-based lawyer with an expertise in campus-threat assessments, told the crowd.

“In planning prevention, you have to abandon a ‘fortress’ mentality,” Nolan said.

That’s not to say lockdowns (of the sort that shuttered Winooski High and Middle Schools on Nov. 15) don’t work, Nolan added — it’s just that time and effort spent in advance, identifying individuals who might be prone to violence is time and effort well spent.

The process is not only difficult, but “is more art than science,” he added.

Nolan asked for a show of hands.

“Who here is a violent person?” he asked.

No one signaled the affirmative.

“Who here might, in certain circumstances, be moved to commit an act of violence?” he continued. A few hands wavered to shoulder-height.

However counter-intuitive it might seem, the best way to head off a homicidal attack by a frustrated teen (or parent, or employee) “is to keep them close” — by regularly assessing the risk he or she poses, Nolan said.

“There is some discomfort in this,” he concluded. “You’re asking tough questions.”

Successes, glitches

When threats surface out of nowhere, as they seemed to do last week in Winooski, preparation of the “fortress” sort pay off, said that city’s police chief, Steve McQueen, later Wednesday afternoon.

Law enforcement officers from throughout the region worked in concert for more than two hours to clear the locked-down school following a phoned-in report of an armed intruder, McQueen said.

The late-afternoon report turned out to be false: a rumor-embellished account of a nearby home invasion.

“Overall, it went extremely well,” McQueen said of the operation. “Everyone knew what they were supposed to do. You don’t often get a chance to practice what we went through.”

The pressurized incident also exposed some glitches, some successful improvisation and some room for improvement.

McQueen listed them: his department had never before trained for an after-school-hours lock-down (most teachers and administrators were out of the building); it took too long to locate keys to some of the smaller storage rooms; the binder with the school’s floor plans likewise made a delayed arrival to the scene.

Improved protocols are in the works, McQueen said, including quick file- and message transfers via an iPad; and ways to remotely access the school’s surveillance cameras.

Safety gear

Some similarly technical fixes were on display at Wednesday’s conference.

- a newly patented device that wirelessly drops the shades on every window at a school (offering cover to people inside classrooms as well as to police outside)
- a plastic coating for windows and glass doors that frustrates entry — even when the glass has been shattered by repeated gunfire
- “crisis management” software that maps and ranks risks, and can send out alerts to enabled mobile devices

Educational scare #2

Upgrades to security will cost Shrewsbury Mountain School dearly, but might add to its occupants’ peace of mind, said Principal Debra Fishwick, during a question-and-answer session.

In May, her students’ otherwise quiet day had been interrupted by small-arms fire.

“Occasionally we’ll hear hunters, but this was rapid gunfire,” Fishwick said. “The students stopped and looked at me and said, ‘What do we do?’ We’d done the drills, and so we locked the doors and pulled the blinds and we called 911.”

It took 75 minutes for state troopers to arrive. They traced the gunshots to a livelier-than-usual bout of target shooting on a neighboring property.

It was a hair-raising, educational hour-and-a-quarter in this remote part of Vermont with no cell phone service, Fishwick said.

She has made some changes: in deference to police policy, the classroom doors now have numbers, in addition to the names of the teachers affixed to them; the front doors are now locked while school activities are underway; an intercom system now connects her office with each classroom; security cameras will soon be installed to the tune of about \$5,000.

“It’s just changing times, I guess,” Fishwick said. “I still love my job, I love what I do. But I was trained as an

educator, not a security officer.”

Second-best

In response to Fishwick’s (and others’) concerns, Evans emphasized that each community’s planning efforts must incorporate “reasonable expectations for a finite amount of resources” available in the state.

The best template for school safety, he added, is one that makes the best use of community resources, emphasizes collaboration, and adapts quickly to changing circumstances.

As with the nerve-racking drill in Winooski, preparations against a school shooter will probably always get mixed reviews, Evans said: “When it happens, we’re all going to wish we had a better plan.”

Biz Forum: Small business owners express frustration

Dan D’Ambrosio

If you want to get an earful, just ask small business owners in Vermont what they think of health care reform.

That’s what the Burlington Free Press did about a week ago to launch the Small Business Forum on Facebook, inviting a group of about a dozen people to answer an inaugural round of questions, including the challenges they were facing deciding on the avenue they would take for health care.

Moulton: Lots of forms

Melinda Moulton, chief executive officer of Main Street Landing, got the ball rolling with a series of posts that detailed what she was doing to make the switch to 21st century health care coverage for her employees.

Moulton began by saying Main Street Landing in Burlington has provided insurance coverage for its employees and their families for the past 30 years. Moulton met with her insurance consultant, who went over her options for coverage, and she chose the BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont Platinum Plan because it was similar to the plan Main Street Landing had before.

“The rest of the process has been really the paperwork — and filling out forms,” Moulton wrote.

Lots of forms, as it turns out. There was the 20-page form for employees going on Medicare. When Moulton went online and tried to sign up as an employer, the Vermont Health Exchange website didn’t work, “so we are doing it using ‘paper’ work,” Moulton wrote.

“Finalizing our submission to Vermont Exchange — and found another form our employees need to fill out — about 7 pages — and also found another 2 forms I have to complete,” Moulton wrote in her last post.

She hoped to have everything submitted by this week.

Elliott: 'Negative factor'

Eileen Elliott, an attorney with Dunkiel Saunders in Burlington, wrote that one of the biggest challenges her firm faced was getting across the details of health reform to employees who “have had little exposure to the nuances of health insurance.”

Elliott says Dunkiel Saunders has always offered generous health benefits and will continue to do so through Vermont Health Connect with the help of a broker who will help the firm’s employees make coverage

decisions.

“But, even if the firm’s decisions make the transition to new coverage relatively easy, it is still more bandwidth than our employees have had to devote to the topic previously,” Elliott wrote.

Elliott also notes the fact that the Health Connect website doesn’t work properly, calling it a “negative factor.” She lays out three changes that could make the process easier.

First, the website has to work. Second, the administration and the legislature, the media, employers and individuals need to continue to make a “public case” for the importance of everyone having health insurance, she says. And third, there needs to be “payment reform.” Costs must be reined in.

“But payment reform has taken a back seat to the Exchange, and when the Exchange does not work well, the impression is that reform is faltering, government is inept, and reform is nothing but a burden,” Elliott writes.

Mayer: His own plan

Don Mayer, chief executive officer of Small Dog Electronics headquartered in Waitsfield, begins by saying double-digit increases in health insurance premiums put the cost of health care at more than 20 percent of payroll.

“We asked our employees to share in this cost but still find that providing a platinum level plan for all employees still costs in excess of 18 percent of payroll,” Mayer writes. “This is clearly unsustainable.”

Mayer has a plan he will most likely implement next year. Small Dog will get out of the health insurance business.

“Our intention is to raise wages to a sufficient level that with the federal subsidies available under the Affordable Care Act, that all employees will be able to choose their plan on the exchange with little or no additional out of pocket expense,” Mayer wrote.

DeSanto: Predictability needed

A follow-up question asking what President Obama or Gov. Peter Shumlin could do to make things better brought a response from Michael DeSanto, owner of Phoenix Books in Burlington and Essex. DeSanto, recounting the experience of co-owner Renee Reiner’s efforts to navigate the federal system, does not mince words.

“The utter lack of clarity is breathtaking,” DeSanto writes. “The incredible complexity posed for a truly small business trying to do right by its employees and the law is mind boggling?”

And how about Vermont’s system?

“I do not believe the Vermont program is anything to boast about except in comparison to the national debacle,” DeSanto writes. “Other than drop the whole effort I wouldn’t know what to suggest.”

Most of all, DeSanto said he needs predictability when it comes to health care costs.

“Businesses make plans for the next year, and we need a predictable formula with information on costs to the business,” he wrote. “It is also difficult to actually run a business and be the guinea pig in this experiment.”

My Turn: A palliative care physician's response to Patient Choices at End of Life

Dr. Ursula McVeigh is director of Fletcher Allen Palliative Care Service and assistant professor, University of Vermont College of Medicine.

Palliative care is care directed at comfort and quality of life for patients facing serious illness. The focus is on living and helping people retain as much of themselves and what matters despite difficult illness, largely through controlling symptoms and providing supportive care. We also help people formulate plans for when they are at the end of their lives.

At some point, goals of care will shift from controlling disease and extending life, to comfort only and allowing death. The “when and how” that occurs is a personal path to navigate and can include physical and emotional struggles as well as times of joy and times of grief.

Act 39: Patient Choice at the End of Life, Vermont’s physician aid in dying (PAD) legislation, has stimulated discussion about suffering at the end of life and control over how one dies. PAD legislation allows a terminally ill patient to ingest lethal medication to hasten their death.

Having thoughts of hastening death are not uncommon near the end of life. Because of this legislation, more people may broach this subject with their physician, increasing the chances of addressing concerns of maintaining control and alleviating suffering, thus possibly obviating the need to pursue PAD.

But a few will pursue PAD — estimated at six patients a year in Vermont if similar to other states with PAD.

While physician participation in prescribing PAD is voluntary, being able to respond to a patient’s request by exploring the reasons underlying the request are essential. This can be a pivotal opportunity to deepen the conversation about their concerns and discuss how to maintain control of their life and their death.

For example, we can ask about what causes suffering now and discuss concerns for the future. We can ask what brings their life meaning. We can explore what may be going on when they think they cannot take it anymore, and what is going on when they think they can. We can help them define their goals of medical care now and identify conditions under which their goals would shift from prolonging their life to comfort only and allowing an illness to end their life.

Moreover, we can assure them that no matter what they share with us we will not abandon them, and will do everything possible to address their suffering now and in the future. Some patients will want specific information on the PAD option. Vermont Ethics Network website has compiled concise information sheets for both providers and patients: www.vtethicsnetwork.org.

A challenge is present if one takes a strict reading of Vermont Act 25 Patient Bill of Rights for Palliative Care and Pain Management (2009) stating patients have the right to be informed of all options related to terminal care, which now includes PAD. However, listing options, especially PAD, is in conflict with how patients cope with, and make, end of life decisions. In particular, I find providing a menu of end of life care treatments is not usually helpful, wanted or recommended. I believe best practice is for end-of-life discussions to be nuanced and tailored to the patient’s goals, priorities and information preferences.

The experience of practitioners from states with PAD is that the request for information should come from the patient and not initiated by the clinician or family.

As health professionals, we should strive to keep quality of life and relief of suffering a high priority throughout the course of serious illness, optimize timely use of palliative and hospice care services when needed, and align end of life discussions to patients’ elicited goals and concerns.

Patient-instigated PAD discussions can lead to rich conversations that usually lead to addressing these without pursuing PAD and offer opportunity to improve living as well as dying.

Voice of the Free Press: For more meaningful report cards

Aki Soga

The Burlington School District deserves praise for responding to complaints from parents about report cards that failed to show problems students were having in class.

The complaints came from families of recently arrived immigrants who found their children had problems gaining admission to college despite receiving high marks in high school.

A report card that fails to reflect a student's true academic achievement level creates grounds for serious misunderstanding.

Allowing students to move up a grade or even graduate without at least attaining grade-level competency in core subjects threatens the integrity of the school system.

Most of all, misleading grades are unfair to the students.

Mary Alice McKenzie, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Burlington, tells the Free Press, "There are kids who graduate and in their minds, you know, they've been achievers in school and they believe that they are going to be able to handle college level work and it's painful to find out that they can't."

Parents who might be unfamiliar with the classes and grading system used in the American schools might comprehend, for example, the difference between getting an "A" in a remedial class versus a "B" in a class in the college preparatory track.

Burlington High School's response was a pilot program that sends supplemental progress reports to about families of about 150 students in the English language learner, or ELL, program.

The supplemental reports are color-coded to show the difficulty level of classes, ranging from "beginner" to "college/career ready," and include graphs that put the letter grades in perspective and marks to draw attention to "D" and "F" grades.

The visual aids aim to help new Americans and others who might have trouble interpreting the grading system and course hierarchy. Any student at the high school can generate the supplemental report on the school website, and that's an important benefit.

ELL students are hardly the only ones who could use a boost in understanding how they're doing in school. Nationally, there is no shortage of horror stories about how a student graduates from high school only to find he or she lacks the basic math, reading and writing skills to get a job.

A system that more clearly put grades and classes in perspective is an important step in delivering more meaningful report cards to all students.

VTDIGGER:

SHUMLIN CELEBRATES BROADBAND PROGRESS, THOUGH TARGET IS MISSED HILARY NILES

Despite conceding that Vermont will miss his target of statewide broadband and cellular coverage before year's end, Gov. Shumlin Wednesday gathered top telecommunications executives to celebrate how far they've come.

In early January 2011, Shumlin created Connect VT, "an ambitious plan to deliver broadband and cell service to every corner of Vermont," he said soon after in his State of the State address.

At least \$174 million of federal funds, millions more of state money and an untold amount of private investment by telecom providers has been poured into the effort since 2010. According to a congressional aide, Vermont's share of stimulus funding for broadband buildout surpassed all others when measured by funding per capita.

To deliver a progress report, Shumlin was joined by representatives from FairPoint, AT&T, Sovernet, EC Fiber, Verizon, VTel and Comcast at a press roundtable on broadband service Wednesday afternoon in Montpelier.

The tally: About 3,000 homes still lack high-speed Internet service, he said. He underscored that the number represents less than 1 percent of residences in the state. Of those homes without service, solutions have been identified for the vast majority, though connection dates remain elusive. Five or fewer locations still remain without any solutions figured out, he said.

"From an economic development standpoint, from a quality of life standpoint, this is huge," Shumlin said.

He stressed that high-speed Internet connections are necessary for modern job creation, tourism, public safety, energy delivery and education. The Federal Communications Commission also cites broadband connection as essential for democratic engagement, and some in attendance pointed to business and health care benefits, not to mention interpersonal communications.

As people come to expect more from technology and use more devices to connect to the World Wide Web, infrastructure struggles to keep pace. The state's working definition of "high-speed," in particular, is up for debate.

Jim Porter, director of telecommunications for the Public Service Department, said state regulators take cues from the federal government's standards for grant funding, which is typically 4 megabits per second (Mbps) upload and 1 Mbps download speed. When asked the minimum speed that qualifies as "high-speed" in Vermont however, Porter responded with a different federal standard.

"I think the FCC continues to define 768 Kbps/200Kbps service as broadband service," Porter said, describing rates about one-fifth of the higher standard.

In fact, the FCC upgraded its definition of "broadband" to the 4/1 standard in its Sixth Broadband Progress Report, in 2010. At the time, the commission admitted that the upgrade was already "long overdue."

Chris Campbell, executive director of the Vermont Telecommunications Authority, said Vermont's speed standards deserve a public conversation. VTA was created by the Legislature in 2007 to re-grant capital appropriations that bring telecom infrastructure to Vermont's hardest-to-reach residences and businesses.

"Definitely when we've looked at funding projects to date, we've looked at funding projects that are capable of supporting more than just the bare bones," Campbell said. "We know the overall trend over time is for speeds and performances ... to go up."

But speed is not the only consumer consideration in question. The state's 2011 Broadband Telecommunications

Plan also laid out pricing “on par with national urban areas” as a desired outcome by the end of 2013.

A clear profile of pricing was not available at the press event, however. Campbell said the question is best directed to individual providers.

Connection gaps, debatable speed of the network that does exist, and unclear comparative cost of Internet services are not enough to dim the enthusiasm of David Weinstein, a senior policy analyst for Sen. Bernie Sanders. He said federal funding agencies see Vermont as ahead of the curve.

Three strategies set Vermont apart, Weinstein said.

First is the strategy of concentrating high-speed service to “anchor” institutions, such as schools, hospitals, banks, public offices and major businesses. Second, a “wireless canopy” strategy helps reach rural areas by bypassing phone, cable and fiber optic networks. Finally, coordinating broadband technology with “smart-grid” infrastructure establishes Vermont as a pioneer among other states, Weinstein said.

“Some of the projects certainly are moving along a little bit slower than we had hoped — not unusual,” Weinstein said. But federally funded telecom infrastructure projects “are starting to pay dividends,” he said. “When this is all built out, we’ll have one of the fastest speed networks in the entire country.”

In the meantime, Secretary of Administration Jeb Spaulding is more than satisfied with Vermont’s progress so far.

“I think most Vermonters would be very impressed that we’re getting over 99 percent coverage by the end of 2013,” Spaulding said.

Sitting in for the governor when Shumlin had to leave the roundtable early, Spaulding said the effort has been largely successful. “I think (the governor) is excited and thankful and gratified for the progress we have made, and I think for all intents and purposes, we have hit his target.”

That said, Spaulding said, the work is not done.

“This is not a marathon. This race doesn’t end,” Spaulding said. He acknowledged that improved speed and affordability, plus greater digital literacy, are constant goals.

Spaulding also speculated that some Vermonters who complain about slow or lacking Internet service may not be aware of the connections available to them. He encouraged anyone with limited options or experiencing problems with their connections to contact the Vermont Telecommunications Authority or the Public Service Department for assistance.

For those with access to the Internet, the state’s website BroadbandVT.org offers an interactive map to find service options in your neighborhood, a “speed test” and an online form to report an unserved address.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ASKED TO STAY POSITIVE AMID GLOOMY PREDICTIONS ALICIA FREESE

Lawmakers convened Wednesday for a gathering that House Speaker Shap Smith encouraged them not to view as a “doom and gloom session.”

The senators and representatives were briefed on a \$72 million budget gap, the serious shortfall in the teacher retirement fund, possible cuts to federal funding, and the status of the state’s still-not-entirely-functional health

exchange.

The Legislature doesn't convene until Jan. 9, but Smith described the Wednesday meeting as a way to give lawmakers the "lay of the land" ahead of that date.

Shumlin's agenda: Secretary of Administration Jeb Spaulding offered a bare bones sketch of Gov. Peter Shumlin's priorities for the upcoming session. His top one is already a familiar refrain in the Statehouse halls: creating jobs and prosperity.

Beyond that, Spaulding said, Shumlin is focused on improving Vermont Health Connect, bolstering the Vermont Working Landscape initiative, "finishing the job" on early education and preschool, completing statewide broadband coverage, and balancing the budget.

Fiscal woes: Legislative economist Tom Kavet gave a rundown on the revenue coming into the state. "This is not all doom and gloom, but it could be a whole lot better," he told lawmakers. Incoming revenues to the state's three main funds — general, transportation and education — are very slightly above target, according to Kavet. He noted that while he hasn't observed any "big revenue weakness," neither does he expect any "big budget rescue coming in revenues."

Absent an unexpected revenue "rescue," the Shumlin administration and lawmakers will be left grappling with what Steve Klein, the chief fiscal officer for the Legislature, estimates will be a \$72 million budget for fiscal year 2015.

But before they face that, the administration will ask the Legislature to approve a budget adjustment for fiscal year 2014, which Finance and Management Commissioner Jim Reardon currently pegs at \$13.5 million. Reardon said he would deliver a definitive figure to the House Appropriations Committee on Dec. 2.

During the afternoon session, State Treasurer Beth Pearce briefed lawmakers on rising health care costs and the burden that's placed on the teachers retirement system.

Vermont Health Connect: Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have been critical of the halting start to Vermont's health insurance exchange, Vermont Health Connect.

Department of Vermont Health Access Commissioner Mark Larson, addressing the Legislature as whole for the first time since its launch, began by saying, "It's important for me to acknowledge the obvious."

The "obvious," as Larson describes it, is that the exchange has not lived up to expectations.

Some lawmakers didn't find Larson's admission satisfactory, saying they thought he owed them a more forthright mea culpa. "Did you hear an apology?" Rep. Cynthia Browning, D-Arlington, asked afterwards.

One of the central hitches has been the payment system, which will allow people to actually purchase plans. That, Larson said, is still being tested. Another major problem has prevented employees from picking a plan after their employer registers. Larson also acknowledged that navigators hadn't received sufficient training — "We would have preferred to give navigators more training before October 1."

Larson also pointing to glimmers of improvement. The speed of the website, which crawled when it first launched, has picked up to the point it "operates at a speed that allows them [users] to function," Larson said. And enrollment numbers are a testament to the site's functionality, he said, noting that roughly 16,000 people have set up accounts and over 5,000 have picked a plan.

Mental Health: Mental Health Commissioner Paul Dupre said the state is making progress making more beds available at mental health facilities, but in the meantime, psychiatric patients are still spending as long as 15 days in hospital emergency rooms while they wait for a bed to open up. This problem has been perennial since the Vermont State Hospital was flooded and subsequently shut down after Tropical Storm Irene.

“I know that sounds awful but there’s no way around it at the moment,” Dupre said.

Rep. Martha Heath, D-Westford, who chairs the House Appropriations Committee, told him, “Paul, we’ve put \$20 million or more into the community-based system in hopes of beefing up the system, but also preventing the need to fill more acute beds. I’m really worried about the timing. And whether the community system is going to be functional in time that we don’t start overbuilding acute beds and residential recovery beds. What assurances can you give me that we aren’t going to do that?”

Dupre rehashed the challenges the department is facing before telling Heath, “I wish I could give you assurances, but I can’t.”

Miller, Lawrence

From: Gray, Laura
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2013 7:22 AM
To: Gray, Laura
Subject: MEDIA CLIPS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

TIMES ARGUS/RUTLAND HERALD:

GMCR profit jumps on Keurig, coffee pod sales

NEW YORK — Green Mountain Coffee Roasters Inc. reported a higher quarterly profit that beat Wall Street expectations Wednesday as sales of its Keurig brewing machines and coffee pods rose.

The company, based in Waterbury, also declared a 25-cent dividend and announced a \$1 billion share buyback program.

Green Mountain makes single-serve brewing machines that have gained popularity in recent years. During the quarter, the company said, it sold 2.6 million machines, up from 2 million in the previous quarter. Sales of its portion packs rose 23 percent from a year ago, as stronger volume was somewhat offset by lower prices.

For the three months that ended Sept. 28, the company says, it earned \$127 million, or 83 cents per share. Not including one-time items, it earned 89 cents per share, beating the 75 cents per share Wall Street expected.

A year ago, the company earned \$91.9 million, or 58 cents per share.

Revenue rose 11 percent to \$1.05 billion, topping the \$964.6 million analysts expected.

Looking ahead, Green Mountain says sales growth should be in the high single digits from the previous year, but cautioned that there would be some variability from quarter to quarter because of new products and that growth would be stronger in the second half of the year.

Net income, not including one-time items, is expected to be \$3.75 to \$3.85 per share. Analysts had forecast \$3.78 per share.

The dividend will be paid Feb. 14 to shareholders of record Jan. 17. The stock buyback plan is authorized to take place over the next two years.

Shares of Green Mountain rose \$2.47, or 4 percent, to 64.30 in after-hours trading.

Lawmakers forsee tax and spending challenges

By Peter Hirschfeld

MONTPELIER — As the Legislature prepares to reconvene in January, Gov. Peter Shumlin in recent weeks has issued his customary pre-session dictate to lawmakers: No increases in broad-based taxes.

House Speaker Shap Smith, however, is calling for an even harder fiscal line in 2014, and says that lawmakers will have to resist the urge to increase any revenues, “broad-based” or not.

“I don’t think the distinction between broad-based taxes and other ... sources of revenues matters. You’re either for new revenue or you’re not,” Smith said Wednesday. “And I think we have to figure out some way to resolve this gap without raising revenue.”

The “gap” to which Smith referred was one of the subjects of a daylong legislative briefing Wednesday in Montpelier, when lawmakers gathered in the State House to learn more about the \$72 million shortfall projected for the fiscal year 2015 general fund budget.

The so-called budget gap represents the difference between the amount of revenue projected to come into state coffers in fiscal year 2015, and the estimated cost to keep government running at current levels.

“I think that we have to try to solve the problem within the current revenue structure that we have,” Smith said.

It’s unclear still what balancing the budget under the current revenue scheme would mean for the areas of government — corrections, human services, public education, health care for the poor — most reliant on general fund revenues.

But eliminating the prospect of raising additional revenues via the “splinter” taxes to which lawmakers have turned in the past to make up shortfalls will make balancing the budget a more difficult task. And it could result in the reduction, or elimination, of line items currently funded by taxpayer dollars.

The Legislature during the last session considered taxes on items including tobacco, soda, satellite television and bottled water. Shumlin, whose definition of “broad-based” includes taxes on income, sales, and rooms and meals, proposed new or increased taxes last session on break-open tickets, bank franchises and health insurance claims.

Smith said he thinks lawmakers can find “ingenious” solutions to the \$72 million budget problem next year without resorting to the kinds of revenue packages passed by his chamber’s top tax committee during the last session.

“I think we have to be better at identifying the programming that we’re getting good results from, and I think that to the extent we’re not getting good results, we need to ask, do we need to be spending money there?” Smith said

Smith said he has yet to identify the areas of government from which the Legislature can shave allocations without impacting the flow of commerce or the receipt of needed services.

Senate President Pro Tem John Campbell said he heads into the 2014 legislative session with a mind toward holding the line on revenues, though he included some caveats. In years past, he said, the state has been able to find one-time funding sources to fill the budget gap, a luxury he said the Legislature won’t enjoy this year.

“The cupboards are dry,” Campbell said. “But rather than just looking at revenue to solve the problem, I’m going to look to see if there are places that we can consolidate or cut.”

He added, “If that’s impossible to do while still maintaining the level of services needed to protect the most vulnerable, then you have to look at some kind of new revenue. But right now that’s pretty far from the track that I’m on.”

The majority of House representatives and a handful of senators attended a daylong gathering Wednesday that included presentations from administration officials and analysts on the budget, federal revenues, progress on the health care reform rollout, and the condition of the teachers pension fund.

Administration Secretary Jeb Spaulding didn't offer any previews of the governor's fiscal year 2015 budget plan, which he'll deliver to the Legislature in an address scheduled for Jan. 15.

But he said lawmakers should expect a spending plan that reflects Shumlin's belief "that living within our means is an important priority and a value that Vermonters have."

"We want government to do more, and we want to do it with the same or less," Spaulding said. "And that is the challenge."

Senate Minority Leader Joe Benning said he's glad to see the Democrats who control the governor's office and both chambers of the Legislature "acknowledging the fact that government is living beyond its means."

"We have serious problems in front of us," Benning said. "And getting to the bottom of those problems is going to require serious discipline."

Benning, however, said he worries about whether Democrats' talk Wednesday will be reflected in their walk next May.

"When the political winds blow through this building, funny things happen here," Benning said.

Lawmakers will contend with a host of hot-button issues in 2014, from a GOP effort to undo a mandate that will force about 100,000 Vermonters into the new health insurance exchange, to what will be a heavy push to require employers to provide paid sick days to employees.

Property tax reform and overhauls to a retired teacher health care plan that, according to many elected officials, has fallen severely out of balance, will also get significant legislative attention in 2014.

Report hits Vermont on sending inmates out of state

By Eric Blaisdell

MONTPELIER — A social justice organization based in North Carolina has released a report that is critical of the four states, including Vermont, that export prison inmates to for-profit correctional institutions in other states.

The report titled "Locked Up and Shipped Away: Interstate Prisoner Transfers and the Private Prison Industry" by Grassroots Leadership was released Wednesday. The organization also held a teleconference Wednesday to discuss the report with members of the media.

Holly Kirby, the author of the report, said the organization's investigation "exposes a largely unreported practice that makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for prisoners and their families to maintain supportive ties that are critical to rehabilitation."

According to the report, California, Idaho, Hawaii and Vermont together have around 10,500 inmates housed in out-of-state, for-profit prisons due to overcrowding. Vermont currently has 450 inmates housed in Kentucky and 30 in Arizona.

"The lack of state laws regulating these types of transfers have allowed state leaders to send incarcerated people, en masse, to private prisons without their consent, leaving incarcerated people and their families in the dark," Kirby said.

According to the report, Vermont started the practice of sending inmates out of state in 2004 when it signed a contract with Corrections Corporation of America to house up to 700 inmates in Kentucky and Tennessee. The report quotes then-Corrections Commissioner Steve Gold as saying at the time, “The contract provides up to 700 offenders, but my hope and my goal really is to eliminate the need for any Vermonters having to go out of state while they are incarcerated. But at the present time we will need to use some out-of-state beds.”

The state later authorized payment of up to \$61.7 million from 2011 to 2015 to house Vermonters in private prisons in Arizona and Kentucky, according to the report, citing another state contract with Corrections Corporation of America.

The report claims interstate transfers of prisoners to for-profit prisons serve the interests of an industry that views prisoners as commodities and perpetuates the country’s mass incarceration crisis. It uses the current Vermont contract as an example.

“The contract includes per diem increases for each year of the contract and 95 percent occupancy guarantee clauses at both facilities. The clause does not require Vermont to pay for unused beds, but stipulates that the Vermont DOC will lose priority for the use of the beds should the occupancy fall below 95 percent,” the report says.

The report recommends that states prioritize strategies to reduce prison populations so inmates in other states can be returned, and pass legislation that bans the exportation of incarcerated people from their home state to for-profit prisons.

Rep. Suzi Wizowaty, D-Burlington, proposed such legislation during the last legislative session. The bill, which is in the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions, says no Vermont inmate can be transferred “to a privately-owned or operated out-of-state correctional facility unless living conditions at that facility meet or exceed those in Vermont.” The bill also calls for all Vermont inmates to be housed in public institutions by July 1, 2014.

Wizowaty, who also took part in Wednesday’s teleconference, said even though the practice has been going on for almost a decade in Vermont, there is growing opposition to it.

“We want to stop sending people out of state. We want to stop using private prisons. We want, instead of a criminal justice system that punishes crime, to have a criminal justice system that reduces crime,” Wizowaty said.

She said the state can reduce the prison population by increasing the use of treatment courts, court diversion and community-based reparative boards. She added that the country needs to end the war on drugs and recognize drug addiction as a public health issue and not a crime.

She said that while parts of the state have treatment courts and reparative boards, they aren’t statewide programs, and they could be expanded to help bring down prison populations. And even where the programs are available, they aren’t being used to their full potential.

“In Vermont, we have 13 elected state’s attorneys by county. Some of those prosecutors are more likely to refer people to some of the alternatives than others,” she said.

Schools told: Plan for the worst, with best possible response

By JOSH O’GORMAN

SOUTH BURLINGTON — Vermont schools must plan for the worst and prepare to overcome the safety

challenges created by the state's rural nature, according to speakers at a statewide training conference Wednesday in South Burlington.

Hundreds of police officers, firefighters, EMTs and school officials at the Sheraton Burlington Hotel & Conference Center shared experiences unique to a rural school setting and learned the team effort that might make all the difference in preventing and responding to school shootings.

Throughout the Governor's Statewide Safety Training Conference, Capt. Rob Evans of the Vermont State Police and others reiterated the notion that, because of the difference in the sizes of Vermont's cities and towns and their distances from each other, it's up to each community to look at its resources and create a response plan.

"If Winooski had happened in the Northeast Kingdom, you'd still be waiting for that many police to show up," Evans said, referring to the immediate and widespread police response to reports of an armed intruder at Winooski's schools Friday night. The reports turned out to be incorrect.

Evans noted response times in more rural areas can be much longer, an issue echoed by Debra Fishwick, principal of Shrewsbury Mountain School, who shared a story of putting her school in lockdown in May after hearing numerous gunshots outside.

Police response time was 75 minutes, she said.

"We just waited," she said. "Parents were really upset because they were showing up and we were in lockdown."

Afternoon talks ranged from a forum on school violence from the perspective of school administrators to another that focused on mental health services. During one, Evans discussed the evolution in the way police respond to an active-shooter situation.

"In the pre-Columbine world, law enforcement would respond and take an 'isolate, contain and negotiate' approach. Well, you all saw the end result at Columbine," Evans said, referring to the 1999 shooting at Columbine High School in Colorado that left 15 dead and 21 injured.

"Now, we're not looking to negotiate," Evans continued. "There are three outcomes: Kill them, they kill themselves or they're forced out of the building."

While Evans discussed how law enforcement responds to an intruder, Jeff Nolan, a Burlington-based attorney who consults with clients around the country on campus threat assessments, discussed how to defuse a volatile situation before it becomes violent.

Nolan said every school should have a safety team, which, after identifying a person who is a potential threat, should answer a series of questions to try to define the person's motivation and see if the person has communicated any threats or has the means to carry out an attack, or has expressed feelings of hopelessness, desperation or despair.

Nolan said once a person is identified as a potential threat, the best thing to do is to "keep them close." He rejected the idea of simply taking out a no-trespass order as a solution.

"Because nobody who's committed to homicidal behavior would violate a no-trespass order," Nolan said dryly. "That's a civil charge."

Instead, Nolan said, it's best to include at least one person on the threat assessment team whom the threatening person trusts and to work to identify the conflict, de-escalate it and — in many cases — help the person find mental health treatment.

“You're not looking to make a disciplinary action. You're not looking to predict future behavior. You're looking to prevent,” Nolan said.

U-32 High School has a team in place, said Amy Molina, head of the safety and security team and the school's athletic director.

“We did a lot of work after the stuff that happened in Connecticut,” said Molina, referring to the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in December that left 27 dead, plus the shooter, and two injured.

U-32's safety and security team includes teachers, guidance counselors and physical plant staff.

The conference was designed to be proactive, according to its organizer.

“We are bringing together the brightest minds who are caring for our children across this great state to innovate, be creative, and to be sure we are doing every protection possible to keep our kids safe in light of tragedies that have happened around the country,” said Gov. Peter Shumlin.

Evans sent forth the conference participants with a mission.

“The goal is to get enough energy here so you go back to your schools and have the larger conversation about how to react to these kinds of situations,” he said.

Shumlin declares broadband victory at 99 percent

By NEAL GOSWAMI

MONTPELIER — With less than 1 percent of homes in Vermont left to connect, the Shumlin administration is declaring victory in its quest to bring universal broadband coverage to the state.

Gov. Peter Shumlin on Wednesday hosted representatives from telecommunications companies serving Vermont at a press roundtable to tout the administration's progress in delivering high-speed Internet service. Shumlin had pledged complete coverage for all of Vermont by the end of the year.

Shumlin claimed victory despite the fact about 3,000 homes do not yet have access. However, solutions for those homes are in the project pipelines of various service providers, according to the administration.

“Today we are over 99 percent,” he said. “The great news, as a result of your partnership, is we have less than 1 percent to hook up and we can count on this hand — and I can't tell you exactly how many fingers, but on this one hand — the number of folks' connections and locations in Vermont to which we have no solution.”

The new connections will help the state create jobs, enhance public safety, boost a smart grid electrical system and provide more educational opportunities for Vermont students, the governor said.

Elected in 2010, Shumlin succeeded Republican Gov. James Douglas, who had espoused a similar plan but was unable to complete it. The state had 89 percent of homes with access to broadband at that time, Shumlin said. But the remaining homes were a challenge. They tended to be at the end of rural roads where providers saw little financial incentive to continue building out their networks.

With more than \$170 million in federal stimulus funding — the most per capita among the states — Vermont sought to create a public-private partnership with telecommunications companies to deliver service to “middle-mile” and “last-mile” locations. The stimulus funding, along with state money, leveraged investments from the companies.

“Thirty-thousand Vermont homes that didn’t have connection when we took over now have connection because of the partnership,” Shumlin said. “If you’re one of those 30,000-plus people who’s gotten connected in the last two and a half years, it makes a huge difference in your life.”

The additional homes are being served by various wired and wireless connections delivered by a host of companies, including FairPoint Communications, VTel, AT&T, Verizon, SoverNet and Comcast.

There is some debate over what constitutes high-speed service. The state considers speeds as low as 300KB per second to qualify as high-speed service. Many streaming video sites, however, and other popular online services require at least 3MB per second.

Secretary of Administration Jeb Spaulding brushed off a question about whether the effort is a success because of the 3,000 homes that remain without service. Spaulding said “most Vermonters would be very impressed” with the administration’s delivery of service to more than 99 percent of the state’s homes.

“We’re thrilled that for all intents and purposes we’ve gotten to where we want to go. But importantly ... this is not a marathon. It’s not 26.2 miles. This race doesn’t end,” he said.

The remaining uncovered locations are “ends of dirt roads or goat paths,” Spaulding said.

Several telecom companies touted investments in recent years that helped deliver service to rural parts of Vermont. Beth Fastiggi, state president for FairPoint in Vermont, said her company has added hundreds of miles of fiber optic cable in the state.

“We’ve invested nearly \$100 million of our own money in the past five years, adding more than 500 miles of new fiber to bring broadband Internet to Vermonters,” she said. “Since 2008, we had broadband of nearly 66 percent, and now we’re at nearly 92 percent of our customers who can get broadband access.”

Owen Smith, AT&T’s regional vice president for Vermont, said the company plans to continue investing and upgrading its network in Vermont and across the country. It has spent \$50 million in Vermont since 2009, he said.

“It really has been a partnership with our company, other companies and the state of Vermont,” Smith said. “We will continue to invest these dollars in the future.”

“They expect it to do some amazing things, and, in fact, it does do some amazing things,” Smith said.

He said consumers expect fast and better services every day, which will require a continued partnership with government.

“Now it’s a new game. People expect a lot from the computer, from the cellphone,” he said. “To keep up pace we announced back in the fall that we would be spending some \$66 billion nationally to build out our network across the country to reach about 99 percent of all users in the country, and that includes the state of Vermont.”

Nuclear still needed

Bob Leach lives in Brattleboro. He is a retired radiation protection manager and certified senior reactor operator.

If someone had suggested a decade ago that natural gas, and not coal or nuclear power, would become the dominant fuel for electricity production in New England, the idea would have been dismissed as absurd.

Back in 2000, there was a balanced mix of energy sources — coal, natural gas, nuclear power and hydro. But with a surge in the production of natural gas from a combination of hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling in shale, an abundance of low-cost gas is now available for electricity production. In some places, this gas is a cheaper source of electricity than coal or even nuclear power, as was seen in the decision this year to prematurely close Vermont Yankee in late 2014.

Electricity companies have mixed emotions about natural gas, and for good reason. Although natural gas is clean burning, it has a history of price volatility, sudden swings in price that are in sharp contrast to coal and nuclear power. People in California and Texas, two states that now rely on natural gas for more than half of their power, haven't forgotten the huge spike in electricity prices a few years ago after the cost of gas spiraled upward and there wasn't enough power from alternative sources to replace it.

Solar and wind power were of limited use. Today they supply such a small share of electricity in most parts of the country that it will be a long time before renewable sources can make a meaningful difference.

In New England, electricity production from gas plants has reached 50 percent of power use, three times what it had been in 2000. Earlier this year, we narrowly avoided serious electric-power reliability problems after a scarcity of gas pipeline capacity in the Northeast led to a bottleneck in gas supply. New England's independent system operator (ISO-NE), which manages the region's electricity grid, said the greatest risk to New England's energy security is its increasingly heavy reliance on natural gas for electricity generation.

Nationally, since 1995, roughly 75 percent all new electricity generating capacity built has been gas-fired — almost 350,000 megawatts. Coal and nuclear power accounted for just 6 percent of the total. And over the next decade another 50,000 megawatts of gas-fired capacity, possibly as much as 100,000 megawatts, will be added.

Natural gas prices are already increasing. So far this year, the average price of natural gas delivered to electricity generators is 44 percent higher than in the first six months of 2012. As utilities use more gas for electricity generation, as more gas is used in industry and transportation, as exports of liquefied natural gas ramp up, gas prices will surely rise.

It's clearly time for state governments in New England to recognize the urgency and to set our region on a clear strategy of maintaining a balanced mix of energy sources, along with improvements in efficiency, while holding the line on the amount of natural gas used for electricity generation.

Here's why: With more and more coal units likely to close under increasing environmental pressure, we can't afford to allow zero-carbon nuclear power to languish. Anyone concerned about climate change ought to recognize that natural gas, though cleaner than coal, has its own environmental problems. Natural gas plants account for a quarter of the carbon emissions from electricity production. By contrast, nuclear plants are carbon-free.

In most cases, the production cost of electricity from operating nuclear plants is competitive with electricity from natural gas plants, although large new nuclear plants are more expensive. But the higher cost is deceptive. Large nuclear plants cost more to build than comparable gas plants because they are required to build and maintain costly systems to shield their radioactivity from the environment. If gas plants were similarly required to control emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants they generate, they would cost significantly more

than nuclear plants do. But markets in states where electricity is unregulated like those in New England don't take this disparity into account.

The fact is nuclear power contributes to the fuel and technology diversity that is one of the bedrock characteristics of a safe and reliable electric sector. It helps to maintain grid stability. And it is vitally important in strengthening regional and state economies through creation of large numbers of well-paying jobs and providing revenue for government at all levels. A recently completed study done for the Nuclear Energy Institute has determined that Seabrook provides an annual impact of nearly \$1 billion to the New Hampshire and Massachusetts economies.

High priority should go to renewing the operating licenses of the Seabrook and Pilgrim plants, which supply base-load power around the clock. And to meet the growing need for carbon-free energy, policymakers in New England should encourage electricity producers to participate in the Department of Energy's cost-sharing program aimed at bringing a new generation of small modular reactors nearer to reality.

These factory-built reactors are under 300 megawatts and can be added at a competitive cost per unit of output one module at a time, as the need for more electricity arises. If the promise of these new reactors is fulfilled, they will reduce carbon emissions and spur economic growth.

Opinion | Editorials

Keeping it transparent

Time and again, as we track the progress of boards and commissions around Washington County and the state, the media continue to be amazed at how naive elected officials often are when it comes to understanding the state's laws on open meetings and public records.

Democracy works best when government is transparent. The ultimate boss is the public, and the actions of an informed and conscientious body provide credible results. Secrecy, or even just the elimination of public input, always raises more questions and allows for certain aspersions to be cast.

Secretary of State James Condos is in the midst of his second statewide Transparency Tour. He is scheduling forums at locations around Vermont where he aims to answer basic questions about what the public has a right to know when it comes to local government.

During an interview on "City Room," a public access show hosted by Times Argus Editor Steven Pappas, Condos discussed how his first tour yielded larger audiences of elected officials and members of the public. In some communities, where there were hot-button transparency issues, as in St. Johnsbury, scores of residents turned out seeking answers. This time around, Condos said, attendance has been more meager even though education needs to be ongoing; there is always a new crop of elected officials.

Condos' message is clear: "The state's open meeting and public records laws are some of our most important because they allow us direct access to the decisions that affect us." Understanding these laws, he maintains, makes everyone a better citizen.

In his presentation, Condos walks through the state constitution and the state statutes. He defines "meeting," "quorum," "public body," "discussing business" and "taking action." He also highlights to whom and when the open meeting law does not apply. But, most importantly, he walks officials, the public and the media through how meetings are warned, how the public has input, how meeting minutes are reported, and the process for executive sessions, as well as the penalties — financial and professional — for ignoring these laws.

Condos, a former legislator and municipal official in South Burlington, has made a point of studying the pitfalls

and has come to appreciate the process, using the full force of his office to ensure openness. “It is at the heart of democracy,” he said.

“In Vermont, the people rule, sometimes directly, sometimes through elected or appointed representatives, but always with the benefit of public scrutiny,” Condos stated in his presentation.

Condos is correct. And while he strives to make government across Vermont as functional as it should be, he knows the media want more exemptions lifted, stronger legislation and even more severe ramifications for abusers.

When asked if Vermont’s laws were having an effect on the “good ol’ boy” network that often mires government bodies in all corners of Vermont, Condos acknowledged it was at least “leveling the playing field.”

But there is still much work to be done. Condos urges more members of the public to be engaged and praises the media for kicking over stones and challenging authority as the eyes and ears of the public.

At a time in our history when more people distrust government, doesn’t it make the most sense to be more mindful of the actions being taken and to participate in the discussions being had?

The media will continue to watch, but the public must, too. Attend meetings. If you can’t attend, watch them on public access (or stream these meetings online through your public access station). It holds us all accountable and makes us all model citizens.

Opinion | Editorials

As taxes rise

Rising property taxes are focusing the attention of legislators on the complex state system for collecting and distributing taxes for education. In most ways, Vermonters can only blame themselves for rising taxes, which are the consequence of voters’ decisions approving their school budgets at town meetings. But the way the tax burden is apportioned among different classes of taxpayers is creating imbalances that are causing some lawmakers to consider changes.

One of the great advantages of the present system is that it protects most residential taxpayers from overly burdensome property taxes. It does this in several ways.

First, it ensures that tax revenues are shared equitably among all towns. With education property taxes collected by the state, the state serves as a clearinghouse, redistributing them fairly. Property-rich towns do not enjoy a tax advantage.

Second, the tax rate for residential property differs from nonresidential property. The result is that owners of second homes and businesses generally shoulder a larger tax burden and owners of primary homes get a break.

Third, for taxpayers earning less than \$92,000 the education property tax is calculated as a percentage of income. Because of what is called “income sensitivity,” the law limits the tax bill of most homeowners.

And yet upward pressure on school budgets is putting pressure on this system. Projections now suggest that for the second year in a row, the statewide property tax will rise by about 5 cents. During the economic crisis, school boards practiced extreme austerity, with school budgets often rising 2 percent or less. In some school districts teachers were even willing to give back some of their earnings. But budgets are on the rise again because of those difficult to restrain line items, such as teacher salaries and health insurance.

Because residential taxpayers are protected, a greater share of the new tax burden can be expected to fall on the nonprotected categories. Thus, homeowners making more than \$92,000, and thus not protected by income sensitivity, will take a hit. Owners of nonresidential property will also take a hit.

Owners of second homes and businesses have long complained about their high tax bills, but legislators have been reluctant to shift more taxes onto homeowners to give a break to owners of ski condos or factories. So far there has been no sense that the tax burden on the nonresidential property has been so extreme that it justified higher bills for homeowners.

As taxes go up, however, the category of upper-middle-class resident earning just above \$92,000 may shout louder and have more clout than the typical second-home owner. It remains to be seen, however, if legislators will be listening.

Another idea under discussion is a plan to shift a greater share of school costs to the income tax. This would have the advantage of introducing an even greater degree of progressivity to the tax system, but if it is upper-middle-class taxpayers who are squawking, then it's not clear why that would solve their problem.

Making schools increasingly dependent on the income tax also subjects them to the volatility of income tax revenues, which can fluctuate dramatically during recessions. The money coming to the Education Fund from the General Fund comes partly from the income tax, and the Legislature has had a hard time keeping up with the transfer it ought to have been making. One way to rely more on the income tax would be to fund the General Fund transfer fully.

The prospect that Vermonters will be called upon to pay a large new payroll tax, in lieu of health care premiums, as the state takes on a single-payer health care system, means that lawmakers and the governor have an additional reason to resist an added burden on the income tax.

Republicans have pursued a variety of strategies for imposing restraints on school spending. What they generally come down to is making taxes more painful for taxpayers — so that taxes do not become too painful. It is difficult to justify. Administrative fixes — school consolidation, limits on student-teacher ratios — are not likely to be accepted at the local level.

As taxes increase, the system has a built-in corrective: the voters. Next year budget restraint will most likely rule the day.

Verizon plans to build cell tower in West Rutland

By Darren Marcy

WEST RUTLAND — Verizon Wireless has filed a notice it intends to apply for a certificate of public good to install a cell tower in West Rutland.

Verizon said the proposed cell tower is needed to improve its wireless network and meet the needs of customers who expect fast, reliable network coverage.

In an email statement, Michael Murphy, public relations manager for Verizon, said “The 248a application is in the process of being completed and will be filed with the Vermont Service Board.”

The 45-day written notice was delivered Oct. 28 to the town, adjoining landowners and others as required by the Section 248a process, the section of state law that deals with communications facilities.

According to the letter, which was submitted by attorney Brian Sullivan of the Burlington law firm of Murphy

Sullivan Kronk, the cell tower would be located at the northern section of a 63.6-acre wooded lot located off Robert Lane.

The tower would be located on land owned by Frances Flynn and situated about 1,000 feet from the last house at the end of Robert Lane and 1,400 feet east of the south end of Pleasant Heights.

The location would consist of a 50-foot by 50-foot compound where a 110-foot monopole tower would be erected. The location would be surrounded with an 8-foot chain link fence topped with three strands of barbed wire.

The tower would contain 12 panel antennas and three remote radio heads at the top mounted on a triangular frame containing four panels and one radio head per side.

The monopole and antennas will be painted brown.

Also on site would be a 12 foot by 30 foot prefabricated two-room equipment shelter and a 1,000-gallon propane tank that will be installed on a concrete pad.

One room of the shelter will contain the transmitting and receiving base station equipment and the other room will house a propane fueled emergency generator.

The notice references the growing need for cell service and says the project meets the requirements of the West Rutland Town Plan as well as the Rutland County Regional Plan.

“Users across the region have stated a clear desire for increased and improved wireless telephone coverage and will continue to seek faster data access speeds and increased mobility,” the letter stated. “They have also stated that infrastructure should not have an undue adverse effect on local wildlife habitats or views of pristine ridgelines and peaks.”

While the notice has not been out long, West Rutland Town Manager Mary Ann Goulette said there has been some concern about the tower as people wonder just where it will be and from where it will be visible.

“As people come in to pay taxes, they’re trying to figure out where it would sit on the ridgeline and where it would be visible,” Goulette said. “I’m hoping someone from Verizon will meet with the board and explain the need and where it is.”

The notice asks that comments be sent no later than 30 days from the receipt of the notice so there will be time to consider those comments prior to filing the permit application.

Once the application is filed, which will be at least 45 days from Oct. 28, there will be 21 days in which to file comments, a motion to intervene or request for a hearing.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Helen Labun Jordan <helen.labun.jordan@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 3:45 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Making a difference

It's actually VTel that piloted placing interns in the field offices - you should thank them (although the person who did that left to work for Paul at the Digital Economy Project)

On Tue, Nov 19, 2013 at 3:40 PM, Miller, Lawrence <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:
Annie Noonan just reported that they now have interns in ether DOL field offices to help people learn how to get online, everywhere. You 'da boss!

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 989-0569

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2013 9:29 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: from the clips - Richmond cell towers

BURLINGTON FREE PRESS:

Richmond residents: Cell tower threatens 'town character'

Terri Hallenbeck

RICHMOND — If a plan offered up by AT&T goes through, a cell tower shaped like a fake fir tree surrounded by a chain-link fence will one day soon rise from the field 117 yards from Ezra Hall's house.

Hall and many of his neighbors think this site off Cochran Road in Richmond is not the place for a cell tower, which would loom large in the view of about 20 nearby homes and likely would be visible to travelers on Interstate 89 and across the valley. They cite aesthetics, property values and potential health risks as concerns.

They worry, though, that because of a temporary state law that streamlines the approval process for cell towers, they and the town will have little say in what happens.

"I feel like the state of Vermont is completely ignoring the town's character," Hall said, noting that one reason he lives in Richmond is that the town has a thoughtful approach to development.

A balloon test conducted Saturday on behalf of AT&T did nothing to alleviate Hall's fears. Hall said he was "shocked" at how close the balloons were to homes on Greystone Drive, where he lives.

"It is extremely close and overpowering to not only the cluster of houses at the bottom of the neighborhood, but to anyone entering the neighborhood," Hall said, arguing that the tower could be moved to the east on the same property and have less impact.

The site off Cochran Road, proposed by AT&T, is one of five telecommunications towers in the works in Richmond, an influx that has town officials reeling, too.

"The character of the town could be changed overnight," said town administrator Geoffrey Urbanik.

The town of Richmond wants official status before the Public Service Board for the proposals, but also wants three proposals from AT&T lumped together in one case, Urbanik said. That way, the board can better judge whether all of the towers are really necessary or which would have the least impact, he said.

The proposals have prompted a flurry of questions from residents about whether the towers are needed, whether they should be allowed so close to homes and whether residents' opinions matter.

The towers are needed, there may be some wiggle room on the locations and local residents' concerns do matter, said Will Keyser, spokesman for AT&T in New England.

"There is a desire to work with the community and do everything we can to design sites in a way that has the least impact while still meeting our coverage goals," Keyser said.

AT&T has agreed to combine the three proposed towers in its application with the Public Service Board, Keyser said.

State officials said that companies proposing telecommunications towers around the state have been taking local concerns into consideration, even under a streamlined process that was designed to quicken the pace of siting such towers.

"I have found it to actually work very well for towns," said Jim Porter, telecommunications director for the state Public Service Department.

Projects that involve building a new structure, rather than simply adding to an existing one, usually receive rigorous review that includes public comments, Porter said. Companies proposing the towers have also been willing to make changes in response to local residents' concerns, he said.

In Richmond, residents and town officials wonder whether the sudden influx of projects was driven by the fact that state law governing siting of the towers is slated to change July 1. The current law, in effect since 2012, allows the siting of towers to go through the Public Service Board process, but not the state's Act 250 land-use regulations which incorporates local zoning.

Keyser said AT&T's decision to spend \$66 billion to build more cell towers across the county was announced last year and is just now coming to fruition with projects such as those in Richmond. The company is not basing decisions on possible changes to Vermont law, he said.

Thirst for cell service

Five projects proposed in Richmond in recent months have left town officials and local residents wondering what's going on. In a Nov. 4 letter to the Public Service Board, Urbanik wrote on behalf of the town Selectboard, "This potential sudden proliferation of telecommunication towers is of great concern to the town."

The projects are:

- **FARM SILO:** Cellular antennas located within an existing silo on the Verburg farm near Exit 11 of Interstate 89. That project was approved by the Public Service Board in September and had the support of Richmond's Planning Commission and Selectboard. Residents say this is the kind of siting they'd prefer.
- **JOHNNIE BROOK ROAD:** A new 140-foot-high wireless telecommunications tower to be located on Johnnie Brook Road proposed by Internet provider VTel to boost broadband service to Richmond. An application for a certificate of public good is pending before the Public Service Board. AT&T has said that adding on to that tower would not meet its coverage needs. The VTel proposal calls for a "monopole," or a tower designed to look like a fir tree on property owned by David Mortensen and Jill Markel. The tower would be surrounded by a 8-foot-high chain-link fence.
- **COCHRAN ROAD:** A new 140-foot cell tower with a 5-foot crown to be located off Cochran Road, proposed by AT&T to expand cellular telephone coverage. AT&T has alerted the town and adjacent landowners that it is within 45 days of filing an application with the Public Service Board, though the company has since told the town it would delay that filing to combine the project with two others. The tower would also be designed to look like a fir tree and would be on land owned by Mary and Richard Houle. The tower would be surrounded by a fence, with an equipment shelter and backup generator.
- **TWO OTHERS:** Two other new cell towers would be on land yet to be leased by AT&T near the Jericho and Hinesburg town lines. Those proposals would be combined with the one off Cochran Road in a yet-to-be-filed application with the Public Service Board.

AT&T's proposals are partly to fill gaps, partly to keep up with exploding demand, which doubled in 2011-12, Keyser

said.

“With each passing day, the demand for the latest and best mobile technology grows. More and more people are acquiring smart phones and they can do more than cell phones.” Keyser said.

The new towers would solve known gaps in coverage in the Richmond area, Keyser said, including the notorious dead spot on French Hill on I-89 between Richmond and Williston.

The already-approved antennas on the Verburg silo will improve coverage on I-89 and U.S. 2, but gaps would remain in Jonesville, Fays Corner and into Hinesburg, Jericho and Huntington, AT&T’s lawyer said in a Nov. 8 letter to Richmond town officials.

The Cochran Road tower would then improve coverage on I-89, in Jonesville and at Cochran’s Ski Area, the letter said.

A 2011 Vermont Telecommunications Authority map showing gaps in cells coverage around the state indicates there are two long swaths in Richmond. Along with a stretch in Huntington and another in Milton, the Richmond spots are the biggest gaps in coverage in Chittenden County.

Keyser said cell tower expansion has reached the stage where service providers are reaching beyond areas where there are existing tall buildings to use as cell towers. The gaps in service now are typically rural settings hidden by mountains that require new structures. Thus, the fake fir tree, which is designed to fit into its surroundings better than an iron tower would but which neighbors say looks like a fake fir tree.

These monopoles are used elsewhere in Vermont, including AT&T sites in Sharon, Rockingham Falls and Vernon, according to the Public Service Department.

Richmond town administrator Urbanik and local residents said it remains unclear to them just what service would be boosted by which towers. In his letter to the Public Service Board, Urbanik said, “We do not have a good picture of where those coverage gaps are.”

Hall and several of his neighbors who gathered along Greystone Drive on a chilly morning last week to discuss the proposed Cochran Road tower, said they have strong cell service.

Neighbor Erin Wagg said, “It’s not demonstrated at all that this tower serves any need at all.”

Hall said that his signal strength was at four bars while talking on his phone from his basement with AT&T service on a recent day, making him wonder why AT&T needs a tower next to his house.

Hall said he doesn’t oppose cell towers that will help others have similarly strong coverage, but he’d like the towers to be more sensibly sited. “Let’s find a better spot,” he said.

The town is also concerned that the towers would violate Richmond’s zoning regulations, which seek to protect the view, Urbanik said. “All of the projects would have a negative on the aesthetics of our unique Winooski Valley location,” Urbanik said in his letter to the Public Service Board.

The Richmond Land Trust, which owns preserved parcels above and below the Cochran Road site, is also concerned. There are hiking trails on both parcels, said Brad Elliott, a land trust board member. “We’re worried mainly about the visual effect,” he said.

The concern goes beyond what a few hikers might see, Elliott said, and includes the view from Interstate 89. “A ton of public money has been sunk into preserving the scenic valley,” he said. “We kind of feel like we have to be stewards of that money.”

Photos land trust members took Saturday of the balloon test showed the tower would be visible from various land trust sites, include across the valley at the restored Richmond monitor barns.

Room for negotiations?

Residents near the Cochran Road site have immersed themselves in the intricacies of the cell tower proposal in a hurry. They have found the state Public Service Board a tough nut to crack, a factor that heightens their worries that no one will listen to their concerns when making decisions about the towers.

Hall was so frustrated by the lack of information on the board's website about cell tower cases around the state available that he started his own website, where he is posting whatever documents he can find related to all of the Richmond proposals. He and his neighbors share information, but have many questions about the process.

Cheryl Owens, Hall's neighbor on Greystone Drive, said their neighborhood has to abide by numerous environmental and aesthetic guidelines. Homeowners in the enclave of large, modern homes built into the side of the mountain pay an aesthetics tax on their property taxes, their power lines are buried and the height of their homes was limited so they wouldn't stick out of the mountain. Owens said she wonders why a cell tower would not have to follow those same rules.

"I don't understand how we, as taxpaying citizens, have to abide by Act 250, but these big, giant corporations with big cell towers can come in here and ignore Act 250," Owens said.

Keyser, the AT&T spokesman, said the company will work with local residents on their concerns. Sometimes towers can be moved, he said, though that depends on what impact the move would have on the tower's ability to provide coverage.

"There is some flexibility, but every adjustment you make compromises the service goal. There's a delicate balance," Keyser said.

--
Lawrence Miller, Secretary
Agency of Commerce and Community Development
One National Life Drive, Sixth Floor
Montpelier VT 05620-0501
(802) 828-5204 Office
(802) 989-0569 Cell
Parking at National Life

Our mission is to help Vermonters improve their quality of life and build strong communities.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:29 AM
To: Allen, Susan
Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: reporters' roundtable

I just realized that I also need to see if Duncan Cable should be listed.

I will need help preparing the invitation/msg to the carriers. Should it come from you or me? Or is it more appropriate for me to get on the phone w/ them? If you can reach out to the reporters, that would be great.

Assume that the invitation is something like this: please join us for a reporters roundtable on 11-20 at 1PM at ??? with the Governor to talk about the achievements that we have made in our broadband goals?

Or something more articulate that?

From: Allen, Susan
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:22 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: reporters' roundtable

I defer to Liz, but personally think the more the better.

Kiersten, what can I do to help you get this set up, outlined, messaged, coordinated, etc. Sounds like you have it under control, but don't hesitate to ask for help! I can certainly do press alerts closer to time. I can also help with a press release if that's helpful.

Sue

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:20 AM
To: Allen, Susan
Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: reporters' roundtable

Not sure how far we want to go with this, but Lawrence suggested extending an invitation to VELCO and/or GMP as well?

Fairpoint - Beth Fastiggi
Comcast - Tuck Rainwater
Verizon - we need to ask Warren
AT&T - Owen Smith
VTel - Diane Guite
VTA - Chris C.
PSD - James C. Porter
Sovernet - Rich Kendall

From: Allen, Susan
Sent: Tuesday, November 05, 2013 12:54 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: RE: reporters' roundtable

Who: Fairpoint, EC fiber, Comcast, Verizon/ATT wireless?, Charter/SV Cable?, VTEL, VTA, PSD, Sovernet, others?

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten

Sent: Tuesday, November 05, 2013 12:41 PM

To: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence

Cc: Allen, Susan

Subject: reporters' roundtable

I just talked to Sue. She's going to pencil in 11-20 at 1PM for our broadband media event.

Can you pls hold that on your respective calendars?

Kiersten Bourgeois | Senior Project Manager

Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development

1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

802-828-5220 office | 802-793-4899 cell | 802-828-3383 fax

accd.vermont.gov

Miller, Lawrence

From: Gray, Laura
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:36 AM
To: Gray, Laura
Subject: MEDIA CLIPS FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

BRATTLEBORO REFORMER:

New projects

By **MIKE FAHER**

BRATTLEBORO — VTel Wireless' drive to establish a new high-speed Internet system is continuing, with the state approving three new projects in Windham County.

Each of the projects — in Townshend, Putney and Westminster — involves the placement of new antennas on existing towers.

And each was approved under the state's 248a permitting process for communications facilities, with the Vermont Public Service Board finding that no hearings were required.

"The project, excluding equipment, antennas or ancillary improvements, does not increase the height or width of the existing facility," the board wrote, using identical language for all three sites.

"The project will not increase the amount of impervious surface at the existing facility site as the improvements will take place within the existing gravel compound," officials added.

Aided by federal funding — and with a push by Gov. Peter Shumlin to spread high-speed Internet access to every address in Vermont — VTel administrators recently said they have about 180 projects going statewide.

The Springfield-based company's focus is not on traditional cellular service but rather on a wireless-broadband signal that will enable homes and businesses to access high-speed Internet service.

VTel hopes to compete with other Internet providers such as cable companies.

In some cases, the company wants to build new towers. Several such examples in Windham County include proposed towers in Guilford, Newfane, Vernon, Marlboro and Wardsboro.

But VTel administrators have said they prefer, when possible, to use existing structures. That applies to all three state certificates of public good issued last week for VTel in Windham County: — In Townshend, nine panel antennas and three dish antennas will be installed on an existing 112-foot-tall lattice tower at 1069 Hazel Hill Road, state documents show.

— In Putney, six panel antennas and three dish antennas will be placed on a 115-foot lattice tower on Holland Hill Drive.

— And in Westminster, VTel has received permission to install six panel antennas and two dish antennas on a 100-foot monopole tower.

The new VTel antennas will extend 8 feet horizontally from the Townshend tower and even less in Putney (5 feet) and Westminster (6 feet), according to the Public Service Board orders.

The new VTel equipment won't extend vertically above the existing towers in Putney and Westminster. In Townshend, the antennas will rise a maximum of 4 feet above the tower, state documents show. VTel's wireless-broadband network still is a work in progress. The company recently activated equipment on Mt. Ascutney, and that was VTel's first such site operational for commercial service.

State plans Guilford Center Road upgrades

By MIKE FAHER

GUILFORD — As a winding route with a 45-mph speed limit and several relatively busy intersections, Guilford Center Road could be termed a “high-risk rural road.”

State officials think that label applies, and they are proposing multiple safety upgrades under the Vermont Agency of Transportation program of the same name.

The planned work covers sign improvements and ledge removal, with the state picking up most of the tab. But Guilford officials want to be sure they understand the town's financial responsibility before proceeding.

“We're going to wait and find out what the whole price is,” Selectboard member Anne Rider said.

Rider was among the town officials who met in June with a Windham Regional Commission representative and two VTrans officials to discuss Guilford Center Road.

Among the concerns expressed by the town was the failure of some motorists to stop fully when entering Guilford Center Road from Weatherhead Hollow Road, VTrans documents show.

There also were questions about improving sight lines for those traveling on Guilford Center Road.

According to state statistics, there were 11 crashes in the area from 2008 to 2012. Three were caused by driving too fast for conditions, while one driver failed to yield the right of way and another failed to stay in the proper lane.

Based on findings from this summer's review, VTrans has “completed a safety review and has recommended some low-cost safety improvements” for Guilford Center Road, Traffic Safety Engineer Mario Dupigny-Giroux wrote last week in a letter to town officials.

The state focuses on more than three miles of Guilford Center Road stretching from Stage and Sweet Pond roads to a point just beyond Weatherhead Hollow Road.

Also proposed are some changes on a short portion of Weatherhead Hollow Road near the intersection with Guilford Center.

Suggestions include: — To alleviate safety concerns caused by sharp curves, the state would install new signs throughout the corridor “where useful.”

That includes multiple new speed-limit and warning signs as well as upgraded signage at Guilford Center Road's intersections with Bonnyvale, Fitch, Weatherhead Hollow and Tinker Hill roads.

On Weatherhead Hollow, there would be new speed and stop-ahead signs. Plans also call for new signs at the

intersection of Bullock Road and Weatherhead Hollow.

In addition to sign upgrades, the state has “made some recommendations for ledge removal in some places,” said Dan Zumbruski, the town’s road foreman and road commissioner.

Such work would be intended to address spots on Guilford Center Road where a ledge “inhibits sight distance on curves” or is too close to the roadway, documents show.

Zumbruski said town officials should expect to pay 10 percent of the bill for the proposed upgrades. But at this point, the total cost is unclear.

In his letter to the town, Dupigny-Giroux asks for Guilford officials to review the proposal and send questions, concerns and comments to VTrans by Nov. 25.

Farming pioneers discuss their roles in the organic movement

By CHRIS MAYS

BRATTLEBORO — A panel made up of five farmers, who are known as the pioneers of the organic movement, were all grateful to have chosen that path decades ago.

Although fertilizers were becoming more and more standard after being introduced in the 1800s, there are farmers who looked for innovative ways to go without harmful chemicals.

“It’s exciting to see these new farmers,” said former Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Roger Allbee. “Today, I think we’re seeing an interest in local foods, both organic and nonorganic.”

On Nov. 10, Strolling of the Heifers presented “A Celebration of Vermont’s Organic Farming Pioneers” at the Latchis Theater in Brattleboro. Before the panel came on stage, a slide show of pictures from the photographic essay, “Plowing Old Ground” by Susan Harlow and John Nopper, was shown.

Allbee was the moderator of the event and introduced the farmers who were also part of the essay. They included Howard Prussack of High Meadows Farm in Putney; Paul Harlow of the Harlow Farm in Westminster; Jack and Anne Lazor of Butterworks Farm in Westfield; and Joey Klein of Littlewood Farm in Plainfield.

Prussack said that after spending some time on a farm in Putney, it had made a big impression on him. After that farm dissolved, he bought a neighboring farm in 1979, where he is still located today.

“It’s great to be a part of the Brattleboro area,” Prussack said.

One of his customers happens to be the Hannaford supermarket on Putney Road.

Paul Harlow told the crowd that he had started farming along with his family at the age of 8. In the middle of the 1970s, he began to see a lot of weeds he hadn’t seen before and there weren’t worms in some of the soil.

“I would see wind blow the soil around. I thought, ‘This isn’t right.’ I did some reading,” said Paul Harlow.

After having dinner with Prussack one night, they discussed different organic growing methods. In 1976, they began experimenting and then Paul Harlow became certified for organic foods around 1985-86.

Klein had started his farming career in the area as well. Attending Marlboro College, he lived in Brattleboro.

“Some of us can’t help ourselves,” said Klein. “Not only do we want to grow for ourselves but for our neighbors. It became an inner necessity to find ways to grow it myself and make it healthy.”

Inspired by a teacher, he investigated ways to grow food organically.

“It’s a very wonderful feeling to be one of the suppliers of the neighborhood food supply,” said Klein. “The commitment to invent organic methodology is something we farmers have worked on together in a highly cooperative effort over the years. From one end of the state to the other, we tend to know one another except for all these newpeople, who we are very happy to welcome.”

Husband and wife team Jack and Anne Lazor have been farming organically together since 1974.

“It’s been quite a journey,” said Jack Lazor. “I didn’t want to use chemicals.”

He had learned about composting and met other farmers with knowledge that could be applied to developing his own systems.

When Allbee asked the farmers what advice they’d give to the younger generations, Prussack suggested that they grow what they can sell.

“The public is demanding organic produce, especially locally,” he said. “If you just started out, I would try to do it organically just for your own health, the soil and the community. It worked for us and it worked for the community.”

Paul Harlow said he wouldn’t have done it any other way. He mentioned that new cultivation techniques and equipment have made the process easier today.

“People’s mindsets have definitely changed. People with children recognize the need to feed their family organically,” he added.

Lazor advocated for finding mentors. He said he wasn’t happy with organically certified farms where farmers feed their animals with GMO’s, or genetically modified organisms.

“I really don’t like using poison,” said Lazor. “But I’m not going to judge anyone else. I know I have my own problems.”

The farmers generally agreed that the market has been better for organic foods. They also discussed how becoming certified to sell organic foods has become increasingly difficult due to the amount of paperwork involved.

“If you can keep records, it’s not impossible. There’s hundreds of (organic farms) in the state,” said Prussack. “It’s a process.”

Klein mentioned a time when anyone could call their product organic. He said he was glad that was not allowed anymore.

“My only beef with organic certification is it doesn’t measure quality,” said Lazor, who misses the yearly meetings where the farmers themselves determined the certification process rather than the United States Department of Agriculture. “It was really fruitful. But if that’s what it takes to change the agriculture in this country to something more reliable and sustainable, we need to go to it.”

Help your child succeed

OUR OPINION

The debate over assessing how our children are doing in school — based on the results of one standardized test or another — is probably at least as old as the Department of Education itself.

There is another way parents can assess how their children are doing in school — talk to their teachers. The kids have been in school for more than two months now, certainly enough time for them to adjust to a new school year and for the teachers to have a baseline for each student's strengths and weaknesses. Now that the excitement of Halloween is over, and before the craziness of the yuletide holiday fully engulfs us, parents should take advantage of the temporary lull to reconnect with how their kids are doing in school.

Talk to your children about school, their likes and dislikes, and listen for clues about areas in which the child may be struggling. Next, set up a meeting with your child's teacher, the one who knows firsthand how your child is doing academically and what kind of work lies ahead to achieve certain grade-level goals.

Many area schools have already set up parent-teacher conferences to allow for that one-on-one assessment that is so lacking in standardized tests. Parents and teachers can talk about more than numbers on a chart, but also about your child's particular gifts and attributes which can be harnessed to ensure their academic success.

The website FamilyEducation.com offers a number of tips for a more successful and productive parent-teacher conference: Be prepared (talk to your child and make a list of questions to ask); start off on the right foot with positive comments about the teacher and the classroom; stay on track; listen to what the teacher has to say; stay calm and objective (remember, the teacher is trying to give you an honest assessment to help your child improve).

In order to help your child have a successful school year, you need to know what is expected of him or her, academically, from now until June. You can find out by asking some questions.

What skills and knowledge will my child be expected to master this year? What will my child learn this year in key subjects like math, science, history, and English? Are there challenging academic standards in place at this school, and how do they compare with those at other school districts? How will my child be evaluated — what tests are used and how often? What can I do to stay more involved in my child's academic progress?

With parents and teachers working together, the potential for the student's success is unlimited. As FamilyEducation.com noted, "a better informed parent equals a better student."

If they spoke the truth

By RICHARD DAVIS, is a registered nurse and long-time health care advocate.

Imagine a world in which politicians and public figures are not afraid to speak honestly about issues that we all face. Instead, what we get most of the time is carefully crafted statements that have been either designed by a committee or personally censored so much that they no longer offer any truth or insight.

Once in awhile a public figure throws off the filter, but that is a rare occasion. It's not that most people can't decipher B.S. when they hear it, it's that the people making these politically correct statements start to believe their own words.

Eventually half-truths, distortions and lies become the norm and we end up in a world where nothing spoken or written reflects much of reality. The case might be made that this is the world we are living in today.

What follows are comments I would like to hear in a more truthful world. These are statements I would like to hear from our leaders, but doubt they will ever be spoken.

President Obama: “Look, here’s the real story. I have waited too long to speak honestly to the American people but enough is enough. This is still very much a racist country, despite my election and re-election.

“The people who run this country from Washington are operating on the assumption that we still live in a society that never made it out of the 1950s and 60s. Sure, they think they are up to date, but they are so out of touch with the American people that you might make the case that they are irrelevant, except for the fact that they have so much power.

“It will take decades before we have enough members of Congress who actually reflect the American landscape. Right now the white WASPs with white hair still rule. Until that changes and until voters indicate that politicians like Harry Reid, Mitch McConnell, John Boehner and Nancy Pelosi have become irrelevant, the American people will continue to suffer from the consequences of political deadlock and ideological warfare.

“To be honest, my election was a step in the right direction, but most Americans do not realize how much of a baby step it was. We have a long way to go and the changes that need to happen will not be evident in the lifetime of any of us now alive. That is the American political reality.”

Secretary of State Kerry: “I would like to tell you that the U.S. will be able to broker a deal between the Israelis and the Palestinians. But the truth is, that will never happen. Any lasting agreement cannot be dictated from the top down.

“All of the diplomats in the world cannot stop the Israelis or the Palestinians from defending themselves however they see fit. Political leaders have been coming up short because they do not respect history.

“When two cultures claim the same homeland there will never be peace. The best that we can ever hope for is the lowest level of conflict and violence possible. It is a basic law of human nature that those with the biggest weapons and the most money rule the day.

“That’s the way it was when the Romans ruled Jerusalem and conditions are not much different today, except that the players are different. The legacy and curse of the Middle East is political tension and conflict and that will never change. Diplomats feel obliged to enter the fray but they will never make much of a difference.”

Governor Shumlin: “I have been pushing for a single-payer health care system for Vermont for a long time. While I believe this kind of approach makes sense, the primary reason I am pushing this is that it helps me get critical votes so I can stay in office.

“The truth is that we will never really have a true single-payer system in Vermont but the rhetoric does well for me politically. In order to have a single payer health care system that saves money and improves people’s lives we need to include all Vermonters in that system.

“Any health care system in Vermont will be a patchwork of systems because, even in a best case scenario, we might be able to have 60 percent of the people enroll in a single payer system. That will never really be a single payer system but only an attempt to get there.

“To be honest, Vermont will have a hybrid health care system. That is the reality, but I will continue to call it a single payer system because it is good politics and it will help push us in a good direction.”

Town attorney briefs trustees on public record rules

By DOMENIC POLI

BELLOWS FALLS – The town’s attorney coached the Rockingham Free Public Library’s trustee board Tuesday on the definition of a public record in response to public records requests from the media.

Stephen Ankuda addressed the trustees in the library’s meeting room and answered questions on what he admitted was a difficult topic. The Reformer was one of at least three area newspapers to, following the controversial termination of Library Director Celina Houlne in September, file requests for all public records from trustees pertaining to public library business.

“What is important for you to understand is public record involves anything that is produced or received in the course of agency business. And it doesn’t matter if it’s e-mail or on paper,” Ankuda said from the first row of seats at the Tuesday’s library trustee meeting. “And public records have to be produced for members of the public in response to a public records request.”

He said Vermont state statutes provides “400-something” exceptions to the rule, such as police investigation records, tax returns and attorney-client records. He also said each e-mail, phone call or letter requires some analysis to determine if is a public record, which is also defined as any written or recorded information produced by a member of a public agency like a municipality, committee or library acting on official public business.

“If one trustee sends an e-mail to another trustee commenting about the hair color of a third trustee, well that’s not public agency business. That’s plain old gossip,” Ankuda said. “But if they send an e-mail to another trustee regarding, maybe, a vote that is coming up, well that’s closer to being agency business, but because it’s not a quorum it’s not agency business.”

A quorum is the minimum number of voting members that must be present for a legal vote.

Ankuda said if a trustee e-mails a document to a member of the public, he or she runs the risk of it becoming public record even if not doing so in his or her official capacity as a trustee. He also said anything produced on library-owned machinery is public record. He also recommended trustees never send an e-mail via blind-carbon-copy, which allows the sender to not reveal all the other recipients of an email, saying it make matters complicated.

Later in the meeting, Trustee Carolyn Frisa made a motion to create a policy that prohibits trustees from blind-carbon-coping one another. The board voted unanimously to pass the motion and send it to the policy committee for review.

Trustee Chairwoman Janice Mitchell-Love attested to the complexity of legal matters when she told Ankuda, “I told myself I understood it until you explained it.”

Ankuda also said any e-mails regarding Baybutt Construction Corp. – which botched the library renovation project – are public because the contract, which was eventually terminated, was a public document. He also said the Friends of the Rockingham Library are not subject to public record rules because it is a private nonprofit and not an agency of the state.

WCAX:

Parents mission to keep drug use on the decline in Williston

By Ali Freeman

WILLISTON, Vt. - Tuesday night parents in Williston got a lesson in drug use.

School officials say drug use is on the decline -- but now an effort is underway to keep it that way.

"For me to keep informed about other ways that they can cope, and find out more about what kind of skills they need," said Paul Rocheleau.

Rocheleau says having two teenage daughters of his own, he always likes to try and stay on top of drug use in schools. And a forum at the Williston Central School was focused on just that.

"Engaging the community, trying to ask the hard questions -- actually, essentially asking the questions period, and then asking the hard questions," said Tim Trevithick

Tim Trevithick -- the CVU student assistance counselor -- says although drug use among students may actually be on a slight decline, he says it is always important for parents to be willing to talk about the issue. The forum covered a variety of ways for parents to see the signs of drug use, and know what their roles are.

"I think the thing that struck me the most was that he referred to us as first responders -- that we don't have to be experts or brain surgeons or anything, but because parents and teachers and friends of families can be first responders, and to look for what kind of signs are there," said Rocheleau.

Some current students, say the problem is there. What is important, one student says, is to look past the facts and figures, and get to the root of the problem.

"We really need to be more aware of what's happening and how teenagers are affected in the long run -- and even in the short run. And how we can become so dependent on something that we never really wanted to be dependent on," said Caty Mara, a CVU senior.

But what was a common theme throughout the evening, was regardless if your child has a drug problem -- simply being there is key.

"I think just being there and participating with your kid in life -- and just not being an absent parent -- being present," said Rocheleau.

Forum organizers say the idea of the forum was to just start the conversation. There will be another discussion held in January -- where they hope more parents and community members can come be a part of the conversation.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, November 07, 2013 9:06 AM
To: Allen, Susan; Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Wilson Ring

Just talked to Caro Thompson at the VTA. Wilson is going to try to finish the long-awaited broadband story late this week (assume tomorrow afternoon). He still is focusing on the Victory/Granby perspective - they were the last to get electricity, now they are among the last to get broadband. She thinks that he's also spoken to FairPoint and used the draft horse story.

He's calling me later this AM and I will give him the "98% served/confident that we will have solutions for 100% by end of year/big construction project can = delays/proud of what we've accomplished". He is also going to ask - I'd bet - how many addresses are actually have projects in process. According to our #'s, that's about 10k as of end of last year, which is largely VTel, but also includes a few Comcast and SVC projects. I am really hesitant to use that figure...

Any other thoughts?

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, November 01, 2013 6:42 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Allen, Susan
Subject: Fwd: broadband update

FYI,
Have a nice wknd

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve Zind <szind@vpr.net>
Date: November 1, 2013 at 6:39:28 PM EDT
To: Kiersten Bourgeois <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
Subject: Re: broadband update

Thanks for the clarification Kiersten.

Steve

Steve Zind
Vermont Public Radio
office: 802-728-3752
cell: 802-324-1147
www.vpr.net

----- Original Message -----

From: "Kiersten Bourgeois" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
To: "Steve Zind" <szind@vpr.net>
Cc: "Elizabeth Miller" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us>, "Susan Allen" <Susan.Allen@state.vt.us>, "Lawrence Miller" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2013 6:23:00 PM
Subject: Re: broadband update

Hi Steve,
Just for clarification: The end-date for VTel's grant is mid 2015.

We are optimistic that they'll complete much of their work in 2014 and are aware of their delays (again, large development projects often experience unforeseen delays) and are working with them.

Thanks and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Kiersten

Sent from my iPad

On Nov 1, 2013, at 3:48 PM, "Steve Zind" <szind@vpr.net> wrote:

Thank you, Kiersten.

Steve

Steve Zind
Vermont Public Radio
office: 802-728-3752
cell: 802-324-1147
www.vpr.net

----- Original Message -----

From: "Kiersten Bourgeois" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
To: "Steve Zind" <szind@vpr.net>
Cc: "Susan Allen" <Susan.Allen@state.vt.us>, "Elizabeth Miller" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2013 3:42:27 PM
Subject: RE: broadband update

Hi Steve -

Thanks for the chat. I want to clarify a couple of points.

Since 2010, about 30,000 new addresses been served in Vermont. At this point, our data shows that about 98% of Vermonters have access to broadband. With a solution in place now for all but 3 addresses, we are confident that we are going to reach our goal.

-----Original Message-----

From: Steve Zind [<mailto:szind@vpr.net>]
Sent: Friday, November 01, 2013 12:17 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Re: broadband update

That's fine. 802-728-3752. Thanks!

Steve Zind
Vermont Public Radio
office: 802-728-3752
cell: 802-324-1147
www.vpr.net

----- Original Message -----

From: "Kiersten Bourgeois" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
To: "Steve Zind" <szind@vpr.net>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2013 12:09:03 PM
Subject: RE: broadband update

Can I buzz you? I am not sure where I will be.

-----Original Message-----

From: Steve Zind [<mailto:szind@vpr.net>]
Sent: Friday, November 01, 2013 12:06 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Re: broadband update

Kiersten,

That's fine. What's your number?

Steve

Steve Zind
Vermont Public Radio
office: 802-728-3752
cell: 802-324-1147
www.vpr.net

----- Original Message -----

From: "Kiersten Bourgeois" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
To: "Steve Zind" <szind@vpr.net>

Sent: Friday, November 1, 2013 11:46:32 AM

Subject: RE: broadband update

Sure. I am available at around 3. Will that work for you?

-----Original Message-----

From: Steve Zind [<mailto:szind@vpr.net>]

Sent: Friday, November 01, 2013 11:17 AM

To: Bourgeois, Kiersten

Subject: broadband update

Hi Kiersten,

Would you have time this afternoon for a short taped phone interview? I'd like to get your assessment of where we stand now that we're two months out from our end of 2013 broadband goal. Thanks very much.

Best,

Steve

Steve Zind

Vermont Public Radio

office: 802-728-3752

cell: 802-324-1147

www.vpr.net

--

Scanned by MailScanner

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Friday, November 01, 2013 5:55 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Vpr broadband story

Tell VPR

Sent from my iPhone

> On Nov 1, 2013, at 2:48 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>

> For clarification: I did NOT say that VTel wouldn't be finished until '15. I said that their grant ended on '15, but we are optimistic that they'll achieve much of their commitment by '14, are aware of the delays, working with them, etc.

>

> Ugh.

>

> Sorry.

>

>

>

> Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Friday, October 25, 2013 2:00 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Recchia, Chris; London, Sarah
Subject: Fwd: Presentation to the House Committees on Monday
Attachments: Joint Meeting Agenda Monday-10-28-2013.pdf; ATT00001.htm; Immediate capacity needs BDCC SeVEDS WRC.xlsx; ATT00002.htm; Regional package list-v.6 with WRC.docx; ATT00003.htm

FYI

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 989-0569

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Pat Moulton Powden" <pmpowden@brattleborodevelopment.com>
To: "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us>, "Gosselin, Lisa" <Lisa.Gosselin@state.vt.us>, "Leriche, Lucy" <Lucy.Leriche@state.vt.us>
Cc: "Camp, Lori" <Lori.Camp@state.vt.us>
Subject: Presentation to the House Committees on Monday

Hi all,

Attached is what we are presenting to the Hs. Commerce and Hs. Nat. Resources and Energy Committees when they are here on Monday. The narrative you have mostly seen before. I added a couple of small descriptions on some new "projects" that were not in the original doc we sent to you. Those are a nuclear plant closing conference and restarting the business plan competition. Other than that, you have seen all from us before.

The budget numbers are pulled from the larger doc/budget we sent you earlier. We have characterized these as our "short term" needs and they are rather large. This is a much larger number than we gave you before as we put some project money in there, not just capacity needs. Again, the projects are pulled from what we sent up before.

We will be providing verbal testimony and docs to the committees Monday.

Call me if you would like to discuss.

FYI, also attached is the agenda for Monday's hearing.

THANKS!
Pat

--

Patricia Moulton Powden

Director of Workforce Development
Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
76 Cotton Mill Hill
Brattleboro, Vt 05301
(802) 257-7731 ext. 224
(802) 451-9578 cell
(802) 257-0294 fax

115 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT 05633
TEL: (802) 828-2228
FAX: (802) 828-2424



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
REP. BILL BOTZOW, CHAIR

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL
RESOURCES AND ENERGY
REP. TONY KLEIN, CHAIR

**STATE OF VERMONT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Joint Meeting of House Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and on
Commerce and Economic Development**

AGENDA

Vernon Elementary School, 381 Governor Hunt Road, Vernon, VT

October 28, 2013

*The economic impacts on the region of the closing of Vermont Yankee,
mitigation strategies and the legislature's role*

1:30 PM

Windham Regional Planning Commission

Chris Campany, Executive Director, Windham Regional
Commission

2:15 PM

**Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and Southeast Vermont
Economic Development Strategy**

Pat Moulton Powden, Director of Workforce Development,
Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Laura Sibia, Executive Director, Southeast Vermont Economic
Development Strategy

Stephan Morse, Chair, Post VY Committee

3:15 PM

Selectboards and Town Planning Officials

Patty O'Donnell, Chair of Selectboard, Town of Vernon

Stephen Skibniowski, Member, Vernon Planning Commission

Patrick Moreland, Town Manager, Town of Brattleboro

Rod Francis, Planning Director, Town of Brattleboro

Katie Buckley, Town Administrator, Guilford, VT

4:00 PM

Entergy Vermont Yankee

Michael Twomey, Vice President of External Affairs, Entergy
Nuclear Vermont Yankee

4:30 PM **Break**

5:00 PM **Public Hearing**
Members of the public may sign up to testify

7:00 PM **Adjourn**

*If you have any questions and comments, please contact
Gabrielle Malina at 802-828-2231*

WINDHAM COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS POST VY

Immediate needs: Capacity/people

	Total Need	Resources We can find	Remaining need:
BDCC: Organizational consultant	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000
BDCC: Nuclear plant closing conference	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000
BDCC: Project manager-Innovation Ecosystem and others (2 yrs)	\$ 200,000		\$ 200,000
BDCC: Redevelopment director (2 yrs)	\$ 200,000		\$ 200,000
BDCC: Marketing coordinator: SVSMP (Windham/Bennington counties), Rte. 30 (2 yrs)	\$ 180,000		\$ 180,000
BDCC: Workforce Director	\$ 90,000	\$ 56,000	\$ 34,000
BDCC: Expand SBDC position in Windham County to full time (3 yrs)	\$ 150,000		\$ 150,000
WRC: Regulatory process participation*	\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000
WRC: Tri-state Regional Commission Collaboration*	\$ 45,000		\$ 45,000
WRC: Local/regional advocacy*	\$ 75,000		\$ 75,000
WRC: Regional decommissioning information center (on-line)*	\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000
WRC: Research and issue tracking*	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000
subtotal	\$ 1,110,000	\$ 56,000	\$ 1,054,000

Immediate needs: Projects/studies

SeVEDS: Southern Vermont Web site	\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000
SeVEDS: Marketing dollars-So. Vt. Sustainable Marketing (pages 15 & 51)	\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
SeVEDS: Innovation Ecosystem business planning (page 28)	\$ 100,000		\$ 100,000
BDCC: Restart business plan competition (pg. 6)	\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000
BDCC: Redevelopment studies: market assessment, structural assessment, incubator (pg. 17)	\$ 300,000		\$ 300,000
BDCC: biz start up funding: co-working, possible VY employee bizes (pg. 6)	\$ 150,000		\$ 150,000
BDCC: Business recruitment marketing (g. 6)	\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000
SeVEDS: Cluster analysis: High performance building (pg. 53)	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000
WRC: Regional and municipal planning for economic development (pg 8)	\$ 70,000		\$ 70,000
subtotal	\$ 1,005,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 895,000

Immediate needs: Workforce

SeVEDS: Regional job board (built in the recruitment web site) (pg. 378)	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000
SeVEDS: Machine apprenticeship (pg. 42)	\$ 100,000	VTP	\$ 100,000
SeVEDS: Gov. Career Ready Certificate/CCV (pg. 45)	\$ 100,000	WETF	\$ 100,000
subtotal	\$ 250,000		\$ 250,000

TOTAL \$ 2,365,000 **\$ 2,199,000**

*These items are multi year needs, in some cases up to possibly 10 years. This request is for one year.

This document represents a compilation of currently identified needs of the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) and the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) and the Southeast Vermont Economic Development Strategy (SeVEDS) as we address the now known closing date of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power plant. These organizations are poised to continue working on the closure and cleanup of the site, as well as rebuilding the Windham regional economy in the face of the loss of jobs, payroll and business activity resulting from the closure. These organizations are recognized and supported by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

This is a compilation of *currently identified* needs. It is likely additional needs will emerge as we proceed with our work. We welcome maintaining an open dialogue with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Governor's office and the Vermont Legislature as we proceed with this work.

Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and the Southeast Vermont Economic Development Strategy

BDCC (Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation) is a private, nonprofit economic development organization established in 1954 managing a 2 million dollar annual operating budget. BDCC is fortunate to generate much of its revenue from its real estate holdings. These currently include one single use building in the Exit One Industrial Park, one available lot and land in the Exit One Industrial Park, two redeveloped industrial complexes housing 110 tenants who employ approximately 300. BDCC serves as a catalyst for industrial and commercial growth throughout Southeastern Vermont, including Windham County and the towns of Readsboro, Somerset, Searsburg, and Weston. BDCC's primary objective is to create and retain a flourishing business community in the region it serves that supports vibrant fiscal activity, and improves the quality of life of all its residents. BDCC is affiliated with the State of Vermont as the certified Regional Development Corporation (RDC) serving the greater Windham County area. BDCC is one of 12 RDCs throughout Vermont. BDCC provides staffing and some funding for SeVEDS. SeVEDS (Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies) is an affiliate of BDCC that grew from a 2008 grass roots effort, initiated by BDCC, to reverse the economic decline of the Windham Region. It is guided by a regional board of 18 public and private sector individuals and staffed by BDCC. SeVEDS has solicited and received broad municipal and private sector support within the region.

After decades of little to no economic or population growth, the Windham Region, through SeVEDS, began to undergo a process to assess the current economic and demographic conditions to understand the impacting factors. Subsequently a series of broad strategies were established, including preparing for a Post VY economy (**see SeVEDS Goals, Objectives and Strategies**) and the region began to chart a course towards economic revitalization through refinement and implementation of those strategies, including development of a federally recognized Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). SeVEDS has a number of economic development strategies already outlined with more being finalized along with our CEDS document.

In 2011, the Windham Region was severely impacted by flooding from Tropical Storm Irene. BDCC, the regional development corporation, has been leading a multi-regional effort to assess and recover from the business and economic damage. Leading an effort with the Windham and Bennington County Regional Commissions, BDCC created short and longer term action plans that were funded by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). These action plans are being implemented including individual business assistance, village and downtown revitalization, identifying long term economic plans that need to be implemented and development of a sustainable regional marketing program to attract employees and tourists to our businesses and employers. BDCC has also taken the lead in partnership with Springfield Regional Development Corporation for CDBG-DR assistance to impacted businesses from Irene.

Because we well understood existing economic challenges in SE Vermont, SeVEDS and BDCC have already added both permanent and temporary staffing capacity to handle the existing challenging economic conditions, have already developed a broad network of regional cooperation, and understand economic revitalization is a marathon and not a sprint. Progress on revitalization plans and actions is underway.

Because we specifically assessed the regional impacts of an eventual VY closure:

1. We estimate that the VY Closure will result in a loss of 6% of the regional economy. A loss of 6% of the Windham region Vermont economy represents \$150 million losses in regional GDP.
2. We know from other nuclear plant closing that at most 50% of employee skills are transferable to existing economy (at significantly reduced wages and standard of living)
3. Employment options to replace 240 SE Vermont residents at average wages of 100K annually are not available in the region or in the foreseeable future based on current conditions

We know that a date certain closure greatly increases our need to be able to act even more quickly and with greater urgency on our existing long term planning and strategy implementation. We have both immediate, short term and longer term needs.

Our immediate needs are for additional capacity to firm up financial needs, to implement projects, and procure grants and other funding and support we will need to implement strategies. We estimate the dollar amount of the immediate capacity need to be \$1,959,000 of which we think we can come up with approximately \$166,000. We are looking for assistance in the remaining amount. **(see budget detail)**

Immediate needs: Capacity/people

- Organizational alignment and structure consultant
- Funding to assist with a nuclear plant closing conference
- Project manager for Innovation Ecosystem and others
- Redevelopment director
- Marketing coordinator: SVSMP (Windham/Bennington counties), Rte. 30
- Workforce Director
- Expand SBDC position to full time
- Windham Regional Commission needs (see pages 7 & 8)

Immediate needs: Projects and studies: (See below and attached CEDS project descriptionsⁱⁱ)

- Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing: web site and marketing dollars (pages 14 and 49)
- Innovation Ecosystem business planning (page 27)
- Restart a business plan competition
- Redevelopment studies: market assessment, structural assessment, incubator (page 16)
- Business startup funding: potential former VY employees
- Business recruitment marketing
- Cluster analysis (page 52)
- Windham Regional Commission municipal and regional planning for economic development (page 7)
- Workforce training: regional job board, machine apprenticeship, Gov. Career Ready Certificate (pages 37, 41 and 44)

ONGOING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: The *asterisk denotes work that remains to be done, positions that need to be filled and where financial resources are needed.

Below are projects that are currently underway and funded as noted.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS):

1. Funded by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) we are nearing completion of the CEDS for Windham County.
 - a. Original roll out of the CEDS was to be October. It will be delayed up to two months to incorporate the known closing date for VY and the impacts a known closing date represents.
 - b. BDCC is leading this effort with strong participation from Windham Regional Commission and all communities around the region.
 - c. 52 CEDS projects were submitted after a "call for projects" to include in the CEDS. All projects will be included.
 - i. A group of 5 respected, trusted local CEO's has just completed a prioritization process and selected 12 "vital projects" for advancing the strategies identified in the CEDS. Many of those vital projects are cited below.

Flood recovery:

1. BDCC is administering \$1.5 million dollars of CDBG-DR funds in sub-grant to businesses affected by TS Irene.
 - a. This is a project with BDCC and Springfield Regional Development Corp (SRDC) and covers southern Windsor and all of Windham Counties.
 - b. The first round of grants has gone out to 32 businesses.
 - c. \$500,000 in supplemental funding has been awarded by CDBG-DR. Application workshops and accepting applications will commence in October.
 - d. It is anticipated we will seek an additional \$1million+ in CDBG-DR2 funding.
2. Delivering flood recovery services through a US EDA funded grant to the Windham and Bennington County Regional Commissions (\$475,000) for Bennington and Windham counties for three distinct programs. BDCC, SeVEDS, Windham and Bennington Regional Commissions are all involved:
 - a. Direct resource assistance to businesses affected by TS Irene and other flooding. Through Flood Recovery Officers (FRO's)
 - b. Direct resource assistance to communities for rebuilding and organizing for recovery. Through FRO's.
 - c. Development of the Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program for the two counties. Components include (**see attached CEDS description**):
 - i. Brand development for the two counties.
 - ii. Targeted marketing and outreach strategies for the two counties to:
 1. Attract tourists to the region
 2. Attract talent to the region
 - iii. *Development of a "recruitment web site" for the two counties to post job openings, information on relocating to Vermont, and other useful data for those interested in moving here for work.
 - iv. *Implementation funding.
 - v. *Coordinator to implement the Sustainable Marketing Strategy and business buy in, annual marketing plans and media buys. This position is expected to becoming self-funding after two years of implementation.

Redevelopment:

BDCC and SeVEDS are undertaking a comprehensive inventory of vacant buildings in Windham County to redevelop as appropriate. This is being done with support from BDCC, Wilmington Community Development

Office, Windham Regional Commission and Bellows Falls Community Development Office and Bellows Falls Area Development Corporation. **See attached CEDS project descriptionⁱⁱⁱ**

1. Have a comprehensive inventory of empty or underutilized buildings including commercial, industrial, hospitality and other real estate.
2. *Conduct market analysis in the communities where these properties are located. Determine needed businesses and services likely for these buildings.
3. *Conduct physical assessment, structural analysis, retrofit analysis for specific uses identified as needed in those communities.
4. *Determine which buildings are suitable for business incubator space and conduct retrofit analysis.
5. *Prepare marketing materials for each property.
6. *Target businesses to move to the properties.
7. * Support legal creation of Wilmington Downtown Commercial Redevelopment Project whose purpose is to purchase 10 vacant buildings in downtown and renovate **See CEDS project description^{iv}**
8. *Support Windham Regional Commission Village Water and Wastewater Need Assessment and Feasibility Plan **See CEDS project description^v**
9. *Leverage new broadband infrastructure development **See CEDS project description^{vi}**

Innovation Ecosystem: This project is in the planning stages with strong support from throughout the region. This is at the heart of creating new and more entrepreneurial activity in the region. **See attached CEDS project description.^{vii}** BDCC is taking the lead on this with help from several local leaders. There is no funding attached to this effort thus far.

1. *Hire a coordinator for the Innovation Ecosystem.
 - a. Investigate other successful models in rural areas
 - b. Review Maine initiative.
2. *Planning grant to develop a business plan for the elements of the ecosystem.
3. *Develop business incubator(s) that target both high tech and legacy sectors.
 - a. Feasibility of which building(s) is part of the redevelopment program.
4. *Seed capital fund for start-up.
5. Implement a business mentoring program with successful existing entrepreneurs. Look at "Peer to Peer" model.
6. *Business plan competition re-start:
 - a. Technology
 - b. Traditional
7. Virtual incubator in the region: similar services as above, available around the region
8. Target specific sectors for recruitment and start up.
9. *Create a high tech co-working space in the region.
10. *Create a consulting firm with former VY employees to provide services to nuclear and other industries.
11. *Expand .5 VtSBDC position to 1.0 FTE to support development of startups or expansions.
12. *University partnerships: These are dollars needed to develop partnerships with UVM and/or other colleges and universities in the region. Strong partnerships with research institutions is critical. Also conducting research on the impacts of these strategies in slowing and reversing economic decline.
 - a. Develop relationships with research labs and university patent libraries to provide new products and solve technical issues with product development.
 - b. Develop and implement the "UVM Windham County Community Development and Applied Economics Program". This idea is still in the development phase but utilizes this existing program at UVM to be applied in Windham County.
 - i. Student projects to assist with implementation of the innovation ecosystem.

- ii. Student and Faculty research on the impacts to rural community of a nuclear plant closing.
- iii. Longitudinal studies of the outcomes of the innovation ecosystem on the Windham regional economy. Analysis of a number of measures, GDP, real estate values, population changes, wage and income changes, etc.

Workforce projects: BDCC and SeVEDS have hired a full time Director of Workforce Development to undertake the projects listed below. The current workforce director, Pat Moulton Powden, will be assuming the position of Executive Director of BDCC when Jeff Lewis retires at the end of the year. The process to backfill the Director of Workforce Development has begun, earlier than expected so Pat can spear head VY planning and recovery efforts.

These are projects that have begun or are in the planning stages.

1. *Conduct a survey of VY employees. In conjunction with VDOL and VY.
 - a. Skills, certifications, credentials, degrees and security clearances.
 - b. Determine how many would like to remain in the area.
 - c. Determine how many would like to start their own business.
 - d. Determine if the workforce is an asset we can market to attract businesses and/or clients to business startups.
2. Internship Coordinator for the six Windham County Colleges (**funded by VDOL**)
3. Hiring inventory for the top 50 employers in Windham County. Projected their hiring needs for the next 5 years in terms of numbers and occupations needed. (underway)
 - a. Need intern to assist with the work, compile the results.
 - b. *Coordinate with area k-12 schools to seek to align curriculum and programs with the occupational needs identified.
 - i. All schools in Windham County.
 - ii. Windham Regional Career Center and River Valley Tech Center
 - c. *Coordinate with the six colleges to align necessary programs and curriculum. In some cases it will mean new programs in Windham County.
4. *Undertake the "Scope and Sequence" project submitted to CEDS. **See attached CEDS project description.**^{viii}
5. *Develop a regional job board to list open positions in Windham and Bennington Counties. Link with National Labor Exchange and Vermont Joblink as appropriate. **See attached CEDS project description.**^{ix}
6. *Develop the Southeast Vermont Machine Apprenticeship program. Patterned after the consortium in the Upper Valley, this is a partnership with VTC and employers in Windham County. **See attached CEDS project description.**^x
7. *Develop a Southeast Vermont Governors Career Ready program in Windham County. **See attached CEDS project Description.**^{xi}
8. *Expand the Windham Childcare Association. **See attached CEDS description**^{xii}.
9. Creation of the "Windham Higher Education Cooperative" has begun. This is all six of the colleges located in Windham County. They are Community College of Vermont, Landmark College, Marlboro College, Vermont Technical College, World Learning/SIT, and Union Institute and University. They have formed and are moving ahead with these projects:
 - a. Hiring an Internship Coordinator to increase internship opportunities for students at the six colleges with area employers. (See #2 above).
 - b. Develop a cooperative agreement to continue to expand joint articulation agreements between the six colleges.
 - c. Other marketing and collaboration as discussed.
10. Continue dialogue with UVM and how they can assist with workforce, innovation and other projects and needs in the region. (ongoing)

NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: In this document we are putting forward an initial needs assessment of

\$16 million dollars based on existing planning, knowledge and work. We know this list needs to be further refined and grow, and we need to create a financing plan. These projects have been discussed as part of the CEDS process in Windham County. The *asterisk denotes work that remains to be done, positions that need to be filled and where financial resources are needed.

*Organizational alignment: The Windham Region CEDS will articulate a need for aligning/organizing governance and resources between existing boards (SeVEDS and BDCC) and how new structures (redevelopment capacity, innovation ecosystem) can be aligned with or added to those existing boards.

*Nuclear plant closing conference: We are working with the University of Massachusetts to develop a conference to be held in Windham County to focus on announced and planned nuclear plant closings. The focus of the conference is a federal policy to prioritize the closings of the nation's nuclear power plants similar to the base closings policy at the federal level. The conference will engage communities facing a plant closing, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, planners, economic development practitioners, state policy makers, congressional delegations and others to determine if we currently have the best policies in place to assist communities facing nuclear plant closings.

*Restart the business plan competition: BDCC needs to restart the general business plan competition is held for many years. This competition has resulted in the startup of several new business in the Windham Region. The competition provides cash to winners to get their winning business plan up and running.

*VY Employee businesses: There has been discussion of the possibility of VY employees that may be able to start a nuclear power consulting business or other businesses that utilize the talents of VY employees. This funding would provide startup capital for such a business. The feasibility needs to be explored. If it is not feasible, this funding can support the business plan competition for VY employees that wish to start a business of any type.

*Business recruitment marketing: Part of marketing must include dollars targeted at attracting entrepreneurs and other businesses to the Windham region. This funding could be coupled with the Southern Vt. Sustainable Marketing Program or as a separate campaign utilizing the branding and work of the SVSMP.

*Short term mitigation planning and financing consultant: BDCC and/or SeVEDS sees the need at some point soon to engage with a consultant with experience in nuclear plant closings and/or base closing with the special needs and challenges that represents, particularly to a rural community. The need is similar to the need the State of Vermont saw post TS Irene when they engaged Whitt Associates. The state specifically identified someone with FEMA experience as a need for the State which is why they engaged Whitt Associate. We see a similar need for us not too far from now. At this time it is difficult to identify exactly what expertise will be needed, but we expect we will need that resources. Whether it is seeking federal grant funding, working with the NRC, expertise developing an innovation ecosystem, or any of the other CEDS projects we have included. We are likely to need that expertise and need the resources to procure it. This is a place card holder for that work.

Special economic development zones in the region: This seeks to target resources to areas in the county with substandard performance now or anticipated.

1. Develop a "Route 30" collaborative of businesses and town management to better market and promote that corridor. Planning has begun on this. **See CEDS project description**^{xiii}
 - a. *Hire staff to organize and promote the region or someone at a willing Chamber of commerce.

- b. Form a “chamber of commerce” or like entity to support the business along that corridor.
 - c. *Market empty properties (see redevelopment above).
 - d. *Market the corridor for visitors.
2. Enhance existing programs for growing businesses in identified “zones”.
 - a. Identify the zones: Route 30, Wilmington/Dover, Vernon/Brattleboro, Bellows Falls.
 - b. Enhance VEDA, VEGI, CDBG, and other programs for projects in this region. I.e. higher investments than normal, higher risk, more funding, higher VEGI incentives.
 - c. Greater investments in tourism and economic development marketing dollars in these zones.

Industrial sites inventory and development: This is work that is just starting. We have limited industrial sites or parks in the county. We need these sites ready for potential new businesses and for locations for expanding existing businesses. We know of at least two existing businesses that will need new buildings to accommodate known growth and we lack shovel ready sites.

1. Conduct an inventory of industrial zoned land throughout the county.
 - a. Identify barriers to development.
 - i. Work to eliminate those barriers. i.e. rezone, remediate brownfields, etc.
 - b. *Estimate costs to develop.
2. *Build road, water and sewer up to BDCC’s acreage in the Exit One industrial park.
3. *Prepare new industrial sites/parks in Bellows Falls, Brattleboro and Wilmington areas.

Develop a “green” high performance building cluster in Windham County: This project planning has begun with a group of very interested people. A business plan needs to be developed to intimate and support this cluster.

1. *Develop a business plan for this cluster. **See attached CEDS project description^{xiv}**
2. *Support the building a rapid prototyping facility at existing shop for prefab high performance building envelopes and resilient mechanical systems. **See attached CEDS project description^{xv}**

Windham Regional Commission Vermont Yankee Closure and Decommissioning Resource Needs

Two essential components of resiliency planning and development going forward will be 1) regional advocacy in the closure and decommissioning process, and 2) land use and redevelopment planning at the regional, interstate and municipal levels to ensure that town and regional plans and economic development plans are in alignment with one another. The Windham Regional Commission would lead these efforts. The WRC has been engaged in Vermont Yankee decommissioning planning since 2007 through our engagement in multiple Public Service Board dockets related to Vermont Yankee. The WRC has remained purposefully neutral as to whether or not the plant should continue operations, but we have focused on what is in the region’s best interest when the plant does eventually close for whatever reason. We have unique knowledge about what the plant operators say they intend to do when they close the plant, and what that means for the orderly development of the region.

We are requesting additional resources to support our responsibilities that are unique to the Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee power station closure. We have spent literally thousands of staff and volunteer hours on work related to Vermont Yankee, and that time and effort is of great benefit to our towns, the region as a whole, and

the state. Now that plant closure is imminent, we need the resources to represent the region's interests and effectively participate in the land use and redevelopment planning that is essential to recovery, and greater economic resiliency going forward.

- **Continued participation in VT Public Service Board processes: \$60,000 / year until the process concludes.** At this point it is anyone's guess as to how Docket 7862 will proceed. Furthermore, Docket 7600, which relates to the leaking pipes underground, remains open. The WRC has participated in the dockets pro se and this has consumed considerable resources. The Vermont Energy Generation Siting Policy Commission has recognized that Regional Planning Commissions should have bill back authority in order to effectively represent the Regional Plan in major Section 248 processes. We do not have time to wait for a statutory change, and the PSB has denied our requests for reimbursement. We need additional assistance from the state to support our work in the dockets related to VY as long as they move forward. Please note that we are not requesting reimbursement for past participation.
- **Tri-state Regional Commission Collaboration on Regulatory Response and Resiliency Planning: \$45,000 / year.** We have reached out to our regional planning counterparts in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. The closure of Vermont Yankee will have impacts throughout the tri-state region and will require a tri-state regional response. The WRC has already assumed a leadership role in this effort, and that role will continue as we work together to develop and pursue initiatives. This will consume resources in addition to our own intraregional and state efforts, and will likely require our engagement in a tri-state U.S. EDA initiative that is already being discussed. We will need funding for our part of the match should that materialize.
- **Local/regional government representation and advocacy in national and federal decommissioning deliberations (Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Federal Legislation, Federal Rulemaking, NGOs (Natl. Association of Development Organizations; National Association of Counties): \$75,000 / year.** Vermont Yankee will have two years after it announces its closure to develop the Post-Shutdown Decommissioning Activities Report required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that lays out how the plant will decommission. We will need to engage in this process in both Vermont and beyond. As multiple reactors close or announce their closure (3 have closed this year; two have announced closures; more are expected), we will need to engage in national policy discussions about the extraordinary deference the NRC regulations gives to the plant operators without any regard to the orderly redevelopment within the host communities and states. We will need to be part of this conversation to represent our own interests, and we believe our Congressional delegation will be looking to us for guidance due to the level of our engagement and knowledge about the issues. We will also need to engage national organizations such as NADO and the National Association of Counties to research the issues associated with plant closures, orderly redevelopment, and the potential for prime industrial sites throughout the nation to remain idle for decades.
- **Regional Decommissioning Information Center (online): \$10,000 first year/\$5,000 maintenance per year thereafter.** The need for an online public resource center about the closure and decommissioning process has already arisen. We have created a page on our website, but feel a stand-alone online resource center is needed. Our current website is staff created and maintained. We need additional resources to create this new online resource and maintain it throughout the decommissioning process.
- **Closure and Decommissioning Research and Issue Tracking (probably use UVM or VT Law School): \$50,000 / year.** We have relied heavily upon WRC Commissioners to supplement staff to track and research issues related to the eventual closure and decommissioning of Vermont Yankee, and legal, regulatory and policy issues related to the same. This need will continue, and should be properly resourced in the interest of the region and the state.

- **Regional and Municipal Planning for Economic Development and Resiliency: \$70,000/year for 3 years.** The regional economic development strategies being developed by the SeVEDS partnership and regional and municipal plans will need to be brought into alignment with one another. This includes broad policy positions as well as detailed site identification and planning; GIS analyses and mapping; basic training and awareness for towns about how their plans and policies can contribute to economic development, business retention and growth; and the links between economic development and overall town well being. In our experience the connections between town policy, economic development, and what economic development means for the overall fiscal and socioeconomic sustainability of the town are not well understood. As such, economic development planning is seldom a priority for most selectboards and planning commissions. We need additional resources to support this work above and beyond the municipal planning support capacity and activities we already provide.

APPENDICES:

*Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategy Group
Goals, Objectives and Strategies Outline
(updated July 23, 2013)*

Goals:

1. Create Operational and Fiscal Sustainability Plan for SeVEDS by December 2011
2. Improve Wage Parity with Surrounding Labor-shed
3. Increase the Size and Quality of the Workforce
4. Increase population proportion of 25-44 year olds from 23% to 28% of total population by 2017
5. Create an Entrepreneurial Environment

Metrics:

<i>Base SeVEDS Region Metrics</i>	<i>Baseline*</i>	<i>2017 Goal</i>	<i>%Change</i>	<i>Total Ch</i>
Population	42,605	44,605	4%	+2000
Employable Population (16 and older)	35,520*	36,171	+1.8%	+651
Labor Participation Rate	65%*	68.8%	+5.8%	-
Total Employed	23,089*	24,894	+7.8%	+1,805
Average Wage	\$38,820	\$39,848	+2.6%	+\$1,028
Total Region Wages	\$896M	\$992M	+10.7%	\$96M
Regional GDP	\$2.37B	\$2.8B	+18.1%	\$430M
<i>Regional Strategic Metrics</i>	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>2017 Goal</i>	<i>Change</i>	
Ratio Net Earned Income/Total Income	.566	.650	+14.1%	-
Increase Median Annual Income for Associates/Some College workforce	\$26,855	\$32,000	+19.1%	+\$5,145 (\$2.47/l
Increase Median Annual Income for Bachelors Degree workforce	\$32,518	\$39,000	+19.9%	+\$6,482 (\$3.12/l
Increase 20-44 employment by 20% in five years (2009 data)	10,691	12,829	20%	+2,138
Increase Associates Degrees/Some College and Technical Certificates among 18-44 age bracket	38% (1,495)	47% (1,884)	+23.6%	+389
Increase the 25-44 age population by 20% in five years	9,533	11,439	20%	+1,906

Objective 1. Create Operational and Fiscal Sustainability Plan for SeVEDS by December 2011

1. Create Legal SeVEDS Entity
 - a. Create Board of Directors – *A board of directors was named at the September 22, 2011 current board members can be found on the www.seveds.com website*
 - b. Incorporate SeVEDS as a Non-Profit - *Incorporated as a 501 c(6) September 2011*
 - c. Affiliation Agreement with BDCC – *approved and signed December 1, 2011*
2. Outline multiyear budget and fundraising needs
 - a. Hire SeVEDS staff person to provide organizational and funder planning support. – *BDCC provides staffing*
 - b. Prepare 3-year budget – *FY 2012 budget approved on November 17th 2011, FY 2013 budget approved July 2012*
 - c. Develop and implement private fundraising campaign
 - d. Develop and implement public fundraising campaign – *FY 2013 - 14 towns were presented with funding request; 7 approved for total of 106,826 in FY 14 funding*
3. Develop Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for submission to EDA
 - a. Complete EDA Technical Assistance Grant – *completed*
 - b. Create Action teams to identify and support implementation of priorities and projects including VY closure, work force, redevelopment, and flood – *workforce, redevelopment and flood action teams created*
 - c. Create CEDS plan – *funding to create CEDS document received in November 2012 – CEDS document to be completed October 2013*

Objective 2: Increase the Size and Quality of the Workforce (1-8)

4. Develop a Workforce Center of Excellence Collaborative between providers and users of workforce development services that identifies and connects existing workforce development assets, defines future workforce requirements and gaps by September 2012 – *hired Director of Workforce in February 2013, plan and action items below to be worked on with workforce employer group Spring Summer 2013*

Key Metric: Recommend Preferred Workforce Development Collaborative Plan by December 2012

- a. Map workforce development assets and define gaps to be filled
 - b. Build strategic relationships between assets
 - c. Define 3 to 5 Career Pathways that will meet the needs of the priority industries
 - d. Identify workforce development Best Practices appropriate to the region
 - e. Recommend Preferred Workforce Development Collaborative Plan by December 2012
5. Increase 20-44 age group employment by 20% in five years

Key Metric: By January 2012 Define Top 3 – 5 Industry Clusters with the potential for increasing high-value jobs within the next five years *being developed as part of Windham Region.CEDS to be completed in October 2013*

- a. By January 2012 Define Top 3 – 5 Industry Clusters with the potential for increasing high-value jobs within the next five years
- b. Create Action Teams in Q1-2012 around Clusters to identify Strengths (Assets), Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats and value chain gaps
- c. Prioritize at least 2 Clusters for Opportunity Analysis Research that will Action 3.2.D – define at least 2 Niche Markets per Cluster for implementation by October 2012

-
- d. Develop Immigration Attraction Strategy by April 2012 focused on doubling the percentage of foreign born population in the region from 3.5% to 7% by 2016
 - e. Develop a Highly Skilled Professionals recruitment and retention strategy – *acquired SoVermont.com, SVSMP work with Bennington County through EDA Flood Grant*
6. Increase Associate Degrees/Some College and Technical Certificates

Key Metric: 18-24 year old age bracket from 38% (1495 persons) to 47% (1884 persons) for net increase of 389 persons by 2017

- a. 18-24 year old age bracket from 38% (1495 persons) to 47% (1884 persons) for net increase of 389 persons by 2016
 - b. Identify Industry Sectors with critical skill needs – *employer hiring projections collection in process May 2013*
 - c. Work with Secondary, Post-Secondary and Vermont State College System and the broader region to develop education programs to meet industry needs – *working with 6 colleges on greater collaboration – worked with CCV and VTC on employer workforce series Fall 2012s*
 - d. Partner with UMass
7. Identify public and private resources to support a sustainable implementation of workforce development plan – *successful municipal fundraising in FY 13 to support wf position hire*

Objective 3: Increase population proportion of 24-44 year-olds from 23% to 28% of total population by 2017 (1)

8. KBE Strategy connecting the SeVEDS region to the NE Next Generation Knowledge Corridor –*communication with Pioneer Valley Planning CEDS creators/ and John Mullin in 2012*
9. Develop a Livable Communities Strategy by 2014
10. Leverage Tourism and Second Homeowner Assets to attract 1,000 young families – *tied to SVSMP with Benn Co*
11. Develop a coordinated regional marketing plan to promote SE Vermont as the best place to live, place, and work. – *tied to SVSMP w Benn Co*

Action Plans for Objective 4 Strategies will be developed during Phase II

Objective 4: Create an Entrepreneurial Environment (1-8)

12. Define and implement an Innovation Ecosystem within 3 years
 - a. In 2013, assess regional innovation and entrepreneurial climate based upon best practice criteria (Innovation Index): facilities, governance, business services, access to capital, business networks, culture, R&D capacities, etc. – *done preliminary to be completed as part of CEDS by Oct 2013*
 - b. Convene an Action Team to use the Innovation Index for SeVEDS developed in 12.a to address complex regulatory and other concerns with State and Local jurisdictions.
 - c. Assess business needs and set a goal to assist existing businesses and new or potential businesses each year.
13. Create a Young Professionals Group (YPG) to support and attract 20-44 year old professionals and workers *started in Spring 2012*
 - a. By Q4-2011 identify and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of existing young professional networks and social organizations – *surveying completed in June 2013*
 - b. Engage a representative group of existing younger individuals (especially 18-35 yrs. old) in the community to assess interests and the role of young professions in the region's economic future – *started 2013*

-
- c. As a result of Action 13b recommend a set of activities and actions to be adopted supporting both the YPG and entrepreneurial climate of the regions, such as: business seminars, speakers, business plan competitions, investment forums, social events, etc. – *part of FY 14 plan*
14. Create a sustainable start – up funding program by March 2013 – *included in FY 14 workplan – accelerator/finance*
 - a. Define and implement a plan to benchmark and track new businesses looking for funding by December 2012
 - b. Define and implement a plan to benchmark and track new jobs created by December 2012
 - c. Create a mentor/investor network plan utilizing especially the services and assets of 44-75 year olds by December 2012
 - d. Take advantage of opportunities under the federal crowdfunding bill (if passed)
 - e. Create marketing plan including social media to package and publicize local funding sources, mentor networks, incubator spaces, etc. Reach out to UMass/Amherst area via recruitment events, advertising, etc.
 - f. Identify Incubator Space
 15. Recognize and blend Quality of Place characteristics and concepts into the SEVEDS strategies
 - a. Establish a group of relevant regional stakeholders to review Quality of Place concepts and index methodologies to craft a set of appropriate regional metrics – *CEDS focus groups June 2013*
 - b. Develop and conduct several community presentations describing the role and critical components of Quality of Place within the SeVEDS strategy – *CEDS focus groups June 2013*
 - c. Develop internal (within Windham Region) and external (out of Windham Region) marketing plan – *external SVSMP to be completed Spring 2013*
 16. Facilitate bringing challenged properties in the Windham Region back into purposeful use – *redevelopment group soliciting for regional redevelopment and industrial sites inventory May 2013*
 - a. Build structure for redevelopment capacity by 2019
 - b. Aggregate relevant environmental, financial and land record information for qualified interest groups.
 - c. Aiding qualified individuals and/or groups in purchase and rehab planning consistent with regional, economic, environmental and town planning.
 - d. Create a mechanism to facilitate intermediary ownership if there are no other alternatives
 - e. Identify and work with redevelopment efforts underway
 17. Expand Percentage of the Regional Economy coming from the Global Economy by leveraging businesses w/global connections seeking higher skilled workers in high wage jobs.
 - a. Create a database of businesses with international relationships
 - b. Map international, linguistic, cultural, and technical knowledge assets
 - c. Create a Global Marketing plan that links with International trade marketing tools and programs to expand markets and attract new business to leverage regional assets
 - d. Define three (3) Global Niche Markets having value chain gaps that can be filled by regional assets
 - e. Identify workforce skill gaps that might be filled by international workers coming to the region and create an worker recruitment plan
 - f. Identify potential needs of international workers and develop a plan to meet those needs

Objective 5: Plan for a Post VY Economy (I-5)

18. Establish a sustained effort to cope with and recover from the closure of Vermont Yankee

-
- a. Build a broad based steering committee to guide planning and action on economic and social impacts. *Created Daniel Yates (Brattleboro Savings & Loan), Martin Langeveld (Strolling of the Heifers), Andrea Livermore (Building a Better Brattleboro), Art Greenbaum, Barbara Sondag (Town of Brattleboro), Connie Snow (Windham Housing Trust), Ellen McCulloch-Lovell (Marlboro College), Jeff Lewis (Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation), Jesse Corum IV (Attorney) Lawrence Company (Windham Regional Planning Commission), Mark Richards (Richards Group), Robert Stevens (Stevens and Associates), Robert Woodworth, Chad Simmons, Robert Oeser, Stephan Morse (retired)*
 - b. Conduct Substantial study of other nuclear plant closings and other plan shutdowns and find major learning's - *WRPC*
 - c. Establish Site decommissioning, deconstruction, clean up, restoration and reuse planning group:
 - d. Identify potential impacts from VY closure – *completed November 2011. Major categories include Jobs, GDP declines, Real Estate prices decline, Human Capital, Taxes*
 - e. Identify possible mitigation, barriers and means of overcoming barriers – *Completed February 2012*

Objective 6: Plan, Track and Participate (1-8)

19. Maintain list of issues and sectors for development of additional objectives and strategies
 - a. Energy Prices, Broadband and Cell expansion, Disaster preparedness, Transportation Infrastructure, Railroads, Regional Plan

Project Description: Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program for Recruitment of Employees and Tourists Submitted by Laura Sibilia, Director of Economic Development at BDCC
lsibilia@brattleborodevelopment.com

1. Organizational Overview:

BDCC is a private, nonprofit economic development organization that serves as a catalyst for industrial and commercial growth throughout Southeastern Vermont, including Windham County and the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, and Weston.

The primary objective of the BDCC is to create and retain a flourishing business community in the Windham Region that supports vibrant fiscal activity, and improves the quality of life of all its residents. BDCC is affiliated with the State of Vermont as the certified Regional Development Corporation (RDC) serving the greater Windham County area. BDCC is one of 12 RDCs throughout Vermont.

BDCC is the primary regional organization helping businesses recover from physical and economic injury caused by TS Irene in August 2011.

2. Project Description: Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program for Recruitment of Employees and Tourists

As part of the FEMA ESF 14 long term community planning recovery process in the towns of Wilmington and Dover, it was identified that there is not a consistent Southern Vermont brand to market the area for tourism and business/employee recruitment.

The *Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program* is a part of the Windham and Bennington Region Commission Southern Vermont flood recovery project that was funded by the US Department of Commerce in December of 2012.

- **Phase 1:** (in process) Atlas Advertising has been contracted to begin development of the Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing program, a project envisioned by BDCC. This is a regionally initiated research, analysis and program development process designed to provide a mechanism for the Windham and Bennington Region employers and tourism dependent businesses to create collaborative long-term marketing strategies.

Those strategies will be targeted to grow the economy by adding new employees to Southern Vermont and attracting visitors, both of which will be supported in the long-term through regional economic development efforts. The scope of work includes evaluating existing employer and tourism recruitment and marketing efforts, current targeted markets, and employer and tourism brands to create a large marketing umbrella brand for Southern Vermont that can be used by all of those entities, and to create annual cooperative marketing plans with a cooperative sustainable funding mechanism.

-
- **Phase 2:** Create a website for SoVermont that displays career, economic and visitor opportunity including a “job board”.

Coordinate stakeholder buy in by top 75 employers in southern Vermont at 5K annually.

Coordinate stakeholder buy in by the 40 largest Southern Vermont tourism businesses and events at \$2.5K annually to fund an annual Tourism Marketing Campaign.

3. Authority:

BDCC has been contracted by the two regional commissions to manage the project and the current consultant agency, Atlas Advertising. BDCC maintains excellent working relationships with other So Vermont business, planning, municipal and development organizations and has experience working with the State of Vermont on collaborative regional marketing projects. The *Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program* also directly relates to a strategy tied to Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS). BDCC is contracted by SeVEDS to provide all of it’s staffing.

4. Project Capacity:

BDCC has added both a Director of Economic Development and a Director of Workforce Development position in the last two years. These two positions will work closely on further development and implementation of this project.

5. Do you have the wherewithal to implement the project?

This project is intended to provide efficiency and yield better results for businesses recruiting talent and visitors in Southern Vermont. .It’s success is dependent upon buy in from the employers and tourism entities in SoVermont.

6. What is the likely outcome of this project?

Buy in by the top 75 employers in southern Vermont at 5K annually. Goal annual budget: \$375,000 (75 employers * 500K annual op budget *1% contribution) Estimated 5% ROI in payroll and sales on \$375,000 annual for 5 years is \$9.3 million.

Buy in by the 40 largest Southern Vermont tourism businesses and events at \$2.5K annually to fund an annual Tourism Marketing Campaign. Goal annual budget: \$100,000 (40 employers * 250K avg annual op budget * 1% contribution) Estimated 5% ROI on 100K annual for 5 years is 2.5 million. There is a possibility of state match for this program.

7. Is the proposal consistent with SeVEDS established strategies? Does it satisfy an objective? How will this project help the Windham Region to meet its economic development goals?

This project is consistent with SeVEDS established strategies to increase the size of the work force and to increase the population of 22-44 year olds.

WINDHAM COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT GROUP CEDS PROJECT PROPOSAL

August 9, 2013

Project Title: Redevelopment Organization for Windham County

Submitted By: Windham County Redevelopment Group

Organization Overview:

The Windham County Redevelopment Group is composed of representatives from the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation, the Town of Rockingham Development Office and the Town of Wilmington. We are looking to create a redevelopment organization to help revitalize the neglected, blighted buildings that are scattered throughout our towns and are inhibiting our economic growth. In order to provide space for our businesses to grow and for new entrepreneurs to locate to our region, we are looking to ensure that Windham County has a significant supply of buildings that meet standards set by the International Building Code, the current Fire Code (NFPA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and local zoning ordinances.

Our organization's goal is to provide an integral link to the multifaceted approach to grow Windham County's economy represented by this CEDS project and to expand the welfare of our community.

Project Description:

We have identified three major planning projects that will allow us to develop an organization that will best serve our community.

Define the Organization on a Regional Level

The majority of redevelopment authorities exist to serve a single municipal area. Our goal for the Redevelopment Organization for Windham County is to create a body that can serve the needs of 27 diverse towns with disparate needs. This will require a higher level of coordination, foresight, and, because we will not have an individual town to fund projects, it will require capital. Because the need to redevelop neglected properties is common throughout our region and because this necessary economic tool carries inherent risks that can be mitigated by collaboration, successfully articulating the project on a regional level best serves the interests of our economy. Conveying our goal on a regional level will be challenging and will require significant collaboration with leaders across the region.

Market Study

When we begin to evaluate and rehabilitate buildings throughout our region it will be necessary to know what the demand for space is and will be in the future. This will help us determine the type of building most needed in the various markets across the region and will help us make the best use of each space. Additionally, a strong understanding of the market will allow us to better attract businesses to the newly renovated spaces, maximizing our impact on the local economy. We plan to apply for a RBEG grant for additional assistance in funding the market study.

Building Inventory

Finally, we have been working on a Building Inventory of abandoned and mostly abandoned commercial and industrial properties in the Windham region. We have attached the preliminary inventory with findings from Brattleboro and Wilmington and we are working on the Town of Rockingham. This information provides a crucial first step in identifying the barriers to redevelop the properties, but more work is

necessary before we can make informed planning decisions. In addition to completing the inventory, we will need to preform assessments of the buildings to identify their structural integrity, the availability of electrical and broadband service, whether Brownfields or other environment hazards are present, and assess the building's overall condition. This will help determine ready candidates for potential businesses and property owners. We have assessed a few buildings in the towns of Wilmington, Rockingham, Brattleboro, and Putney, which have been included in the attached report, but it will be necessary to expand this list before we can make informed, regional decisions.

Authority to Implement Project:

The Windham County Redevelopment Group is composed of representatives from the major economic development agencies in Windham County with experience successfully managing properties. We are well connected to the business community and our initiatives have been met with support from business leaders across the region. Our team is experienced in economic development, building management, architectural and structural design and construction. This will enable us to found a successful organization.

Regional Economic Impact:

This redevelopment project addresses a number of the goals identified by SeVEDS: acting regionally, developing our capacity, developing the quality of place, and assisting the manufacturing supply chain. This project will be implemented on a regional level. We are identifying properties in all 27 towns in Windham County and will be developing properties across the region. This will increase the Towns' Grand Lists, provide existing and new businesses with safe and appropriate spaces for work, as well as allow for a more evenly distributed tax burden.

Our physical capacity is a pressing problem for Southern Vermont businesses. It can be difficult to identify space that can be easily, and with minimal investment, transformed into the workspace needed by a growing company. We look to help alleviate this supply problem by redeveloping properties in accordance with the needs of the community.

We all love Southern Vermont for its rural beauty, but this aesthetic charm becomes marred by the presence of blighted or neglected properties in our downtowns, our villages, and our countryside. In addition to accelerating our local economy, this project would give life to the vacant buildings and lend vibrancy to areas that have stagnated.

This project would also help develop the manufacturing supply chain by allowing new business to locate here and our existing employers to grow. Identifying the needs of the manufacturing community and helping develop isolated cluster industries will be difficult without the ability to house these businesses or to meet the space requirements of a growing company. This redevelopment project would help both the large employers who are looking for space to expand and the small entrepreneurs who are looking for a space to start a business but do not have the capital required to renovate a property.

Thank you,
Francis Walsh Gretchen
fwalsh@rockbf.org

Havreluk Robin
havreluk@gmail.com

Renzoni Sweetapple
rrsweetapple@brattleborodevelopment.com

WILMINGTON DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL PROPERTY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The urgency of now demands a collaborative approach to redevelopment, moving away from a one building at a time approach to a more planned and macro program, leveraging public and private efforts.

Organization: Wilmington Works

Contact: Adam Grinold, Promotions Committee Chair

802 464 8092

adam@visitvermont.com

Wilmington Downtown Commercial Property Redevelopment Project

Wilmington was severely damaged due to Tropical Storm Irene in August of 2012. The downtown village was completely flooded leaving many business and property owners paralyzed. Many business owners have reopened their store fronts; however many buildings in Wilmington have stayed vacant. Retail stores, restaurants, office buildings, etc. remain closed. Currently there are sixteen vacant buildings in downtown Wilmington; two of them are being developed, one as a diner and the other a restaurant. Ten other vacant buildings outside of the downtown are waiting for a revitalization plan. When potential buyers of properties or interested tenants see the buildings beside them vacant as well, they are more reluctant to make the investment as it seems risky. Local banks are also a bit reluctant to make loans again as a very high risk.

Organizational Overview

Wilmington Works, the official downtown organization for the town of Wilmington, working with the Vermont Downtown Program. Wilmington Works is focused on the following mission: "To build, improve and support a vital downtown that benefits the entire Wilmington community." Wilmington Works functions as a subcommittee of Wilmington Fund, VT. The Wilmington Fund VT is a nonprofit organization formed to help rebuild and grow the village of Wilmington, VT, which was badly damaged by Tropical storm Irene in August 2011. The fund recognizes the importance of economic development in the redevelopment of Wilmington and has committed itself and its resources to investing in the downtown.

The Village of Wilmington, Vermont, has been on the National Registry of Historic Places since 1980. Its businesses were badly damaged by Tropical storm Irene on August 28, 2011 with the loss of 40 businesses with 120 employees, 20 apartments, and all Municipal services. All buildings sustained some damage, from flooded basements to total loss.

Recognizing the importance of the downtown to the economy of the area, it is the purpose of the Wilmington Fund, VT to support Wilmington's recovery by raising funds to help repair damaged buildings and to promote commerce and business activity through use of grants, low interest loans, real estate ownership, other investment opportunities and partnerships with like-minded entities designed to promote job growth and economic opportunity for area residents.

Project Overview

Wilmington Downtown Commercial Property Redevelopment Project (WDCPRP)

Wilmington Works wishes to establish an entity that will purchase empty buildings with the intent to renovate and rent these buildings. Wilmington Works believes the number one obstacle to recovery in the downtown is

that the quantity of vacant buildings continues to discourage individual investment. Once established, the economic model for this organization will be to acquire multiple properties through Purchase and sale agreements, Slums/Blight federal and state process, as well as partnerships with current mortgage holders.

Private investors will be partnered with local funds available through Wilmington Fund, VT, local monies raised through the VT state 1% tax option, state tax credits, and other federal and state programs. It will be the intent to pursue the remaining funding through CDBG disaster recovery funds. It will be the goal of WDCPRP to be economically attractive to investors in order to raise at least 25% of the funds through local sources. Wilmington Works believes that there are the state and federal resources available that will allow for the purchase, renovation and operation of these buildings for a 5 to 7 year period at which time the goal will be to sell the buildings and provide the return on investment for the local investors.

It should be clear that the project at this time is NOT the purchase of the properties, their renovation and operation. Rather, the project under consideration for this CEDS submission is the PLANNING PHASE- the legal creation of the organization to be known as Wilmington Downtown Commercial Property Redevelopment Project. This organization will need to be formed to allow for the complex goals and partnerships identified, while also ensuring future availability of state, federal and private funding. It is this complex balance that requires legal, financial, state and federal planning expertise to all contribute in order to properly form this organization. Wilmington Works plans to create the partnerships necessary to form the independent WDCPRP that will carry on the goals identified above.

Authority to implement project

Wilmington Works, the official organization for the Town of Wilmington's Vermont Downtown Designation is duly authorized and empowered to organize efforts aimed at economic recovery of the village of Wilmington. The property owners in the downtown of Wilmington are eager to support this organization and have demonstrated this support with recent participation in organizational and promotional efforts.

Once established, WDCPRP will need to acquire the vacant properties identified in partnership with their current owners. Engineering, design, and permitting will all follow. Wilmington is currently considering a new master plan to mitigate future disasters and this plan, along with the town plan and local ordinances will all be considered during the implementation phase of the project.

Capacity to implement project

Wilmington Works is a new organization with little history. However, the board of directors and parent organization, Wilmington Fund, VT have significant experience in business, community organization, and project management. Additionally, the town of Wilmington, the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC), Windham Regional Commission, SeVEDS, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the Vermont Downtown Program will all help provide specific technical assistance where appropriate. An example of support available is the BDCC architectural consulting provided by Robin Sweetapple. The BDCC has already invested significant time and resources to identify each vacant building's needs and challenges. This work will be leveraged to allow for rapid execution in the implementation phase.

Wherewithal to implement project

The Wilmington Fund, VT has raised approximately \$750,000 for village projects, clearly demonstrating a commitment and capacity to see this project through. The 11 person Wilmington Works board is composed of members from the public, private and organization sectors, providing much depth and breadth of community representation. The goal of economic recovery within the village is widely accepted as necessary for the entire community and has very strong support by voters and tax payers.

Regional Economic impact

Once formed and implemented, the WDCPRP will have a significant economic impact for the region. Without this project we are likely to see yet more business shuttered in the village. Simply put, we are barely viable as a tourism-dependent village. We must have our vacant buildings occupied in the coming year or we will be discarded by our visitors as a town you pass through on your way to some other place. With at least two million dollars invested in the purchase and renovation of these buildings, Wilmington will send a clear message that it is serious about its economic development. This message will be received wide and far and will help bring new, young entrepreneurs to the forefront of these efforts.

The facts are staggering when you look at the loss of employment from our vacant buildings. A successful implementation phase and operation of currently vacant buildings will return us to 2008 employment figures and better.

Successful Implementation Phase would look like

- 12-15 New businesses in operation within the village alone.
- 30 full time jobs
- 30 part time jobs

As new business, these would be founded and operated with current business models & workforce standards, significantly increasing the size and quality of the workforce. It is our hope that some of these new businesses would expand beyond the tourism-based industry, employing higher earning employees. Perhaps most importantly, this project will empower the entrepreneurial needs of our current and future residents. By making available newly renovated space at market rates, the WDCPRP removes the major barrier preventing growth and fosters an entrepreneurial environment. This project when implemented will provide the stability needed in our local economy to allow for year round employment options for our young workforce. This is supported by previous employment figures when compared to current employment in Wilmington.

This project is ground zero for Wilmington, without the rapid and successful redevelopment of these vacant buildings, Wilmington's economy and tax base will continue to suffer. There is no greater priority for Wilmington than a successful commercial property redevelopment.

SUPPORTING DATA

Wilmington Population		
2000	2225	
2012	1876	a 16% decrease

Unemployment Rates – The Impact of Irene^{iv}

	September 2008	September 2011	September 2012
Wilmington	5.6%	12.9%	7.1%

The average annual wage in Wilmington is \$28,779 and the median wage for Southern Vermont is \$33,680 which is a considerable difference.

Rooms and Meals Stats^{iv}

2002	Meals	Rooms	Alcohol	Total	Adjusted for Inflation (2010 Dollars)
Wilmington	4,944,316	2,384,713	1,268,295	8,597,324	\$10,293,937

2010	Meals	Rooms	Alcohol	Total
Wilmington	4,651,615	1,447,770	1,006,565	7,108,950

2012	Meals	Rooms	Alcohol	Total
Wilmington	3,589,720	1,428,373	851,442	5,869,535

Sales Tax^{iv}

2007 \$24,045,137

2012 \$20,030,801

Sewer Flow^{iv}

2000-2005 0.0938

2005-2010 0.0861

2010-2012 0.0772

	2011	2012	2013
January	0.0619	0.0768	0.0683
February	0.0661	0.0661	0.0708
March	0.1351	0.0732	.0740
April	0.0988	0.0587	

May	0.0809	0.0798	
June	0.0808	0.0674	
July	0.0663	0.0597	
August	0.0930	0.0625	
September	0.1075	0.0579	
October	0.0846	0.0779	
November	0.0700	0.0618	
December	0.0860	0.0728	
Avg.	0.0859	0.0679	

Note that we are seeing decreasing flow rates in 2012 and 2013. One would have anticipated these to increase following the immediate flood recovery.

It could be assumed that these trends are regional and not exclusive to Wilmington. However the data suggests that in fact, Wilmington in particular is suffering more than its Windham County neighbors.

Tax Receipts 2013^{iv}

2013 YTD% Increase	Meals	Rooms	Alcohol	
Wilmington	4.9%	10.5%	1.8%	

2013 YTD% Increase	Meals	Rooms	Alcohol	
Dover	11.8%	14.2%	13.8%	

√ Project Proposal for Inclusion in CEDS

Windham Region Village Water and Wastewater Need Assessment and Feasibility Plan

Organization: Windham Regional Commission

Contact: Chris Company, AICP

Executive Director

139 Main Street, Suite 505

Brattleboro, VT 05301

(802) 257-4547 x106

ccampany@windhamregional.org

www.windhamregional.org

Organizational Overview

The mission of the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) is to assist towns in Southeastern Vermont to provide effective local government and work cooperatively with them to address regional issues. The Windham Region is comprised of the 23 towns of Windham County, the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg and Winhall in Bennington County, and Weston in Windsor County, and has a land area of more than 900 square miles. The Commission is composed of town selectboard-appointed Commissioners (up to two per town), and ten Citizen Interest Commissioners representing specific regional interests such as business and industry, natural resources, energy, and housing. The WRC is organized to perform those functions authorized by 24 V.S.A. 4345 and 4345a; the preparation, maintenance and implementation of a Regional plan as provided by 24 V.S.A. 4348a; advise and assist member towns in their preparation, adoption and implementation of municipal plans pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 4381-4426; and coordinate and assist in efforts to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the Windham Region through development and planning activities affecting human resources and natural resources. In all efforts the Commission fosters the wise expenditure of public funds and resources necessary for the efficient delivery of governmental and community services. We currently have 10 professional staff, an operating budget of approximately \$1.3 million, and a well-established record of managing large federal and state grants and infrastructure implementation projects.

Project Overview

Project Need

The principal planning goal for the state, region, and towns is planning of development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village centers separated by rural countryside. Achieving this goal is impossible when village centers do not have public water and/or sewer. The full scope of the problem is unknown – a fundamental reason why this project is needed – but anecdotal evidence indicates that when the realities of existing village properties (lot size and aging individual well and septic systems) meet the realities of water and wastewater regulations necessary to protect human health, it's not just new development that is challenging if not impossible. Retaining *existing* businesses, and in some cases homes, is at risk. As properties come up for sale, as aging systems need to be repaired, or as residences or businesses seek to expand, the costs associated with private wastewater regulatory compliance can be prohibitive. This is a crisis that must be addressed.

As is noted in the current Windham Regional Plan: 2

“Many of the region's villages have limited infrastructure to support future growth and available, buildable land is in small units. Septic disposal has proven to be the primary limiting factor for growth and development in unsewered villages. Failed septic systems can also affect the quality of life, threaten public health and environmental quality. Many village buildings are underutilized and business and community expansion is strictly limited by existing septic capacity. Septic system failures often are not easily remedied due to the close proximity of existing on-site septic and water systems. In addition, inadequate space and poor soils contribute to siting problems (Section 3.2 Existing Land Use Issues and Opportunities, p. 22).”

Businesses and residences in villages without public water and/or sewer are ostensibly frozen in time with the amendment of Vermont’s wastewater and potable water rules in 2007. The costs or physical ability for village properties to comply (i.e., not enough land, septic or well on adjoining property, etc.) are simply prohibitive. This undermines business and job retention, the availability and viability of our existing housing stock, and the ability of the region and state to create new businesses, jobs and housing. As such, this is not just about individual business or homeowner capacity to comply with the rules. It’s a question of overall public good, the economic viability of our villages, and the future of our communities. The answer may necessitate a public investment solution.

When the costs of compliance with private wastewater system standards contribute to the closure of inns, stores, restaurants and other businesses, we’re putting the sustainability of our villages at risk. The other side of the same coin is the risk failed private systems pose to human health. Our villages are our economic, civic, social and cultural centers, and as they wither, so will the culture and economy of our region and the state as a whole. Some may fear the costs of public systems, but those costs need to be weighed against the costs incurred by property owners when the inevitable repairs to every private system come due. We also need to confront the costs of losing the businesses and homes that are the anchors of village and town life. We’re losing the very things that make the Windham Region and Vermont the special places that they are.

Villages and other areas of the Windham Region presently served by community wastewater/sewer systems are:	Town	Notes
Village name		
Algiers	Guilford	part of Brattleboro system
Brattleboro	Brattleboro	
Putney	Putney	relatively new
Bellows Falls	Rockingham	
Kissell Hill area	Westminster	part of Bellows Falls system
North Westminster	Westminster	part of Bellows Falls system
Wilmington	Wilmington	
Readsboro	Readsboro	
Haystack area	Wilmington	fire district
West Dover/Mt. Snow	Dover	fire district
Stratton Mountain	Stratton/Winhall	fire district
Jacksonville	Whitingham	
Whitingham	Whitingham	
Saxtons River	Rockingham	

^{vi} **Leveraging Broadband**

A CEDS Project Proposal

Organization: BDCC

Contact: Jeffrey Lewis, Executive Director; Laura Sibilila, Economic Development Director

The Opportunity

Vermont has seen substantial investment, fueled by Federal ARRA funds, in expansion of broadband availability. One very large project, executed by Sovernet, has been the creation of a 'middle mile' infrastructure to build out high capacity fiber to nearly all the towns in our region. (The project addresses other areas as well but we are focused on Windham County.) However, the project was designed to connect the high capacity pipe to a limited number of key community institutions in a town; not to connect all possible users. Completion of the connection project requires a 'last mile' connector to arise that motivates people and businesses to want service, then to invest in the final leg of connectivity.

We believe that effective, creative use of the now available broadband capacity in the region by both individuals and business is an opportunity waiting for focus and leadership.

BDCC is the Regional Development Corporation for the Windham Region, and, with its affiliate, SeVEDS, have the mission of economic development. They are well positioned by role and capability to undertake a project of this nature. They have undertaken other regional strategy and planning project in pursuit of their shared mission; notably Post-flood recovery work with Windham and Bennington Regional Commissions, regional strategy and CEDS, and post-flood business recovery CDBG grants.

SeVEDS has established goals for entrepreneurial environment and increased population/workforce in age range 20-44. Improved use of Internet/broadband fits both of these goals well.

Expected Outcome

There are three expected outcomes:

1. Increase the utilization of broadband tools particularly for business with a goal of helping businesses gain broader, deeper access to customers and markets as well as improving the ability to communicate with other members of its supply chain.
2. Market the high capacity, broadly available service to individuals and companies that might like to migrate to Vermont. Make this feature a known advantage to being in Vermont
3. Identify sufficient demand that last mile providers arise to build out the final connectivity needed to make the promise of high capacity broadband a reality at all interested addresses.

The Project

Working from the installation maps from Sovernet (fiber middle mile) and VTel (wireless broadband) plus the established carriers (Comcast and Fairpoint) to identify more recent capacity expansions where there may be lower levels of knowledge and expectation about service and opportunity.

Develop maps for use in marketing programs to show the locations of high capacity lines and connections.

Identify existing businesses with limited use of broadband business tools. Work with those businesses to find networks of suppliers of customers they could benefit from. Introduce them to web based business management tools by bringing in trainers and consultants, including Google, to demonstrate how to use the technology to advantage. That training/education program can be a distinctive advantage in itself.

Work with local colleges, including Marlboro Graduate Center, to develop workshops and targeted training aimed at taking advantage of the vast capacity available. Again, this become part of the competitive distinction of the region—both the training, and the accumulation of trained people available as consultants or employees.

Develop a marketing program to attach to the Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program as an element of our attraction strategy based on broadband capacity and availability and the availability of human resources to take advantage of the resource. An element of the program would be examples of business projects undertaken in the region.

Regional Economic Impact

Southeastern Vermont has well documented economic and demographic challenges. We need to create all the differentiation we can. Creating a strong program to take advantage of our broadband capacity could be a useful way of creating an identity for the region by raising the visibility of our readiness for Internet based activity. Among other things this will help to put us on the map with exactly the demographic we need to attract—20 to 44 year olds. This will also add to our entrepreneurial tool box as we work to build an eco-system that supports business innovation, creation and expansion.

vii CEDS PROPOSAL
PLANNING GRANT FOR INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

APPLICANT: Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
Pat Moulton Powden
76 Cotton Mill Hill
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
(802) 257-7731
pmpowden@brattleborodevelopment.com

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project seeks to obtain funding to continue development of an “innovation ecosystem” in Windham County. Funding will continue to build the foundation that will lead to implementation of the key elements needed within an innovation ecosystem. Specifically, funding would assess existing key elements of an innovation ecosystem currently in Windham County or within a reasonable distance, determine missing elements, research models for those missing elements, and develop metrics for evaluating success of the innovation ecosystem. Assessments will include determining the demand for technology innovation in Windham County companies, demand for incubator space in the region and best locations, ability to create regional capital sources such as revolving loan funds and/or seed capital sources and the best structure, the ability to develop regional start up and research capital in the region and appropriate structures, investigate appropriate research institutions including Universities and research laboratories to collaborate with, opportunities for Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grants for area companies and the development of metrics to appropriately measure the elements of an innovation ecosystem.

WHAT IS AN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM?

An innovation ecosystem is an environment, both virtual and physical, that fosters innovation within existing firms and seeks to enhance the creation of new firms engaged in innovation of products, services and systems. The term “ecosystem” is deliberate and refers to “actors and functions” being present to enhance innovation.

Elements of an innovation ecosystem can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Innovative firms
- Innovation Engineering
- Innovative and creative people
- Business incubators
- Shared services
- Financing including start up and growth capital.
- Mentoring/training
- Consulting services
- Professional services
- Talent recruitment
- Research and technical development capacity
- Innovation clusters

The diagram in appendix A depicts elements of an innovation ecosystem and how they interact.

The creation of such a system in Windham County involves being proactive in developing the right environment for innovation, improving knowledge and understanding about innovation, connecting sectors and communities with skills and access to risk finance and making the region a better place to live and work. We have to assess

elements that presently exist within existing firms and other entities, including the appetite for innovation. Create an inventory of missing elements such as risk capital, connections to Universities, and develop relationships with missing elements and/or bringing those elements to Windham County. Creating such a system involves developing an innovation strategy. SeVEDS consultants Vital Economy sees five common elements of an innovation strategy:

1. Strategy: Where do we want to go? What are the choices we have? What broad approach will we take? Such a strategy is constantly evolving.
2. Process: A process for generating, selecting, prototyping, funding, implementing and commercialization. In Vermont, the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center promotes the use of Innovation Engineering as a process.
3. Structure: Having in place laboratories for experimentation. Venture capital that funds innovation projects. A "specialist ladder" for talent to develop and grow.
4. Climate: Innovation grows in spaces that are open and conducive for collaboration. These can be informal or self organizing groups like Special Interest Groups or Quality Circles or other Communities of Interest (COI) to enable innovation. These groups can organize knowledge sharing sessions, competitions and newsletters.
5. Competency: Innovation needs ambidextrous leaders who can focus on efficiency as well as new ideas.

BACKGROUND:

Traditional economic development has long focused on the creation of jobs by attracting new firms to a state or region, such a strategy in extremely competitive and difficult for Vermont or Windham County. We compete with states with much larger budgets and incentives that far outpace what we offer here. Vermont, and Windham County have always fared better by encouraging business start ups and expansions of existing businesses, most of which started here. In fact, new research shows that while small businesses create more jobs, the most new job creation is from start ups. That job creation by small businesses has more to do with age of the business than size. Why? Start ups tend to be the innovators. Businesses that start here tend to have a greater loyalty to their "home" town and are not easily lured by the promise of incentives. Vermont has a history of starting and growing nationally recognized names like Ben & Jerry's, Burton Snowboards, Green Mountain Coffee and King Arthur Flour to name a few. Vermont continues to be a small business state with approximately 90% of all establishments employing less than 25 people. Lastly, if a community or region has a good diversity of small, medium and large size firms, there is less susceptibility to the decline of one industry sector or one large business. Ten firms employing 10 people is generally less risky to an economy than one firm employing 100 people.

We believe creating an innovation ecosystem that supports legacy industries and products as well as new innovative businesses and products will create more stable, higher paying jobs and provide greater stability for the regional economy. Further, creating an entrepreneurial environment is Objective 4 of SeVEDS.

While Windham County hosts a few multi-tenant industrial buildings, it lacks a true incubator. We lack the "infrastructure" that will encourage new business start up and enhance the likelihood of success.

AUTHORITY AND CAPACITY TO ACCOMPLISH:

Through SeVEDS, a small group has been meeting to discuss a "business accelerator" model for Windham County. Those conversations have progressed to innovation and the innovation ecosystem. The team meeting has been Jeff Lewis and Pat Moulton Powden of BDCC, Martin Langeveld of Strolling of the Heifers and Tristan Toleno, local business person and Vermont Legislator. It is expected most of the work will occur under the auspices of BDCC and SeVEDS. BDCC has a long history of economic development delivery in Windham County. This includes property development and management. BDCC successfully ran a business plan competition for a number of year. Jeff Lewis is retiring at the end of 2013, his successor; Pat Moulton Powden has 32 years of experience in the practice of economic development in Vermont. Having served in various positions statewide,

Pat is knowledgeable of the state resources that can be brought to Windham County to help implement. Martin Langeveld has vast experience in media and marketing as well as success organizational skills. Strolling of the Heifers sponsors a “farm to food” business plan competition annually that has now expanded statewide and partnered with VTC. Tristan Toleno has extensive experience in complex systems and is a respected voice in the Vermont Legislature. Jeff Lewis is retiring from BDCC but may remain involved as his time allows. There is additional talent in the region that will be tapped. This includes existing innovators and creative talent in the region that can help design and drive elements of the ecosystem.

BDCC is prepared to apply for and administer a grant for this work. We are prepared to seek out the necessary talent to undertake the assessment and other work. We are well connected regionally and statewide with education and other institutions that will be supporting the various elements of the ecosystem.

BDCC has extensive experience in grant writing and administration. We plan on pursuing grant funds to continue this development work as outlined below. Both Pat Moulton Powden and Laura Sibia have successfully written and administered grants. BDCC as present is administering or co-administering in excess of \$1.6 million dollars in federal grants.

There are existing resources/entities that can provide direct services and/or guide our activities going forward. These include but are not limited to:

- Vermont Manufacturing Extension Service (VMEC) including their Innovation Engineering program.
- Vermont Experiment to Stimulate Competitive Research (VtEPSCOR)
- Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies (VCET)
- Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA)
- Vermont Investors Forum
- North Country Angels
- Fresh Tracks Capital
- Higher Education including UVM, VTC, others
- National Research Laboratories

THE WHEREWITH ALL TO IMPLEMENT:

Developing an innovative ecosystem will involve many players, multiple institutions, time and tenacity. The work will involve developing relationships as well as creating new resources. The BDCC and SeVEDS boards and staff are well networked throughout the state and region to make these critical connections. In some cases, we will need to develop relationships with entities out of state. We will be initiating these conversations in the coming months. We will rely on our excellent relationships with our Congressional delegation to help make connections to federal research laboratories as well as funding sources. We are also connected with regional and national economic development organizations to tap in to “best practices” in regions with well establish ecosystems as well as those in the start up phase.

We are in conversations with the University of Vermont, Vermont Technical College and others to discuss how they could be a part of this system. We have relationships with the Vermont State College system, which includes Community College of Vermont (CCV) and Vermont Technical College (VTC) locally. These resources will be tapped as needed. We are looking to these partnerships to help us develop critical elements of the ecosystem. We know both VTC and CCV are interested in developing additional capacity in Brattleboro with the new campuses in downtown.

We are seeking development funding at this stage. We anticipate needing approximately \$100,000 to conduct the necessary assessments and determine appropriate metrics. We will be applying for grant funding from federal and/or state sources. US Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Community Development Block Grants, US Economic Development Administration, and National Institute of Standards and Technology are all

possible sources of grant funds. We will need to obtain matching funds from existing sources such as community development funds around the region, foundations, and other sources with a vested interest in the Windham regional economy. We do not have funding committed at this time but are optimistic we can acquire the necessary resources which could include direct appropriations from the Vermont Legislature.

Grant funding will enable us to hire or contract to have the capacity to undertake the necessary assessments and develop metrics to determine success. We will need to bring in that talent to undertake these assessments in a timely manner.

WHAT IS THE LIKELY OUTCOME OF THIS PROJECT?

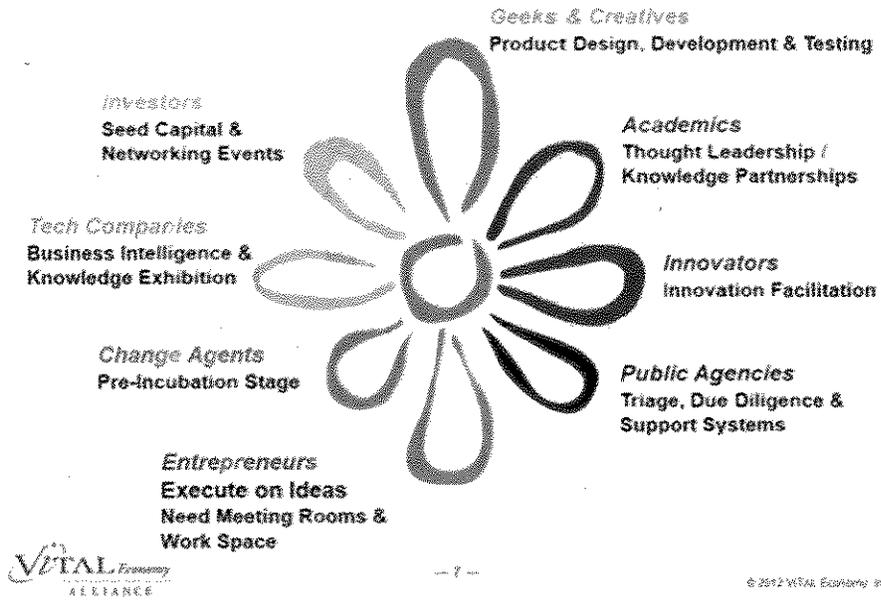
The development funding will enable us to undertake the assessments and develop an implementation plan for the various elements of an innovation ecosystem. Some elements may require development of physical space, such as business incubators. Others will require developing relationships for product development and or technical solutions, such as with research laboratories. The assessments will enhance continuing discussions with resources and partners as well as initiate conversations with external resources. The development phase is critical to implementation of this strategy. As with any new initiative, you need to have a plan before you begin and this will develop that plan.

The development of an innovation ecosystem will result in the creation of new business, the expansion and stabilization of existing businesses throughout the region. The ecosystem will be region wide, as both virtual and physical infrastructure. We want the jobs created as a result of the ecosystem to be above the northern New England average as they will be research, production, manufacturing, science and higher end service related. This type of employment typically pays higher than average wages. The metrics we develop for the ecosystem will include job creation and wages so this will be measured going forward.

CONSISTENCY WITH SeVEDS ESTABLISHED STRATEGIES:

Development of an innovation ecosystem is Goal #5 in the SeVEDS goals, objectives and strategies outline currently articulated by SeVEDS. That goal is to "Create an Entrepreneurial Environment" which through conversations with Vital Economy, the SeVEDS consultant assisting with the CEDS, and internal conversations, we have focused on the "innovation ecosystem" as the term for this work. The characteristics of an entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem are the same with a greater emphasis on innovation in the innovation ecosystem.

Innovation Ecosystem Actors & Functions



CEDS Project Proposal

Southern Vermont Scope and Sequence to Success Project

Applicant: Rebecca Balint, SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee
Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
76 Cotton Mill Hill 05301
beccabalint@gmail.com
802-451-8065

Having worked in the field of education for many years, Rebecca Balint has extensive contacts in the public schools throughout the county. Through her work on the SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee, she has gained the necessary knowledge of the economic and employer landscape to undertake this work. She has many years' experience working on curriculum committees for schools and districts within Windham County. She understands the school systems and the enormous pressure on schools due to the constraints and mandates of No Child Left Behind.

Project Description: Southern Vermont Scope and Sequence to Success Project

The **Scope and Sequence to Success Project** will assist students and employers by working with Windham Region schools and businesses to clarify "pathways" to jobs that will come available in the great Windham Region in the next five years.

Partnering with middle schools, high schools, the new proposed STEM Academy at BUHS, the regional career centers, and CCV and VTC, we will collaboratively identify a clear set of workshops, classes and courses that will adequately prepare those students who want to work in the Windham Region beyond high school graduation. We will initially focus on pathways for advanced manufacturing and healthcare employment; these are the areas that will see the most immediate and dramatic need for workers.

Background and Context:

Students in our region are often not ready to step into jobs available to them upon graduation. We will identify the critical skills and training needed by local employers and develop a clear map that students can follow in order to be employment-ready.

As the research shows, the SeVEDS region has been steadily declining as an employment hub for the past decade. There has been a decline in total number of jobs, as well as the quality of employment and the wages associated with that employment. Windham County wages are substantially below those available in the adjacent counties of New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Although there is a popular perception that workers in Windham County are more highly educated than those in other parts of Vermont or surrounding regions, this is not borne out by the data. Our workers are generally under-educated and are not prepared for jobs with high demand skills across many industry sectors.

We have a growing population of residents who qualify for free and reduced lunch; poverty has grown in Windham County in the last decade. There is genuine concern that we will enable a crushing cycle of poverty to continue if we don't actively work to connect local families to real, good-paying jobs in our region.

As well, there is a very real danger that the workforce in the Windham region will not be able to meet the workforce needs of the region's employers. We must focus on increasing educational attainment in this region

so that we keep the valuable employers we have and develop our workforce to such an extent that our region will become more attractive to additional employers.

Work already underway:

The SeVEDS Workforce Committee has begun a critical hiring inventory with the region's top 50 employers. After the initial survey is done with the biggest employers, we will know the approximate aggregate number of jobs that will open up in our region in specific skill areas. We want to insure that our region's students and parents are not only aware of the jobs that local employers will have in the near future, but will also be prepared to step into these jobs.

Project timeline

- 1. Complete employer hiring inventory:** This work is in progress by SeVEDS Workforce Committee and will be completed by December 2013. Using this data, we will know the types of jobs that area employers anticipate will become available in the next 5 years. This is information that we will share with area schools, the student population, the general public and the regional colleges.
- 2. Work with representatives from area middle schools, high schools, and technical centers to collaboratively develop education and employment "roadmaps" for students in advanced manufacturing and healthcare.** Students, parents and educators need a clear scope and sequence that will guide them through the education and training students need in order to be employment-ready. We will start by working in the Brattleboro area (at BUHS, the Windham Regional Technical Center and the STEM Academy), as that network directly impacts the highest number of students. We will then turn our attention to River Valley Career Center in Springfield and BFHS, and then Twin Valley. Our intent is that this work will be regional in scope and focus. All corners of our region need a clear roadmap of learning for students seeking area employment. Complete working draft of curriculum scope and sequence by June 2015.
- 3. Work closely with CCV and VTC to develop a seamless pathway between high schools' course offerings and college classes so that students will be employment-ready in advanced manufacturing or healthcare upon completion of a particular certificate programs.** Complete working draft of "Higher Ed Connector" by December 2015.
- 4. Identify teachers and administrators who will be "Education to Employment Allies" within their public schools and will educate students and families about genuine employment opportunities in the Windham Region.** There is a narrative in our region that "there are no jobs here." We must work with educators to dispel this myth. We will utilize varied communication systems: email, Facebook, Twitter to facilitate communication about employment opportunities in real time. Communicate regularly with this "working group" of educators to inform them about job opportunities coming available in the Windham Region.

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5. **Identify local employers who will be “Employment Ambassadors” within the region and will educate their communities about the work they do and the employment opportunities available in SeVEDS region.** Link employers and educators through the communication networks developed for the “education/employment allies.”

Benefits to the Region

This project speaks directly to the needs of several critical sectors of our population. Students and their parents benefit because there will be a clear pathway for them to follow to be employment-ready. The economic landscape is improved because the quality of our workforce improves. Current local and regional businesses are more likely to stay in the area because there will be a better prepared workforce, and the program will make our area more attractive to businesses outside our region. By connecting schools to employers, our educational system will be more attractive to those considering relocating to the area.

We have a thriving BUHS Dual Enrollment program that enables high school students to earn college credit; it is important to also develop a robust system to successfully prepare students for area employment. The recent meetings of local businesses with Governor Shumlin and Representative Peter Welch were filled with urgent warnings from local industry that the workforce here is not prepared for the jobs available to them, and this obstacle prevents area businesses from expanding their capacity.

SeVEDs has identified 5 key goals for regional economic development. This proposed project directly relates to two of these goals: Increasing the size and quality of the area workforce and increasing the population proportion of 25-44 year olds in the region.

Authority to Accomplish Proposed Project

SeVEDS is the premiere organization in the Windham region working to reverse the economic decline of our area. Its Workforce Committee is a duly established committee of SeVEDS with authority to proceed with projects and initiatives. SeVEDS is affiliated with the BDCC, which is an established Regional Development Corporation, 501 C 6, and private, non-profit organization. SeVEDS and/or BDCC will apply for the proper funding to carry out this project. The Scope and Sequence effort is endorsed by the SeVEDS Workforce Committee, and it falls clearly within the responsibilities of that group.

Working closely with Pat Moulton Powden, Workforce Development Director and soon to Executive Director of BDCC, the Workforce Development Committee has already cultivated solid contacts with regional employers and has made positive initial contacts with the educational community. SeVEDS is currently building relationships with the new head of the Windham Regional Center and the principal of BUHS, who is in the midst of the initial planning of a STEM Academy at the high school. The WSESU Superintendent, Ron Stahley, has said he would be willing to assist us in bringing more superintendents to the table to discuss ways of supporting this vital work.

As teachers, administrators, support staff and guidance counselors are all swamped with meeting the requirements of No Child Left Behind, AYP (adequate yearly progress), and the new Common Core, it is imperative that we take the lead on this important work and not expect our overtaxed schools to do so alone.

Resources to Accomplish this Project

The Scope and Sequence project is a vital but a new and untested project. We are confident that the BDCC and SeVEDS have the necessary capacity to bring this project to fruition. The SeVEDS Workforce Committee will continue to spearhead this initiative using seed money from SeVEDS and the paid working & volunteer hours performed by members of the group. We also have a summer intern who has helped a great deal in getting this program off the ground. We estimate the ongoing cost of this 2 year project to be in the range of \$200,000. This will cover staff time, curriculum consulting, materials costs, social media development, traveling costs, printing costs, data input, and resources unanticipated at this time.

The SeVEDS Workforce Committee will need to secure grant funding to support this project. Both Pat Moulton Powden, Director of Workforce Development, and Laura Sibilia, SeVEDS Director, have extensive experience writing and administering grants. BDCC is currently administering or co-administering over \$1.6 million dollars in grants.

The Critical Need for this Work

Employers, educators and local families have all voiced concern that, despite our excellent schools and state of the art Windham Regional Tech Center, many students still do not seem adequately prepared for employment in the Windham Region following graduation. We see this as a more of a disconnection of information than a lack of true educational resources. We have talented professionals on both the educational and employment side of this equation. We simply need to do a better job of bridging the communication gap and strive for a deeper and more full understanding of the economic and employment landscape. This project will strengthen and make more relevant the immediate work of schools; it will offer much-needed talented and trained employees to local businesses; and it will offer local families the hope that there will be good-paying jobs available to their children.

Likely Outcomes of the Project

In conjunction with the Southern Vermont Regional Job Board, this project seeks to increase the talent pipeline to regional employers. A clear curriculum Scope and Sequence for students and their families will increase the number of employment-ready high school graduates in our region. It will also increase awareness of local business and visibility of available work. Having clear “pathways” to work, as well as strengthened partnerships with area businesses, will make our educational offerings more attractive to those interested in relocating to Southern Vermont.

It is our hope that this focused, clear attention to employment pathways will also bolster positive feelings about the work climate in Southern Vermont—for businesses and for families. We have heard from some area families and educators that there is such a strong emphasis placed on 4 year college degree attainment, that area students who wish to seek gainful area employment feel lost in the shuffle. We want to support all area students in their career aspirations.

Consistency with SeVEDS Strategies

- 1.) Increase the employable population
- 2.) Increase the total employed
- 3.) Increase 20-44 year old employment by 20% in five years
- 4.) Increase 25-44 year old population by 20% in five years.

Employment:

In terms of jobs created, we must take the long view with this project. In order to bring (and to keep) jobs in the Windham Region, we must have a robust well-trained, reliable workforce. We have heard this from employers, large and small, in our region: They are worried that they won't be able to fill jobs in the near future, as they already have jobs they can't fill; the workforce available to them often does not have the necessary skills and training.

ix CEDS PROJECT PROPOSAL
SOUTHERN VERMONT REGIONAL JOB BOARD

APPLICANT: Patricia Moulton Powden, BDCC and SeVEDS Workforce Committee
Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
76 Cotton Mill Hill
Brattleboro, VT 05301
(802) 257-7731 ext. 224
pmpowden@brattleborodevelopment.com

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The goal of this project is to build a talent pipeline for employers in Southern Vermont. This project will create a regional job board to list available jobs in Windham and Bennington Counties. It will retrieve resumes from interested applicants as well as those interested in relocating to Vermont. It will further seek to “mine” for folks that express interest in the lifestyle and jobs offered in Southern Vermont. The job board will be available to employers in Windham and Bennington Counties.

The job board will be part of and incorporated in to the “Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program” being done by the Windham and Bennington Counties Regional Planning Commissions and the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC). That Program will market the region to attract tourists and talent (funded by US Economic Development Administration flood recovery funds). The program has contracted with Atlas Advertising of Denver to develop a brand for southern Vermont as well as a sustainable marketing program, including collateral and electronic materials, to market the region to potential tourist and talent to fill hard to fill jobs. Atlas is developing the brand, visuals, and collateral. The actual marketing will be funded by area businesses. That effort will develop a web site or web portal to market the region. The job board will be part of that web site or portal.

The job board will enable employers to list their openings and push information out to potential applicants. It will also provide a venue for those interested in relocating to Vermont to post their resumes and push that information out to employers. In addition to the job board, the web site will contain relocation information for those interested in moving to Windham and Bennington Counties.

This job board will be unique in the state by marketing jobs in the two counties. Development of the job board will include the technology needed to link to state and national job boards.

BACKGROUND:

SeVEDS has identified the availability of workforce as a major challenge to employers and a limiting factor in the expansion of existing employers and the ability to attract new employers. Companies seeking certain technical or hard to find skills are seriously challenged finding that talent in Windham County. By example, in meetings with Norm Schneeberger of GS Precision, and often quoted by Governor Shumlin, GS Precision maintains they could hire in excess of 40 new employees if they could find the talent with advanced manufacturing skills. We continually hear from employers throughout the county the difficulty finding highly skilled, professional and/or technical workers. These include engineers of almost all types, technicians, professionals at a variety of levels, professors, CFO’s and accountants to name a few of the sought after positions. We are aware of employers that have set up satellite operations in other states or countries as a means of attracting the talent they need versus asking those employees to move to southern Vermont.

SeVEDS demographic information indicates we are the oldest county in Vermont and aging the fastest. Further, that we are losing population in the 25-44 year old cohort at an alarming rate. This all leads to a serious concern of our ability to sustain our current employer base and seriously diminishes our ability to attract or grow new businesses in this region.

The SeVEDS Workforce Committee is in the process of doing a "hiring inventory" with Windham County employers. This inventory will provide numbers and types of jobs needed by area employers over the next five years. The inventory will include jobs needed to fill positions vacated by retirement, and regular attrition as well as growth of companies. We expect that inventory will yield a need for hundreds of jobs over the next five years. Finding that talent is a deep concern for area employers. This inventory will provide data needed to populate the talent recruitment web site and job board.

The SeVEDS Workforce Committee is also engaged in a variety of activities working with area schools and higher education to align programs and curriculum with the hiring needs of area employers. These activities will include career exploration, internships and other opportunities to help students understand the career opportunities in Windham County. As well as education and training programs specifically designed to prepare workers for the jobs available in the region.

These activities are proceeding along two tracks:

- 1) Work with schools to fill the talent pipeline locally through better alignment of career exploration, curriculum and training programs.
- 2) Attract talent to the region to fill hard to fill jobs. These efforts will also seek to attract back "ex-patriots" of Windham and Bennington Counties that perhaps grew up here, went to school here, vacationed here and would love to live here if they could find the right job.

AUTHORITY TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING:

The SeVEDS Workforce Committee is a duly established committee of SeVEDS with authority to proceed with projects and initiatives. SeVEDS is affiliated with BDCC which is an established Regional Development Corporation, 501 C 6, and private, non-profit organization. SeVEDS and/or BDCC will apply for funding to carry out this project. This effort is endorsed by the SeVEDS workforce committee. This effort legitimately falls within the responsibilities of the SeVEDS Director of Workforce Development and SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee.

CAPACITY AND WHEREWHITAL TO IMPLEMENT:

While this is a new project to this region and these organizations, BDCC and SeVEDS have the capacity to carry out such a project. We will need to attract grant funding to build the job board. We have extensive experience with grant writing and administration between the Director of Workforce Development, Pat Moulton Powden and SeVEDS Director Laura Sibilgia. We will need to identify and attract matching funds for this project which we expect will come from area employers. We do not have commitment of funding at this time but will be pursuing soon.

Pat has previously served as Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Labor which operates Vermont Job Link, a statewide job board. In addition, Pat served on a committee of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies to select the successor to "America's Job Bank" when the US Dept. of Labor chose to discontinue that nationwide job board. Pat was part of the team that selected a vendor to create a new national job board.

BDCC has extensive experience attracting and administering federal grants. We are currently administering or co-administering in excess of \$1.6 million dollars in grants.

We will have to contract with a consultant or firm to build the job board infrastructure. There are multiple companies that provide that service to states and regions. There is no doubt the

technology exists. It will need to be customized to Southern Vermont and adapted to fit the marketing strategy of the Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program.

LIKELY OUTCOME OF THE PROJECT:

The outcome will be a greater talent pipeline to regional employers. A job board targeted to Southern Vermont job openings and those interested in relocating to Vermont will increase the number of resumes and interested talent. It will substantially augment the talent recruitment efforts currently being done by employers on their own, by themselves. This will increase the visibility of job openings because the job board is coupled with marketing strategies also being funded by employers. It will provide a "spotlight" on jobs in this region.

We are aware of no such effort underway elsewhere in Vermont at the present time. By highlighting jobs in Southern Vermont, we will increase the talent pipeline available to employers.

This will result in more in-migration of talent to the region. This will grow the 25-44 year old demographic and result in measurable population increase of that age cohort.

CONSISTENCY WITH SeVEDS STRATEGIES:

This proposal hits several important strategies of SeVEDS:

- 1) Increase the employable population (16 and older)
- 2) Increase the total employed
- 3) Increase regional GDP
- 4) Increase 20-44 year old employment by 20% in five years.
- 5) Increase the 25-44 age population by 20% in five years.

The Sustainable Marketing Program and job board will attract more workers to the region. The marketing efforts will target the 20-44 year old age cohort and result in increasing that age population and increase the number of folks in that age demographic who will be working in the region. It will increase GDP by helping to fill the talent pipeline needed by area employers. Those employers will be able to fill needed jobs and thereby increase their productivity and production resulting in an increase in regional GDP.

Regionality: This is a regional project that targets both Windham and Bennington Counties. While SeVEDS is Windham County, the Sustainable Marketing Program is both counties. Due to SeVEDS and the work of the SeVEDS Workforce Committee, Windham County is a few steps ahead of Bennington County. By having both counties involved, the job board will have a critical mass of jobs.

Developing capacity: This project will further develop capacity for the region to sustain talent recruitment activities by developing the job board in conjunction with the Sustainable Marketing Program. The marketing will be funded by employers. The job board can be funded by grant funds but must be maintained in the same way the marketing efforts will be maintained, by the users which are employers. We expect maintenance costs will be minimal.

Employment: While this project only creates jobs for the consultant building the board, the job board itself will help fill literally hundreds of jobs provided by employers throughout the region.

Wages: The wages of these jobs will range from entry to professional, CEO level jobs.

Leveraging external assets: This project leverages the assets of the Sustainable Marketing Program. It also leverages and enhances the assets of employers currently marketing to attract talent from out of the area. It is impossible to estimate the dollars spent by employers own talent

recruitment efforts but it is likely in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The job board provides another venue at low cost to these employers.

Quality of place: The web site or portal being developed by Atlas, as well as the brand, is very likely to highlight our region's quality of place as an attraction, in addition to the job, for those coming to Vermont. This project builds on that quality of place by bringing folks to Southern Vermont who love Vermont and want to be part of all it offers. Further, it will bring professional talent and young professionals to the region who will engage with their communities to protect and enhance the quality of place.

Supply chain: This directly speaks to the talent supply chain. The goal is to enhance the talent pipeline.

Readiness to begin: The project is underway with the work Atlas Advertising is doing in the Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program. Atlas is scheduled to wrap up their work in 2013. This project will launch soon starting with the identification of funding sources and application.

Consistency with SeVEDS: This project hits several of the SeVEDS goals. It is supported by the SeVEDS Workforce Committee. It is supported by SeVEDS and BDCC staff.

x

**CEDS PROJECT PROPOSAL
SOUTHEAST VERMONT MACHINIST APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

APPLICANT: Patricia Moulton Powden, BDCC and SeVEDS Workforce Committee
Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
76 Cotton Mill Hill
Brattleboro, VT 05301
(802) 257-7731 ext. 224
pmpowden@brattleborodevelopment.com

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

We propose to create the Southeast Vermont Machinist Apprenticeship Program in Windham County. Patterned after the same program in the Upper Valley of Vermont, this will provide precision machining and manufacturing training for regional employers. The program is conducted by Vermont Technical College (VTC) and involves a collaboration of regional machine technology employers. Appendix A has a description of the existing program in the Upper Valley. This could be modified to meet the specific needs of Windham regional employers. The program would be offered to incumbent workers, new hires and those seeking a career in precision machining. The existing program provides academic credit to those successfully completing the program. The credits are only a few shy of an Associate's Degree from VTC. Successful completers may choose to proceed to obtain their Associates on their own.

BDCC will survey area machine technology employers to determine their interest in participation. We will determine how many incumbent workers and new hires from each company. GS Precision has embarked on a similar program for their hiring needs. Most other employers are too small to cover the costs of such a program so a collaboration is needed.

We will work with the Windham Regional Career Center as a program delivery site. We also want to collaborate with the Center to see what elements can be offered in their adult program and as well as the program offered to high school students.

AUTHORITY TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING:

Pat Moulton Powden, as SeVEDS Director of Workforce Development will assess employer interest and work with VTC and area employers to design the program specific to the needs of regional employers.

Development of employer specific training is well within the goal of SeVEDS Workforce program.

We need this type of training to support the precision machining businesses in this region.

CAPACITY AND WHEREWHITAL TO IMPLEMENT:

While this is a "new" to this region, BDCC and SeVEDS have the capacity to deliver the assessment of employer interest, convene necessary parties to make this program happen in Windham County. We will seek federal and state grant funds to offer the program, as well as participation by area employers. We will seek as needed, US Dept. of Labor funds, funding from the Vermont Department of Labor's

Workforce Education and Training Fund (WETF) and the Vermont Training Program (VTP) at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Funding from WETF and VTP has been utilized to offer this program in the past so likelihood of success is significant. A detailed budget will be prepared once a final design is established. We will work with the existing program design and modify as needed.

We will begin assessing employer interest in the fall of 2013. The hope is we can offer the program in 2014.

LIKELY OUTCOME OF THE PROJECT:

The outcome of the project is better trained and prepared machine technology workers. We hear consistently around the region a lack of workers possessing machine technology skills. In particular we hear a screaming need for math skills in this sector. This program can upgrade the skills of incumbent workers, prepare new hires and provide an opportunity for folks seeking careers in this field.

CONSISTENCY WITH SeVEDS STRATEGIES:

This project speaks directly to the SeVEDS goal #3 of "Increase the size and quality of the workforce" by bringing critical machining skills education to the region.

Further, it furthers the objectives of Objective #2 of the SeVEDS goals, objectives and strategies of "building strategic relationships between assets" by utilizing and existing VTC program, partnering with regional employers and service providers. It also brings a best practice from elsewhere in the state to Windham County.

Appendix A:

Associate Degree & Apprentice Program

- **General Education (20 credits)**
English I, Technical Communications, Humanities elective, Social Science elective, Technical Math I, Physics I

- **Foundation Courses (20 credits)**
Computer Applications, Communications, Technical Mathematics II, Physics II, Technical Elective

- **Emphasis Courses (20 Credits)**
Design Communication, Manufacturing Processes, Metrology & Inspection, Computer-Aided Technology, Engineering Project, & additional emphasis credits.

Total Credits = 60

Apprentice Program Courses:

Technical Math I (5 cr.)
 Technical Math II (5 cr.)
 Physics I (4 cr.)
 Design Communications (2 cr.)
 Manufacturing Processes (2 cr.)
 Metrology & Inspection (3 cr.)
 Computer-Aided Technology (2 cr.)
 Engineering Project (3 cr.)

Total Credits = 27



Advanced Machinist Apprenticeship Course Sequence

Spring 2013:

MEC1011 Design Communications
 HACTC, MW 4 pm - 6:30 pm

Fall 2013:

MAT1340 Introduction to Technical Math
 VTC, Days/Times TBD

Spring 2014:

MAT1420 Technical Math
 VTC, Days/Times TBD

Fall 2014:

PHY1041 Physics I
 VTC, Days/Times TBD

Spring 2015:

MEC1020 Manufacturing Processes
 Location/Days/Times TBD

Fall 2015:

MEC1060 Metrology & Inspection
 Location/Days/Times TBD

Spring 2016:

MEC2040 Computer-Aided Technology
 Location/Days/Times TBD

Fall 2016:

ELT2730 Engineering Project
 VTC, TBD



CEDS PROJECT PROPOSAL
SOUTHEAST VERMONT GOVERNOR'S CAREER READY CERTIFICATE

APPLICANT: Patricia Moulton Powden, BDCC and SeVEDS Workforce Committee
Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
76 Cotton Mill Hill
Brattleboro, VT 05301
(802) 257-7731 ext. 224
pmpowden@brattleborodevelopment.com

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

We propose to bring the existing Governor's Career Ready Certificate to Windham County. The Career Ready Certificate is a collaboration of the Community College of Vermont (CCV) and the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) to provide critical workplace skills to Vermont's unemployed and underemployed. It also partners with employers to recognize the Certificate as skill mastery in the program areas. The full program has been in existence in Vermont for over three years. We do not believe it has been offered in Windham County before and no Windham County site is on the current schedule of offerings. While it has been offered in Springfield and nearby regions, we want to bring it here. In other parts of the state where the program has been offered, it has been embraced by employers and the workforce.

We will work survey existing employers to determine their interest in the program. And work with CCV to bring the program to Windham County. The program is typically free to participants due to state funding. That funding is shrinking and we may need to seek grants to assure delivery here. We will work with employers to see if certain elements of the program should be emphasized or de-emphasized. For example, we may want to augment the math portion or the "soft skills" portion of the program.

We will target the regions unemployed and underemployed. Working with VDOL locally, Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA), Youth Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, United Way and other service providers, we will spread the word about how this program will benefit them as attendees. We will work with area employers so they can see the value of the certificate to them. If there are two applicants for one job, and one has the Certificate and another does not, the Certificate holder is the best bet as they have mastered the modules of the program.

Governor's Career Ready Certificate Program Description

Participants are assessed to determine their individual needs for skill building using American College Testing (ACT) Workkeys. The skill modules listed below may vary in content and sequence according to those individual needs, and describe sample topics only.

Students will learn and practice:

- Module 1- Applied Mathematics: the use of calculators, fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios, proportions, perimeters, surface areas, and more.
- Module 2- Reading for Information: identifying the main ideas, understanding and applying instructions, and comprehending important details.
- Module 3- Locating Information: reading charts and graphs, identifying trends, interpreting data and drawing conclusions.

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- Module 4- Teamwork & Interpersonal Skills: listening and speaking, debating ideas, working on a team, and dealing with conflict.
 - Module 5- Work Ethic, Learning & Life Skills: time and project management, learning to learn, punctuality and attendance, setting goals and priorities.
 - Module 6- Basic Computer Skills: introduction to computers, simple applications, email basics and the use of the Internet.

What's in it for Employers?

The Governor's Career Ready Certificate can help take the guesswork out of hiring decisions. Using a "Six Point" assessment process we can help identify the strengths and improvement needs of new and potential employees as well as develop a plan for helping employers and their employees reach new levels of workplace readiness.

Job profilers can help pinpoint the most important skills needed for a specific job, based on thousands of national skills standards. By matching skills with an employee, and by raising those skills through individualized targeted training, we'll help you get the right person in the right job with the right skills.

The Governor's Career Ready Certificate utilizes the national WorkKeys assessment system, a tool used in over 40 states to give employers a hiring advantage.

The program can help:

- Match the right person to the right job
- Reduce turnover
- Reduced training costs
- Save time and take the guesswork out of hiring

The Governor's Career Ready Certificate can also help existing employees. By assessing their talents, skills and work suitability, CCV can help raise the skill levels of your existing employees through the same individualized training we provide to new and potential employees.

The Certificate program responds to the concerns heard expressed by employers that applicants lack basic skills and "work ethic." This program seeks to teach those critical skills to the regional unemployed and underemployed.

AUTHORITY TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING:

BDCC and SeVEDS will do the work to assess employer interest and work with CCV to assure program delivery. CCV has expressed willingness to bring the program here. We need to develop employer interest. This is a legitimate element of the SeVEDS Workforce Committee work. While we have not had an in-depth conversation about this Certificate, that will be happening soon.

Timetable for implementation is to begin assessing interest Fall 2013 for implementation in early 2014.

This program can be taught at CCV's existing facilities or at any of the educational facilities in the region. The

CAPACITY AND WHEREWHITAL TO IMPLEMENT:

While this is a “new” to this region, BDCC and SeVEDS have the capacity to deliver the assessment of employer interest, convene necessary parties to make this program happen in Windham County.

Pat Moulton Powden was part of the development team for the Career Ready Certificate when she was the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and is very familiar with its content and impacts. She has already initiated conversations with the Tiffany Keune at CCV about the possibilities of delivering locally.

It may be that CCV can offer the program without us finding implementation dollars. If not, we will pursue Workforce Education and Training Funds (WETF) from VDOL to implement this program regionally. These grants are targeted at delivering training programs that will result in new hires and job retention. We may also pursue US Dept. of Labor funding to implement if needed.

LIKELY OUTCOME OF THE PROJECT:

The outcome of the project is a better prepared workforce. It will provide a competitive edge to those seeking employment. It will help reduce turnover at area employers. It will result in lower unemployment.

When implemented, we will survey attendees to track attendees and how the program impacted them. We will also survey employers and ask them to track turnover rates from successful program graduates. We recognize folks take, stay in or leave jobs for a variety of reasons. But surveying can give us information to help market the program and/or make changes going forward.

CONSISTENCY WITH SeVEDS STRATEGIES:

This project speaks directly to the SeVEDS goal #3 of “Increase the size and quality of the workforce” by bringing critical skills education to the region.

Further, it furthers the objectives of Objective #2 of the SeVEDS goals, objectives and strategies of “building strategic relationships between assets” by utilizing and existing CCV program, partnering with regional employers and service providers and tracking the success of the program. It also brings a best practice from elsewhere in the state to Windham County.

Windham Child Care Association
130 Birge St.
Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-254-5332
www.windhamchildcare.org

Contact: Elizabeth Raposa, Executive Director
elizabeth@windhamchildcare.org

Organizational background

Windham Child Care Association envisions a day when the healthy development of all children is a top priority of our communities, our state, and our nation. Families struggle to pay for child care, which can cost more than tuition at a state college. Long-term studies document that \$1 invested in quality early care can save up to \$17 in later costs (e.g., for special education, criminal justice, welfare, social services, etc.) Through our outreach, education, and family support services, we constantly work to our mission to improve the lives of children and families in Windham County.

Founded as Vermont's first child care resource and referral agency in 1981, Windham Child Care Association began as a loose affiliation of child care providers. Since that time, the organization has seen tremendous success in terms of its organizational capacity and community impact. From a one-person office in a converted barn, the staff now includes fourteen trained and capable staff and is overseen by an eight member board of directors. It is an integral part of the community's fabric of human service agencies and the non-profit sector.

As the regional community child care support organization, Windham Child Care Association is the only community organization in Windham County that offers child care referrals, helps families access financial support for child care, and provides comprehensive professional support for early childhood and afterschool educators. In addition to these core services we provide child care for 20 children ages 6 weeks to 8 years in our licensed child care center – Sprouts Early Learning Cooperative – and operate the county's bookmobile program – the Early Learning Express.

Project Description

A healthy, robust and flexible child care system is vital to any economic development plan. During the fall of 2012 and the spring of 2013 the organization conducted a community needs assessment and will publish a report titled, The State of Child Care in Windham County, in the fall of 2013. Information gathered through this process also informed this year's strategic planning process. One theme that emerged through our community conversations and surveys is that Windham Child Care Association plays a key leadership role in building and supporting the development of a robust child care system in our region.

Our project addresses SeVEDS objectives of attracting young workers (ages 24 – 40) to the region, building capacity, quality of space and enhanced business clusters through the following strategies:

1. Build a more sustainable child care system through innovative shared business practices which will increase overall individual and program quality and earnings.

Shared services

Rationale: The ability for any program to stay solvent has to do with the level of enrollment in individual programs and those programs ability to collect fees. Our organization is poised to establish a shared services business model that will support, stabilize and enhance the child care programs in our region. We are in the eighth month of a one year pilot focused on establishing this type of business model. Currently we have 12 family child care programs involved and it has been a successful venture. We plan to roll this program out to all interested child care programs including family child care and child care centers. Our model will provide a 'fiscal back office' to provide billing, enrollment and other administrative functions. This model, which is utilized in

other economic sectors, decreases the duplication of efforts and allows for a more centralized and streamlined approach to the business-end of child care. This service could include:

- o Shared business administrative costs – centralized billing and accounts receivable, enrollment, commercial insurance;
- o Cost savings on general areas – janitorial, supply and food ordering, etc.;
- o Marketing support;
- o Shared transportation;
- o Shared healthcare consultant.

Goals:

- o Increase wages/income within the child care workforce. A recent wage and income survey conducted by us in July 2013 reveals that the majority of child care workers are not earning a livable wage. By shifting administrative functions to a shared services model individual programs will see more dollars available to increase wages of their employees or their individual earnings. We anticipated all participating programs to see a 15-24% increase in their net income. So, a family child care provider who is currently earning \$22,000/year could see an increase to \$27,280 allowing more dollars to be spent in local economy thus increasing the overall economic capacity of the region.
- o Increase in access to high quality child care programs for families. Research shows that when child care programs are able to focus their resources and energies directly on program development and delivery, overall program quality increases. As programs achieve higher quality ranking within the state quality rating system they are able to receive increased tuition reimbursement for children receiving state tuition assistance. This increased reimbursement is then applied to the child's tuition thus decreasing annual tuition by at least 9%. For a family currently paying \$8,658 annual tuition for one child they could see an annual savings of \$779. This savings helps to stabilize families economically and increases their capacity to spend additional dollars in the local economy.

SeVEDS Objective(s):

Building capacity: To further develop the shared services model the organization will need to re-structure its current fiscal office. We will increase our current part time staff person to fulltime and hire 1 additional fulltime and 1 part time administrative staff. This increase of 2.5 FTEs will move our fiscal office staff from .5 to 2.5 FTEs. Networking through a shared services business model builds the collective capacity of an economic sector.

Enhance/support business clusters: A shared services business model will allow programs within the child care field to reduce costs while increasing quality of programs, thus offering more choices to families seeking high-quality affordable child care.

Enhance quality of space: Increase of dollars to spend in local economy will sustain local businesses and create a more vibrant community. A sustainable and affordable child care system will attract new employers and employees to our region.

2. Workforce development for the child care field and other fields of employment

Rationale: A strong economic base which attracts young workers of child-bearing age must be built with a vibrant child care system as one of its legs. Windham Child Care Association works on this strategy in two distinct yet related ways:

Goals:

- o A highly qualified and credentialed workforce provides employees with increased child care choices. Windham Child Care Association works closely within the child care community to support educational and professional growth of its members. Our programming includes the following:
 - ☐ Provide education and training to the child care provider population through our ongoing professional development program;
 - ☐ Partner with CCV and other higher education institutions to provide opportunities for individuals to achieve at least an Associate's degree, preferably a Bachelor's degree, in Early Childhood Education/Development;
 - ☐ Provide career counseling for individuals interested in the field of early childhood;

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- ☐ Provide support to programs to increase their program quality as identified by the state quality rating system;
 - ☐ Provide trained mentors to assist individuals when they enter the field and as they progress in their career.
 - o Partner with local employers to:
 - ☐ Provide subsidized child care spaces and/or additional child care reimbursement benefits for their employees;
 - ☐ Provide comprehensive child care referrals for families seeking child care;
 - ☐ Provide parenting education and/or support to address work/family issues, child development and other parenting concerns.

SeVEDS Objective(s)

Building Capacity: Windham Child Care Association will add 1 fulltime staff to our current program staff to meet the anticipated need and desire for additional provider training and mentoring. We will add 1 part-time staff to support employers and their employees with child care issues and concerns. This is an increase of 1.5 FTEs.

Building Capacity & Quality of Space: Employer-supported child care is an attractive enticement for young families and individuals of child-bearing age. This strategy can increase and sustain the overall employment of the region enhancing our quality of place.

Capacity and resources to implement project

Windham Child Care Association is a fiscally sound organization with strong leadership and an experienced and well-qualified staff. We are continually working to diversify our financial support in order to ensure the organization is not over-reliant on any one source of funding. We have 100% Board participation in our fundraising efforts. Our stability is further affirmed through the support of community members and foundations that share our vision of promoting a good start for all our children. We have well-established collaborative relationships with many organizations. Both our fundraising and our inclusion in local collaborations evidence the support of the community for Windham Child Care Association's work.

Windham Child Care Association has an important voice in the community conversation surrounding the health and well-being of children. We have demonstrated the value of a strong child care infrastructure for businesses, employees, and the community to local individuals and businesses in a variety of venues.

We are currently engaged in the above activities and are prepared to move ahead with fully implementing this project in the coming fiscal year.

Route 30/West River Valley Project

Submitted by Laura Sibilia, Director of Economic Development at BDCC lsibilia@brattleborodevelopment.com

1. Organizational Overview:

BDCC is a private, nonprofit economic development organization that serves as a catalyst for industrial and commercial growth throughout Southeastern Vermont, including Windham County and the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, and Weston.

The primary objective of the BDCC is to create and retain a flourishing business community in the Windham Region that supports vibrant fiscal activity, and improves the quality of life of all its residents. BDCC is affiliated with the State of Vermont as the certified Regional Development Corporation (RDC) serving the greater Windham County area. BDCC is one of 12 RDCs throughout Vermont.

BDCC is the primary regional organization helping businesses recover from physical and economic injury caused by TS Irene in August 2011.

2. Project Description: Creation of a plan to network businesses and economic interests along Route 30/West River Valley to leverage existing organizational and financial resources

Businesses in Dummerston, Newfane, Townshend, Jamaica, Winhall and Londonderry Businesses along Route 30 and in the West River Valley are more vulnerable and isolated than businesses in other small towns in the region due to a lack of connection to business organizations like a chamber of commerce.

Since TS Irene in 2011, BDCC has been called out numerous times to meet with businesses in this part of the region, particularly post Irene, struggling with low economic activity, marketing challenges, staffing challenges, beautification, and business development. Stratton Mountain ski resort is a main destination for travelers in and through this region and, in the past, has supported the idea of connecting businesses in this region via a byway program which would have allowed increased collaborative marketing.

3. Authority:

BDCC is the regional economic development entity for SE Vermont and has or is establishing relationships with businesses in this region.

4. Project Capacity:

BDCC has added both a Director of Economic Development and also has two Flood Recovery Officers who have been working with businesses in this area.

5. Do you have the wherewithal to implement the project?

This project is intended to provide efficiency and yield better results for businesses along route 30 / West River Valley. It's success is dependent upon buy in from those businesses.

6. What is the likely outcome of this project?

An increase in tourism and event activities, increase in business support, increase in year round population, increased jobs and increased grand lists

7. Is the proposal consistent with SeVEDS established strategies? Does it satisfy an objective? How will this project help the Windham Region to meet its economic development goals?

This project is consistent with SeVEDS established strategies to increase the size of the work force and to increase the population of 22-44 year olds as well as to develop the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

^{xiv} **Develop a “green” high performance building cluster in Windham County:**

Submitted by Laura Sibilia, Director of Economic Development at BDCC on behalf of Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) lsibilia@brattleborodevelopment.com

1. Organizational Overview:

BDCC is a private, nonprofit economic development organization that serves as a catalyst for industrial and commercial growth throughout Southeastern Vermont, including Windham County and the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, and Weston.

The primary objective of the BDCC is to create and retain a flourishing business community in the Windham Region that supports vibrant fiscal activity, and improves the quality of life of all its residents. BDCC is affiliated with the State of Vermont as the certified Regional Development Corporation (RDC) serving the greater Windham County area. BDCC is one of 12 RDCs throughout Vermont.

SeVEDS is affiliated with BDCC and its mission is to develop and implement strategies to reverse the Windham Region’s economic decline..

2. Project Description: Explore Viability of a Green Products and Services Industry Cluster in Southeastern Vermont

Background:

Asset mapping discussions around the SeVEDS region identified a number of unique raw material, products, services, and research and knowledge assets in the green building field.

The next step is to explore the viability for developing an emerging industry cluster that would establish Southeastern Vermont as the center of gravity for growing green building research, product and service businesses with high wage jobs.

3. Authority:

BDCC has contracted with VITAL Economy to create a regional economic development strategy on behalf of its affiliate SeVEDS. . BDCC maintains excellent working relationships with So Vermont business, planning, municipal and development organizations. *Exploring the Viability of a Green Products and Services Industry Cluster in Southeastern Vermont* directly relates to a strategy tied to Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS). BDCC is contracted by SeVEDS to provide all of its staffing.

4. Project Capacity:

BDCC has added both a Director of Economic Development and a Director of Workforce Development position in the last two years. These two positions will work closely with regional industry leaders on further development and implementation of this project.

5. Do you have the wherewithal to implement the project?

BDCC, on behalf of SeVEDS, has managed the Windham Regional CEDS plan and will be able to implement development of *a Green Products and Services Industry Cluster in Southeastern Vermont*

6. What is the likely outcome of this project?

Based on initial research, Southern Vermont economic development consultants ViTAL Economy believe there may be significant opportunity for the SeVEDS region to connect its unique assets in the Green Building Research, Products and Services arena and develop a Northeastern U.S. regional center of excellence that can create hundreds of new higher wage jobs and numerous green building research, product and service firms over the next ten years.

7. Is the proposal consistent with SeVEDS established strategies? Does it satisfy an objective? How will this project help the Windham Region to meet its economic development goals?

This project is consistent with:

- SeVEDS established strategies to increase the size of the work force
- Increase the population of 22-44 year olds.
- Grow the entrepreneurial ecosystem of SE Vermont.
- Improve average wage

Build a rapid prototyping facility at existing shop for prefab high performance building envelopes and resilient mechanical systems

1. Identify the applicant

Eli Gould
57 Covey Rd., Brattleboro, VT 05301
802.258.0800 ironwoodbrand@gmail.com

I am a Vermont native, resident of West Brattleboro and proprietor of three related companies:

-Ironwood Brand LLC, a vertically integrated timber/mill/design/build firm focusing on the residential construction sector. (www.ironwoodbrand.com)

-Precraft, LLC, an R&D vehicle to lead the development of new building assemblies and market them on-line (secured the future site of www.precraft.com).

-STIX, L3C (Sustainable Timber Investment Exchange), a means to advance wood science to the point where native lumber can be used for engineered structures as well as a means to carry out the key forestry work which often cannot happen commercially.

Over the course of 19 years Ironwood Brand has been involved in the construction of more than 80 structures, primarily single-family homes. Many of them include lumber harvested and milled locally by us. The design elements in these homes have often been developed or refined through my advanced CAD/CAM capabilities which I first explored during my dual forestry/architecture degree at Yale.

While some Precraft type manufacturing/assembly has already taken place at my shop in West Brattleboro, we have not yet actively launched the Precraft company. Some building component partners have Precraft as their R&D partner for next year based on work we have done for the Alex Wilson house/barn prototype project this year. When we are successful at the next level, a scaled up design/build operation could quickly move into some of Brattleboro's vacant manufacturing space. Even at that point, my shop would continue to provide its best value as a destination to demonstrate, develop, and teach the design/build of prefab building components linked to a local supply chain.

STIX, one of the first Vermont low-profit L3C's, was only a concept and startup until last year when we won a wood science grant through VT Forest, Parks and Recreation, allowing us to build a mobile timber testing device that I had been proposing to other funding sources for years. Hurricane Irene accelerated the need for this device and the science behind it. I did recently get called in to explain and plan some possible applications with the VTrans group of engineers.

2. Provide a detailed description of the project.

Prefab high-performance building envelopes and resilient mechanical systems.

Ironwood Brand, with its sister companies PreCraft and STIX, is seeking matching funding to complete a rapid prototyping facility at our shop. High-performance building envelope sections as well as specialized building mechanical systems will be the products. With this facility we will be able to scale up our industry-leading R&D work in the building trades, link local forestry and wood product manufacturing with more regional construction employment opportunities, and help a whole supply chain achieve the best utilization of my hometown region's timber.

I believe that Windham County's position as the state's top timber county, so well connected by transportation hubs to other states, is a "sleeping giant" of economic impact once we have a design and manufacturing process that truly links native lumber, design/engineering, and prefab construction. Add to that the expanding demand for energy efficiency and resilient design (resilient against climate change impacts) -- a field in which our region is already rich with expertise -- and Windham County can be a real leader for others to emulate and for exporting of our knowledge and experience. My companies can demonstrate that process, provide immediate job creation, and more importantly provide opportunities for other small and large companies to take part in their own growth based on that model.

On the 42'x84' footprint of a falling down barn, purchased in 2004, I have slowly permitted, constructed, and brought into operation a sawmill, design studio, and prefab construction facility. Even as my companies have become recognized around the region, and grown to eight employees and a large indirect sales impact, my property equity has almost slipped "underwater" as comparable properties had their appraisals drop and I have struggled to fund major construction steps out of pocket.

The key infrastructure improvements that we need include provision for sewer and water, a completed and reinforced roof, and a small interior frost free enclosure to house critical building services like backup heat and IT equipment.

3. Establish that you have the authority to accomplish what you are proposing.

The unfinished shop that I own at 628 Abbott Road is 3500 square feet and there is an adjacent sawmill, also on my property. Two years ago an attached 10 x 20 office/engineering space was added. This all sits on an acre of land with an adjoining 2-acre lot also owned by me. This is property 100132-000 on the Brattleboro's Listers' records.

The major remaining needs to complete the mill include:

-Sewer and water. There is no town water and sewer so a well and septic system would need to be permitted and constructed. Since there are 3 acres available it is quite likely that both are feasible. A septic system plan has already been designed.

-Roof. While a newer roof currently covers a portion of the space, an older, dilapidated roof needs complete replacement.

-Small interior frost free enclosure. I already have a good idea about how this can be constructed to leverage the existing heating system and existing space.

4. Do you have the capacity to implement this project?

Along with the previously mentioned academic background in forestry/architecture, I already have a lengthy track record in residential construction with a focus on green building and resilient design. I have been building customized homes for 19 years. One Brattleboro house project in 2012 won a state-wide, Efficiency Vermont award in the "passive house" category. On another project, in 2012 and 2013, we have led the major renovation of the farm house and barn of Building Green founders Alex & Jerelyn Wilson. As part of this process they meticulously chose resilient design materials and approaches, usually aided by my research and advice.

My unfinished shop on Abbott Rd. -- even for awhile before it had any kind of roof -- has been put to use on 8-10 projects, as my individualized, customer-driven designs have been assembled in house and then transported to the building sites.

I have also been the recipient of a wood science grant through VT Forest, Parks and Recreation, allowing us to build a mobile timber testing device that I had been proposing to other funding sources for years. I successfully finished that project, complete with an end of grant report.

5. Do you have the wherewithal to implement the project?

I need \$100,000 to make this facility improvement project happen. I have had conversations with Merchants Bank on a \$40,000 financing package. It is my intention to apply for a Working Lands grant of \$50,000 and I am prepared to put in \$10,000 of my own capital.

Since my company has already exercised most if not all elements of the design/prefab approach to high performance building envelopes and mechanical systems, we clearly have the managerial capacity to make this happen. I have recently subcontracted some project coordination and scheduling work with a person who can scale up her hours as the need arises, and my part-time business manager can ramp up his number of hours. Some members of my crew, while spending much of their time on site carpentry, have also participated directly in the shop prefab work.

6. What is the likely outcome of this project?

The benefits to my employees will be immediate as they help to create a workplace where we can build homes year round regardless of weather. Also every step that I take towards being ready to build and export helps my hometown partners who supply timber, lumber, and allied services and trades people on all the projects that I lead.

My 6 current full-time skilled carpenters are paid at rates equaling \$37,440 to \$50,440 per year, with 4 of the 6 above \$40,000. Because of the seasonal nature of the bulk of the work Ironwood currently carries out, these employees do not usually work full-time during January through March. If this proposed R&D/prefab assembly facility goes forward, however, year-round work can become much more the norm.

We design buildings and link them to standing timber, instead of cutting standard inventory or retail. Even two of our underutilized local species, hemlock and poplar, represent millions of board feet in this county alone, or the capability to supply many hundreds of homes. Even just an incremental growth in the number of homes built with our process has an impact because our percentages of local products are higher than a typical home.

This is proven by a quick look at our current local leadership of a small but vertically integrated supply chain. Ironwood's direct services in recent years have averaged close to half a million, but each year the many small or medium residential projects which we manage add up to millions of dollars being spent locally on other trades and local suppliers. My lumberyard accounts, all local, have been in the consistent six figures for four years now, and I have built a broad, reliable network of allied professionals which my jobs provide work to. Timber harvesters, sawmills, site and survey workers, construction trades, building science and design professionals, even local insurance and lending contacts all have been impacted by Ironwood's consistent presence. This network can easily scale up as quickly as or more quickly than my own small businesses can. So, while my standard operations can continue their success, the R&D and assembly aspects can also be a focal point, an idea generator and experience-sharer to jumpstart success for other companies wanting to serve the expanding demand for high performance envelopes and resilient mechanical systems.

Although we have used the residential design market as the most flexible field to develop our skills and capabilities, public buildings and engineered structures represent a slower-to-change supply chain that I am already working to impact. My conviction is that Vermont's new design/build enabling legislation will eventually become best utilized by municipalities. This will call for all the engineering and design capacity that we are building, and for a small and tightly controlled "chain of custody" that can follow a single timber through mapping, harvest, design, milling, testing, fabrication, and assembly.

7. Is the proposal consistent with SeVEDS established strategies? Does it satisfy an objective? How will this project help the Windham Region to meet its economic development goals?

This project addresses the SeVEDS goal to Improve Wage Parity with Surrounding Labor-shed. My residential construction work provides above average pay for my full-time skilled carpenters during the construction season but this is not generally true in the winter. This R&D/prefab shop will enable them to work year-round. They are paid at rates equaling \$37,440 to \$50,440 per year, with 4 of the 6 above \$40,000 despite not having college degrees.

This project addresses the SeVEDS goal to Increase Population Proportion of 25-44 Year olds. My current full-time employees all fall within this range. The Building trades are often a younger person's profession because of the physical nature of the work. But as my companies transition into more R&D and testing work, young college grads with CAD/CAM or other technical education will be needed by me or by other companies that enter this expanding field.

My project addresses the SeVEDS goal to Create an Entrepreneurial Environment. My companies want to be a regional leader in the high performance/resilience field, but we also want to see existing or new companies in our area work in this same arena. I have seen the demand grow for this work even as traditional timber framing is declining.

While I believe the SeVEDS plan has not yet finalized the industry clusters that the region should focus on, it is my understanding from a recent visit of the Vital Economy folks that they will recommend Green and High Performance Sustainable Building Materials as one of these. The link to my project proposal could not be more direct

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2013 6:39 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence; Recchia, Chris
Cc: Porter, James
Subject: VTel memo
Attachments: VTel_update_10_24_2013.docx; ATT00001.htm

Attached is the memo that Jim and I prepared as requested last week.
Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Kiersten

CONFIDENTIAL INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: ELIZABETH MILLER, CHIEF OF STAFF
JEB SPAULDING, SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION
FROM: KIERSTEN BOURGEOIS AND JIM PORTER
SUBJECT: STATUS OF VTEL WOW PROJECT
DATE: OCTOBER 24, 2013
CC: CHRISTOPHER RECCHIA, COMMISSIONER
LAWRENCE MILLER, SECRETARY

Liz and Jeb:

This memorandum is written as a follow-up to our meeting last week with the Governor, Senator Sanders and Michel and Diane Guite.

There are approximately 70,000 addresses in the VTel WOW ARRA territory that are slated to receive broadband service from VTel. Of these 70,000 addresses, roughly 90% already receive broadband service from fixed service providers such as FairPoint and Comcast. Of the remaining 10%, 5,327 are within the propagation maps of mobile wireless providers such as AT&T and Verizon. As such, there are 1,618 addresses in the VTel WOW ARRA territory that, based upon current broadband build-out projects, will only receive broadband service from VTel. VTel has provided the PSD with information that indicates that 926 of the 1,618 addresses will receive broadband from VTel WOW by the end of 2014. There are 692 addresses will not receive broadband from VTel in 2014. While we believe that the ARRA RUS grant requires VTel to build-out the remaining 692 addresses, it will not happen, if at all, prior to 2015. The two charts below show the number of addresses by town for those addresses that will be served in 2014 and those that will not. In addition, the first chart shows VTel's projected service date by town.

Unserved VTel locations to be served in 2014		
Town	Locations	Target Date
WHITINGHAM	96	3Q14
HALIFAX	76	2Q14
ALBANY	68	1Q14/2Q14
MAIDSTONE	63	1Q14/2Q14
THETFORD	46	Need Site
BLOOMFIELD	40	1Q14/2Q14
BARNARD	40	1Q14/2Q14
CANAAN	38	1Q14/2Q14
READSBORO	37	1Q14/2Q14
BETHEL	35	3Q14
Subtotal	539	
Other towns	387	
Total	926	

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2013 5:52 PM
To: Michel Guite; Miller, Elizabeth; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence; Porter, James
Cc: Diane Guité
Subject: RE: Tomorrow

Hi Michel -

We didn't schedule a formal meeting for tomorrow, but Jim and I were tasked by the Governor, Liz, et. al. to work with VTel to answer some of the questions that he raised during our meeting last week.

We have been in regular conversation with Diane - who has been incredibly helpful - and are working on getting the Governor the answers by Wednesday.

I sincerely apologize for any confusion.

Thanks,

Kiersten

From: Michel Guite [mguite@vermontel.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2013 5:15 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Porter, James
Cc: Diane Guité
Subject: Tomorrow

Hi Liz,

I had penciled in my schedule a follow up meeting at the Governor's office, tomorrow, but am unsure if am invited.

A couple of clarifications I would like to make tomorrow, or in a later meeting, at your and the Governor's convenience.

The VTel project always expected (i) to cause accelerated broadband investments by AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, T-Mobile, US Cellular, and Fairpoint, and this has happened, and (ii) to build our own. There were 120,000 un-served or under-served Vermont rooftops three years ago. Today a vast number of these are getting service from at least two competitors. We plan to be a 3rd

Vermont rated "fastest Internet in America" was the result of many efforts, but VTel has been a key catalyst.

It is easy to build a wireless network that will fail to compete with AT&T and Verizon. It is hard to build a wireless network that will be faster and cheaper, but we are trying our best to do so.

Any suggestion how I can make these points super-clear to our Governor, as his support is essential to what we are doing.

Thanks,

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

Get the latest news and updates on VTel GigE, VTelevision and VTel WOW – Like us on Facebook!

From: Michel Guite

Sent: Monday, April 29, 2013 7:09 AM

To: 'Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us'; 'Jeb.Spaulding@state.vt.us'; 'susan.allen@state.vt.us'; Miller, Lawrence (Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us); Bourgeois, Kiersten (Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us)

Cc: Diane Guité

Subject: RE: VTel Dinner Next Tuesday

Hi Liz, Jeb, Susan, Lawrence, and Kiersten,

Governor Shumlin's helpful quote Thursday contributed to VTel's GigE to homes getting picked up by Wall Street Journal Friday, and within hours it seemingly went viral with translations into Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Hebrew, and 150 blogs and publications worldwide, making us – apparently – the most popular technology story in Vermont history. I have no idea how blog eyeballs get accurately measured, but one report said 22 million eyeballs (sets of eyeballs?) had looked at this by noon Saturday, and 22 million is 0.3 percent of the human race. Can you please pass this good news on to the Governor?

<http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2013/04/26/look-out-google-fiber-35-a-month-gigabit-internet-comes-to-vermont/>

<http://gigaom.com/2013/04/26/vermont-gets-a-gigabit-network-and-it-only-costs-residents-35-a-month/>

<http://www.theverge.com/2013/4/26/4271702/vermont-telephone-company-offering-35-per-month-gigabit-internet>

http://www.reddit.com/r/technology/comments/1d63zz/look_out_google_fiber_35amonth_gigabit_internet/

<http://hothardware.com/News/LookOut-Google-Fiber-VTel-Vermont-To-Offer-Gigabit-Internet-Speed-At-35-A-Month/>

<http://live.drjays.com/index.php/2013/04/28/a-rural-phone-company-offers-fiber-internet-cheaper-than-google/>

<http://network.pconline.com.cn/327/3277038.html>

<http://www.fayerwayer.com/2013/04/influencia-de-google-fiber-isp-de-vermont-ofrece-1-gbits-a-us-35-mensuales/>

Best,

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

Miller, Lawrence

From: Michael Singer [redacted]
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2013 4:55 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence
Cc: Leriche, Lucy
Subject: Re: internet

Dear Kiersten and Lawrence,

Just to clarify, my next door neighbor who has the 368 phone exchange (same side of road) has internet service. Actually the telephone pole providing that service is CLOSER to my office property, which has a 464 phone exchange, than to hers. From that same pole, a phone line with a 368 number can be run to my location, and with it fast internet. So there is no substantive reason why I can't have service now if Fairpoint will run a line to me. I really don't have to wait for the WOW project. I'm hoping your Agency can bring this to Fairpoint's attention and help me simply get another phone line, infrastructure for which I'm willing to pay. I hope this is something you or Lawrence can bring forward.

I wonder how many other properties can be served from such a simple solution, removing some burden from the overall effort statewide? I haven't had luck with this and it's getting more and more difficult for me to conduct business in Vermont.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, Michael Singer

On Oct 17, 2013, at 11:00 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

> Dear Mr. Singer,
> According to our data, your address will be served by VTel as part of their WOW project. Please let me know if you have any further questions.
>
> There is an online tool that you can use - broadbandvt.org - that will allow you to type in any address in Vermont to see who serves/will serve a specific location.
>
> Thanks and again, feel free to let me know if you have any further questions.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Kiersten Bourgeois
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Michael Singer [mailto:[redacted]]
> Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2013 4:42 PM
> To: Miller, Lawrence
> Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Leriche, Lucy
> Subject: Re: internet
>
> Dear Kiersten Bourgeois,
> Please see Mr. Miller's note below. My address is [redacted]
> Wilmington Vermont 05363 Sincerely, Michael Singer
>
> On Oct 14, 2013, at 6:32 PM, "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

>
>> Hi Michael,
>>
>> Unfortunately, what I said was there are about 200 addresses without a plan for getting service there, I wish we were already at 200 unserved, but we are getting there. The Wilmington area is definitely one of the challenging spots so I would not be surprised if you are among those yet to have an identified solution.

>>
>> I am copying Kiersten Bourgeois on this email, who is leading the effort. Please send her your 911 address so she can cross check it with the project list and first make sure your address is correctly identified as currently unserved and then see if there is a project identified and let you know that status. Once we know that we can also be in touch with Fairpoint.

>>
>> Lawrence

>>
>>
>>
>> *****

>> Lawrence Miller, Secretary
>> VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
>> (802) 371-9075

>>
>> On Oct 14, 2013, at 6:19 PM, "Michael Singer" <msinger@michaelsinger.com> wrote:

>>
>>> Dear Secretary Miller and Deputy Secretary Leriche, On a recent VPR
>>> talk program Secretary Miller mentioned there are "only about 200 addresses" in the State without fast internet. If that's the actual number, I'm one of the 200 and I have several neighbors who are also without fast internet. I've been trying to get Fairpoint to extend the fast internet line service to my business office for several years and have even offered to help pay for the line. My next door neighbor has the service because her phone is a 368 exchange. I am a few hundred feet from my neighbor but my exchange is 464. My other neighbors who also have the 464 exchange have the same problem. Fairpoint says they will not extend the 368 line to my office. This seems to be a simple fix, yet Fairpoint has not followed through. I'm aware that you both are working to solve internet access problems. Is there some way you can help me, someone you can put me in touch with so this situation can be resolved? Thank you for your attention to this.

>>> Sincerely,
>>> Michael Singer 

>>>
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>>
>

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2013 9:15 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: VTel meeting

Hi Liz – do you need anything for today’s meeting with VTel? I assumed that we were all up to speed, but wanted to make sure.

Jim may have told you, but we had a good chat with Weinstein last week. Highlights that Bernie wants to hit are timing, cost, pricing and probably reconfirm commitment #s as far as addresses are concerned.

We shared this w/ VTel following our conversation and Diane sent us the following bullets of items they expected to be asked:

- 1) **Fiber to the home**
 - a. **Status**
 - b. **Feedback**
 - c. **IPTV summary**
- 2) **Wireless**
 - a. **Roll out schedule**
 - b. **Roll out plan (incl mailer)**
 - c. **Pricing**
 - d. **Work force concerns/challenges**
 - e. **Permitting challenges (poles in public ROW)**

Thanks,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois | Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
802-828-5220 office | 802-793-4899 cell | 802-828-3383 fax
accd.vermont.gov

From: Gray, Laura
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2013 7:36 AM
To: Gray, Laura
Subject: MEDIA CLIPS FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15

TIMES ARGUS/RUTLAND HERALD (Cont.):

Essential transparency

Opinion | Commentary

Bruce Lisman, of Shelburne, is the founder of Campaign for Vermont.

Transparency is the essential ingredient in transforming state government into an organization capable of solving Vermont's most pressing challenges. It's also the most valuable tool in holding government accountable to the very people whom government serves and who actually elect the government. Imagine it: government transparency — the ability to measure how well government is led and managed, not merely administered.

Campaign for Vermont made these points in our paper "Achieving Accountability: Transforming State Government into a Modern, Transparent 21st Century System." Now it's time to take action — and you should join the effort.

Good ideas alone never compel politicians and special interest groups to embrace real transformation, especially when the result will be more accountability. That's why Campaign for Vermont and the nearly 1,000 Vermonters who have become partners will advocate for real reforms in the next legislative session.

As part of our transparency proposal, we also advocated for developing ethics rules for elected officials. Ours is one of the few states with no ethics laws, financial disclosure requirements for those running for statewide office, required conflict of interest disclosure, or an ethics panel that would advise on and enforce these matters.

That's why the Better Government Association ranked Vermont 43rd in government integrity laws, while The State Integrity Investigation gave Vermont a D-plus for corruption risk. That may also be one reason Vermont has among the highest rates of embezzlement in the nation.

To stymie reforms, some say ours is a small state and we all know each other; there have been few examples of corruption at the state level; or ethics regulations place a burden on legislators or statewide officials.

It is true that most Vermonters don't break laws, but we still have a wide array of regulatory frameworks that offer protection from the few who do. In addition, corruption isn't always a matter of stealing money or selling access or influence — but it certainly can be. Ethics guidelines would tell us how conflicts of interest should be treated in certain circumstances, and mandatory disclosures would help us highlight potential pitfalls. Certainly, any new burden placed on politicians for transparency is far less significant than the regulatory burden imposed by state government in a wide range of issues — generally with good reason.

That's why we believe Vermont ought to establish standards of conduct that are applied to public office and that these policies must be enforceable through an independent, nonpartisan and quasi-judicial system — an ethics commission — that is itself a model of transparency and accountability.

Campaign for Vermont will be releasing a detailed ethics proposal. Be prepared for political insiders to say they

support it but take no meaningful action, or attempt to explain away ethics laws and disclosures as unnecessary.

Vermont is a proud, forward-thinking state that likes to lead. We cannot be content to be among the last in transparency, accountability and ethics.

Victory for openness

Opinion | Editorials

The Supreme Court ruling in the case involving the Rutland Herald and the Rutland City Police Department is a significant advance for open government and public accountability.

The newspaper had sought Police Department documents related to an internal investigation of city police officers who had viewed pornography on city computers. The city refused to comply, arguing that the documents were exempt from disclosure because they involved the “personal records” of police personnel.

The city said that the police officers’ privacy rights were protected by the personnel records exemption.

The court did not buy it, deciding unanimously to uphold a lower court ruling declaring that the newspaper ought to have access to the documents. Since the court’s ruling last week, the Herald has examined those documents and written stories about the officers involved, the investigation looking into their transgressions and the disciplinary action taken by the Police Department.

The whole unsavory saga about pornography and the police is a case study proving the wisdom of the Supreme Court’s ruling in favor of openness. A central finding of the court is that “there is a significant public interest in knowing how the police department supervises its employees and responds to allegations of misconduct.” The court went on to say: “This is particularly true given the repeated instances of similar misconduct within the police department over a five-year period, as well as the apparent scope of the misconduct.”

Public access to records of internal investigations allows the public to determine if the Police Department has been responsive to allegations of misconduct, the court ruled — in essence, whether the department has taken effective measures to police itself, “the absence of which may result in patterns of inappropriate workplace conduct.”

The fact that the viewing of pornography persisted over years among several officers showed that the lack of effective oversight had done precisely what the court had suggested — allowed a pattern of misconduct to continue.

It was only when the public became aware of the scandal that the department’s ineffective discipline came to light and the department was able to crack down on the misconduct. A welcome change in Police Department leadership followed, which is what public accountability is all about.

The court found that the officers’ privacy rights in the case were virtually nonexistent. “Certainly, one cannot reasonably expect a high level of privacy in viewing and sending pornography on work computers while on duty at a public law enforcement agency,” the court wrote. The officers may be embarrassed by disclosure of what the court called their “personal frolic,” but their embarrassment is vastly outweighed by the public’s need to oversee the actions of government personnel.

The court addressed the question of whether the city might spare the officers embarrassment by releasing the records while withholding the employees’ names. The court found that doing so would cast a shadow of suspicion over the entire department and the majority of officers who are not guilty of misconduct.

As with most cases in which disclosure of public documents is contested, the court found that there must be a balance between the public interest in openness and the harm to the individual resulting from disclosure. In a case of wrongdoing by public officials, the public has a strong interest both in the wrongdoing and in the conduct of the those investigating the wrongdoing. The court found that the privacy interest of the officers was “much less compelling.”

Privacy interests pertain to the intimate details of a person’s life — health records, for example. Disclosure that an officer had been looking at pornography may be embarrassing, but it involved a public employee’s behavior using public property, not the intimate details of his life.

In recent years state officials in the courts and the Legislature have recognized that the pendulum has swung too far toward secrecy in government. The court’s ruling in this case continues a reversal of the pendulum’s direction, sending it back toward openness and accountability. It is a welcome turnabout.

BRATTLEBORO REFORMER:

State approves VTel tower in Guilford

By MIKE FAHER, Reformer Staff

GUILFORD — The Vermont Public Service Board has given a Springfield company the goahead to build a new, 90-foot-tall wireless-broadband facility in Guilford.

VTel Wireless Inc. now can move forward with constructing a monopole tower and associated equipment at 663 Barney Hill Road. State officials say they found no evidence that the structure will have any “undue adverse effect on aesthetics” at or near the site.

“The project will employ a relatively short tower, flush-mounted antennas and will use a matte gray finish to avoid glare in order to minimize visibility from the surrounding area,” Public Service Board officials wrote in an order accompanying a certificate of public good issued to VTel.

“The project will be located in an area that is screened by vegetation and farm buildings from surrounding properties,” the state’s order says. “Therefore, VTel has taken reasonable steps to mitigate the aesthetic effect of the project, and the project will not be shocking or offensive to the average viewer.”

VTel is working to expand its broadband service statewide. The company is not offering traditional cellular service, but rather a high-speed, wireless Internet service that will compete with traditional Internet providers such as cable companies.

The company has run into opposition when proposing new towers in some area municipalities, including Wardsboro and Newfane.

By comparison, there have been few such concerns expressed in Vernon, where VTel plans to ask state permission to erect a 90-foot-tall monopole on Pond Road.

And Guilford officials heard no complaints about the proposed Barney Hill Road facility.

“I heard from people who were hopeful that they would get it, because they have no access,” Selectboard member Anne Rider said.

“I think it’s good news,” Rider added.

According to the state's certificate of public good, the Guilford VTel project includes the new 90-foot monopole and "nine panel antennas of various sizes to be flush-mounted to the tower."

Also included are two microwave dish antennas, each about 2 feet in diameter; an equipment cabinet; a 10-foot by 7-foot concrete pad; and a 12-foot-wide, 34-foot-long gravel access road.

The project will require a total "earth disturbance" of about 750 square feet.

Officials said they've found that the project "will not have an undue adverse impact on flood ways, the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites or rare and irreplaceable natural areas."

In July, Guilford Selectboard received a report from a consultant who conducted a "balloon test" by raising a red helium balloon 90 feet in the air at the Barney Hill Road property.

"The topography and dense tree cover within the 1-mile radius of the proposed site made viewing the balloon from public roads and places very difficult," the consultant wrote.

The Vermont Department of Public Service recommended that the board approve the VTel project "without additional hearings or investigation," the certificate of public good says.

No other comments were filed with the board.

'More empowered'

By CHRIS MAYS, Reformer Staff

WILMINGTON — With the new health insurance marketplace open and accepting customers, residents from the Deerfield Valley were invited to a presentation that focused on the changes that were made to the way in which people are covered.

On Oct. 9, the crowd at Memorial Hall was told that the new marketplace, known as Vermont Health Connect, would affect approximately a quarter-of-a-million residents in the state.

"We're moving into a phase where people will be more empowered when they buy insurance and we as the consumer can better understand what it means to have a health plan," said Vermont Health Connect Public Information Officer Emily Yahr.

She explained that navigators as well as brokers were available upon request for consulting. Navigators are better equipped to assist people with enrolling using a website or by telephone. They are trained to answer questions and assist others with becoming acquainted with the new system.

There are four goals of the state's new health care system, Yahr said. These goals include reducing costs, assuring all Vermonters have access to quality health care, improving the health of Vermont's population and assuring greater fairness and equality in how health care is paid for.

She said that the governor-appointed Green Mountain Care Board is an independent body that is "working hard at fixing the fractures in our health care system." The board has been busy attempting to introduce a single-payer health care system by 2017.

Yahr explained that the new marketplace had been a result of the federal Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare. She said that calling it Obamacare is just a shortened way of putting it.

The presentation stated that the Vermont Health Connect website allows users to compare health insurance plans easier and clear than before.

“You’re greater able to understand what you’re choosing,” said Yahr.

Financial assistance will be available to approximately 50,000 people in the state with different levels of income.

All the plans available through the marketplace are high quality plans, Yahr said. There are two providers to choose from — Blue Cross Blue Shield and MVP.

“We’re a really small state. We only have 100,000 people who fall into purchasing independently or at a small group rate,” said Yahr, when discussing why there are only two providers in the marketplace. “By 2014, everyone is going to be mandated to have health insurance if they can find an affordable plan.”

The penalty is a fine that will gradually increase each year.

Pre-existing conditions that had caused people to be denied certain insurance policies in the past will no longer be a concern, said Yahr. People with these conditions will be guaranteed entry into the Vermont Health Connect.

“Whatever it is that insurance company denied you for can no longer happen,” she added.

Yahr also mentioned that out of pocket and expenditure costs will have limits now.

“I like to consider this financial help that will help people pay for their plans,” she said.

Those who are 26 years and younger can remain on their parents’ health insurance plans through the Affordable Care Act.

If a business has 50 employees or less, it can be defined as a small business. The small business community had requested making it 50 employees rather than 100, Yahr said.

“(Businesses with over 50 employees) will continue to offer insurance the way they are today,” she added.

With the Vermont Health Connect in place, Yahr said it is believed that more people will opt to start their own businesses because the fear of not being covered won’t be as great anymore.

For more information or to sign up for a plan, visit VermontHealthConnect.gov.

Windham County’s wit and grit

Opinion

By BECCA BALINT

There’s a “wall” at mile 20 of a marathon. Your legs — so capable and strong at mile 18 — suddenly feel devoid of blood or muscle. It’s like when your toddler goes “boneless” in a grocery store and refuses to move— although minutes ago she seemed so very compliant. The exasperation stems from helplessness and stark mortality. You trained. You ate right. You awoke before dawn for months to prepare yourself for this moment. Yes, Yes, Yes. And yet — in the words of Olympia Dukakis in “Moonstruck,” “You’re still going to die.”

By mile 20 of the Clarence DeMar Marathon, the nagging discomfort in my right foot had evolved from achy to acute. I jogged up next to a runner I'd been trailing for miles; we exchanged names and ailments. Jim — seemingly an exceedingly fit man — confessed through a tight grin, "I don't seem to have any feeling from my waist down." I nodded as we passed spectators who shouted, "You look great! You look strong." And the truth was, we did. We weren't sweating profusely. We were lithe of body and smooth in our strides. But we still felt awful. And we feared we wouldn't have the tenacity — or the tendons — to finish.

We all know appearances deceive. But what if we all actively contribute to the deception? Out of fear, ignorance or irrepressible optimism, honesty becomes illusory. This is what I dread is happening here in Windham County.

Snatches of conversations — now plaited together into a Gordian knot of worry — demand my attention. There's the one in which I learned that the percentage of Brattleboro students on free and reduced lunch (a clear sign of our local families' economic struggles) has now reached nearly 70 percent in some of our town schools. I was deeply troubled when the figure hovered at 50 percent; now I'm panicked. Then there's the one in which a local business owner confessed, "Oh, we all lie about how we're doing." Admitting you're struggling is the kiss of death, he explained. You smile through your terror, and you find the will to trust that it will get better before you lose your business.

Two other recent disclosures fundamentally altered my own perceptions of local poverty and what it looks like. Both involved outwardly appearing "middle class" families who receive public assistance. They have white collar full-time employment; they still don't earn enough to feed their kids without help. Then there are the friends who cobble together several jobs in their frantic fight to keep their homes. Or the acquaintance who moved here from Maine — a state not unlike Vermont in its demographic profile and economic struggles — thinking it would be easier to find work. Not so. She's a degree-holding professional who now cleans houses to make ends meet.

There's a story that kicks around town: People in Windham County are downwardly mobile by choice. If they can't make ends meet, it's because they choose to be underemployed. This narrative, often conveyed by the fortunate ones with economic stability, is simply not true. Yes, there are a handful of "gleaners" who choose to live outside of the mainstream — hopping from public meeting to public meeting in search of free snacks. But these few hardcore counterculture participants are not the genuine face of Windham's struggles.

True, the current economy is not unique to Windham County; it's a national crisis. But Windham County's struggles do not mirror the nation. Our county's aging workforce is even older than Maine's — and Maine has the highest median age of any state. We are on target to have a shortage of thousands of workers by 2015. Our population has been in decline since 2,000; we simply do not have enough younger workers to fill jobs that will become available in the next 5-10 years.

The number of residents drawing income from retirement and rent income and public assistance has steadily increased since 2000, while the percentage of residents earning private wages and salaries has significantly declined. We are rapidly approaching the point of no return. Our economic metrics are out of balance and not sustainable. Before we can fix it, we must accept our predicament.

The solutions to our crisis will and must be varied. My interest is in the connection between education and workforce development, and how a better prepared workforce will keep jobs here. Others understand the tricky technicalities of bringing new business here, and some have expertise in how VY's shutdown will impact the regional economy. Still others seek out non-capitalist ways to create economic stability. All are valuable perspectives in this complicated puzzle. We must listen deeply, appreciate differences, and move forward with this vitally important work.

The empty storefronts in town demand attention. As does the rising level of poverty and the disappearing middle class. But we have the wit and the grit to confront the formidable tasks. We are a talented and gutsy crew here in Windham County. We put on a world class literary festival and have the guts to dig out from under the crushing muck of Irene. We created a wry circus version of The Nutcracker, "The Flying Nut," and tenaciously fought to bring the Brooks House back from the dead. Our region's wit and grit can see us through. But just as that witty, flirty forefather, Ben Franklin quipped, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

By mile 24 of my marathon misery, I felt desiccated and nauseated. I told Jim to run on without me. "The only thing not hurting is the tip of my nose," I explained. "No way," he said. "I'm a Navy man. We never leave our shipmates. We're crossing that finish line together." And we did.

Brattleboro Retreat to honor Governor Shumlin

BRATTLEBORO — The Brattleboro Retreat will present the 2013 Anna Marsh Award to Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin at a gala fundraising event to be held on Saturday, Nov. 9, beginning at 5:30 pm at The Hermitage in West Dover.

Members of the public are invited to purchase tickets for this event, which includes hors d'oeuvres, dinner, and live entertainment. The Retreat is also offering complimentary roundtrip coach bus service from Brattleboro to the Hermitage. Ticket prices are \$125 per person with proceeds supporting the Retreat's Recovery Project, an initiative to strengthen its inpatient and outpatient programs for clients struggling with addiction and increase coordination with local recovery networks.

Governor Shumlin will be the fifth Anna Marsh Award honoree to receive this recognition for advocacy on behalf of those with mental illness and addiction. Past honorees have included Hollywood actor Ken Howard, the late Senator Robert Gannett, the Retreat's first female board chair, Julie Peterson, and last year's honoree, former Retreat board member, Larry Cassidy.

"We are so pleased to recognize Governor Shumlin for his work on behalf of those with mental illness and addiction," said gala cohost and Retreat trustee, Bette Abrams. "As a leader, the Governor responded to Tropical Storm Irene with a commitment to creating a stronger state mental health system that better serves vulnerable Vermonters. The Governor has demonstrated a clear understanding that mental illness and addiction are diseases, just like diabetes or kidney disease. With this understanding, he has committed to having the quality of Vermont's mental health care reflect this parity."

For event information, including ticketing and bus reservations, contact Robert Szpila at 802-258-4318 or e-mail rszpila@brattlebororetreat.org. Tickets can also be purchased online at www.brattlebororetreat.org/anna-marsh-gala-2013. Seating is limited.

Event attendees are asked to make reservations by Friday, October 18. To reserve November 9th overnight accommodations at The Hermitage at the special rate of \$99, call 802-4643511.

BENNINGTON BANNER:

Columbus Day tourists bring good fortune to Bennington businesses

DEREK CARSON, Staff Writer

BENNINGTON — Bennington businesses praised this year's Columbus Day weekend as one of the best for business in years.

“I’ve been here for 13 years, and this is the best Columbus Day weekend since,” said Judy Pennock, office manager of Evans’ News, 434 Main St. Evans’ News, founded in 1897, sells all sorts of Vermont related souvenirs as well as office supplies and many other local products. When asked what the best sellers this weekend had been, Pennock said, “Maple syrup and Vermont shirts.” Evans’ sells syrup from the Corse Family Farm in Whitingham and the Horst Maple Farm in Bennington, whose maple syrup comes in old fashioned tins.

Pennock described leaf tourists as “the best; they’re always relaxed, happy, on vacation.”

The Bennington Battle Monument, perhaps Bennington’s prime tourist attraction, saw near-record numbers of people this weekend. In a September Banner article, Anne Bugbee, who works in the gift shop at the monument, predicted around 300 people per day during the peak of leaf season. Elevator operator Mike Chapman confirmed the actual numbers were much higher. “We had 728 people on Saturday, Sunday was around 624,” said Chapman on Monday, “Today its slowed down a little bit, but we’ll probably have around 400.”

The Grace Christian School’s Class of 2014 was at the monument on Monday, selling baked goods to raise money for their March mission trip to an orphanage in Guatemala. The students, who have been raising money since their freshman year, hoped to raise about \$800. “We’re pretty close,” said one of the seniors.

The tourists have visited from all over the United States. While many are from Massachusetts and New York, Chapman said he had seen people from as far away as Cape Town, South Africa and Brussels, Belgium this weekend.

“We came for the leaves, but a lot of them seem to be gone already,” said a couple from Pennsylvania. One man from Kansas had spent the last four days in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., where “a lot of the leaves had fallen. So, we came over to Vermont, and its been much more picturesque.”

A family from Albany had just finished up a meal at the Madison Brewing Company when stopped by a reporter Monday as they were about to head over to see the monument.

Natasha Garder, owner of Crazy Russian Girls bakery, said, “I don’t have the numbers in front of me, but this is the best Columbus Day we’ve had since we opened, and we needed it.”

According to Garder, the Better Bennington Corp. encouraged her to open up her bakery downtown, so as to attract more tourists to the downtown area. The strategy has apparently worked as, one woman said to an employee behind the counter, “I asked a local where the best place to eat was, and they sent me here.”

Similarly, Ken Monte of the Village Chocolate Shoppe, 471 Main St., said of this weekend, “It’s actually been really good. It’s helped to have the Welcome Center.”

The Welcome Center, which opened on Friday, has been criticized by many citizens of Bennington, but Monte, who is the son of Village Chocolate Shoppe owner Nick Monte, said he is happy its there. “You have a counter staffed by knowledgeable, local people who can bring tourists into downtown Bennington who might not have stopped here.”

Monte acknowledged, business at the Arlington location, the Village Peddler, has also been good. According to Monte, one tour bus driver had seen news coverage of the Shoppe’s World’s Largest Peanut Butter Cup attempt in early October, and had called to ask if he could bring his bus to the Arlington location this weekend.

Joann Erenhouse, executive director of the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce, said that of the 17 welcome centers in Vermont, Bennington’s was the sixth most visited this weekend, with more than 3,000

visitors.

“People come in and say, where can we do this or that, or that they’re hungry, and we send them to local businesses,” said Erenhouse, who also noted that, “People are driving around, they don’t even know they need help, then they see the building, and stop.”

Erenhouse also praised the location of the welcome center, as its very easy to direct people to the downtown area. “The view is spectacular up there, especially the monument, with Mount Anthony in the background. It’s enticing.”

Miller, Lawrence

From: Josephine Hingston <jhingston@vermontel.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 08, 2013 3:12 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Computer initiative

Good afternoon!

Back in the Spring, you paid VTel a visit in Springfield to discuss potential initiatives arising around VTel GigE and WOW services. Computer ownership/access came up as one of the barriers to internet adoption and to equal opportunity for those seeking employment, benefits, or educational assets – and you mentioned the idea of taking state computers at the end of their three year cycle, refurbishing them, and offering them to low-income, high-need Vermonters. I'm wondering if that great idea is still possible, and if so, how I might work with your office to get the ball rolling!

Many thanks,
Josie

Josephine Hingston
Monitoring & Compliance Coordinator
Vermont Telephone Co., Inc.
354 River Street
Springfield, VT 05156
Phone: 802 885-7728
Mobile: (802)289-2194
E-Mail: jhingston@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, October 08, 2013 7:42 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: vtel, etc

Okay – I am around all morning except a VTel call at 9.

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Tuesday, October 08, 2013 7:34 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: RE: vtel, etc

It would be good to get filled in before Noon. I am doing VT Edition.

--

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
Agency of Commerce and Community Development
National Life Building, Sixth Floor
Montpelier VT 05620-0501
(802) 828-5204 office
(802) 989-0569 cell
lawrence.miller@state.vt.us

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, October 08, 2013 7:28 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: vtel, etc

Good meeting with Liz, Jeb, Sue and Jim yesterday about VTel, etc. I can fill you in later should you wish.
Meant to call you last night but got sidelined with another issue.

Kiersten Bourgeois | Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
802-828-5220 office | 802-793-4899 cell | 802-828-3383 fax
accd.vermont.gov

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Monday, October 07, 2013 2:01 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Re: Vtel Workforce issues

Sounds good.

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 989-0569

"Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

I had a lengthy talk about workforce needs w/ Diane the other day.

Since we can't do anything to help them move their project along outside of tech assistance and counsel on getting through HP, permitting, etc., is it appropriate to see if we can help them train some people?

I will also FW this to Annie to see if she can help get the word out/pre-qualify/whatever else she does.

From: Diane Guité [<mailto:dquite@vermontel.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 9:53 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: RE: Workforce issues

Hi Kiersten! Thank you so much for following up. Sorry for delay...was at a conference for 2 days last week and I'm still catching up!

That's exactly the right list, but here's a little more detail:

- Wireless Technicians
- Wireline Technicians (Fairpoint, Burlington telecom, even Comcast backgrounds)
- Sales (wireless and wireline)
- Marketing and social media (wireless and wireline)
- Customer service reps
- Network engineers (experience with fiber optics, wireless, and/or television all ok)

We're hiring across the board, and need good people. Have lots of room. Starting salary is in the \$15/hour range for CSR, sales are primarily commission based, and ranges are negotiable / very competitive at the network engineer and social media/marketing arena for the right people.

Any more thoughts on if the governor wants his name on the Mt. Ascutney tower announcement/? We can figure it out once he's back from China, not urgent!

Diane Guité
Vice President of Business Development

Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7702

Mobile: 802 289-2190

E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

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From: Bourgeois, Kiersten [<mailto:Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>]

Sent: Monday, September 23, 2013 9:08 AM

To: Diane Guité

Subject: Workforce issues

Hi Diane -

I want to follow up with my friends at the VT Dept of Labor today to talk with them about some of the workforce needs that we talked about last Thursday.

As I recall, you need:

- techs
- sales folks
- customer service reps
- other?

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, October 07, 2013 1:07 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Spaulding, Jeb; Allen, Susan
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FW: final changes
Attachments: Oct13Mailer_5.pdf

Here's VTel's mailer for their Ascutney test.
Jim and I have a call w/ her tomorrow for the bigger letter blast.

From: Diane Guité [mailto:dguite@vermontel.com]
Sent: Monday, October 07, 2013 1:02 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Porter, James
Subject: FW: final changes

Hi! FYI this is a mailer going out on Friday to 950 people near mt. ascutney, asking for help with testing.

The message for the broader, mass mailer that will go out to communities as towers come online is: "We're coming to your neighborhood soon! Sign up!" but will be in a similar format.

Diane Guité
Vice President of Business Development
Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.
Phone: 802 885-7702
Mobile: 802 289-2190
E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

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From: Diane Zeigler [mailto:zig@ksepartners.com]
Sent: Friday, October 04, 2013 3:05 PM
To: Diane Guité
Subject: FW: final changes

Final final

From: Kyle Martel <Kyle@ksepartners.com>
Date: Friday, October 4, 2013 3:03 PM
To: Diane Zeigler <zig@ksepartners.com>
Subject: Re: final changes

--
KYLE MARTEL
KSE Partners, LLP
www.ksepartners.com
Direct: 802.552.4437

From: Diane Zeigler <zig@ksepartners.com>
Date: Friday, October 4, 2013 2:24 PM
To: Kyle Martel <kyle@ksepartners.com>
Subject: FW: final changes

From: Diane Guité <dguite@vermontel.com>
Date: Friday, October 4, 2013 1:25 PM
To: Diane Zeigler <zig@ksepartners.com>
Subject: final changes

Final modifications then I'm signed off.

1-Space between "Greetings Neighbor" and "Great News!"

2-Missing a "?" after "How does it work"

3-Change websites to:

www.vermontel.com/wireless

www.vermontel.com/wireless/pioneer

4-change "to suit our different customers' needs" to "to suit different customer needs"

5 – delete "We look forward to having you as a customer"

6-Change "We are turning up new towers every day, and – by the end of 2014 – we expect to have **coverage across approximately 95% of the state.**" to

"We are expanding our network every day, and – by the middle of 2015 – **we expect to have coverage across approximately 95% of the state.**"

7-make "Internet" in tear off lower case to match the rest

Working on getting you the mailing list in excel format. Team working on it now. How do I get you my signature? I want to sign but can't get that until Monday (don't have scanner or anything).

Diane Guité

Vice President of Business Development

Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.

354 River Street

Springfield, VT 05156

Phone: 802 885-7702

Mobile: 802 289-2190

E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, October 07, 2013 1:03 PM
To: Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James; Allen, Susan
Subject: VT Biz Mag Article - Telecom

Here's what I was referencing this AM.

Please note that I was completely misquoted re: towns and tourists. That sounds positively idiotic.

<http://vermontbiz.com/article/october/telecom-getting-close-last-mile>

Telecom getting close to the last mile

Author:

by Kevin Kelley



Cell service higher mountain to climb

Vermont officials say they expect telecom providers to meet Governor Peter Shumlin's stated goal of universal access to high-speed internet service by the end of this year. Cell-phone coverage, however, won't be nearly as complete.

As of mid-September, state regulators were estimating that fewer than 2,000 of the roughly 300,000 enhanced 911 addresses in Vermont remain to be reached with broadband technology.

The projected on-schedule completion of the broadband buildout results from an enormous investment on the part of the federal government, combined with smaller, but still sizable, commitments by private companies and the state.

The Obama administration's economic-stimulus program alone accounts for some \$150 million in support of efforts to give every Vermont household the opportunity for a high-speed internet connection. The state has added about \$20 million of its money to this effort.

Why the big outlays?

"Ensuring access to broadband is as important today as access to water and sewage used to be," says Kiersten Bourgeois, the official who directs the state's broadband initiative. "It's an essential economic development tool."

In all, adds Vermont Telecommunications Authority director Chris Campbell, \$423 million has been spent on the broadband buildout, improvements in cell-phone coverage and implementation of the smart-meter project.

Closing gaps in cell-phone reception is proving "more of a challenge" than bringing broadband to remote parts of the state, Campbell says. That's because a lot less money has been spent on ensuring continuity of cell-phone signals than on providing rural areas with fast internet service.

"We're largely dependent on investment by the cell companies," Campbell notes.

There are still many "drop sites" around the state where calls are lost, he acknowledges. But contractors hired by his agency have been taking "test drives" on 5500 miles of roads throughout Vermont, charting where signals become unavailable to subscribers to either of the two largest cell providers in the state: Verizon and AT&T. Initiatives to eliminate about half of those drop sites are underway or have been completed, Campbell says.

Providing steady cell signals is as important as ensuring access to broadband, state officials suggest. They cite the proliferation of smart phones and the attendant expectation that users will be able to send and receive data and voice from their mobile devices.

This, too, is an economic development issue, Bourgeois says. The hospitality industry has a stake in keeping visitors connected, because they may not return to Vermont if they cannot use their phones while here. "Towns need to make sure tourists can call home," Bourgeois observes.

The state found it difficult in the past to persuade the big cell carriers to make the requisite investments. They calculated that the returns from building infrastructure would be negligible in the state with the second smallest population in the country. (Only Wyoming has fewer people than Vermont.) But that neglect is said to be giving way to engagement.

"We definitely have their attention now," Campbell says in regard to AT&T and Verizon, attributing the turnaround to "sustained outreach from the highest levels of the [Shumlin] administration.

"We're punching above our weight" in terms of the impact the state is having on the telecom giants, Campbell declares. Cellular companies have invested \$80 million to improve service in recent years, according to state estimates.

He points to a cell tower built in Bethel earlier this year through a partnership arrangement involving the state and AT&T. It provides cell coverage to a major employer, GW Plastics, as well as to local residents and small businesses, Campbell points out.

The siting of cell towers had been an occasion for controversy in some Vermont towns, but opposition has largely melted away in recent years, says Jim Porter, telecommunications director for the Vermont Public Service Department. Many Vermonters have come to the conclusion that consistent cell-phone service is an essential feature of contemporary life, he theorizes.

While AT&T and Verizon together account for an 80-plus percent share of the Vermont cell phone market, T-Mobile "has done a surprising amount of buildout in Vermont," Campbell notes. And Springfield-based Vermont Telephone Company (VTel) may eventually get into the cell business as well, says Josie Hingston, the company's monitoring and compliance coordinator.

VTel is building towers and hanging fiber optic lines at many locations around the state, she says. The move toward offering cell-phone service is made possible, in part, by the \$116 million economic-stimulus grant awarded to the company.

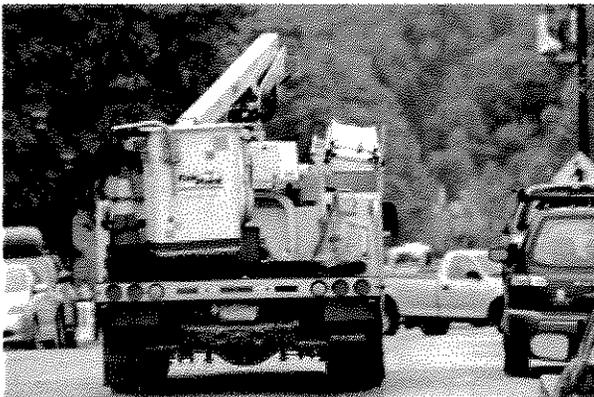
VTel is also extending broadband service to all of its 15,000 customers as part of what company president Michel Guité describes as a coordinated push for universal access on the part of the state and private telecom businesses.

"Dealing with state agencies who historically approach telecommunications as regulators has been very complicated for us at VTel," Guité wrote in an email message. "Nonetheless, we've seen massive efforts by all concerned to work together, cooperatively. There have been many successes and a few setbacks."

Guité praised Shumlin's commitment to the broadband buildout, which, he said, "will be of huge importance for many decades to come."

Bourgeois again highlights the economic significance of this achievement by pointing to the world-class velocity that internet users in Vermont are able to achieve. She cites the Akamai "State of the internet Report" which lists Vermont as the U.S. state with the highest average internet speed, with Guité further noting that if Vermont were a country, it would trail only South Korea in the number of megabits processed per second, on average.

Analysts caution, however, that Akamai, an internet content provider, calculates rates on the basis of how much data is being processed. Heavy users with high-speed connections push up the averages measured in the Akamai survey. David Belson, author of the Akamai report, told Vermont Public Radio earlier this year that the University of Vermont and Middlebury College, with internet speeds well above average, together account for 15 percent of internet traffic in the state.



FairPoint, a major entity in the Vermont telecom constellation, wins praise from state officials for its contributions to the broadband buildout and to innovations in cell-phone coverage.

Campbell points to the company's agreement with CoverageCo, a Virginia-based firm, to make cell service available to a 215-mile swath of rural Vermont, starting in Orange County.

CoverageCo got a \$500,000 grant from the Vermont Telecommunications Authority to complete work on an initial 90-mile segment of the envisioned cell-phone coverage area, Campbell notes. The company plans to use its own money to build the remaining 125 miles of its network, Campbell says.

The extension of service will be achieved through a technology known as small-cell backhaul that expands bandwidth and closes gaps in wireless coverage. It consists of small cells placed on existing phone polls, steeples and other structures about a mile apart from one another. Data transmitted through them is "backhauled" through FairPoint's network and through the internet to CoverageCo.

FairPoint is also building out its own network, most recently reaching 500 homes and businesses in Burke, Kirby and Lyndon. Altogether, says FairPoint Vermont president Beth Fastiggi, the North Carolina-based company has invested close to \$100 million and added 1100 miles of fiber optic lines.

Customers making use of FairPoint's data and internet services have come to account for a large share of the company's business. Revenues for that sector grew 11 percent on a year-to-year basis in the second quarter of 2013, reaching \$40 million for that three-month period.

FairPoint also continues to rely on a sizable but steadily shrinking landline operation. The company had 271,000 wireline phone customers in Vermont in 2008, a year after purchasing that portion of Verizon's business. The number had fallen to 183,000 last year. The rate of attrition is slowing slightly but still amounts to close to eight percent a year.

The company also cut about 60 workers in Vermont earlier this year. To local FairPoint union leader Mike Spillane, that move is symptomatic of a poorly conceived business plan and a uncommunicative attitude on the part of management. Company leaders "won't meet with us at all," complains Spillane, business manager of the Vermont branch of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers which represents about 300 FairPoint workers. Spillane adds that "the company's decision to essentially ignore the residential side of the business is a mistake."

Fastiggi doesn't agree that FairPoint is ignoring its residential customers. But she does acknowledge that the company encountered service problems due to heavy rains early in the summer and was slow in some cases to make repairs.

Wall Street investor and analyst David Tawil is bullish on FairPoint, however. He says the company made the right move in reducing its workforce in Vermont and other states, bringing it closer into conformity, Tawil reckons, with the industry's employee-to-access-line ratio. Tawil, co-founder and portfolio manager of Maglan Capital, says his firm has done well by investing in FairPoint, which has seen its share price climb steadily since the company emerged from bankruptcy in January 2011.

Company CEO Paul Sunu has also stabilized the business' revenues -- "a remarkable thing for a wire line telecom company," according to Tawil. There's little prospect of FairPoint being sold, he adds, until it concludes contract negotiations with its unions, which are scheduled to start next summer.

Fastiggi says FairPoint has managed to win some relief from state regulations it regarded as onerous and unfair. But as one of the former Baby Bells, the company is still required to make some of its telecom resources available to competitors at set prices. Fastiggi calls that stipulation "a regulatory dinosaur."

Its original purpose, she says, was to spur competition in the telecom industry, "but now there's so much competition because of all the changes in technology.

Porter, the telecom director at the Public Service Department, counters that the state "has let FairPoint operate as close to unregulated as a regulated company can." He says Vermont has been more flexible in that regard than have either Maine or New Hampshire, where FairPoint also took over wire line businesses from Verizon.

FairPoint does face "enormous competitive pressure" from the wireless companies and from telecom giant Comcast, Porter notes. More and more Americans are simply abandoning their wire lines and relying exclusively on cell phones. Others continue to use a wired home phone but receive the service from Comcast rather than from a smaller provider such as FairPoint.

In addition, FairPoint is unable altogether to compete with Comcast for video customers -- a major shortcoming that even FairPoint fans such as Tawil acknowledge.

Public Service Department regulator Port was asked in an interview in Montpelier whether he expects FairPoint to still be operating in Vermont in five years, given the formidable challenges the company is facing. Porter paused and replied in his native-Alabaman drawl, "I hope they will be. About 10 percent of Vermonters still get their service only from FairPoint."

Vermont's eight local independent phone companies are experiencing the same pressures as FairPoint, Porter added.

Comcast is taking part in the push to provide access to Vermonters unreached by broadband links.

The Philadelphia-based company has extended its network "by thousands of miles since arriving in Vermont in 2006," says Laura Brubaker Crisco, a spokeswoman for Comcast's western New England region.

Comcast, which reported revenues of \$62.6 billion for 2012, was awarded a \$247,000 grant by the Vermont Telecommunications Authority last year to expand broadband services to an additional 56 locations in Braintree, Shaftsbury and Pownal.

The company, with its Business Class service, has also begun offering Ethernet services in parts of Chittenden County to businesses with more than 20 employees.

This set of technologies for local area networks provides access to Comcast's fiber network and speeds of up to 10 gigabits per second.

Comcast has more than 100,000 customers in about 150 towns around Vermont, Crisco says.

Comcast Business Class will initially serve Burlington, South Burlington, Essex, Essex Junction, Williston and Winooski. It's targeted to businesses, schools, hospitals and other institutions, especially those with heavy bandwidth requirements from point-to-point, point to multipoint or multipoint to multipoint.

The Comcast expansion, along with other fiber competitors, could add another obstacle to the recovery of Burlington Telecom, the city's own fiber telecom provider.

Last spring, Mayor Miro Weinberger said in his state of the city address: "Despite the Administration's heavy focus on Burlington Telecom, the BT situation remains uncertain, complex, and beyond the City's control to resolve unilaterally, and the City remains at financial risk in the \$33 million lawsuit brought by CitiBank. We will continue to diligently and patiently pursue a fair resolution of the lawsuit for Burlington taxpayers."

Given the suggestion that BT could be sold to a private entity in order for the city to rid itself of the liability, a local group formed to try and buy BT and turn it into a member-owned cooperative. BT has damaged the city's credit rating and BT still owes the city \$17 million.

However, Judge William Sessions in August ruled that he would not place BT in receivership nor find the city in contempt, as CitiBank wanted. He set a trial date of February 11, 2014, which should give both sides even more time to find a resolution of a case that's gone on for more than two years.

Kevin Kelley is a freelance writer from Burlington.

Kiersten Bourgeois | Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
802-828-5220 office | 802-793-4899 cell | 802-828-3383 fax
accd.vermont.gov

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, October 07, 2013 8:55 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Quick topic list for today's discussion

Hi Liz –

Jim and I put together a quick list of items that we'd like to cover in our meeting today. We know that time is short, so decided to actually make a little agenda.

Thanks,
Kiersten

VTel

- How to handle their 2015 deadlines
- The "712"
- Messaging
- RUS

General Next Steps

- Group meeting scheduling

VTA

- 170 unserveds left
- How do they help with the 712, if at all?
- Meeting request with AoA

Legislative

- USF/Comcast
- Prepaid
- 248a
- WW/retained lot issue

Kiersten Bourgeois | Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
802-828-5220 office | 802-793-4899 cell | 802-828-3383 fax
accd.vermont.gov

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2013 7:36 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel wireless update

So – topics that we should discuss:

- VTel and timing (they are way, way off schedule)
- How to deal with about 700 that won't be hit by VTel even though they are in the ARRA territory.
- Two events that are being planned (one by VTA for their NEK project and the other a VTel request)
- The draft memo...
- Next meeting of the post2013 team. I spoke to Jeb about this last week and let him know that we'd share a draft of the memo prior to sending it out to the larger group.

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 7:37 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: VTel wireless update

Will review and let's chat - we just scheduled the Gov and Sanders mtg so it would be helpful if VTel would hold off on sending something or distributing until we have a chance for that meeting, if you could pass that along ... thank you - and thank Diane too - for sharing.

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Oct 1, 2013, at 7:26 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

We should chat...pls don't distribute widely as DG requests

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Diane Guité <dguite@vermontel.com>
Date: October 1, 2013 at 5:48:24 PM EDT
To: "Bourgeois, Kiersten (Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us)"
<Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
Subject: FW: VTel wireless update

Hi Kiersten!

Wanted to pass along the below. This was meant to be internal only but wanted to send along to you as it gives a snapshot of where we are today

and where I think we'll be by end of the year. Let me know if helpful to discuss. Not hugely confidential, but please don't forward widely.

Feels like we're finally making progress! Also, we're sending out a series of mailers in the next 2 weeks (will forward you the text) – wondering if the Governor wants to be involved with it. Let us know.

Diane Guité

Vice President of Business Development

Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7702

Mobile: 802 289-2190

E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

Get the latest news and updates on VTel GigE, VTelevision and VTel WOW – Like us on Facebook!

From: Diane Guité

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 12:33 PM

To: VTel Staff

Cc: Michel Guite; Gordon Mathews; Sam Coleman; Jason Beckham; Natalie Rosa; Timothy Tassinari; Tim Clickner; Dent, Andy (ADent@engineeringassociates.com)

Subject: VTel wireless update

Hi everyone!

Wanted to send a quick internal note around to the office with an update on the wireless project. Please email with any questions.

Snapshot of where we are today:

- 53 sites are through permitting, with another 30 in various stages of permitting
- The VTel civil construction team has completed construction on 22 sites, and Ericsson is in the process of integrating these sites
 - 18 are integrated today and being used by Green Mountain Power's Smartgrid network (these sites have temporary backhaul, and are therefore not ready for commercial service, but can accommodate smartgrid data traffic from GMP)
 - 2 of these sites are right here in Springfield: Hallie Whitcombe's tower up on Highland Road, and the Springfield Church. Driving around town, we can make cell phone calls on our 4G phones (Samsung, Sony, Huawei) with a VTel SIM card, or use a wi-fi hot spot to get speeds of up to 25mpbs while driving around Springfield (!!)
- 26 sites are currently under construction, led by Jason Beckham and team (Tim T, Tim C, and Natalie) and should be handed off to Ericsson by the middle of November
- Near term goal: 50 sites up and running by the end of the year (although not all of these will have permanent backhaul until the early part of 2014)

- Medium-term goal: build 180 sites in Phase I, by June 2015 (end of RUS grant), with substantial mobile phone coverage
- Long-term goal: 250 sites statewide, and expand into New York and New Hampshire

What can you expect in the next few weeks and months?

- This week, we are sending out a mailer to non VTel homes and businesses that will receive a 4G/LTE signal Mt. Ascutney tower, which is online today. We are looking for 50 test customers to try out our service (for free) and provide feedback over the next 3 months. Michelle Stark is already one of our betas!
- Before the end of the year, we expect that we'll be able to provide internet to the following 10 towns. (The delay / X factor in many cases is when permanent backhaul will be in place at these sites – either microwave or our own VTel fiber)
- Throughout 2014, more and more sites will come online each week.

The first 10 areas we expect will get VTel service by end of year is as follows. (all via permanent fiber backhaul) (* indicates RUS territory)

Towns surrounding Mt. Ascutney (Perkinsville, Reading)* - today

South Hero – next week

Burlington – next week

Fairlee 01* - October

Hardwick* - November

Vergennes* - November

Sheldon* - November

Barnet 01* - November

Colchester (2 sites) - November

Essex - November

What services with VTel Wireless be offering over its 4G/LTE network? (Note: for current VTel customers in our ILEC territory, we will be marketing the cell phone service option rather than cannibalizing our current customer base).

Wireless high-speed internet and landline phone service

Today, we are offering high-speed wireless internet and landline phone service, for in-home or in-office use. Here's how it works: VTel will send a customer the appropriate equipment needed to get high-speed internet (a modem or an outdoor unit that attaches to the side of a home). The modem will pick up the wireless signal from a nearby tower, and re-transmit the signal throughout your home. Customer can connect up to 15 devices at any given time. No messy wires required. If it's an outdoor unit, or customer has trouble setting this up, a VTel technician can come to the home and help. If customer also wants landline phone service, we offer that, too. They need to buy a VoIP phone from VTel, or at an electronics store, and plug it in to the back of modem (service will be like Vonage)

Cell phone service

In the coming months, we will be offering mobile voice and mobile broadband services. Customers can select from VTel's portfolio of 4G/LTE phones, so they can stay connected even when away from home. Our mobile phones will include the latest models of Samsung, Sony, HTC, Huawei and Blackberry. We are turning up new towers every day, and – by the end of 2014 – we expect to have coverage across 95% of the state. We have roaming agreements in place with several of the major national U.S. carriers, so you can use your cell phone outside of Vermont, too.

How much does it cost?

We are still finalizing, but the following is directionally where we are going. Trying to make it very simple: During our soft launch period (now through December), the service will be free. When we commercially launch in the beginning of 2014, VTel will offer a number of flexible plans to suit our different customers' needs. Plans start as low as \$10/month for high-speed internet (1GB/month), in addition to the cost of equipment, which can be either purchased or rented. All plans are based on data usage. For an extra \$15/month, you can add a landline phone number. And for an extra \$10/month, you can get mobile phone service, with an 802 cell phone number, which includes some amount of LD and data (TBD). You can buy a new smartphone from VTel, or – if your current cell phone is unlocked, is 4G/LTE capable, and is compatible with our network, we'll send you a VTel SIM card and you won't need to buy a new phone. *We expect that an average customer will pay VTel \$70 / month (\$45 for internet if they pick the mid-tier package of 10GB, \$10 for VTel modem rental, and \$10 for mobile phone number + \$5 for data+call minutes).*

Diane Guité

Vice President of Business Development
Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.
354 River Street
Springfield, VT 05156
Phone: 802 885-7702
Mobile: 802 289-2190
E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 7:41 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE:

I also haven't heard back from the 5th floor about getting together to talk about VTel and that mess.

Separately, I need to talk w/ you about getting the group back together that met a couple of weeks ago. Jeb and I talked on Wed or Thurs of last week

-----Original Message-----

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 7:28 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: RE:

Please let Annie know of job cut forecast ASAP.

--

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
Agency of Commerce and Community Development National Life Building, Sixth Floor Montpelier VT 05620-0501
(802) 828-5204 office
(802) 989-0569 cell
lawrence.miller@state.vt.us

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2013 5:13 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject:

Revision didn't get contract. Was an opp for 100 jobs. \$68mln.
Met with them on Friday to prep for ramp up.
Jobs will be cut in Newport.

Can fill you in tomorrow. Or now, but am making manhattans

Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Brady, Ted - RD, MONTPELIER, VT <Ted.Brady@vt.usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2013 11:14 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: RE: Op Ed

Nor did I. Didn't share outside of RUS staff here. And I am almost positive none of them would take it upon themselves to make such a call.

-----Original Message-----

From: Miller, Lawrence [mailto:Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us]
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2013 12:31 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Brady, Ted - RD, MONTPELIER, VT
Subject: Re: Op Ed

I did not.

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 371-9075

> On Sep 27, 2013, at 2:44 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>

> Did either of you talk w/ Michel?

>

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** Michel Guite [mailto:mguite@vermontel.com]
> **Sent:** Thursday, September 26, 2013 10:32 AM
> **To:** Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence; ted.brady@vt.usda.gov
> **Subject:** RE: Op Ed

>

> Heard some indirect feedback there may be some concern that my Op Ed is critical of wireless? That is helpful feedback because intent was not (is not) to be anything but praising of U.S. wireless importance and excellence. If WSJ permits me to do so, I will try to clarify language. I have no idea whether they run it, or advise they plan to, or ask me to sign a release. This is all new. If anyone has a suggestion please let me know.

>

>

>

>

> Michel Guite
> President
> Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.
> 354 River Street
> Springfield, VT 05156
> Phone: 802 885-7000
> Mobile: 914 572-7664
> E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

>
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> _____
> _____
> From: Michel Guite
> Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 1:34 PM
> To: Bourgeois, Kiersten (Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us); Miller, Lawrence (Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us); Porter, James; Otley, Brian; Monder, Jeffrey; ted.brady@vt.usda.gov; McLean, Daniel (Sanders); Sullivan, Megan; Hilda Legg; OHara, Rob - RD, Amherst, MA; Stitzel, Liz (Leahy); Diane Guité; Guite, Sophie
> Subject: RE: Op Ed
>
> Sorry, the final edited version they liked is now correctly attached, cut to under 800 words..
>
> Michel Guite
> President
> Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.
> Phone: 802 885-7000
> Mobile: 914 572-7664
> E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com
> Get the latest news and updates on VTel GigE, VTelevision and VTel WOW - Like us on Facebook!
> From: Michel Guite
> Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 1:28 PM
> To: Bourgeois, Kiersten (Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us); Miller, Lawrence (Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us); Porter, James; 'Otley, Brian'; Monder, Jeffrey; 'ted.brady@vt.usda.gov'; 'McLean, Daniel (Sanders)'; 'Sullivan, Megan'; 'Hilda Legg'; 'OHara, Rob - RD, Amherst, MA'; 'Stitzel, Liz (Leahy)'; Diane Guité; 'Guite, Sophie'
> Subject: Op Ed
>
> Hi all,
>
> Received a welcome but unexpected email from Wall Street Journal a few minutes ago saying Op Ed editor Howard Dickman, and Featured Editor Mark Lasswell liked the attached Op Ed piece about GigE fiber in Vermont, and US policy, and phone poles etc..
>
> They said "We want to run the Op Ed but we are cramped for space this week".
>

> I may be naïve, but I like to think this means they might consider running it soon. If anyone on this list sees a problem, or sees anything that might embarrass our Governor, or our federal delegation, or USDA, or Vermont's companies including GMP, please advise. It isn't too late to change it, pull it, cancel it.

>

> I like the idea of 7 million readers learning more about Vermont, but realize that any embarrassment to our friends could cause great harm.

>

>

> Michel Guite

> President

> Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

> 354 River Street

> Springfield, VT 05156

> Phone: 802 885-7000

> Mobile: 914 572-7664

> E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com<<mailto:mguite@vermontel.com>>

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>

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2013 1:39 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Allen, Susan; Porter, James; Campbell, Chris
Subject: Re: Interviews w/ Wilson Ring and Kevin Kelley

we talked here about this issue and it would be good to connect; will try for this p.m. but may have to be tomorrow...

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Sep 18, 2013, at 12:15 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

> Quick update on this -
>
> Wilson is looking for a project (address) that was hard to serve and we will work with him to ID one. Interestingly, we haven't run into - or heard - about any that have been drama-filled, which is good. Jim, Chris and I are meeting this afternoon for our post-2013 assignment and will talk about Wilson's q as well.
>
> He also wants to talk to one of the last 170 that does NOT have a solution, yet. That could be a little more challenging.
>
> Will keep you all posted.
>
> He doesn't have a deadline, yet, so we can work with him on this.
>
> Thanks,
> Kiersten
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
> Sent: Saturday, September 14, 2013 7:16 AM
> To: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Allen, Susan
> Cc: Porter, James; Campbell, Chris
> Subject: Interviews w/ Wilson Ring and Kevin Kelley
>
> Yesterday, Jim, Chris and I talked broadband and cellular progress with Wilson and Kevin. Wilson's story will run in the next couple of days. Kevin's will be in the October Vermont Biz Magazine.
>
> We let them both know that we have about 170 left in the VTA unserved list; we are confident that every Vermonter will have a solution by the end of the year and there are several projects in progress that won't be completed until after 12-31. We used the marathon analogy to describe the consistent progress and how the last connections are the most challenging. We also talked about the usual challenges w/ large Dev projects.
>
> They both wanted to talk about broadband and economic development, which was great. I let them know that earlier this week we hosted a prospect from Canada that insists on reliable broadband. We also talked about the public/private partnership in Bethel w/ GW Plastics.
>

> Kevin asked Jim a bunch of Fairpoint questions, too. Mostly about where they were a few years ago vs today as a biz, but also thoughts on their future in VT.

>

> Kevin also asked more q's about cellular. We said its still a priority, relationships w/ carriers are good, etc. He asked if 100% coverage would be a boost to Eco Dev - we told him that yes, it would (obviously) but we are seeing consistent improvements on our major corridors and also in rural areas.

>

> We all steered clear of the VTel timing issue. And neither asked. Speaking of VTel, we should get together to chat soon. We Finally recd info from her that's a little scary re the outstanding 800 addresses.

>

> Thanks and have a nice weekend,

>

> Kiersten

>

>

>

> Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2013 11:30 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: Letters for Projects in Process and Unserved
Attachments: GPS BB VTA Letter v 1 0.docx; GPS BB Letter v 1 0 (2).docx

Hi Liz -

Here are revised letters. I pivoted from our original, "all VTers will have service" to our new "all VTers will have a solution" message.

The first is for VTA funded projects that are in process (about 340). Jim – are there any Fairpoint penalty projects in process as well that we can add to this list? There are a few new Comcast addresses that we can add into this, too. Award was approved on Friday and VTA is doing a release (they'll send to me for Gov quote and edits prior to launching). Note – I inserted a comment about improved public safety in this letter. I don't want in any way to suggest that by not having broadband in unserved areas presently means that there is a lack of police, etc. I was trying to include all beneficiaries of good internet access.

The second is based on the open grant round - NGA-137 - that the VTA manages. There are about 150-170 w/o a solution at this very moment, but we are confident that about ¾ of them can be reached by a cable line extension.

Neither deals with VTel – that would be a separate mailing (if we want to go there) b/c their completion dates change daily. That's what we can talk about when we all get together.

Questions for you:

- 1) Do you prefer a "Dear Vermonter" letter or shall we try to match names w/ addresses?
- 2) Do you want me to get into specific statistics re what we've already accomplished? We used some #s w/ Wilson and Kevin K. the other day that seemed well received; I just didn't want to get too wonky in these letters.

Thanks,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2013 8:56 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Northeast Kingdom Broadband Event

I've got VTA working on a Comcast release, too, that will announce some \$ to serve town of Chittenden. Will get draft and send you all suggested quotes.

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2013 8:46 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Northeast Kingdom Broadband Event

Sue late last week he got bothered that " all of these projects are happening and we aren't there" so I asked kiersten to prioritize planning some opportunities.. This and/or others...

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 16, 2013, at 8:42 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Hi Sue – this event was supposed to have happened in August, but final signatures were just received last Friday. Wondering if the Gov is available in Mid-October to participate in this announcement? The Canadian partners would like also to extend an invitation to the Premier as well, so this could be quite a big event.

Thoughts?

Thanks,
Kiersten

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 3:25 PM
To: Allen, Susan
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth
Subject: Northeast Kingdom Broadband Event

Hi Sue,

The VTA wants to do a public event that includes GPS which will highlight the incredible work that has been done to create a broadband network in the NEK, using disparate fiber that has been "woven" together to create a new, more robust infrastructure for this area. Further, this network connects w/ NH and Quebec. Also, this event will hopefully let ISPs know that this network is available for their use – it doesn't mean that Vermonters will immediately see new options for broadband.

Partners in this endeavor include: VTA, NCIC, NBRC, EDA, fed delegation, state of VT (including the legislature), VEC – as well as others that I am sure I am forgetting at this moment.

At this time, they are thinking of a date in early August, but I am not sure that's possible given the fact that they want to make this a rather large event-- likely Sen. Leahy and perhaps EDA.

There is also an economic development angle to this -- Evan Sealander and his brother (Winston? Winthrop?) will be establishing a data center on the Canadian side of the Tivoly property that will use this new network.

This certainly needs to be more fully discussed, but I think that announcing this is a great opportunity to show how we have the ability to take a very unique situation in the NEK and make it usable for the region; attract new providers, etc.

The only pitfalls that I see in doing this includes dredging up the old Northlink conversations (but this is a solution to that mess) and the subsequent investigations by EDA, but again, this is a good outcome. I will also talk w/ Michel about this tomorrow -- VTel does have a presence up there and they are in the midst of another flap w/ the VTA over leasing fiber...

Please let me know your thoughts? I tried to keep this as concise as possible...

Thanks,
Kiersten

Some background from the VTA w/ edits from me:

This new network will be made available to ISPs, provide backhaul for cellco's - much of the fiber covers unserved target corridors. Public safety will be served when we have cellular service. The VTA could not have applied for and received the Cellular Resiliency Grant in this area if there wasn't some way to provide high speed access along the corridor. Public Safety and AOT plan to be able to use that service to supplement this area - because this is an area where their radios do not work.

Schools will gain access to the Internet 2 program run by UVM / Epscor. This also makes possible the connections to the Canadian Canarie / RISQ network and schools throughout NH and Maine.

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, September 13, 2013 12:14 PM
To: Porter, James
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: It's time to brief Liz and Jeb on the Vtel

....situation. We just got some definitive info from them about 10 min ago.
I've also given the VTA board a heads up that we might need to add another few hundred back in.

Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Thursday, September 12, 2013 8:53 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Fwd: Vermont Business Magazine Story--Broadband and Cellular goals

this is most of the string that I was referring to. if you think the TPs are off or should be tweaked, or that kiersten disagreed and just didn't want to say so, just let me know. Need to work on boss being on same TPs but that is my job, obv's, and I will keep at it. Liz

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
Date: September 11, 2013, 1:20:43 PM EDT
To: "Campbell, Chris" <Chris.Campbell@state.vt.us>, "Miller, Elizabeth" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us>, "Porter, James" <James.Porter@state.vt.us>, "Spaulding, Jeb" <Jeb.Spaulding@state.vt.us>
Cc: "Allen, Susan" <Susan.Allen@state.vt.us>, "Porter, Louis" <Louis.Porter@state.vt.us>
Subject: RE: Vermont Business Magazine Story--Broadband and Cellular goals

Jim should be included, too.

From: Campbell, Chris
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2013 1:18 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James; Spaulding, Jeb
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Allen, Susan; Porter, Louis
Subject: Re: Vermont Business Magazine Story--Broadband and Cellular goals

OK, I will coordinate calendars with Kiersten and try to reschedule Kevin.

cjc

Christopher Campbell
Executive Director
Vermont Telecommunications Authority
802-828-1788
ccampbell@telecomvt.org
Public Free/Busy information: <http://bit.ly/Y3Zfpw>

From: Spaulding, Jeb
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2013 12:38 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth, Porter, James
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten, Campbell, Chris, Allen, Susan, Porter, Louis

Seems right on to me, both the joint approach and the overall message.

From: Miller, Elizabeth

Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2013 12:25 PM

To: Porter, James

Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Campbell, Chris; Allen, Susan; Porter, Louis; Spaulding, Jeb

Subject: Re: Vermont Business Magazine Story--Broadband and Cellular goals

Maybe out of efficiency and in light of common administration and VTA efforts you guys could just both talk to him together as a scheduled interview after the VTA meeting.

Broadband talking points: we continue to believe we have already identified projects, many of which are built or in process, for nearly all locations; some are still pending; a great deal of hard work going on. Here is data on how much we have done in the past 3 years (dollars, including penalty dollars, invested by "state" or regulatory process; locations served; speeds increased)... We are committed to bringing it to all locations. If timing and challenges come up just acknowledge them as Gov has done - the state's focus and role has been incredibly important in driving private enterprise in a competitive industry, but we can't control the weather, we don't tip the scale on permitting and the timing and effort needed there, we can't meet every financing challenge, and local voice/concerns do have to be addressed. It is like pushing through the last few miles of a very long road race - it is worth it to do it but increasingly difficult and somewhat slower as we get toward the wall. But the progress has been enormous and the importance to jobs and economic growth large.

As to VTel, I think I would tell reporters that it is a huge part of our goal; has been for years; incredibly important to see that project finished; know VTel is working on it and having some success but would like to see that continue and the pace increase (continuing road race analogy I guess) because their delay is our delay, and we don't want even more delays for the projects that remain.

Cellular: Chris knows the drill and has a good set of talking points re: need to continue focus to the extent we are able to work with and help direct or encourage (or participate) in cell based projects. Recent news, etc.

CC'ing some of the team here so that they can see the request and these suggestions and weigh in if they'd like. Liz

Elizabeth H. Miller

802-522-3090, cell

elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Sep 11, 2013, at 11:07 AM, "Porter, James" <James.Porter@state.vt.us> wrote:

He only wants to ask me about FairPoint and how they have done.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 11, 2013, at 11:06 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Guys – we should spend some time prior to this interview making sure that we are all on the same page.

From: Campbell, Chris
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2013 10:29 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Elizabeth
Subject: Vermont Business Magazine Story--Broadband and Cellular goals

I got a call from Kevin Kelly of Vt. Business Mag. He wants to do a story in the Oct. issue on where we are at with the 2013 cellular and broadband goals. Currently I'm scheduled to talk to him at 2:00 tomorrow. I might ask to put him off another day on the grounds that after the Board meeting on Friday morning, I'll have more fresh information to share. However, you (Kiersten or someone else in the administration) may want the opportunity to speak to where we are at. Would you? Has Kevin contacted you?

cjc

Christopher Campbell
Executive Director
Vermont Telecommunications Authority
802-828-1788
ccampbell@telecomvt.org
Public Free/Busy information: <http://bit.ly/Y3Zfpw>

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2013 1:45 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James
Cc: Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Telecom Update

My inclination is not to bring them into this, yet. I think that we need to talk internally first about what we observed/heard.

-----Original Message-----

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2013 1:39 PM
To: Porter, James
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Telecom Update

Great. Should we invite Sen. Sanders staff too? they have been helpful on the RUS piece in the past. I leave that to your judgment but let's meet soon.

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Sep 11, 2013, at 1:18 PM, "Porter, James" <James.Porter@state.vt.us> wrote:

> I think you covered it - and I agree we should talk with you all in person fairly soon.

>

>

>

> Jim Porter
> Senior Policy and
> Telecommunications Director
> Department of Public Service
> 112 State Street
> Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2601
> (802) 828-4003 (office)
> (802) 828-2342 (fax)
> (802) 522-6685 (mobile)
> james.porter@state.vt.us (email)

>

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** Bourgeois, Kiersten
> **Sent:** Wednesday, September 11, 2013 1:15 PM
> **To:** Spaulding, Jeb
> **Cc:** Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James
> **Subject:** RE: Telecom Update

>

> Hi Jeb - we are waiting for VTel to get us some data so we could best brief you all. In a nutshell, Jim and I read the RUS application and there is absolutely nothing that suggests they aren't on the hook to serve all unserveds in their ARRA geographic territory (read: they are responsible for all of 'em). But they are being slow on confirming some addresses that we sent them - about 1700. These addresses were sent to them following a discussion that Jim and I had w/ VTel that suggested they didn't feel that they were on the hook to serve all in ARRA territory. It was this same discussion that led us to Springfield to read the application...

>

> They think that they will hit all of them, but if there are addresses that definitely won't be served, we want to get them back in the unserved pot for funding.

>

> If they will serve them all, then we are down to about 138 addresses or so for which we need to find solutions. On Friday, we (VTA Board) will be talking about funding cable line extensions for a lot of them (about 90, I think) which will shave that number down significantly. Then we can start addressing the last 50 or so.

>

> Our meeting with VTel did, however, raise another issue: VTel's commitment to RUS, which we really can't do anything about. Michel said some conflicting things during our discussion and that is something, quite honestly, that should be discussed in person.

>

> I am hopeful that we will get the info from VTel today.

>

> Jim, have I missed anything?

>

>

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Spaulding, Jeb

> Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2013 12:40 PM

> To: Bourgeois, Kiersten

> Subject: Re: Telecom Update

>

> What happened to this?

>

> Jeb Spaulding, via mobile

> Secretary of Administration

> State of Vermont

>

>

> On Aug 30, 2013, at 7:33 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>

>> Perhaps after we get the new data and after Jim and read the application? We are heading down there next thurs. Maybe next Fri if that works for all scheds?

>> _____

>> From: Spaulding, Jeb

>> Sent: Friday, August 30, 2013 7:31 AM

>> To: Bourgeois, Kiersten

>> Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Porter, James

>> Subject: Re: Telecom Update

>>

>> Thanks for he update. When should we schedule the group meeting? I am sure Harriet would be happy to help in that regard.

>>
>> Jeb Spaulding, via mobile
>> Secretary of Administration
>> State of Vermont
>>
>>
>> On Aug 30, 2013, at 7:05 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>>
>>> Hi Jeb - earlier this week (Wednesday), Jim and I briefed Liz on some VTel updates that may impact our end of year goals. We are waiting for some data from them which is due today to get a better sense of what we are facing. In short, they aren't going to meet their 2013 goals (which we knew) and there may be about 1600 addresses in question which we may need to find other solutions. This was uncovered following our discussion w/ VTel about the Gov's desire to send out letters to folks that haven't yet gotten service and several follow-up conversations with them. There was an ongoing assumption that the figures that we had reflected those addresses that would be covered by VTel's RUS project.

>>>
>>> Jim and I are going to Springfield next week to read their RUS application (at VTel's invitation) to see exactly what their commitments are w/ respect to that project.

>>>
>>> Liz suggested that we all get together (including Chris C. and Pam Mck) to talk about next steps. The VTA still has about \$4.5 million.

>>>
>>> We will let you all know what VTel's # is when we receive it.

>>>
>>> Thanks,
>>> Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, August 30, 2013 7:15 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: telecom - followup

We have about 340 addresses that currently have projects in process by Fairpoint, SVC, et. al. (aside from VTel) that we have identified. Quick question for you - we can either try to match up names and addresses or the letters can be of a "Dear Vermonter" variety - thoughts? I think that it would be great if we could get actual names if at all possible.

Also, Jim and I are trying to find time to talk w/ Beth re: Southern VT.

Thanks - Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, August 29, 2013 9:24 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Other stuff

Will email Jeb today about meeting w/ Campbell, Pam, et. al.
Talking with Pam today to give her a preview of what the situation is Have scheduled time w/ Jim to go to VTel next Thursday Talking with GMP Tuesday AM Have a list of addresses that I will send to Liz for Gov letters (projects in progress) Will work on Putney, Dummerston and Westminster

-

Revision hears this week about their contract = 100 jobs. Even though their financials are shit, VEDA will try to play a role Meeting with Energizer real estate guy next Wed Will smooth out TPs for Mylan once Fred gets me his stuff Need to talk w/ you about Walmart. Seriously

-

Will fill you in on Dom's meeting w/ Obie after I hear from him

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2013 11:45 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Follow Up

If you want. It's weedy stuff, but we are going to talk w her about the VTel mtg, cable deviations and mobile wireless

Sent from my iPad

On Aug 28, 2013, at 11:39 AM, "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

should I also come to the 1 o'clock ? I will be back in town.

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 989-0569

"Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

I will write up my notes from this meeting, but next time we talk, I'd like to pitch an idea to you. Also, need to follow-up on Richmond Creamery, if necessary.

Jim and I are meeting w/ Liz at 1, but I'll be back up here around 2:30 or so.

From: Alexandra Serra [<mailto:Alexandra.Serra@wal-mart.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2013 5:02 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Follow Up

Dear Kiersten,

I want to personally thank you for your participation in the US Manufacturing Summit in Orlando last week. The conference was a huge success and a step forward in our effort to buy an additional \$50 billion in U.S. made products over the next 10 years. We believe the summit represented a real and tangible opportunity for you to meet with interested suppliers by connecting with them directly and trust you made valuable contacts during your time at the summit.

I look forward to continuing to work with you. I expect that there will be a follow up email inquiry from our Made in the USA team asking you for some additional information on your supplier meetings. Please know that I will continue to be your primary point of contact at Walmart related to the summit and am happy to assist you with any follow-up needs you may have. My full contact information is as follows:

Alexandra Serra

(c) 479.285.1863

Alexandra.Serra@wal-mart.com

P.O. Box 150

Hallowell, ME 04347

I look forward to continuing our partnership in expanding US manufacturing in Vermont. Please let me know how I can support any efforts on your end.

Sincerely,

Alex

Alexandra Serra Director, Public Affairs and Government Relations

Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont

Phone 479.285.1863

Alexandra.Serra@wal-mart.com

Walmart

P.O. Box 150

Hallowell, ME 04347

<Picture (Device Independent Bitmap) 1.jpg>

This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error destroy it immediately. *** Walmart Confidential ***

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2013 2:59 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Update

Hi Liz,
Sorry to bother you on what I'm sure is a busy day. Jim and I are wondering if you might have time this wk for a VTel update?

Thanks,
Kiersten

Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2013 5:21 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Porter, James; Recchia, Chris; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: VTel and broadband mapping update

Agreed and focus first on 1700+

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 21, 2013, at 4:59 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Yes. That sounds like a good plan.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 21, 2013, at 4:40 PM, "Porter, James" <James.Porter@state.vt.us> wrote:

For the past couple of weeks we have been talking about 10,900 unserved addresses that were going to be served by VTel. This was incorrect as many of these 10,000 are to be served by FairPoint and other projects in process. The number of unserved addresses to be served by VTel is actually 7283. I was not aware until an hour ago that some time ago a former employee chose to exclude mobile wireless broadband (provided by AT&T and Verizon) from being considered served. I just had Stone Environmental incorporate the current mobile wireless broadband coverage into the 7283 addresses to be served by VTel. 5,620 of the 7283 addresses are currently served by AT&T and Verizon according to their propagation maps. So, by that accounting there are only 1,663 locations currently unserved that are projected to be served by VTel. It seems to me that this is the number we should have VTel analyze to determine when/if they will provide service. It would be informative to have them analyze the 7283 addresses as well I think.

Any thoughts?

Thanks,

<image001.gif>
Jim Porter
Senior Policy and
Telecommunications Director
Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2601
(802) 828-4003 (office)
(802) 828-2342 (fax)
(802) 522-6685 (mobile)
james.porter@state.vt.us (email)

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2013 1:14 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Can you pls call me?

VTel issue. Going to see Liz w/ Jim at 230

Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 11:42 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Porter, James
Subject: Broadband Briefing 81213 final.docx
Attachments: Broadband Briefing 81213 final.docx

Hi Liz – a quick overview of where we are prior to today's meeting. I apologize for not getting this to you sooner, but the VTA and DPS folks literally just finished the latest data scrub.

In short, we have 172 w/o a solution. This # is higher than previous b/c of VTel addresses being added back in; Duncan Cable pulling an application to the VTA and some heavy-duty data verification that I am pushing. The good news is that the vast **majority (150+)** are likely to be served by cable line extensions. Jim, Chris and I met this AM to talk through how this might work (VTA grant to provider or having customer call to request) and this is something that we will want to talk w/ you about in greater detail.

Pls let me know if you have any q's prior to meeting. I'll be over there for the St. Albans meeting at 1:30 also.

Thanks,
Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, August 09, 2013 2:03 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Draft letters for Monday's discussion
Attachments: GPS BB Letter v. 1.0.docx; GPS BB VTA Letter v. 1.0.docx

Hi Liz –

Here is a quick draft of the VTA award letter that we can review on Monday. I also am resending the 'no solution, yet' draft so you have them both handy.

I am pushing VTA and Stone to get me a final list of unserveds and asked them to map them, too.

Talked to VTel – they expect to have Putney/Westminster/Dummerston lit up by end of year. I asked Diane G. to let me know if there is any change, to pls let me know.

Thanks,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, August 01, 2013 10:35 AM
To: Recchia, Chris
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James
Subject: RE: BBVT addresses

Hi Chris,

I checked all of these addresses using broadbandvt.org and each of them clearly has a solution identified, except one (Barton). However, the website is a little weird, so I had to cross reference it with the PSD database and it all checks out.

All are to be served by VTel. Re: Barton, I couldn't find a [REDACTED] address, but doing a wider search, I found that the entire road will be served by VTel.

So, is this really a VTel timing question?

Thanks,
Kiersten

From: Recchia, Chris
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2013 11:25 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth
Subject: Fwd: BBVT addresses

Hi Kiersten -

As I mentioned in the last telecom meeting, our consumer affairs folks are going to compile a list weekly of addresses that are brought to our attention that our maps indicate are served but contact either with the consumer or provider indicate they are not - or at least where they've run into uncertainty

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Pariseau, Tamera" <Tamera.Pariseau@state.vt.us>
Date: July 31, 2013, 5:48:40 PM EDT
To: "Recchia, Chris" <Chris.Recchia@state.vt.us>
Subject: BBVT addresses

Chris,
Here are the addresses identified this week through the Broadbandvt.org/CAP process in which it cannot be reliably determined if the addresses are served or not (or will be served or not through the VTel WOW project).

[REDACTED] South Albany Road, Barton

■ Knapp Rd, Dummerston
■ Dole Rd, West Rupert
■ Deer Park Rd, West Halifax
■ Stony Brook Rd, Stockbridge

Miller, Lawrence

From: Allen, Susan
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2013 6:00 AM
To: Allen, Susan
Subject: MEDIA CLIPS FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 31:

BRATTLEBORO REFORMER:

State gives OK for AT&T upgrade in Vernon
By MIKE FAHER
Reformer Staff

VERNON — AT&T apparently is looking to improve its wireless service in the Vernon area.

The Vermont Public Service Board has approved a project proposed by New Cingular Wireless PCS — doing business as AT&T Mobility — to place new antennas on an existing tower.

The board, in issuing a certificate of public good for the project, said its impacts on the tower site will be minimal.

“The proposed project will consist of modifications to an existing telecommunications facility that will not increase the height or width of the facility,” board members wrote in an order dated July 22.

Furthermore, the project “will not create impervious surfaces surrounding the facility,” officials said.

While an AT&T spokesman did not respond to a request for comment, state documents show that the company’s upgrades are targeted for a 107-foot-tall “monopine” tower that already stands at 168 Princess Lane in Vernon.

The project includes installation of three panel antennas, each measuring eight feet tall by one foot wide, on that tower. There also will be an equipment cabinet and rack and a replacement power plant placed within the tower’s existing equipment shelter, documents show.

The antennas “will not extend vertically above the existing tower and will extend approximately four feet horizontally from the existing tower,” the board’s final report says.

A certificate of public good means the board has found that a project “will promote the general good of the state.” AT&T is not permitted to undertake “any material deviation or substantial change in the project” without the service board’s prior approval.

Both AT&T and VTel Wireless have proposed several projects in Windham County recently to upgrade their wireless capabilities. AT&T is focusing on cellular service, while VTel has been promoting its wireless, highspeed Internet service in underserved areas.

In March, AT&T received state approval to build a new, 139-foot-tall tower in South Newfane despite concerns expressed by nearby residents. The tower will provide better coverage in the Dover Road corridor, the company has said.

A similar controversy arose when AT&T proposed a tower in Dover. The company eventually agreed to move the 140-foot-tall tower to a different part of the same property and to camouflage the structure using a monopine design.

The Public Service Board issued a certificate of public good for the Dover project in late June.

**Vermont Yankee to lay off 30
Associated Press / Reformer Staff**

VERNON — The owner of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant says about 30 jobs will be cut by the end of the year.

Entergy Corp. spokesman Terry Young said the cuts represent about a 4 percent reduction from the Vernon plant's workforce and are part of about 800 layoffs throughout the company.

Entergy says it employs about 15,000 companywide. It owns and operates power plants with about 30,000 megawatts of generating capacity, including more than 10,000 megawatts of nuclear generation capacity. Young said the company knows how many people will be laid off but hasn't yet determined which ones. He said the cuts won't be focused on any one area and that the company will make sure the reductions don't pose any hazards to the plant's operation.

Earlier this month, Chanel Lagarde, a national spokesman for Entergy Corp., issued a statement saying there are "a number of companywide strategic imperatives under way examining how we meet both the challenges and opportunities of today's business realities."

"One specific initiative is focused on finding ways to increase efficiencies in all parts of our business," Lagarde said. "We do expect workforce reductions to be one result of this initiative. We don't have final specifics at this time regarding who or how many employees will be affected."

The statement added that Entergy will "remain focused on all our key stakeholders throughout this process, and we will deal fairly and communicate openly and honestly."

"We will not compromise safety, security, reliability, customer service or compliance as we move forward," Lagarde said.

On July 16, Entergy said its second- quarter operational earnings are expected to be approximately \$1 per share compared with \$2.11 per share in the second quarter last year.

The company attributed a decrease in earnings to "substantially higher income-tax expense than the prior year" as well as to "higher non-fuel operation and maintenance expense and higher depreciation expense."

Also cited in the notice were lower revenues due to "lower volume and energy prices" for the company's nuclear holdings.

Additionally, the earnings release noted "expenses associated with the implementation of the human capital management strategic imperative."

The long-term future of Vermont Yankee remains in doubt due to an ongoing court battle with the state.

Though the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission has renewed the plant's license for another two decades, the state Public Service Board has not yet issued a certificate of public good for the facility's continued operation.

A federal judge ruled in 2012 that Vermont lawmakers overstepped their authority when they voted to forbid issuance of a state certificate of public good for Vermont Yankee.

State officials have appealed.

Due to that uncertainty, Entergy has not renegotiated a longterm tax deal with the town of Vernon. In May, Vernon Selectboard approved a second oneyear extension of an expired taxstabilization agreement keeping the Vermont Yankee plant's value steady at \$300 million.

Board discusses future of bridge

By CHRIS MAYS

Reformer Staff

HALIFAX — The Selectboard will be drafting a letter to send to Holden Engineering regarding the restoration of Old County North Bridge.

"This has sort of been a project that's been ongoing," said Halifax Selectboard Chairwoman Edee Edwards. "We started off believing we could replace the wood deck with concrete decking but it turned out, the existing beams weren't going to support that weight."

Before the letter goes out, board members plan to conduct more research to get a clearer idea on how to move forward on the project.

On July 29, the Halifax Selectboard held a special meeting to discuss the future of the bridge. It is a bridge that was not considered to be a part of post Tropical Storm Irene damage assessment. Still, its decking needs replacing, which has been the topic of the board's conversations of the bridge.

"We have been working with an engineer to figure out how to best replace it," said Edwards.

The board researched several viable options. It found four or five different options of possible bridge designs. During discussions, the supported weight load for the bridge being planned was increasing, Edwards said.

When looking at cost estimates, the Selectboard started asking "if that level of weight was really necessary."

"It's a bridge that goes to a road that leads to a town trail, so it's not traveled a lot. We want to make sure we're sizing it appropriately," said Edwards.

The board plans to sign the letter to the engineering firm at the next board meeting on Aug. 6.

The board has received various e-mails from residents that live in the surrounding area. They gave feedback on how they think the bridge should be designed, which echoed concerns of the Selectboard about weight limit and size.

ON A1 (FROM YESTERDAY'S BANNER): Shumlin asking lawmakers to appropriate \$2M to Vermont Veterans Home

By NEAL P. GOSWAMI

<http://brattlebororeformer.vt.newsmemory.com/>

BENNINGTON BANNER:

State: Many understanding health care

KEITH WHITCOMB JR.

Staff Writer

BENNINGTON — With more than 80,000 Vermonters expected to be required to purchase health care through the state exchange come Jan. 1, the Department of Vermont Health Access believes many are starting to get the message, but many more still need to hear it.

Vermont Health Connect will allow people to begin enrolling in plans starting Oct. 1, said Department of Vermont Health Access Commissioner Mark Larson. Larson was in Bennington Tuesday to speak at a forum at Mount Anthony Country Club to talk about the health exchange. He told the Banner that the event was being hosted by the Bennington Rotary Club and the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce.

Larson said the chamber is considered a navigator organization. Part of the Department of Vermont Health Access strategy to spread the word about the exchange is to train a few hundred “navigators” who can host informational sessions to target audiences such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and young people.

Larson said a little over 171 navigators have been trained with the goal being 300. The Internet and social media are also being used to get the word out. Visit the exchange’s website at www.vermonthealthconnect.gov. Email the organization at vthealthconnect@state.vt.us, follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/VermontHealthConnect, or follow on Twitter @vthealthconnect.

While Larson attended the chamber/Rotary meeting, he said the goal is for navigator organizations like that to be able to host events without a department member present. More meetings will be held in Bennington and the rest of the state, and department is also planning a media campaign using radio, television, and newspapers.

Individuals and those who work for companies with under 50 full-time employees must purchase health insurance through the exchange. Larson said if they do not enroll by Dec. 15 they may not be covered starting in January and will have to wait for February. Those who are late to enroll by a few days may get coverage by then, just not an insurance card.

Few are expected to rush to the exchange to buy health insurance when enrollment opens in October, Larson said. The department anticipates many will wait until November and there will be some who do not realize they must enroll until December.

Both the Vermont Health Access Program and Catamount Health will end Dec. 31. Larson said for many of the people enrolled in those, the transition will be smooth, but the DVHA will work with those to make sure those who need to go through the exchange.

The exchange itself is mandated by the federal Affordable Care Act. All states must have one in place or the federal government will implement one. Vermont is one of the states that chose to build its own. Larson said federal grants are paying for the \$171 million start-up cost, which includes the first year of operation. After that it will cost the state \$18 million annually.

Larson said the state would like to use the exchange’s eligibility calculator on other state programs, such as food and heating assistance. The calculator will also inform those using the exchange what, if any, tax credits they can receive depending on their income and family size.

Secretary of State Jim Condos also announced Tuesday that Vermont residents will be able to register to vote at the health exchange’s website.

Earlier this year, few Vermonters knew anything about the exchange, mainly because the department did not have many of the answers people were looking for, Larson said. Now that the Green Mountain Care Board, the independent entity that sets insurance rates and hospital budgets, has decided what the two carriers involved in the exchange can charge, there are answers concerning costs, Larson said, adding that most people seem to have accepted the exchange as something that will happen. The goal behind it, he said, is to get more people covered. Cost control is done

elsewhere. He said about 93 percent of Vermonters are insured and the exchange is expected to increase that to 97 percent.

He said the requirement for businesses with over 50 employees to use the exchange if they wish to offer employees health care has been delayed a year. The news of the delay confused many, he said, but beyond that few aspects of the plan have changed.

Plan could solve vet home budget woes

NEAL P.GOSWAMI Senior Staff Writer

BENNINGTON — A plan to boost the census at the Vermont Veterans Home and help close a \$3.5 million projected budget with Massachusetts residents will require a policy change in that state, according to state officials.

Officials at the Bennington residential care facility are hoping an application with Massachusetts' Medicaid program will be approved and the state will allow veterans living nearby to reside here. An application has already been submitted.

"They are going through a process now to accept Medicaid patients from Massachusetts, in this case, veterans," said Vermont Secretary of Administration Jeb Spaulding.

According to Spaulding, officials in Massachusetts have offered contradictory opinions on whether Vermont could receive payment from the Massachusetts Medicaid program. One opinion suggested that payment from Massachusetts to Vermont would not be allowed because of available space in Massachusetts.

"That's not particularly good news," he said.

State officials will continue to work with Vermont Veterans Home Administrator Melissa Jackson and hopefully "work through the political challenges to loosen their policy."

"That's not a done deal by any means," Spaulding said.

Joseph L. Krawczyk Jr., president of the Vermont Veterans Home Board of Trustees, said there are several factors in Vermont's favor. The Bennington home already accepts veterans from New York who live within 50 miles of the state border. Massachusetts has a similar policy, he said.

"I understand what Massachusetts is doing. They want to keep their Medicaid dollars," he said. "(New York has) a 50-mile rule too, but we've been able to work with New York." Krawczyk said veterans have been placed on a waiting list at the Soldier's Home in Holyoke, Mass. At least 250 veterans "are interested in admission as beds become available," he said.

An official at the Holyoke facility has sent a letter, at the request of Vermont officials, to the Medicaid program in Massachusetts highlighting the lengthy waiting list, Krawczyk said. That letter could help with the approval process, he said.

"We shouldn't have veterans in neighboring states on waiting lists when we've got beds right here," Krawczyk said. "We've been working on it. We have not let this go since we were made aware of the fact that they have such a waiting list. It seems ludicrous."

Approval would aid the Massachusetts veterans waiting for a state-run veterans home, but it would also help the Vermont home raise its census and reduce its deficit. Lawmakers provided an additional \$1.4 million for the home, but it is projected to end the fiscal year with a \$3.5 million deficit.

Spaulding told members of the Legislature's Joint Fiscal Committee last week that he and other members of Gov. Peter Shumlin's administration are likely to seek an additional \$2 million in the annual budget adjustment midway through the fiscal year.

A consultant is expected to release a Legislature-commissioned report on Aug. 8 detailing how the home can sustain itself.

VALLEY NEWS EDITORIAL: Editorial: Road Work Ahead; N.H. Falls Further Behind

The good news is that New Hampshire's transportation funding crisis is a very solvable problem. The bad news is that it was a very solvable problem earlier this year when the Legislature chose not to solve it. We suppose that as the deficiencies in the state's transportation infrastructure become ever more glaring, the chances that the Legislature will take action will improve, but that's not a promising management strategy for a system that requires planning and regular investment.

There's no doubt that those shortcomings are becoming ever more difficult to ignore. As staff writer Ben Conarck reported last week, Lebanon has one of the largest inventories of bridges in need of attention among communities in the state. Of the 60 or so bridges in the city, 13 are on the state's or city's red list, a designation meaning they have known structural deficiencies. That doesn't mean they're considered unsafe, but a red-listed bridge requires heightened monitoring. It also means a greater likelihood of nasty surprises such as the one in 2008, when deterioration of the bridge linking West Lebanon and White River Junction suddenly required a lowering of its posted weight limit. Until a temporary bridge was put up, truckers were forced to use detours — not just creating unnecessary expense but also taking them into places where they weren't wanted.

Lebanon's bridge situation is just a symptom of the larger problem — too few funds to adequately maintain the state's transportation network. State Transportation Commissioner Chris Clement forecasts that the highway fund will find itself \$55 million short in 2016, and he is making contingency plans to lay off as many as 600 of his department's 1,600 employees. The state is also scrambling to find the \$250 million it needs to finish off the expansion of Interstate 93 in southern New Hampshire. Meanwhile, about 1,600 miles of New Hampshire roads are rated as in poor condition and about one-third of its bridges need repair or replacement.

The cause of the problem is no mystery. At 18 cents per gallon, New Hampshire's gas tax is the lowest in New England. The Legislature's refusal to increase the tax for more than 20 years amounts to a major cut in funding because the price of highway work has increased significantly.

Inadequate funding is hardly eye-popping news in New Hampshire, but this particular sort of penny-pinching is especially shortsighted. Bad roads and bridges don't merely challenge the patience and sometimes threaten the safety of travelers, they also hamper economic development. What's the sense of keeping taxes low as a way of attracting people and businesses to the state if those low taxes are contributing to an inadequate transportation system that's driving them away?

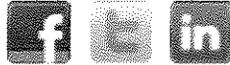
In March, the House decided that it didn't make much sense at all and passed a bill calling for a modest gas tax increase — 12 cents a gallon, to be phased in over three years. However, the Senate overwhelmingly rejected the measure, a defeat most observers interpreted as a retaliatory gesture in response to the House's rejection of a Senate-passed casino bill.

Legislators interviewed by Conarck observed that a gas tax increase stands a better chance when lawmakers return next year. Considering that the need is obvious and that such a measure offers a straightforward way to have users of the transportation network pay for the increased cost of maintaining it, it should be an easy sell. Then again, there's no guarantee that the state's chronic case of tax-aversion or an acute attack of political gamesmanship won't emerge as roadblocks.

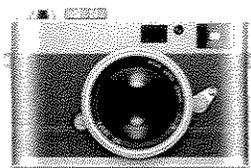
Miller, Lawrence

From: Vermont Chamber of Commerce <vcc@vtchamber.ccsend.com> on behalf of Vermont Chamber of Commerce <news@vtchamber.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2013 9:19 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Commerce Connection, July 30, 2013

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)



Commerce Connection is the statewide newsletter from The Vermont Chamber of Commerce.



Call for Photos

We are still looking for images that depict "People at Work." If you have quality photos that reflect your employees, customers, or business partners in a work environment, please let us know.

Photo Requirements: Color. Original photo must be 1280x960, or 1.2 megapixels. **We don't need photos of landscapes (e.g. sunsets, rolling hills, cows); however, we do need photos to be taken in landscape orientation, i.e. horizontal.** Photo credit will be provided.

In This Issue

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[Tax Compliance and Improving Tax Collection](#)
[Education](#)
[Health Care](#)
[Featured Member Benefit](#)
[Save the Date](#)

Signature Event

Celebrate the 2013 Hospitality Award Winners

Tickets are now available to the Seventh Annual Vermont Chamber Hospitality Gala on September 10. The event will take place at the [Mountain Top Inn & Resort](#) in Chittenden in "The Barn" -- their new event space. A incredible room rate of \$100 including breakfast is available for attendees-- a great opportunity to celebrate the tourism industry while experiencing a spectacular resort and pristine mountain views. As the Vermont Chamber's premier hospitality celebration, this special evening recognizes individuals and businesses for their accomplishments and contributions to the state's tourism economy. This creative black tie event is an exceptional networking experience that provides contact with high-profile people who exemplify the success one of the State's leading industries. [CLICK HERE](#) to register and view a photo album from last year's event.



Tourism

2014 Vermont Vacation Guide: Call For Summer/Fall Information

We need summer and fall photos and tourism information about your region for the 2014 Vermont Vacation Guide. We are looking for a variety of high-resolution images that include action, family, events, weddings, and culinary shots that depict people enjoying experiences in Vermont. We are always looking to represent the wide diversity of Vermont visitors.

You can also promote your town or region in our resources section to out-of-state visitors by sending us the following information on markets/events between April and October 2014:

- Farmers' Markets - Town, address, range of dates, times of market, phone number and/or website.

[CLICK HERE](#) to submit your photos and sign a photo release form, or email us at news@vtchamber.com.



DEW Construction Corp
Announces New Projects in Jay,
Derby and Whitingham

Vermont Telephone Co.
VTel To Build State-of-the-Art Fiber
Network In Springfield and
Neighboring Towns Via Federal
Funds

NVDA
Development Group Buys
Renaissance Block in Newport

ReArch Company
To Construct and Own New Office
Building in St. Albans

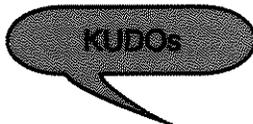
CW
Travel + Leisure Names CW #2 in
Top Tour Operator Category for
2013

**Tech Vault Inc and Cabot
Creamery**
Partner on Data Center Agreement

Norwich University
Announces Renewal of \$250K
Grant for Nursing Students in
Master's Program

PC Construction
Wins \$215M Joint Venture Contract
For D.C. Clean River Project

Lyndon Institute
VEDA Approves \$4.4M In Tax-
exempt Industrial Revenue Bonds
for Lyndon Institute



"Since joining the Vermont Chamber and enhancing our web listing on VisitVT.com, we've seen an increase in traffic from interested

- Festivals and Art & Craft Shows - Name of festival/ show, town of event, dates, phone number and/or website.
- Fairs and Field Days - Name of fair, town of event, dates, phone number and/or website.
- Fishing Derbies and Fishing Events - Name of event, town of event, dates, phone number and/or website.
- Marina and Watercraft Rental information - Name of marina/rental, town, phone number and/or website,
- Any other summer and fall 2014 events or information in your area that you'd like to share.

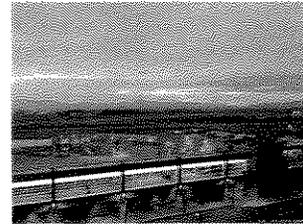
Please send information and photos by September 19 to Lindsay Cahill Lord at llord@vtchamber.com.

Manufacturing

Aerospace and Aviation Trade Show

Join us next week (August 8) for the Vermont Chamber *Aerospace and Aviation Trade Show* at the [Burlington International Airport](#).

Registration includes an airport parking voucher. Your name will also be entered into a raffle to win two airline ticket vouchers from Porter Airlines. [CLICK HERE](#) to see the list of exhibitors and to register.



Gold sponsors for the trade show are [Intertek](#), [Vermont Business Magazine](#), [Mansfield Heliflight](#). Silver Sponsors include [GVH Studio](#), [Superior Technical Ceramic](#), [Vermont Agency of Transportation Aviation Program](#), [WCAX](#) and [Windstream Communications](#).

Advocacy

Sub-Committee Participation Needed

The Vermont Chamber's advocacy team has assembled two sub-committees that will be working through August to research and analyze labor and fiscal policy issues. We are still looking for volunteers to participate on both committees as we move forward with policy planning for the upcoming session. If you would like to learn more about the research and work occurring in these sub-committees, or would like to volunteer to offer input and analysis, please contact Jessica Gingras at jgingras@vtchamber.com.

Tax Compliance and Improving Tax Collection

The Vermont Chamber's Government Affairs Program Manager, Jessica Gingras, attended a meeting last week with Lieutenant Governor Phil Scott and representatives from the Tax Department to discuss the department's newly established Policy, Outreach, and Legislative Affairs Division. Numerous business members, particularly in the retail industry, have contacted us about the outcomes of recent tax compliance audits. To contribute to the conversation, share a story regarding a

parties both as visitors to our website and to the Meadery itself."

~ Kelly Klein
CEO, [Groenfell Meadery](#)



ServSafe® Food Safety Training
Vermont Chamber members save \$50 on [ANSI-recognized workshops](#).



Discount Management Training
Resources are available to joint members of the Vermont Chamber and the [American Hotel and Lodging Association](#).

Business Ownership Webinars
The U.S. Small Business Administration offers free one-hour webinars about starting a business on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. Email Christ.Herriman@sba.gov or visit www.sba.gov/vt.



recent audit, or ask general tax questions, contact Jessica Gingras at jgingras@vtchamber.com.

Education

Upcoming Webinars

Benefits and Outcomes of Pursuing Your Degree in Business or Organizational Leadership
presented by Union Institute & University
August 14, 11-11:30 am
[CLICK HERE](#) to register.

ServSafe® Food Safety Certification Classes & Exams

September 19, 8:30-5 pm
Hosted by the Best Western Plus Waterbury-Stowe, Waterbury
[CLICK HERE](#) to register.

September 26, 8:30-5 pm
Hosted by the Vermont Food Industry Convention & Expo, Essex Junction
[CLICK HERE](#) to register.

Vermont Chamber members receive \$50 off tuition for ServSafe® Food Safety Certification Classes & Exams.

Health Care

Small Business Forums

As a certified state-wide Navigator, the Vermont Chamber can help businesses learn more about Vermont Health Connect, assess options, and assist businesses and their employees throughout the enrollment process. [CLICK HERE](#) for a list of upcoming small business forums to learn more about healthcare reform and Vermont Health Connect.

Is Your Business "Small" or "Large?"

Until 2016, "small businesses" are defined as those employing 50 or fewer employees. Only small businesses are eligible to participate in Vermont Health Connect. For a useful worksheet on how to count to 50, [CLICK HERE](#).

To learn more about Vermont Health Connect, [CLICK HERE](#).



Featured Member Benefit

Valuable Connections

The Vermont Chamber offers numerous opportunities for members to promote their businesses, develop new contacts, learn about demand for new products and services and understand the legislative and regulatory environment. Valuable connection opportunities for members include:

- Industry recognition
- Access to trusted business-to-business (B2B) referrals and introductions
- Supply chain matchmaking
- Access to state and federal government officials
- The Vermont Chamber's Signature Events that celebrate Vermont companies with a focus on tourism, manufacturing and service sectors.

To learn more about the benefits of Chamber membership and how you can make valuable connections, contact June Dobbins at jdobbins@vtchamber.com or 802-262-2133.

Save the Date

Vermont Chamber Aerospace & Aviation Trade Show
 August 8, 2013
 Burlington International Airport

Vermont Chamber Hospitality Gala
 September 10, 2013
 Mountain Top Inn & Resort

Sponsorship



CONTACT US

The Vermont Chamber of Commerce
 751 Granger Road - Berlin
 Barre, VT 05641
 Mailing Address:
 P.O. Box 37
 Montpelier, VT 05601
 Phone: 802-223-3443
 Fax 802-223-4257
 Email: info@vtchamber.com
 Website: www.vtchamber.com

ABOUT US

In business since 1912, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce is a private not-for-profit business organization with 1,500 members employing 45,000 people and representing all sectors of the state's economy. Our mission is to create an economic climate conducive to business growth and preservation of the Vermont quality of life.

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This email was sent to lawrence.miller@state.vt.us by news@vtchamber.com

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2013 4:31 PM
To: Allen, Susan
Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Porter, James
Subject: Steve Zind - Cell Story

Hi Sue – Chris Campbell just called me to let me know that he’s scheduled to do an interview w/ Zind later this week about progress/plans on the cell front.

In an effort to ensure that our messages are coordinated, I’d like to suggest a few talking points that we can share with Chris:

- 1) We will continue to work on improving cell coverage in our state post- 2013. It is important to Vermont citizens, our business community and tourists.
- 2) Innovative solutions have already been implemented to address coverage needs in rural areas – e.g. CoverageCo (I know...); the Bethel tower project and the work that VTel is doing w/ their 4G project.
- 3) We will also continue to work with major carriers and help them, where we can, deploy service around the state
- 4) In addition, we will continue to work on breaking down barriers to investment (extending 248a, etc.)

Thoughts? I tried to be as big-picture as possible...don’t need to lock us in to any specifics at this point.

Thanks,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Kevin Ellis <kevin@ksepartners.com>
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2013 1:21 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Sen. Sanders and Vtel
Attachments: image001.jpg

FYI.

KE

--
Kevin Ellis
Partner
KSE Partners, LLP

Cambridge Montpelier Washington

O: 802.229.4900 x107
M: 802.371.8112
www.KsePartners.com
Kevin@KsePartners.com

separtners.com>

Cc: "Justin M. Robinson" <jmrobins@vermontel.com>
Subject: FYI: release sent to Vt. media

I thought you would be interested to know that we just sent out this release to Vermont media. It is based on the information that we included in our broadband update.

SENATOR BERNIE SANDERS

United States Senator for Vermont



Sanders.Senate.gov

Vermont at Cutting Edge on Broadband

WASHINGTON, July 17 – Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) said today that a region in southeastern Vermont is getting the fastest consumer connection to the Internet anywhere in the United States.

Springfield, Vt., and 13 neighboring towns – Saxons River, Chester, North Springfield, Grafton, Bridgewater, Cuttingsville, Wallingford, Hartland, Killington, Pawlet, Danby, Mt. Holly and Middletown Springs – are in the process of getting state-of-the-art Internet access at speeds 100 times faster than average and faster than anywhere else in the United States except a Kansas City, Mo., pilot project by Google.

“Vermont may be on the verge of reaping enormous dividends from this historic investment in our future,” Sanders said of the new fiber optic service. “The ultra-fast Internet offers the chance to dramatically change how we think about education, health care and business,” Sanders added.

“The goal now is to use this resource to attract business and create good-paying jobs,” Sanders said of the region that once was a national hub for the tool-and-die industry but lost thousands of good-paying jobs as manufacturers shut down.

The cutting-edge development is a result of a federal, state and local government partnership with private business to significantly upgrade the Internet infrastructure in the Springfield area and in other parts of Vermont. The Springfield project is being built by Springfield-based Vermont Telephone Co. VTel received federal funds to build the fiber network that will provide affordable broadband access throughout its 14-town service area. VTel's monthly price for the high-speed Internet access is only about \$35.

About 1,500 homes and business in the Springfield area already have the new fiber-optic connection, a number which VTel expects to double by the end of December. By the end of 2013, VTel says the framework of the fiber work, which includes running the fiber through 14 towns and into neighborhoods, will be complete. During the remainder of this year and throughout 2014, homes will continue to be linked to that network.

The growing list of companies already wired include Black River Meats, Lucas Industries, One Credit Union and Vermont Timberworks. “It does save us time, and time is money,” said Doug Friant, the owner of the company which specializes in designing timber frames and buildings.

Adam Trojanowski, a 38-year-old software developer for IBM who lives in Chester, Vt., was one of the first to sign up for the state-of-the art fiber connection. “I work with people in different sites and now I’m on a par with them,” he said. “When I told the people I work with who live in New York that I was getting this fiber they were envious. I don’t think anywhere in the world has anything faster for consumers.”

Bob Flint, executive director of the Springfield Regional Development Corp., said the Internet service will lure businesses to southeastern Vermont. “This is a huge asset, a huge arrow in the quiver,” Flint said of the arrival the fiber optic connections to Springfield.

Contact: Michael Briggs (202) 224-5141

###

Daniel McLean
Senior Press Advisor
Office of U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders

daniel_mclean@sanders.senate.gov
(802) 862-0697 office phone

Visit Senator Sanders' Online Resources:
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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, July 19, 2013 2:35 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Broadband in Putney ??

I rec'd a similar message from Mike this am at around 6:

Here's my suggestion – let me really dig into this w/ VTel. I have to follow up with them anyway on where they really are in terms of buildout (we didn't get exactly what we wanted from our meeting). My only feeling about sending a letter is the fact that this limited area is the Gov's hometown...if I am a resident of Irasburg (for example) w/o a solution or a VTel solution that will be deployed on XX date, I'd be furious and assume that the Gov is only looking out for his town. I can also quickly put together a list of who has planned projects, etc. I am actually speaking with Mike Smith at 3 and can ask about this.

I will also draft a letter back to Mrowicki. I can speak to the FTTH info that he references, etc.

He is such a great guy and trying so incredibly hard to satisfy his constituents!

So, short answer – we need to arm Mike w/ as much info as we can and still press VTel, et. al. to get their projects done.

Ok?

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Friday, July 19, 2013 9:00 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Fwd: Broadband in Putney ??

help! This is very frustrating - I agree with Mike on that score for sure. And the VTel announcement by Sanders et al with no mention of the larger statewide goal understandably frustrates folks down there. What do you recommend? The Gov would want to be able to send a letter to everyone in the area with info on what solution they currently have; what project(s) is/are in pipeline; and when it would come online - could we do that for this limited area?

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mike Mrowicki <mmrowicki@leg.state.vt.us>
Date: July 19, 2013, 8:34:20 AM EDT
To: "Miller, Elizabeth" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us>
Subject: Broadband in Putney ??

Hi Liz,

Hope you're well and getting some time to enjoy the summer.

Since we all met with the governor in April regarding Broadband expansion in Putney, I've continued trying to meet with Kiersten, and folks at VTEL and Fairpoint.

Kiersten is working hard, I know, but the reality here is that it doesn't seem we are in any different position than we were before.

VTEL says "maybe, Expansion by year end in some parts ...Fairpoint says, no plans for expansion in Putney..."

And, the natives are getting more restless in Putney.

Wednesdays' Brattleboro Reformer sported a banner headline about Super Hi Speed Internet coming to 15 towns in southern Vermont because of a grant from Sen. Sanders.

Only not in Putney.

Hence, the level of frustration I'm hearing from constituents is rising with the question, Can't the Governor exert some influence for Putney?

Any information or help is appreciated.

Thanks,

Mike

Rep.Mike Mrowicki
Vt. House Human Services Committee
Windham 4 District: Westminster,Putney, Dummerston
802.387.8787. www.windham4.net

Miller, Lawrence

From: Allen, Susan
Sent: Friday, July 19, 2013 5:56 AM
To: Allen, Susan
Subject: MEDIA CLIPS FOR FRIDAY, JULY 19:

BRATTLEBORO REFORMER:

Panel discusses nuclear safety, emergency planning
By CHRIS MAYS
Reformer Staff

BRATTLEBORO — Members of the Vermont State Nuclear Advisory Panel met with the public Wednesday to discuss orders related to the nuclear disaster that occurred in Japan as well as matters related to emergency planning. “I see this panel as one that questions the NRC (Nuclear Regulatory Commission) and local operators,” VSNAP Panel Member Sen. Mark MacDonald said. “It’s not our job to build public trust ... Our job is to address when it doesn’t work. And it doesn’t work.”

Members of the public criticized Entergy, which owns and operates the Vermont Yankee, before the organization’s State Liaison Engineer Bernard Buteau presented a Fukushima response update.

Japan’s Fukushima I Nuclear Power Plant is similar in size and operations to the Vermont Yankee plant. Following a tsunami on March 11, 2011, there were a series of equipment failures, nuclear meltdowns and releases of radioactive materials.

That same month, Vermont Yankee received a new license from the NRC.

The latest updates to planning for disaster were a result of analysis of the effects that a tsunami could have on a nuclear plant like Vermont Yankee, even though Buteau admitted there’s a low probability of a tsunami occurring in this area. Three new NRC orders included “hardened vent modifications, spent fuel pool level monitoring instrumentation and mitigation strategies for design basis external events.”

A letter addressed to all licensees also requested emergency planning communication upgrades, emergency plan staffing upgrades and seismic activity emergency planning.

“For most of us, we’ve been assured for decades that we don’t need to do what’s up on this wall today,” said MacDonald. “This seems like a new world we’re dealing with.”

Buteau said new emergency planning was also in response to Fukushima.

One of the new plans is called FLEX, a strategy that addresses events which have not already been evaluated and have not been addressed in previous safety response reports. It aims to be prepared for a 72 hour period.

Preventing fuel damage is a major part of FLEX as well as loss of power. It calls for off-site storage and maintenance of portable equipment that “provides means of obtaining power and water to maintain or restore key safety functions,” Buteau stated.

FLEX also focuses on staging and protecting the portable equipment. There are existing warehouses in Brattleboro that store some of the equipment.

The damage analyzed in the strategies have to do with the potential release of fission gases and fuel damage during an event.

Currently, Vermont Yankee is expected to have FLEX modifications in place by fall 2014.

"We're talking about a very indepth project," Buteau said.

NRC orders for hardened vent modifications are a result of analysis of accidents which caused high temperature as well as high radiation levels in plants, known issues that can contribute to the loss of power.

VSNAP panel member Dr. William Irwin noted that, from his understanding of Fukushima, hydrogen gas was "really why the buildings were destroyed ... (and) why you had loss of primary containment and secondary as well."

Modifications for communications at Vermont Yankee are scheduled for completion by fall of 2014.

"On-site communication will rely on current site radio systems," he said. "Off-site communication will rely on current radios and satellite phones ... Phones are to be located at key emergency response facilities."

These facilities will reach up to a 25-mile radius of the Vernon plant.

"I think it's important for (Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts) to have a sense of plan," said Irwin. "So when rolled out, they are anticipated by the states."

An emergency plan staffing upgrade is under way "to ensure adequate on-shift staff to respond to 'beyond design basis external events,'" Buteau said. This will identify the time and staff necessary for performing each emergency task.

Vermont Yankee is ordered to complete and submit this plan to the NRC by June 11, next year.

The panel also discussed updated flooding information.

A prepared flooding hazards reevaluation was submitted in March. By March 2015, a prepared integrated assessment report is due.

Geologist and VSNAP member Dr. Leslie Kanat referred to a recent study that found rainfall in New England increasing 30 percent over every 100 years.

While changes in climatic conditions are being addressed in upcoming orders, Buteau said those may not be ready to meet for 2014 deadlines.

Another evaluation of Vermont Yankee is scheduled for this week. Participants will include NRC representatives and a Vermont State Nuclear Engineer. *** Erica Bornemann of the Vermont Division of Emergency Management Homeland Security updated the panel about how Vermont and New Hampshire Upper Valley American Red Cross was able to secure more funding that will aid in a response to a potential or future disaster at the Vernon plant.

Currently, the capacity for shelters in Vermont can shelter 3,000 people, which is 10 percent of the Emergency Planning Zone population. In 2012, FEMA set the requirement to 20 percent of the EPZ population.

The aim is to increase the capacity to shelter up to that 20 percent, identify and enter into agreements with 22 facilities to receive survivors, create a scalable approach to congregate care and build capacity within the state to meet needs until regional and federal resources are brought in, Bornemann said.

For meeting these goals, Vermont legislature approved \$250,000 for the American Red Cross portion of the state's enhancement of emergency planning.

Bornemann also stated that the FEMA and NRC graded Vermont Yankee emergency exercise held on June 5 was considered functional and full scale. It included emergency responders of Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire as well as FEMA representatives.

A draft of the VSNAAP 2012 Annual Report was not approved by the panel during the meeting. It said the report failed to meet its expectations.

Welch co-founds bipartisan 'problem-solvers'

By MIKE FAHER

Reformer Staff

BRATTLEBORO — Last month, U.S. Rep. Peter Welch used most of a breakfast speech in Brattleboro to lament the pervasive partisan gridlock in Washington.

On Thursday, the Vermont Democrat joined 80 other members of Congress who have formed a new, bipartisan "problem-solvers" coalition focused on finding ways to break that gridlock.

Welch, Vermont's lone House representative, is a co-founder of the coalition and is one of eight co-chairs.

"The bottom line is, Congress is not working," Welch told the Reformer after a morning rally on Capitol Hill. "The members of this group recognize that, even though we have very substantial differences between us, we've got to make progress on the things we can agree on."

Welch is a former Vermont lawmaker who has said the state's part-time Legislature is a model for problem-solving in spite of political differences. He reiterated that theme on Thursday.

"We do it in Vermont, and what I'm dismayed at is ... how absent that is in Washington," he said.

Welch already had been affiliated with a group of Republican and Democratic federal lawmakers dubbed "No Labels." The "problem-solvers" coalition is an outgrowth of that, and it is comprised of 37 Republicans, 43 Democrats and one Independent.

The effort is "rooted in the Vermont tradition of civility, bipartisanship and practicality," Welch said, adding that the group is "building relationships across the aisle and identifying practical issues on which we can make progress for the American people."

Those issues are highlighted in a package of nine bills touted at Thursday's rally. The group is calling its legislative agenda "Make Government Work," and each bill was announced with a catchy title: — No budget, no pay: There would be no paychecks for lawmakers if Congress does not pass a budget and all annual spending bills on schedule.

— Take the time, save the dime: Congress should budget on a two-year cycle, rather than the current, dysfunctional one-year process.

— Don't duplicate, consolidate: Calls for elimination of duplicative agencies and programs identified this year by the Government Accountability Office.

— Buy smarter and save: Use "strategic sourcing so that divisions within a single federal agency do not make independent contracts for common items."

— No adding, no padding: Would end the assumption of automatic, annual spending increases in agency budgets.

— 21st century health care for heroes: Merges the electronic health records of the Department of Defense with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Welch said this is “totally about efficiency” for veterans so that they can receive “seamless” services.

— Stay in place, cut the waste: Replace 50 percent of federal agency travel with video conferencing.

— Wasted energy, wasted dollars: Make federal buildings more efficient “by incentivizing private companies to identify energy savings.” Those savings would pay for the contractors’ work.

— Plan for efficient and effective government: Creates a bipartisan commission to make federal programs “more economical, efficient and effective.”

Welch helped introduce the energy-efficiency bill, and he said it is one example of taking a bipartisan, common-ground approach to a potentially thorny political issue.

“Climate change is a huge crisis, but there are many people in the House who don’t believe in it,” Welch said.

That debate can be refocused, Welch said, by emphasizing energy efficiency.

“We’re going to create jobs and save homeowners and building owners money,” he said.

The group’s legislative agenda was noted as possibly signifying “real change” but also was labeled “modest” in the New York Times. Welch said the idea was to find issues that encouraged bipartisanship. “We’ve got to build trust here, and we’ve got to work together,” he said.

It remains to be seen, though, how far the group’s legislation will progress and whether its membership will grow. Fewer than 20 percent of House members and just eight of 100 senators currently are listed as participants.

“We’ll see,” Welch said of the group’s future. “What’s significant is that this really is unique because it’s bipartisan. It’s an acknowledgment by a substantial number of the members of Congress that the system is broken.”

EDITORIAL: Technology revolution in Vermont

For years now Vermonters have lamented the fact that high-speed Internet service in many parts of the state is so limited, or even nonexistent. Businesses and residents feel left out of the 21st century technology revolution as they’re forced to contend with slow-speed dial-up or pay for the high cost of satellite, which still isn’t as fast as broadband. It’s a trade off that many of us have accepted as part of rural living. We love being surrounded by beautiful mountain views and rolling green hills, and living in small-town communities where everyone knows each other and pitches in to help their friends and neighbors. Big-city folks fed up with the frenzied pace and cinderblock environment of their everyday life flock to Vermont for a taste of what we get to enjoy all year round.

The downside of all that wonderful quaintness, of course, is that it often takes longer for technological advancements to make their way here. And unfortunately that has held us back in many ways, not the least of which is the economic vitality of the communities we love and the exodus of too many of our young people who are so necessary for our future prosperity.

“The world is radically changing economically and I have been concerned for a long time that parts of Vermont (miss out on the benefits of Internet access),” U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., said this week. “Some parts get virtually no service at

all.”

That’s about to change thanks to a multi-million dollar project that will make Vermont the envy of the rest of the country — even hightech metropolis areas like New York City.

Some towns in southeastern Vermont will receive the fastest consumer connection to the Internet anywhere in the United States, according to Sanders. Saxtons River, Grafton, Springfield and 11 neighboring towns are getting upgraded to state-of-the-art broadband Internet access at speeds 100 times faster than average and faster than anywhere else in the country except for a Kansas City, Mo., pilot project by Google.

The Springfield project is being built by Springfield-based Vermont Telephone Co. (VTel), which received federal funds to build the fiberoptic network that will provide affordable broadband access throughout its 14-town service area. John Caceres, of VTel marketing, said the project is part of a \$116 million Rural Utility Service grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The construction process is expected to be finished by the end of November.

According to Sanders’ office, about 1,500 homes and business in the Springfield area already have the new fiber-optic connection, a number VTel expects will double by the end of December. During the remainder of this year and throughout 2014, homes will continue to be linked to that network. The other towns that will benefit from the upgrade are Chester, North Springfield, Bridgewater, Cuttingsville, Wallingford, Hartland, Killington, Pawlet, Danby, Mount Holly and Middletown Springs.

As Sanders said, high-quality Internet access is crucial to Vermont’s financial health. He noted that the region once was a national hub for the tool-and-die industry but lost thousands of good-paying jobs as manufacturers shut down. Lack of Internet service has kept Vermont from regaining that economic vitality as the state ranked 35th in the country in terms of Internet access, according to a study conducted a few years ago.

However, Sanders said the state will become No. 1 within a few years, as the new high-speed service will become nearly universal. The senator said Internet access today is what roads were more than 100 years ago. He called the Internet a “21st century road network” and said isolated businesses can expand and reach a wider consumer base.

The improved service also will encourage out-of-state businesses to move to the area and bring with them good-paying jobs, he added. “Vermont may be on the verge of reaping enormous dividends from this historic investment in our future,” Sanders said of the new fiber optic service. “The ultra-fast Internet offers the chance to dramatically change how we think about education, health care and business.”

It’s nice to be on the cusp of a technology revolution for a change.

BENNINGTON BANNER:

Shumlin reaches deal in land dispute

LISA RATHKE

Associated Press

MONTPELIER — Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin will return a neighboring property to its previous owner under an agreement reached after he was criticized for buying it at a steep discount.

Shumlin’s attorney said Thursday the deal will allow Jeremy Dodge to keep the East Montpelier property and pay back the governor over five years.

Shumlin bought Dodge's longtime family home and 16 acres for \$58,000 last fall, as Dodge was facing a tax sale. The East Montpelier property had previously been valued at more than \$233,000 — a figure lowered to \$140,000 when Shumlin asked for it to be reassessed.

Under the terms of the initial agreement, Dodge would be allowed to live on the property temporarily and Shumlin would pay Dodge's back taxes and child support payments.

But after Dodge complained publicly about the deal, Shumlin, a Democrat, was criticized by some who felt he had treated the neighbor with a ninth-grade education unfairly.

Shumlin later agreed to renegotiate the deal.

"I'm glad it turned out the way it did," Dodge said. "And I appreciate the governor doing what he did to help me as far as getting it back in my name," he said.

Attorney Jerome Diamond said the amount Dodge will pay back is still being negotiated but he expects it will be about \$30,000, an amount that Diamond said reflects what the governor spent on the transaction that directly benefited Dodge, including taxes, repairs and child support payments.

"I know the governor is pleased that it's being resolved and it's being resolved in a way that Jeremy Dodge and his family are happy," Diamond said.

FOX44:

IBM Drops Fight & Allows State to Report 419 Laid Off in Vermont

MATT AUSTIN

ESSEX JUNCTION, Vt. -

On Thursday IBM allowed the State of Vermont to report that Big Blue had let go of 419 employees from its Essex Junction plant earlier this month.

An end to all the rumors.

"It's about time. It's about time they did the right thing," says Earl Mongeon, vice president of the local Alliance@IBM.

IBM had been required to report the number to the state but had fought its release.

Vermont Department of Labor Commissioner Annie Noonan says knowing the exact number helps them plan to help workers and it's information everyone should have.

"I think for the local communities I think they want to know so they can understand the potential economic impact that it might have to them, to other small businesses in the area, to their schools," says Noonan.

IBM no longer says how many people work here. The state says it's more than 4,000 even after the last round of layoffs. But employees fear it's a lot less than that.

Either way it's a far drop from the peak of 8,500 people who used to work here.

Mongeon says there are concerns about more cuts later this year.

"Things are not going good you know at the plant. Morale is low. I mean we're struggling. I don't see much investment," says Mongeon.

The labor department says IBM has told the state the company remains committed to Vermont.

Our calls to IBM for comment were not returned.

VPR:

Calls Up, Funding Down, For Domestic Violence Hotline

NINA KECK

For victims of domestic violence, the courage to get help can come at odd hours.

That's why shelter advocates say 24-hour hotlines are so important.

More than 12,000 calls a year are made to domestic hotlines across Vermont. It's a number that's rising at the same time federal funding is dropping.

In Rutland, the situation has prompted shelter advocates to reach out to the community for help.

Karis Williams is Clinical Services Director at the Rutland County Women's Shelter. She's also one of 4 staff members who answers the hotline when calls come in after hours or on weekends. "We would go for two or three days with no calls," she said, "now we're getting no less than four to five on a weekend."

The increase in demand for all shelter services has been dramatic.

Marianne Kennedy, Executive Director of the Rutland shelter, blames the rise on a shortage of affordable housing, the sluggish economy and better awareness of domestic violence. She says in 2011, they had to turn away 89 women. "And this year, 277 women had to be turned away because we don't have enough space," according to Kennedy.

Karis Williams say that's why it's so important to maintain a 24-7 hotline. "Because very frequently that's the only time or the first time someone will hear that this isn't your fault and there's help out there."

And even if they don't have space in the shelter, Williams says they can still provide lots of vital information. "It could be housing options, whether they'll need shelter." Or Williams says, "it could be financial; you want to flee the area but you don't have gas money, let's see how we can help you; what agency is there to help." Or she says, "sometimes it's a sexual assault and they're wondering do I go to the hospital or do I not? What happens if I report it what happens if I don't report it?"

Williams admits handling emergency calls can be stressful and it's easy for overworked staff to get burned out. "I still get a little anxious every time the phone rings - what if this is the one time when I don't know how to answer this person?"

Williams says increasing demand is why they're reaching out to the community to be hotline volunteers. They want good listeners who can handle crisis situations calmly. She says qualified applicants will take a rigorous 32-hours of training and would always be backed up by staff.

"I'm hoping that because of everything that's been going on, people will really realize the necessity of helping," says Williams. "Because for many who call, it's truly a matter of life and death."

Analysis: Many Twists And Turns In Health CO-OP Saga

HAMILTON DAVIS

The Vermont Health CO-OP has formally requested that the state's top financial regulator reconsider her recent refusal to grant the company a license to sell health insurance on the federally-financed Exchange, which will begin enrolling customers Jan. 1, 2014.

In an order dated May 22, Susan Donegan, commissioner of the Department of Financial Regulation, denied the CO-OP's application on several grounds, including its potential financial viability, the quality of its governance, the presence of conflicts of interest in its business model and the prospect that Vermont could move to a single payer system in 2017.

Even if the commissioner reopens the case, the CO-OP will face a huge challenge getting an operating insurance company in place in time to begin competing with the Blues and MVP by October 1st

In discussing the order, Donegan said that the CO-OP had two options if it wished to overturn the result. The first would be to appeal the decision to the Vermont Supreme Court; the second would be to submit a new application.

The CO-OP rejected these two alternatives in favor of a request that Donegan reconsider her original decision on the grounds that the CO-OP has remedied four of the major flaws set forth in the original decision.

The CO-OP strategy appears to in some sort of regulatory limbo, however, since Donegan is under no obligation to consider an appeal for reconsideration.

There is no "clock" that calls for a decision within a prescribed time, as there is for an application. And the commissioner refuses to say anything about it publicly, including when she might respond to it, or even whether she will consider at all.

Still, the 30-page document is in fact sitting in the commissioner's office. The specific changes set forth in the request for reconsideration include:

- New proposed rates which are much closer to the rates put forth by Blue Cross and MVP. The rates in the CO-OP application were some 15 percent higher than the other insurers, which threw into question the CO-OP's estimate of the number of customers it could attract to its plans.
- The removal of Mitchell Fleischer, the head of the Fleischer Jacobs Group from the chairmanship of the CO-OP board, and in fact, from the board itself. The CO-OP was paying Fleischer \$126,000 a year, far more than what the board chairs at Blue Cross and MVP draw. (\$28,900 and \$48,750 respectively.)
- The addition of five corporate heavy weights to the board to lend it more credibility. These included M. Jerome Diamond, former Vermont attorney general now in private practice; David Kibbe, a Pennsylvania health insurance executive; and Chuck Butler, an aide to former Vermont Gov. Richard Snelling and a long time Blue Cross executive in Vermont and Montana.
- The elimination of a provision in their business plan that required customers to use only Fleischer Jacobs analysts to advise them on what insurance plan to buy from the Exchange. That was not only a conflict of interest with Fleischer Jacobs, it is also contrary to Vermont law.

In addition to the proposed changes to the original application, the CO-OP request included arguments that the commissioner has the legal authority to reconsider a decision if she chooses, that the issue with the rates and hence the company viability should be considered in the light of the fact that it is a new company in a fast-moving environment, and that the state would benefit from having a cooperative structure involved in the Exchange.

So, what are their chances?

Probably no better than even, if that. And even if the commissioner reopens the case, the CO-OP will face a huge challenge getting an operating insurance company in place in time to begin competing with the Blues and MVP by October 1st, the start date for enrolling patients in the Exchange.

There is no way to tell for sure how much time the CO-OP has to get a decision from the Commissioner, but the best guess is the August 1st. If Donegan does agree to reopen the case, the CO-OP would still have to get its new rates analyzed by DFR actuaries and assessed again by the Green Mountain Care Board and its actuaries; it is the board that makes the final determination on rates.

The financial viability of the CO-OP is likely to be the central issue if the CO-OP gets another chance. It's reasonable to assume that the CO-OP's action in strengthening its board and removing the conflict of interest with Fleischer and his brokerage firm can be considered serious steps to remedy flaws in the original application.

Whether the new rates and hence the company's competitive posture in the marketplace satisfies the commissioner that the company could be financially viable is more problematic. One obvious question is whether the new CO-OP rates are "shadow" pricing. When Blue Cross and MVP submitted their rates last March, neither had any idea what the other's proposed rates would be. The CO-OP, by contrast, has access to the other company's prices.

In any case, if Commissioner Donegan reconsiders, it will be those rates and the question of financial viability that will lie at the heart of the decision that she will have to make.

Hampered By The New Health Care Reality That Created It

If the Vermont CO-OP saga has been unusual for Vermont regulators and health care bureaucrats, it has been equally unusual in business and political terms. The federally financed coops established under Obamacare are the residue of the national debate over a "public option" for health insurance. Coops, which are very popular particularly in the northern Midwest, usually link producers or purchasers of any product as a way to eliminate middlemen and get a better deal for coop members.

While there was no shortage of that sort of rhetoric in the Vermont case, the CO-OP now in play arose at the initiative of the classic middleman—the Fleischer Jacobs group. Beginning in the late 1980s, Mitch Fleischer, the president of the firm, built a lucrative business advising small and medium sized businesses on how to purchase health care insurance for their employees. There were other aspects to the business, but health insurance was a significant part of it.

The advent of health care reform at both the federal and state levels posed an obvious threat to the Fleischer Jacobs business. Guiding small business owners through the labyrinth of offerings on the Exchange would become the function of the Exchange administrator; in Vermont, state government will pay for "navigators" whose services wouldn't cost the small business anything. And Governor Peter Shumlin's single payer initiative held out the prospect for eliminating insurance companies altogether.

There was no stopping the reform momentum in Vermont, however, so Fleischer struck on the coop idea and he and his South Burlington-based team had initial success. Major politicians, including Governor Peter Shumlin and Congressman Peter Welch welcomed the coop idea warmly.

Shumlin's insurance regulators signed on to Fleischer's application for federal funds, which he got; some \$6 million in start-up funds, and \$27 million for the reserves that the new insurance company would need to operate. Both were to be in the form of loans, but the federal underpinning seemed like a golden guarantee.

The underlying rationale continued to be the effort to keep the Fleischer Jacobs business from fading away. The evidence for that judgment is the fact that the application for an insurance license said that businesses seeking advice on how to purchase health insurance could only use the Fleischer Jacobs brokers for that role.

Moreover, it was clear that Fleischer himself was actually running the CO-OP as well as his original business. Christine Oliver, an attorney with extensive government management experience in both Vermont and Ohio, is the CO-OP CEO.

Fleischer was technically chairman of the CO-OP board of trustees, but he was paying himself more like an operating officer and as the CO-OP itself said subsequently, he was spending a large percentage of his time on it and the key to its success.

The fact that Fleischer obviously hoped to armor his original firm against damage from health care reform speaks to at least part of his motivation, but by itself it didn't vitiate the whole coop idea. Fleischer is very well respected as a businessman, and there was no inherent barrier to the CO-OP getting into the hunt for business that would kick off on Oct. 1, when enrollment for the Exchange can begin.

But the execution of the license campaign seemed, well, a little slack. The CO-OP was informed clearly and early that the exclusive contract with the Fleischer Jacobs brokers was not only a conflict of interest for the CO-OP, but was actually against the law in Vermont. Yet, they left the provision in the application.

"We could have taken it out overnight," Oliver said in an interview later. But they didn't take it out, and it counted against them in the rejection of their application.

The rates they would charge were central to the whole effort, but the numbers produced by the CO-OP's actuary came out of far left field—they used a health care cost trend of more than seven percent, a credible figure nationally, but one which had no relevance to Vermont, where the Green Mountain Care board has made it clear that it is aiming at something less than four percent.

That meant that their overall costs would be 15 higher than the Blues or MVP—a damaging misstep.

Finally, the makeup of the original board was obviously deficient—they didn't really need a strong board because Mitch Fleischer himself was steering the whole ship. But in matters of regulation, things have to look good. And the board didn't.

In any event, as noted above, the CO-OP has essentially fixed everything they can about the flawed application. There is still a very substantive issue about whether the CO-OP is financially viable, but the fact that they have federal support is certainly in their favor.

CO-OP Goes On The Offensive

But if their execution of their campaign has been shaky, their political posture over the past month and a half has been puzzling indeed.

The reality is that the Vermont CO-OP needs to get a break from Commissioner Susan Donegan if they are to survive. They thought they had laid the political groundwork for special treatment because of the vocal support from the governor and because they were a new health care insurer in a state with limited options.

All of the substantive points in the CO-OP response could have been argued without the strong tone of personal attack

That obviously hasn't been enough, though, and now they are at the mercy of the commissioner. Their strategy in the face of that reality: they hammered Donegan from pillar to post, personally.

Christine Oliver put out a series of statements that claimed that Donegan was perhaps not really experienced enough to carry out the review, that she had made a flood of mistakes and had misled the public, and they also attacked her integrity by suggesting that she might have been influenced by Vermont Blue Cross to deny the CO-OP application to help the Blues competitively.

“The recent decision (by the commissioner) contains many inaccurate and misleading statements,” Oliver said in a statement on May 28. “So many that it’s hard to know where to begin...DFR has not licensed a new health insurance provider in more than 50 years so due diligence is appropriate,” she wrote. “To say we were blindsided by the decision is an understatement.

There is no honest way to leap from our last exchange with DFR to the order that was issued. It doesn’t add up on so many levels.”

Oliver went on to argue that DFR had “mised Vermonters” particularly on the issue of their rates, which she said were placeholder rates that would have been reduced during the review process and which would have left at least some of their rates lower than the Blues and MVP.

As for the overall financial structure of the firm, all the critical risk would be borne by the federal government. “The illusion of risk to the consumer is patently false,” she said.

All of the substantive points in the CO-OP response could have been argued without the strong tone of personal attack. For example: On experience: “no new licensure for 50 years.” On honesty: “misleading” and “patently false” and “no honest way” to get to the decision.

In a wide ranging interview with Mark Johnson on WDEV on May 29, Oliver elaborated on all of these points; in the process she suggested that Donegan might have tilted the scales against the CO-OP in order to enhance the competitive environment for Vermont Blue Cross.

In the public commentary process during the spring, a Blue Cross official had written a letter raising a question about the CO-OP application for a license.

The process was clearly “political” she asserted, and added, “Blue Cross is the biggest 800 pound gorilla in the room...Blue Cross carries a lot of weight in this town.

“I don’t know what that means,” she said, “it just doesn’t ring true to me.”

There is no evidence whatsoever that Blue Cross made any improper representations to Donegan in the case; but even if they had, well Blue Cross is a private company in a scrappy business.

What was striking was the inference that Donegan might have countenanced such a foray. If that were true, it would destroy Donegan’s integrity and credibility as a regulator. The likelihood of Donegan doing something like that lies somewhere south of zero.

If you need somebody to give you a second chance, to cut you some slack, is it really wise to attack their character and professional performance like that?

VALLEY NEWS:

Shumlin: Revenues show Vt. 'on right path'

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) — Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin calls news that Vermont finished the fiscal year more than \$26 million ahead of expectations for general fund revenues welcome and encouraging.

Shumlin made the comment as his administration secretary, Jeb Spaulding, released a report showing that while revenues came in below expectation in June, the state ended the fiscal year ahead of what had been forecast.

Shumlin says that with the federal gridlock and fiscal problems, unpredictable weather, and global economic uncertainty, Vermont has plenty of challenges ahead.

But he says the end-of-the-year revenue results indicate that overall, Vermont is on the right path.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Allen, Susan
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2013 2:30 PM
To: Allen, Susan
Subject: AFTERNOON MEDIA AND BLOG CLIPS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 18:

WCAX:

Vt. revenues down for June, up for year

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) - Vermont state revenues were off for the month of June, but came in more than \$26 million stronger than expected for the fiscal year that ended June 30.

That's the word from Administration Secretary Jeb Spaulding. He says June receipts were down due to higher-than-expected tax refunds both for personal and corporate income tax payers.

But Spaulding says tallying up general fund revenues for the end of the fiscal year shows the state finished FY 2013 more than 2 percent above the target set by revenue forecasters in January. That equates to \$26 million.

The state transportation fund was the opposite of the general fund, performing at just above target for June but just below target for the year.

Shumlin: Rail safety something to 'look at'

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) - Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin says that following the rail disaster in Quebec, the state's tracking of what travels through Vermont by train is "certainly something we should look at."

Vermont currently has no routine inspections for tracks, leaving that to the Federal Railroad Administration. It also does not track the type of cargo that is shipped through the state.

Questions about rail safety have come to the fore since a July 6 accident in which a train carrying oil derailed and barreled into the town of Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. At least five of the train's cars exploded and officials say 50 people were killed.

Shumlin says rail is important to Vermont's economy, but the state has a duty to ensure public safety.

ASSOCIATED PRESS:

Shumlin reaches deal in land dispute with Dodge

LISA RATHKE

EAST MONTPELIER — Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin has reached a deal in a land dispute with his neighbor, whose property he had bought for a quarter of its appraised value.

A lawyer for Shumlin says the deal will allow Jerry Dodge to keep his property and pay back the governor over five years.

Attorney Jerome Diamond said Thursday he expects Dodge will pay about \$30,000. He said the amount of money reflects what the governor spent on the transaction that directly benefited Dodge, including taxes, repairs and child support payments.

Shumlin bought Dodge's property — which was later valued by the town at \$140,000 — for \$58,000 last fall, as Dodge was facing a tax sale. Dodge and others have complained that Shumlin acted unfairly, and Shumlin agreed to renegotiate the deal.

BURLINGTON FREE PRESS:

Lawyer: Shumlin-Dodge reach deal over land

TERRI HALLENBECK

Gov. Peter Shumlin and his neighbor Jerry Dodge have reached a "deal in principle" allowing Dodge to keep his property and pay the governor back an undisclosed amount of money over five years, Dodge's lawyer, Brady Toensing, said Thursday.

It's unclear whether the amount Dodge is repaying is all of what Shumlin had put into the property, or if the parties will disclose that. "I'm not going to get into those details," Toensing said Thursday.

Toensing said the details of the deal are still to be worked out over the next few weeks.

Dodge, reached by phone Thursday, said, "I'm glad it's over."

He said he believes he'll be paying back what Shumlin paid him, but said, "I'm not exactly sure yet."

He said his daughter, Rochelle, will be moving in with him in a few months, which should make it easier for him to maintain the property and pay the taxes. He said he has been fixing the dilapidated house up in recent weeks.

Jerry Diamond, the lawyer Shumlin hired to handle the situation, did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Shumlin bought Dodge's house and about 16 acres last year for \$58,000, though according to the deal, not all the money had yet been transferred. Dodge, who faced losing the land for overdue property taxes, later regretted the deal. Under public pressure from those who thought Shumlin, a real-estate developer, had taken advantage of Dodge, the governor agreed to renegotiate.

Toensing declined to characterize whether Dodge received a sufficient deal. He said Dodge is continuing to live on the property. "I'm not going to get into characterizing the deal until the ink is on the paper," Toensing said.

Dodge said he expects he and Shumlin will remain cordial neighbors. "That's what I want," he said. "I've got nothing against him."

BRATTLEBORO REFORMER:

14 Vermont towns to get broadband upgrade

By DOMENIC POLI

Reformer Staff

SAXTONS RIVER — A region in southeastern Vermont will receive the fastest consumer connection to the Internet anywhere in the United States, according to the office of U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.

Saxtons River, Grafton, Springfield and 11 neighboring towns are in the process of getting upgraded to state-of-the-art broadband Internet access at speeds 100 times faster than average and faster than anywhere else in the country except for a Kansas City, Mo., pilot project by Google.

Sanders told the *Reformer* that high-quality Internet access is crucial to Vermont's financial health.

"The world is radically changing economically and I have been concerned for a long time that parts of Vermont (miss out on the benefits of Internet access)," he said Wednesday. "Some parts get virtually no service at all."

He said better Internet can entice in-state businesses to expand and out-of-state businesses to move to the area and bring with them good-paying jobs.

Sanders said a study conducted a few years ago ranked Vermont 35th in the country in terms of Internet access. He said, however, the state will become No. 1 within a few years, as service will become nearly universal.

The senator said Internet access today is what roads were more than 100 years ago. He compared the Internet to a "21st century road network" and said isolated businesses can expand and reach a wider consumer base.

This development is a result of a federal, state and local government partnership with private business to significantly upgrade the Internet infrastructure in the Springfield area and in other parts of Vermont. The Springfield project is being built by Springfield-based Vermont Telephone Co. (VTel), which received federal funds to build the fiber network that will provide affordable broadband access throughout its 14-town service area.

John Caceres, of VTel marketing, said the project is part of a \$116 million Rural Utility Service grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He said the construction process is expected to be finished by the end of November.

The other towns that will benefit from the upgrade are Chester, North Springfield, Bridgewater, Cuttingsville, Wallingford, Hartland, Killington, Pawlet, Danby, Mount Holly and Middletown Springs.

According to Sanders' office, about 1,500 homes and business in the Springfield area already have the new fiber-optic connection, a number VTel expects will double by the end of December. During the remainder of this year and throughout 2014, homes will continue to be linked to that network.

Brooks House redevelopment

'A piece of paper. A vision. And a dream'

By HOWARD WEISS-TISMAN

Reformer Staff

BRATTLEBORO — As Bob Stevens was talking about the redevelopment of the Brooks House Wednesday he mentioned more than once that there were moments during the past year-and-a-half when he thought the project would not happen.

From the start, Stevens said, developers faced one challenge after the next while trying to raise the estimated \$24 million needed to develop the Brooks House.

A fire in April 2011 significantly damaged the historic Main Street building, and after the previous owner decided a year later that he would not be able to raise the money, Stevens and a group of local investors have been trying to raise the money to begin work on the building.

On Wednesday more than 100 people from around the region and the state filled the Robert H. Gibson River Garden to celebrate the closing, and recognize a new beginning for the 142-year-old building.

"Today, for us, marks the transition of what we have spent the last two-and-a-half years doing, trying to get this project off the ground," Stevens said. "From the beginning it has been more than a project. It's really about the transformation of this town."

Stevens talked about the fire, and then about the flooding following Tropical Storm Irene.

He said even before the natural disasters, the town was facing uncertain economic times, and when the fire closed the building Stevens, and other people involved with project, realized that it would take a communitywide effort to rebuild it.

Throughout his talk Stevens said it did not make economic sense to invest so much money into the building, when the final property would not be worth the investment.

But he said that leaving the Main Street property vacant would be the worse thing for the future of Brattleboro.

“We were facing looking at this building and saying what should we do?” Stevens said. “Should we let this building sit and continue that economic decline, or do we find some way to put a project together that doesn’t make any economic sense, because in some ways we have to. We need to find some ways to turn this community around and make it prosperous again.”

Stevens spent a lot of time recognizing everyone who helped get to where they were on Wednesday.

He said Governor Peter Shumlin, the Legislature, the state colleges, the town, the banks and federal and state funding sources all came through, often at the last minute when other funding sources said it would be impossible to pull off.

“If there’s one message we want to make today it is that this is way over our head,” said Stevens. “There is no way we could have put this together without the community and without the support.”

Stevens also talked about how complicated the funding was, more than once pointing out that banks and investors had to make accommodations to make the whole deal work.

On top of the challenges around investing, Stevens said when the banks required the group to rent out 70 percent of the building before they received any money he thought again that the project would fall apart.

He wondered why anyone would commit to renting out an apartment when all he had to show were some plans.

Again, Stevens said, people were willing to take a chance and agree to prelease the apartments, bringing the group that much closer to finalizing the deal.

“I didn’t think we could rent 13 or 14 apartments. We didn’t have anything to show people, and if we showed it, you wouldn’t want to rent it,” Stevens said. “We had a piece of paper, and a vision and a dream. And all these people bought into that dream and believed that this would be a great place and signed up.”

Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jerry Goldberg, who is going to move into the Brooks House when work is done, talked about the building’s history, calling it the star of the downtown since it opened in 1871.

He said tourists and business people came to Brattleboro during the hotel’s heyday In the mid-1900s the economy changed and in the 1970s the new owners of the Brooks House transformed the building with small apartments and store-level shops, until, Goldberg said, the fire of April 2011 closed the building.

“Now at last the Brooks House will be making her triumphant return to downtown Brattleboro and to our state,” Goldberg said. “She’ll once more inspire us with her vitality. Engage us with her versatility. And attract a new wave of visitors, local, and from away.”

Shumlin said the project represented more than just the development of a downtown property. He said all of the work

that led up to Wednesday afternoon's event will have impacts that extend far beyond the walls of the Brooks House.

"When tragedy hit us, we all made a promise together that we would turn tragedy into opportunity, and that's exactly what we celebrate today," said Shumlin. "The power to do the impossible. The commitment to ensure that community matters to us. Community is the heart of Vermont. We put that together with jobs, education, residential living and caring about knowing our neighbors, and this is the kind of project we get."

BENNINGTON BANNER:

Loan to help fund local hydro project

Project at former Vermont Tissue site has permits in place

NEAL P.GOSWAMI

BENNINGTON — A local couple has received an energy loan from the Vermont Economic Development Authority to help fund a hydro project at the former Vermont Tissue Mill along the Walloomsac River.

Carbon Zero, LLC and AOE, Inc., has been approved by VEDA for a \$683,278 Commercial Energy Program loan. It will help cover part of the \$1.7 million project to reopen a 375 kilowatt hydroelectric facility at the dam and former mill. The property is owned by Bill Scully and his wife Maria, who purchased the property in 2009.

The hydro project has received state and federal permits to begin producing power from the dam.

Two hydroelectric turbine generators are expected to produce 1,454,000 kilowatt hours of renewable power in a new powerhouse adjacent to the Mill.

The power produced is enough to power 211 average Vermont homes and will help avoid the release of 658 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere annually.

The project also includes upgrades to existing infrastructure at the dam, as well as the installation of equipment that will monitor and control the dam and power production, according to VEDA. Equipment will also convert the direct current power produced by the turbines to alternating current and connect the hydroelectric station to Green Mountain Power's network.

The power produced at the dam will be used by a net metering group consisting of the Scullys, for their residence and other businesses they own, as well as the town of Bennington, the Village of North Bennington and Catamount Glass. The dam had not been used previously since 1958.

According to Scully, habitats in the river near the dam site will be improved by the project because it will increase water flow to areas that often run dry. That will improve fish and other wildlife habitats, he said.

The couple has worked to restore the property since buying it under the state's Brownfield Revitalization Fund. The property was previously designated a Brownfield site because of industrial pollutants including dioxin and PCBs, which have since been cleaned up to residential standards, which will allow the former mill building to be used as a dual industrial/residential use.

Vermont: \$38M available for early local disaster aid

DAVE GRAM

MONTPELIER — Vermont is repeating something that proved popular with towns after Tropical Storm Irene of 2011: getting state disaster relief out early to flooddamaged communities while they await federal aid.

Gov. Peter Shumlin and Treasurer Beth Pearce joined other officials Wednesday to announce that up to \$38 million could be made available from the state in towns declared eligible for disaster aid by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“Once again, Vermont towns are responding to extraordinary weather events that have caused damage and destruction to roads, bridges and other infrastructure,” Shumlin said. “By placing key state payments on the fast-track, we hope to ease the burden on municipalities with any cash flow issues these storms created.”

The money comes from education aid and other state programs that help municipalities, and is to be repaid when towns get the FEMA aid they’re due.

“One lesson we learned from the past is that if we can get cash to cash-strapped towns as quickly as possible, we can make a big difference in their recoveries because the federal government tends to move like molasses,” Shumlin said.

He later added that the state is still negotiating with FEMA on how much money it will get to fix the state office complex in Waterbury, which was flooded by Tropical Storm Irene in August of 2011. The state’s plans for the site — some partially executed — include replacing the Vermont State Hospital with a smaller hospital in Berlin and satellite facilities around the state; demolishing and replacing some of the state offices at the Waterbury site and turning some of the property over to the town of Waterbury.

Wednesday’s announcement followed a fresh round of damage from high water caused by recent heavy rains in the state. May through June was the wettest twomonth period on record in Vermont, according to the National Weather Service, and the first two weeks of July brought about twice their normal rainfall.

Roads and other infrastructure in Vermont have seen significant damage, while the tourism industry and farmers have had a tough summer season so far.

Also Wednesday, the state asked FEMA to do a preliminary damage assessment in Caledonia County to see if it is eligible for federal disaster assistance. The state already had requested FEMA assessments of damage in Chittenden, Orange, Orleans, Rutland, Washington, and Windsor counties; FEMA officials began touring areas affected by weather-related damage in those counties last week. State officials said storm damage in those towns could total more than \$4 million.

The state must show at least \$1-million in damage to be considered for a public assistance disaster declaration. An individual county must show damage to roads, bridges, and other public property equaling or exceeding \$3.45 per capita.

Meanwhile, towns need to call in private contractors to help rebuild roads damaged by streams overflowing their banks and can’t wait to have federal funding in hand before the work gets done, Pearce said.

“Receiving expedited funds from the state can be a big help by providing towns with the cash needed now and help reduce any costs that could be incurred if municipalities must borrow money to cover expenses,” she said.

Steve Jeffrey, executive director of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, agreed. Town cash flows tend to ebb in summer due to the property tax collection calendar, he said. “This early influx of state assistance will be greatly appreciated and will help tide the towns over until tax revenues and any FEMA assistance becomes available,” he said.

Blogs:

VTDIGGER:

Dodge can buy back property from Shumlin for about \$30,000, lawyers say by Andrew Stein

Gov. Peter Shumlin's neighbor Jeremy Dodge has agreed to basic terms to buy back his family homestead from the state's top official. "It's a deal in principle," Dodge's attorney, Brady Toensing, said. "But the specifics still need to be ironed out." Shumlin bought Dodge's East Montpelier home in November 2012 for less than half its assessed value. But after the land deal went sour in May, and the impoverished high school dropout told the media he didn't know what he was doing at the time of the sale, the governor agreed to sell the property back to Dodge and allowed him to remain on the property, while they forged a new deal. To negotiate a return of the property, Shumlin hired former Democratic Attorney General M. Jerome Diamond. "The agreement involves a repayment of not everything, but a repayment of what the governor actually put out of pocket that benefited Jerry Dodge," Diamond said. "And that exact amount still has a little question so that exact amount is still not disclosable at this time ... Ballpark, it will be somewhere near \$30,000." Both sides are verifying exactly what was paid to Dodge as part of a deal that would have totaled \$58,000, had Shumlin and Dodge followed through with the agreement in its entirety. Diamond said that the foundation of the deal allows Dodge to pay back the roughly \$30,000 over a five-year period. Over the first four years, Dodge will only be liable for paying interest on the amount. In the fifth year, he will be responsible for paying the total amount, plus any additional interest. "It will be the lowest interest allowed by the IRS," Diamond said of the rates. But the parties had not contacted the IRS to establish what those rates are, and he did not specify which rates were applicable to this situation.

PRESS RELEASES:

CEO of Vermont's largest state-chartered credit union plans retirement

MONTPELIER — VSECU publicly announced today that planning has begun to choose a successor to the current CEO, Steve Post, who is planning to retire after 23 years of leadership at the largest state chartered and only statewide credit union in Vermont. Mr. Post was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 1990 and previously held the position of General Manager at the White River Credit Union in Rochester, Vermont. Post served as Chairman of the Association of Vermont Credit Unions Government Relations Committee and has been an active and local voice working with regulators and legislators to ensure a place for financial cooperatives in Vermont. "A lot has changed in 30 years in financial services. We're fortunate to live in a state where collaborative thinking and efforts of our members, volunteers, lawmakers and regulators have protected and enhanced the accessibility of cooperative financial services for all Vermonters," said Post. Under the leadership of Post, the credit union grew from \$80 million to over \$600 million in assets, expanded its field of membership from an employee to community based credit union, grew membership to over 50,000 members and expanded branch operations to 7 locations around the state while developing a full service online distribution channel. "It's been a privilege to lead this organization. Now it's time for me to move on and transfer this solid foundation to the next generation of leadership. I know the future is bright for VSECU and I look forward to working with my successor and helping him or her through a smooth transition," said Post. The board of directors retained the services of Cope & Associates, Burlington, Vermont, and several months ago began the process of working with Post and the senior executive team in preparation of succession planning and a transition to a new CEO. The board will now begin the process of recruiting and identifying qualified candidates for the job. "Over the years Steve has demonstrated a strong commitment to the ideals of credit unions. His leadership, vision and commitment to the members of VSECU have been extraordinary and unwavering," said M. Jerome Diamond, Chair of the VSECU board of directors.

Vermonters and allies to walk route of potential tar sands pipeline

North Troy — On July 19 and 20, Vermonters and others from around the region will come together to walk a part of the route of the Portland-Montreal Pipeline in the Northeast Kingdom to raise awareness of the threat of Canadian tar sands crude to Vermont, New England and eastern Canada. The pipeline crosses 10 towns in the Northeast Kingdom, as well as numerous waterways and conserved areas, including the Missisquoi, Connecticut and Black Rivers and Victory State Forest. "The Walk is to educate, celebrate and honor," said Andy Simon of 350 Vermont, which is organizing the walk with the help of local residents. "We are sharing information about tar sands and ExxonMobil's plans for their pipeline. We are also celebrating and honoring the farmland, the water, the forests and the communities of the Kingdom." The 2nd Annual Tar Sands Free Kingdom Walk will begin in North Troy, VT on Friday, July 19th at 9 A.M., and carry over into Saturday, July 20th. The walkers will leave North Troy behind the Bread & Puppet Marching Band. A press conference will be held when the walkers reach the River Road Covered Bridge on the Missisquoi River in Troy at 11 AM

on Friday, July 19. Speakers will include: Art Greene from Trout Unlimited, Carol Irons from Albany, VT, Dr. Ron Holland from Irasburg, Rep. David Deen, chair of the House Fish, Wildlife and Water Resources Committee, Geneviève Puskas from Equiterre and Andy Simon from 350 Vermont. The walk will follow the northernmost segment of the route of the Portland-Montreal Pipeline, a 62-year-old pipeline that, if reversed, could carry tar sands crude down from Montreal, through southern Québec, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine to South Portland for export. On Friday evening, walk participants will camp overnight at Dexter Randall's house on Kittridge Road in Newport. On Saturday morning, the Walk will continue on to Irasburg, where the walk will terminate at the annual Irasburg Church Fair. "The carbon footprint of this pipeline is 6 times that of Vermont," said Dr. Robert Holland, moderator of the Irasburg Town Meeting and owner of Black River Farm (which the pipeline cuts across). "We need to learn to live with a much smaller carbon footprint, not add more emissions to the atmosphere; stop now, not when climate change is ravaging the earth." Says Simon, "Too few Vermonters recognize the very real threat that tar sands crude poses to our local communities. With our second walk in as many years, we hope to both help raise awareness and celebrate the vibrant communities that a pipeline reversal and change of use could impact." The Portland Montreal Pipeline, majority-owned by ExxonMobil, is really three parallel pipelines, the oldest dating from 1941. All indications point toward a corporate plan to reverse one of the lines in order to transport tar sands products from western Canada. In the last three years, similar pipelines carrying these products have ruptured in Michigan and Arkansas, spilling over a million gallons of diluted bitumen into towns, farmlands and waterways. Tar sands pipelines have been documented to spill more frequently — and with more damage to the environment — than conventional oil pipelines. Everyone is welcome to come "walk the line" with local residents, 350 Vermont supporters, and allies from around the region. Participants are encouraged to come for all or part of the walk. More information about the walk can be found on the 350 Vermont website: 350vt.org.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Justin M. Robinson <jmrobins@vermontel.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2013 9:23 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; jrobinson@vermontel.com; Sam Coleman
Cc: Michel Guite; Miller, Lawrence; Fran Stocker
Subject: RE: Contact for former IBM employees

I had also promised Michel to forward along details of the All Things D conference. You can find information about the last one (D11) on their website at http://allthingsd.com/category/d11/?mod=atd_d112013_confwidget_fullcoverage

Specifically I think we were amazed about the speakers that they were able to get in attendance, which include a cast from CEO's from Sony, Apple, Cisco, Twitter, Tesla, Pintrest, Motorola Mobility, and a cast of other high-level executives from technology companies: <http://allthingsd.com/conferences/d/d11/speakers/>

Thanks,

Justin M. Robinson
Chief Technology Officer
Vermont Telephone Co., Inc.
Phone: 802 885-7708
Mobile: 802 289-2108
E-Mail: jmrobins@vermontel.com

Get the latest news and updates on VTel GigE, VTelevision and VTel WOW – Like us on Facebook!

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten [mailto:Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us]
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 1:25 PM
To: jrobinson@vermontel.com; Sam Coleman; Lucenti, Rose
Cc: Michel Guite; Miller, Lawrence; Fran Stocker
Subject: Contact for former IBM employees

Michel, Justin, Sam and Fran -

Thanks so much for taking time to meet with us yesterday. There are several items that we will follow up with you on shortly, but we wanted you to immediately provide you with the contact at our Department of Labor who can help you make connections with the recently laid off IBM employees.

The contact is Ms. Rose Lucenti, (included on this email) and she can be reached at 828.4151.

I hope that you are able to find some new VTel team members from this group!

Thanks,
Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2013 8:41 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Telecom -

Talked to Tom M and between the two of us, we patched together the history of the state's role in Telecom:

When Tom assumed the role of Dep Comm about 8-9 years ago, his telecom responsibilities included administering a small grant program (about \$200K) and also doing general outreach, acting as a point person on the issues, etc. Then he hired Charlie Kremer who managed the grants and did a lot of drive testing. Chris Campbell also was involved as a telecom person from Public Service and he eventually became Director after Larry Lackey's departure.

He said that it was around this time that providers considered Vermont as being cell-hating hippies (yep, we share the same political views), but that obviously changed.

When Tom went to DII, he brought the telecom responsibilities w/ him. Charlie eventually went, too.

Evslin, MKS and to a lesser extent, Tom, dreamt up the concept of the VTA - they wanted to do something big (surprise) and included the bonding authority (\$40mln). It was always the intent that the VTA be dissolved once the mission was achieved.

We talked about what the state's role should be going forward: he said that he thought that returning it to ACCD is likely the best idea. We should maintain our relationships with DII, ANR (for state sites), Public Safety and Public Service for a variety of reasons - continuation of state sites licensing; PSBN, policy work, etc. Obviously, having this role at ACCD will also help us engage with them on eco dev opportunities, etc.

This is about a 1/2 time job.

Here are some other thoughts that Tom and I batted around:

- we are eons ahead of other states due to the stimulus \$.
- the VTA needs to get rid of some of their \$ or Alice Emmons (or folks like her) will flip
- if there isn't a business case for a cell provider to come to Vermont...it's isn't going to happen and the VTA should stop w/ the small carrier (read: CoverageCo) stuff. VTel, given its size, might be a better option
- then we talked about Chris and that isn't something that I should put in an email.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Duggan, James
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 3:28 PM
To: Ehrlich, Judith; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Mackay, Noelle
Subject: FW: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

FYI –

I have reserved Justin Morrill conference room as Coolidge is being used all day.
I believe we will all be able to fit in the room.

Jamie

From: Elizabeth Kohler [mailto:EKohler@drm.com]
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 3:09 PM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Will Dodge
Subject: RE: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

Hi Jamie,

Below is the list of attendees for VTel. Unfortunately, I'll be out of the office next week and unable to attend the meeting but I'm looking forward to meeting you in person on another occasion.

VTel Attendees:

Diane Guité, Vice President of Business Development
Gordon Mathews, Site Acquisition Manager
Jason Beckham, Construction Manager
Will Dodge, Downs Rachlin Martin
Britta Fenniman Tonn, EBI Consulting
Audra Klumb, A&D Klumb Environmental

Elizabeth Kohler | Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC

Of Counsel | Energy & Telecommunications – Real Estate, Land Use and Environmental Group
199 Main Street, PO Box 190 | Burlington, VT 05402-0190
Main: 802-863-2375 | Direct: 802-846-8382 | Mobile: 802-777-0704
ekohler@drm.com | www.drm.com

From: Elizabeth Kohler
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 9:56 AM
To: 'Duggan, James'
Cc: Will Dodge
Subject: RE: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

Thanks. I'll send over a list of VTel attendees early next week.

Have a nice weekend.

Beth

Elizabeth Kohler | Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC

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ekohler@drm.com | www.drm.com

From: Duggan, James [<mailto:James.Duggan@state.vt.us>]
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 9:37 AM
To: Elizabeth Kohler
Cc: Will Dodge
Subject: RE: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

Beth,

Yes, I can confirm the meeting and have reserved a conference room here at ACCD for our use.
Once you know who will attend from your end, I will make sure we have a room that is the right size.

Thanks,

Jamie

James P. Duggan

Historic Preservation Review Coordinator
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
National Life North Building
One National Life Drive -- 6th Floor
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-0501

Tel 802-828-3045
Fax 802-828-3206
James.Duggan@state.vt.us

From: Elizabeth Kohler [<mailto:EKohler@drm.com>]
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 9:35 AM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Will Dodge
Subject: RE: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

Hi Jamie,

I'm checking in with you to see if you are able to confirm the meeting on July 24th at 1:30PM. Thanks.

Elizabeth Kohler | Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC

Of Counsel | Energy & Telecommunications - Real Estate, Land Use and Environmental Group
199 Main Street, PO Box 190 | Burlington, VT 05402-0190
Main: 802-863-2375 | Direct: 802-846-8382 | Mobile: 802-777-0704
ekohler@drm.com | www.drm.com

From: Elizabeth Kohler
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2013 11:20 AM
To: 'Duggan, James'
Cc: Will Dodge
Subject: RE: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

Jamie,

On this end, the best date/time for a meeting is Wednesday July 24th at 1:30PM. Does that still work for you, and should we plan to meet at your offices in Montpelier? Once the meeting is confirmed, I'll send you a list of attendees from our end.

Thanks for your time and effort to setup this meeting.
Beth

Elizabeth Kohler | Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC

Of Counsel | Energy & Telecommunications - Real Estate, Land Use and Environmental Group
199 Main Street, PO Box 190 | Burlington, VT 05402-0190
Main: 802-863-2375 | Direct: 802-846-8382 | Mobile: 802-777-0704
ekohler@drm.com | www.drm.com

From: Duggan, James [<mailto:James.Duggan@state.vt.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, July 09, 2013 12:21 PM
To: Elizabeth Kohler
Subject: RE: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

Beth,

You are correct about 55 West Street – that is for another carrier. I apologize for the oversight.

Looking at schedules, right now the best times are:

Mon 22 – after 2pm
Tues 23 – after 10:30am
Wed 24 - after 1pm
Thurs 25 – after 9am
Fri 26 – not an option

Let me know what you come up with for times.

Thank you,
Jamie

James P. Duggan

Historic Preservation Review Coordinator
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
National Life North Building
One National Life Drive -- 6th Floor
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-0501

Tel 802-828-3045
Fax 802-828-3206
James.Duggan@state.vt.us

From: Elizabeth Kohler [<mailto:EKohler@drm.com>]
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 5:41 PM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Will Dodge
Subject: RE: VTel projects [DRM-ID.FID567135]

Hi Jamie,

Thank you for the summaries. I appreciate your spending the time to pull the information together. On my initial review of the EBI summary, I see that you've listed a project at 55 West Road, Rutland. I'm not familiar with a VTel project at that location. Could you double check your records and confirm whether that is a VTel project?

We're tentatively looking at a possible meeting sometime during the week of July 22nd. I'm still trying to align schedules on this end but wanted to check with you to see if any days that week work for you and other interested parties on your end.

Thanks.

Beth

Elizabeth Kohler | Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC

Of Counsel | Energy & Telecommunications - Real Estate, Land Use and Environmental Group
199 Main Street, PO Box 190 | Burlington, VT 05402-0190
Main: 802-863-2375 | Direct: 802-846-8382 | Mobile: 802-777-0704
ekohler@drm.com | www.drm.com

From: Duggan, James [<mailto:James.Duggan@state.vt.us>]
Sent: Friday, July 05, 2013 2:50 PM
To: Elizabeth Kohler
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Ehrlich, Judith; Colman, Devin
Subject: VTel projects

Hi Beth,

Attached you will find two documents summarizing the current VTel project under review by the Division. One reflects projects submitted by Klumb Environmental, the second lists projects submitted by EBI Consulting. I also wanted to touch base about the proposed New Tower project in Castleton, 1044 Route 4A West - Hydeville Baptist Church.

While we have not yet received the FCC Form 620 for New Tower for review yet, the construction drawings submitted for the PSB 45-day advance notification suggest that for Indirect effects there will be an Adverse effect similar to the Fair Haven project. In addition, we have received notification from abutting historic property owners and the Town of Castleton Select Board, both of whom oppose the proposed design. Clearly there are significant concerns about this project, even before we have received the \$106 submittals.

Please review and advise if you think we can schedule a meeting of interested parties in the near future.

Thank you,
Jamie

James P. Duggan

Historic Preservation Review Coordinator
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
National Life North Building
One National Life Drive -- 6th Floor
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-0501

Tel 802-828-3045
Fax 802-828-3206
james.Duggan@state.vt.us

Miller, Lawrence

From: Noonan, Annie
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 12:59 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Lucenti, Rose
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Connecting IBM folks with VTel

Call Rose Lucenti at 828-4151. Thanks!!! This is great!!!

Sent from my iPhone. Please forgive any typographical errors

On Jul 17, 2013, at 11:43 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Hi Annie - we met yesterday with VTel - located in Springfield - and they wanted to know how they could talk to some of the folks recently laid off by IBM about some job openings that they have. Can you pls advise? I'd like to get back to them in the next day or so.

Thanks,
Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 11:42 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: VTel Meeting and Follow-up

FTTH Status - last piece will be under contract in 2-3 weeks. Everything will be cut over by the end of the year. Possible GPS event

Senator Mark Pryor (D-Arkansas) - he serves on Appropriations/Commerce, Science and Tech/Small Biz, etc - is the keynote for this event: <http://www.pcia.com/pcia-press-releases/586-pcia-to-discuss-rural-wireless-broadband-deployment-on-capitol-hill> where Michel will be a panelist. It isn't an appearance before the Senate

Mastech - agreed to pay them \$2million to complete by year end. VTel is waiting on Mastech to confirm whether this is possible. I was unclear whether this included any wireless or was just for the FTTH piece.

Mastech Contractors - did have a few D-B issues, PWC audited and VTel is in the clear

Challenges: Historic Preservation; PSB (possibly). Our role will be to be a part of HP discussions and help process along.

Timing - I was largely unclear about where they are in terms of their rollout. I'd like to follow up with Sam and Justin to get a better idea of their projections; locations that will not be served by the end of the year, etc.

Outreach - I will f/u on his idea to promote VT via a GigE, etc.

Employees - will call Annie today to link IBM folks w/ VTel.

Draft LoS for USDA - I will follow up with Vtel directly...

am I forgetting anything?

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 10:41 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: NEWS: SE Vt. Getting Fastest Internet Service in U.S.

Literally saw it as we sat down w/ Michel yesterday...

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 17, 2013, at 10:35 AM, "Miller, Elizabeth" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

no, not me

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Jul 17, 2013, at 10:33 AM, "Allen, Susan" <Susan.Allen@state.vt.us> wrote:

I'm curious if we knew this was coming from Bernie? Sue

From: Briggs, Michael (Sanders) [mailto:Michael_Briggs@sanders.senate.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 10:23 AM
Subject: NEWS: SE Vt. Getting Fastest Internet Service in U.S.

<image003.jpg>Vermont at Cutting Edge on Broadband

WASHINGTON, July 17 – Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) said today that a region in southeastern Vermont is getting the fastest consumer connection to the Internet anywhere in the United States.

Springfield, Vt., and 13 neighboring towns – Saxons River, Chester, North Springfield, Grafton, Bridgewater, Cuttingsville, Wallingford, Hartland, Killington, Pawlet, Danby, Mt. Holly and Middletown Springs – are in the process of getting state-of-the-art Internet access at speeds 100 times faster than average and faster than anywhere else in the United States except a Kansas City, Mo., pilot project by Google.

“Vermont may be on the verge of reaping enormous dividends from this historic investment in our future,” Sanders said of the new fiber optic service. “The ultra-fast Internet offers the chance to dramatically change how we think about education, health care and business,” Sanders added.

“The goal now is to use this resource to attract business and create good-paying jobs,” Sanders said of the region that once was a national hub for the

tool-and-die industry but lost thousands of good-paying jobs as manufacturers shut down.

The cutting-edge development is a result of a federal, state and local government partnership with private business to significantly upgrade the Internet infrastructure in the Springfield area and in other parts of Vermont. The Springfield project is being built by Springfield-based Vermont Telephone Co. VTel received federal funds to build the fiber network that will provide affordable broadband access throughout its 14-town service area. VTel's monthly price for the high-speed Internet access is only about \$35.

About 1,500 homes and business in the Springfield area already have the new fiber-optic connection, a number which VTel expects to double by the end of December. By the end of 2013, VTel says the framework of the fiber work, which includes running the fiber through 14 towns and into neighborhoods, will be complete. During the remainder of this year and throughout 2014, homes will continue to be linked to that network.

The growing list of companies already wired include Black River Meats, Lucas Industries, One Credit Union and Vermont Timberworks. "It does save us time, and time is money," said Doug Friant, the owner of the company which specializes in designing timber frames and buildings.

Adam Trojanowski, a 38-year-old software developer for IBM who lives in Chester, Vt., was one of the first to sign up for the state-of-the art fiber connection. "I work with people in different sites and now I'm on a par with them," he said. "When I told the people I work with who live in New York that I was getting this fiber they were envious. I don't think anywhere in the world has anything faster for consumers."

Bob Flint, executive director of the Springfield Regional Development Corp., said the Internet service will lure businesses to southeastern Vermont. "This is a huge asset, a huge arrow in the quiver," Flint said of the arrival the fiber optic connections to Springfield.

Contact: Michael Briggs (202) 224-5141

###

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2013 10:25 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FW: Listing of current VTel projects under review

ugh

From: Duggan, James
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2013 10:23 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Ehrlich, Judith
Subject: RE: Listing of current VTel projects under review

Kiersten,

We understand that the installations are not permanent, and won't have a lasting impact on the silo, however they will have adverse visual effects which change the character of the structure while in place. As they are designed to be removable once obsolete, there is no real need to document before/after conditions.

Regarding technology - VTel is the only carrier we are seeing propose 4' round microwave dishes – which is one of the primary issues with the design. We believe the appropriate technology is out there now, we just are not seeing it as part of their designs.

Finally, while we understand the economic benefits all around (provider, property owner and public) that does not necessarily weigh into our specific review process.

Perhaps we could meet briefly in advance of the upcoming meeting to discuss further.

Thanks,
Jamie

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2013 11:08 AM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Ehrlich, Judith
Subject: RE: Listing of current VTel projects under review

Hi Jamie –

After reading over the list of sites that HP and VTel are working through, a few things struck me, particularly with respect to the silos. I can completely see your concern about the churches in Chelsea and Rutland, as well as the service building in Rutland. So my comments below really refer to silos:

First, I believe that the installations will be temporary and due to improvements in technology, new equipment will be likely smaller. Technology changes all the time, as you know, and presumably VTel will eventually transition – when its cost effective – to smaller, more modern infrastructure as improvements come available. If VTel can agree to mount these antennae, etc w/out a lasting impact to the structure, will that be acceptable to you? (please note that I haven't had any specific conversations about this w/ them).

Also, there is an incredible economic benefit to this project – specifically, VTel has said that these 9 or 10 sites will serve 15,000 homes. Barton alone will hit 2300 rooftops. Is there a way we can do some sort of document and destroy

activity for these? I realize that 'destroy' isn't the best term to use, but I think that is the practice that we employed for St. Albans most recently.

Also relative – although tangentially – to the economic benefit thought: these landowners will be able to put a few more bucks in their pocket from either one-time payments or monthly lease payments.

Any feedback/thoughts appreciated.

Thanks – Kiersten

From: Duggan, James
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 9:05 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Ehrlich, Judith
Subject: RE: Listing of current VTel projects under review

Correct, both EBI Consult. and Klumb Enviro. are consultants submitting FCC forms for §106 review – they are reporting to DRM ...who are dealing with the PSB submittals and generally acting as owners agent for VTel. To further complicate things, Klumb subcontracts out to other architectural historians and archeologists. EBI has a large staff of arch historians - so we have different personnel making determinations of eligibility and effect for each project. Thus the reasoning behind wanting to get everybody on the same page.

Jamie

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 7:06 AM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Ehrlich, Judith
Subject: RE: Listing of current VTel projects under review

Are EBI and Klumb both working for VTel? I am a little confused as to who is who?

From: Duggan, James
Sent: Friday, July 05, 2013 2:05 PM
To: A&D Klumb Environmental, LLC
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Ehrlich, Judith
Subject: Listing of current VTel projects under review

Hi Audra,

Thanks for your time on the phone this morning.

As we discussed, I have a concurrence letter for Underhill awaiting signature, I should have that to you on Monday.

As no "date of construction" can be identified for the Barton project, we will consider the silo historic unless determined otherwise.

I am attaching the summary of projects we have on the table right now for your records and review.

I look forward to discussing these projects with you further.

Thank you,
Jamie

James P. Duggan
Historic Preservation Review Coordinator
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
National Life North Building
One National Life Drive -- 6th Floor
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-0501

Tel 802-828-3045
Fax 802-828-3206
James.Duggan@state.vt.us

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2013 8:38 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: FW: 2010-2013 progress
Attachments: BroadbandStatus_TrendOverTime.xlsx

Hi Liz,
Following up on our conversation from last week, please find a snapshot of the progress that has been made from 2010-2012. I have asked Stone to further update this to show where we were as of June 2013; this might take them a while. And I have to still work on the increased speed data.

In summary:

- From Dec 2010 to Dec 2012, 27,457 addresses were served
- 96.1% of addresses are currently served
- There are about 10k that **will be** served this year (we'll find out how many are VTel)
- There are 298 unserved (according to this report). However, based on some data verification that Stone, the VTA and Public Service did, the number is 222 with 170 having solutions and 52 that need them. During our conversation last week, we explained that 119 of the 170 could be served by Exede. We will dig further into these last 222 today w/ VTel as well and ask whether they will meet with Katie (from Stone) and Corey to help further verify this information.

Do you still want me to draft a letter....?

Thanks,
Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 2:25 PM
To: Porter, James; Recchia, Chris
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTA 8th Capital project report

No, it isn't my idea, but I want to make sure that we look at all angles...

The VTA approved about \$25k for 20 test sites. Trust me, I am not a fan of this, but I am very cognizant of the fact that we still have a handful of hard-to-reach addresses.

In other news, Lawrence and I are going to VTel tomorrow. One of the things I am going to ask them is how many of our last 52 will be included in their build-out. I will also be sure to suggest that their tech folks get together w/ Katie and Corey.

From: Porter, James
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 2:20 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Recchia, Chris
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTA 8th Capital project report

I would say that anyone in Vermont can get satellite today on their own so I would go back to the message that it sends using that a solution the Gov. is supporting. Also, I continue to not understand why we would pay the satellite co. some \$900 per address when their website seems to offer a two-year contract for free.

Sorry to be negative – but I know this isn't your idea.



Jim Porter, Director of Telecommunications
and Smart Grid Policy
Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2601
(802) 828-4003 (office)
(802) 828-2342 (fax)
(802) 522-6685 (mobile)
james.porter@state.vt.us (email)

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 1:56 PM
To: Porter, James; Recchia, Chris
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTA 8th Capital project report

Of course.

What about satellite as an interim step prior to finding permanent solution? If the VTA can prove (let me finish before you get cranky...) that the Exede technology is, in fact, better than expected, do you think that it is a good idea to have this in our back pocket as we approach the end of the year.

From: Porter, James
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 1:50 PM
To: Recchia, Chris
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: VTA 8th Capital project report

I have to agree with Chris and not just because he is my boss.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 15, 2013, at 1:44 PM, "Recchia, Chris" <Chris.Recchia@state.vt.us> wrote:

As a prior user of satellite who now uses DSL, I would urge us not to rely on satellite services. Not reliable in rain, snow or significant wind (not that we get any of those) Also, a cynic might ask, "since satellite is available everywhere (except extreme north-facing sites), if the Governor considered satellite to qualify, what was the big deal about everyone being served by the end of 2013?"

My two cents,

- Chris

Christopher Recchia, Commissioner
Public Service Department
112 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2601
(802) 828-4071
chris.recchia@state.vt.us

From: Porter, James
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 1:27 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Recchia, Chris
Subject: RE: VTA 8th Capital project report

The feds really only dictate what they fund. We have conformed to their guidelines for various reasons though we don't have to. I think it is unlikely that we would change course on satellite in the new telecom plan – also, Chris (Campbell not Recchia) was responsible for the first draft of the current telecom plan. I think generally – across the industry – it is not considered a good alternative, in part because of latency issues.

<image001.gif>
Jim Porter, Director of Telecommunications
and Smart Grid Policy
Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2601

(802) 828-4003 (office)
(802) 828-2342 (fax)
(802) 522-6685 (mobile)
james.porter@state.vt.us (email)

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 1:11 PM
To: Porter, James
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Recchia, Chris
Subject: RE: VTA 8th Capital project report

Okay, so help me with this. My instinct is to work to find other providers to serve the remaining unserveds, but given that the Telecom plan was written in 2011 and has to be updated by next year, is it reasonable to assume that satellite will be a more widely-accepted solution and incorporated in to the plan as such? Or will the latency issues, etc. still deem it ineligible as a solution?

Or do the feds somehow dictate how/when/if satellite should be an option?

From: Porter, James
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 12:31 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Campbell, Chris
Cc: Recchia, Chris
Subject: RE: VTA 8th Capital project report

Also, the current telecom plan, at pages 5-6, reads in relevant part: "Additionally, while satellite Internet access services offering similar data rates are near universally available, non-terrestrial services do not qualify under federal standards. Therefore, for the purposes of generalized statistics, and to identify 'unserved' areas of the state, the Department considers Basic Broadband to be non-satellite data transmission technology...."

<image001.gif>
Jim Porter, Director of Telecommunications
and Smart Grid Policy
Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2601
(802) 828-4003 (office)
(802) 828-2342 (fax)
(802) 522-6685 (mobile)
james.porter@state.vt.us (email)

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 9:38 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Campbell, Chris
Cc: Porter, James
Subject: RE: VTA 8th Capital project report

That is consistent with my memory; thank you. If satellite were to be funded, the technology would have to be demonstrably different etc. I'd think – copying Jim since he was looking at telecom plan for same issue. Thanks for checking - Liz

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2013 9:30 AM
To: Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Elizabeth; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Campbell, Chris
Subject: FW: VTA 8th Capital project report

I am noting that as reflected in the quarterly report our current strategic plan excludes satellite from consideration in achieving the stated service-level goals.

In making grants available, the VTA is required to coordinate with the need analysis of Connect VT. Connect VT's strategic plan identifies four service-level goals with respect to broadband availability for each e911 location:

1.0 = one connection available (other than satellite) at the minimum threshold of 768/200 kbps or better

Goal date: 100% complete by December 31, 2013

2.0 = two connections available (other than satellite) at a minimum threshold 768/200 kbps or better, where at least one option is fixed and one is mobile or fixed

Goal date: substantially complete by December 31, 2013

3.0 = one available connection (other than satellite) at a minimum threshold of 4/1 mbps

Goal date: Future

4.0 = two connections available (other than satellite) at a minimum threshold 4/1 mbps, where at least one option is fixed and one is mobile

Goal date: Future

--
Lawrence Miller, ACCD
(802) 989-0569 Cell

From: Spear, Kelley
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2013 2:22 PM
To: Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Johnson, Harriet; Louise McCarren; Pam Mackenzie (pmackenzie221@comcast.net); Meyer, Peter; Sam Young (samyoung@thinkorsink.net); Stephan Morse; Trevor Crist (tcrist@inntopia.com); Wisloski, Stephen
Subject: VTA 8th Capital project report

Per Section 49(i) of the FY2012 Capital Bill starting on October 1, 2011, the Vermont Telecommunications Authority (VTA) is required to submit a report on investments made or grants awarded in furtherance of the goals stated in 30 V.S.A. § 8060(b), using the telecommunications measures established pursuant to No. 146 of the Acts of the 2009 Adj. Sess. [2010], (an act relating to implementation of challenges for change).

Please find attached.

Kind regards,

Kelley Spear

Vermont Telecommunications Authority
100 State Street, Suite 342
Montpelier, VT 05620-3205

Main 802.828.1788
Tel. 802.828.1792
Fax 802.828.1789
e-mail. kspear@telecomvt.org

Miller, Lawrence

From: Kevin Ellis <kevin@ksepartners.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2013 10:04 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: SHPO/Vtel

FYI: As promised.

Flying to Ireland with daughter but will watch email.

Best,

KE

--

Kevin Ellis
Partner
KSE Partners, LLP

Cambridge **Montpelier** Washington

O: 802.229.4900 x107
M: 802.371.8112
www.KsePartners.com
Kevin@KsePartners.com

From: Diane Guité <dguite@vermontel.com>
Date: Wednesday, July 10, 2013 2:05 PM
To: Microsoft Office User <kevin@ksepartners.com>
Subject: FW: SHPO

SHPO convo with Kiersten, fyi

Diane Guité
Vice President of Business Development
Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.
Phone: 802 885-7702
Mobile: 802 289-2190
E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

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From: Bourgeois, Kiersten [<mailto:Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2013 7:53 AM
To: Diane Guité
Cc: Michel Guite; Gordon Mathews
Subject: RE: SHPO

Hi Diane –

Thanks for the email.

I got a copy of the list that Jamie provided to DRM yesterday and I plan to review it today. I've been focused on shaking loose the Barton project for you, but will dig into each of these a little deeper.

If appropriate, I'd like to be a part of the meeting w/ HP and DRM; you are absolutely correct that agencies need to be working together.

I'll get back to you later today with any thoughts.

Thanks,
Kiersten

From: Diane Guité [<mailto:dquite@vermontel.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, July 09, 2013 10:43 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Michel Guite; Gordon Mathews
Subject: SHPO

Hi Kiersten !

Hope you had a great 4th. We caught up with DRM today to better understand what Jamie Duggan's concerns are around the VTel project.

Sounds like there are 3 silos (Jeffersonville 02, Barton 01, Brandon 02), two 90 foot pole easements (both in Fair Haven), 3 steeples (Montpelier, Chelsea, Albany), and 1 rooftop (Rutland) that are dead stopped because of SHPO concerns.

For 2 of the silo sites, it sounds like the silos are not historic nor are the farms, but rather that the farmsteads are eligible for historic status, and are therefore under the jurisdiction of SHPO.

Together, these 9 sites reach 15,000 Vermont homes and 2,500 RUS homes. Most are key to our network.

I think DRM is planning to arrange a meeting with Jamie Duggan during the week of July 22nd to see if we can work through his concerns. In the interim, do you have any advice for how we might move any of this forward? We're trying to bring internet to Vermont, but with state agencies pulling in different directions, we're having a difficult time...! Want to be sure we're hitting the right balance of playing by the rules and making progress.

Thanks so much for your help / guidance / suggestions – as always, we really appreciate it!

Best,

Diane Guité
Vice President of Business Development
Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.
354 River Street
Springfield, VT 05156
Phone: 802 885-7702
Mobile: 802 289-2190

E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 7:53 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FW: VTel Wireless

I'd like to address these points w/ Liz, et. al. tomorrow if you agree:

- 1) During our last meeting with Michel, he let us know that VTel would be nearly complete with construction by the end of the calendar year and that everything would be turned up by Q1 or early Q2 2014. Snags that have come up include: inability to reach agreement with landowners in a few cases; situations like the one in Rochester where there is lack of consensus in the town around where a tower should be sited; some HP issues. These should be expected and not a surprise given the size of this project. I have a handle on the HP sites that are causing stress, but I think that we should also get a sense of where the locations are affected by the inability to reach agreement with landowners. I can do that this week.
- 2) Let's be clear about the role that the VTA funding would have played in the VTel rollout: Michel has said publically that about 640 addresses would be served by the funds. He also explained that "carving out" the 640 from the larger project was difficult. Following the termination of the \$, VTel said that the addresses would be served anyway. Without written confirmation of this, VTA elected to add the addresses back into the unserved bucket. At this time, the majority of the addresses are now considered to be served and there are about 175 or so remaining.
- 3) The two VTA awards totaled \$3.4 million. Not \$5.8. Further, assertion that the slowdown is due to \$ is not particularly accurate.
- 4) So, what Michel states in his last sentence in the first para isn't really a shock. The problem is the fact that he wants to send out letters, which is a terrible idea.

Our response (generally, not to this email specifically):

- 1) We have solutions identified for every address in Vermont except for 200 (or whatever the actual # is; I will have that shortly). And we are working with providers to ensure that they will have a solution by the end of the year.
- 2) There have been instances of timing taking longer than expected for some providers, but we are committed to making sure that these locations are served.
- 3) There is still \$ to assist
- 4) Our work doesn't end at the close of 2013; we still need to make sure that our broadband infrastructure is maintained. Cellular will remain a focus as well.

From: Michel Guite [mailto:mguite@vermontel.com]
Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2013 9:26 AM
To: Smith, Shap; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence; ssmith@leg.state.vt.us
Cc: Kevin Ellis; Diane Guité
Subject: VTel Wireless

Hi Shap,

I have several times thought about our meeting in Montpelier, with Kevin Ellis, two months ago, where you were EXTREMELY clear – almost combatively clear -- that you wanted to be certain if we were not to be fully built with wireless by year end, you needed to know about it. You were friendly, and

courteous, but extremely clear, in a way that I appreciate. I think the news in this note is clear to all parties, but I want to leave no doubt it is clear to you. We are not going to be fully built by year-end.

Kevin had set up the meeting with you, to discuss my concern that VTA was in the process of stripping \$5.8 million of \$8.5 million, or almost 15%, from our wireless project after VTel had invested several million dollars of our limited capital to meet the VTA's project goals. As you know VTA did cancel the \$5.8 million, though a previously committed \$2.8 million did not get canceled, and is under contract. While we continue to build non-stop, the almost frantic pace of trying to meet the state's year-end goals has been replaced with a full commitment to plow ahead, but with a more orderly process of spending limited capital carefully. A number of rural sites that are not RUS, and not Smart Grid, have been placed lower on our list of priorities. For example Hardwick, Ascutney, and Windsor, all Gold List priorities, are being turned on this week, but several silo owners in non-RUS sites with several hundred homes will soon receive letters from us saying we have deferred their builds.

Well over 1,000 VTel customers are today using our GigE to homes, and attached is a nice article from Ars Technica yesterday, on this topic. <http://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2013/07/gigabit-internet-and-phone-service-for-48-a-month-it-really-exists/> . Our video came on a few days ago, and is working beautifully, with 500 channels. Vermont was rated in National Cable TV Association conference opening speech recently as 2nd only to South Korea in speed, with VTel fastest in Vermont, and so progress is being made. Nonetheless, our friends at AT&T had warned us that costs per wireless site are often much higher than expected, and we are learning this 'the hard way'. Wireless will be wonderful, but is a struggle, and challenge, and slower than hoped.

Overall I think it is fair to say I am very confident you, our legislature, and our Governor and his team will be very pleased with our wireless project, and it will prove to perform well ahead of most expectations, but it will take longer to get fully deployed than we had hoped, and the loss of the VTA's \$5.8 million will have more than \$5.8 million of impact.

If you would like to discuss this, at any time, summertime is probably easier to schedule.

We will demonstrate some technology at our Fireworks ribbon cutting at Springfield airport on July 6th.

Might you be free to attend the fireworks?

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

354 River Street

Springfield, VT 05156

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 7:11 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel Wireless

Hi Liz – Chris C. can't be at the meeting tomorrow b/c he is on vacation until then. However, I am working with his folks to get the info that you requested. Was it critical to have him there? Holly is out as well.

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2013 9:49 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Allen, Susan; Porter, James
Subject: Fwd: VTel Wireless

See below.

I will need to understand his comments better, particularly the several hundred homes delay comment, and will need to update the gov. We probably asap need the update, the map of addresses possibly unserved by year end, the VTA progress plan re grants etc to those areas, and a plan for letters to each address still not deployed with explanation as governor had asked for so that we get ahead if this; my guess is we will see media on it if emails are floating around. I'd like to be on the proactive side of it.

Should we get together to discuss early next week? Will set it up unless you already have a mtg on sch re these topics... Liz

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Michel Guite <mguite@vermontel.com>
Date: July 3, 2013, 9:34:16 AM EDT
To: "Miller, Elizabeth" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us>
Subject: FW: VTel Wireless

Liz,

I hope the following note to Shap is clear, and friendly, and not fighting words.

Best,

Michel Guite
President
Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.
Phone: 802 885-7000
Mobile: 914 572-7664
E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

Hi Shap,

I have several times thought about our meeting in Montpelier, with Kevin Ellis, two months ago, where you were EXTREMELY clear - almost combatively clear -- that you wanted to be certain if we were not to be fully built with wireless by year end, you needed to know about it. You were friendly, and courteous, but extremely clear, in a way that I appreciate. I think the news in this note is clear to all parties, but I want to leave no doubt it is clear to you. We are not going to be fully built by year-end.

Kevin had set up the meeting with you, to discuss my concern that VTA was in the process of stripping \$5.8 million of \$8.5 million, or almost 15%, from our wireless project after VTel had invested several million dollars of our limited capital to meet the VTA's project goals. As you know VTA did cancel the \$5.8 million, though a previously committed \$2.8 million did not get canceled, and is under contract. While we continue to build non-stop, the almost frantic pace of trying to meet the state's year-end goals has been replaced with a full commitment to plow ahead, but with a more orderly process of spending limited capital carefully. A number of rural sites that are not RUS, and not Smart Grid, have been placed lower on our list of priorities. For example Hardwick, Ascutney, and Windsor, all Gold List priorities, are being turned on this week, but several silo owners in non-RUS sites with several hundred homes will soon receive letters from us saying we have deferred their builds.

Well over 1,000 VTel customers are today using our GigE to homes, and attached is a nice article from Ars Technica yesterday, on this topic. <http://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2013/07/gigabit-internet-and-phone-service-for-48-a-month-it-really-exists/> . Our video came on a few days ago, and is working beautifully, with 500 channels. Vermont was rated in National Cable TV Association conference opening speech recently as 2nd only to South Korea in speed, with VTel fastest in Vermont, and so progress is being made. Nonetheless, our friends at AT&T had warned us that costs per wireless site are often much higher than expected, and we are learning this 'the hard way'. Wireless will be wonderful, but is a struggle, and challenge, and slower than hoped.

Overall I think it is fair to say I am very confident you, our legislature, and our Governor and his team will be very pleased with our wireless project, and it will prove to perform well ahead of most expectations, but it will take longer to get fully deployed than we had hoped, and the loss of the VTA's \$5.8 million will have more than \$5.8 million of impact.

If you would like to discuss this, at any time, summertime is probably easier to schedule.

We will demonstrate some technology at our Fireworks ribbon cutting at Springfield airport on July 6th.

Might you be free to attend the fireworks?

Michel Guite
President
Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.
354 River Street
Springfield, VT 05156

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2013 1:57 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FW: Springfield

fyi on the fireworks situation. no action requested

From: Anderson, Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2013 12:39 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Bob Flint; Rouelle, Guy
Subject: RE: Springfield

Hi Kiersten -

I sent this to the organization team this am, I have not heard back yet about any movement on the items I bulleted:

All,

If desired - prior to me going to the AAG with a request to revise the License for the event to cover the unlikely rain date I need to have:

- Commitment from fire that they can cover the 7th at the level they could on the 6th.
- Commitment from police that they can cover the 7th at the level they could on the 6th.
- Commitment from the volunteer coordinator, Larry, that he has enough to cover the event adequately.

I will also need a revised certificate of insurance from VTel that shows coverage for the 7th and 8th (the 8th till 1700 is ok - this would provide the coverage needed for the cleanup) in addition to the original coverage if the event goes off as planned on the 6th.

As I only have today and Friday (tomorrow is a State Holiday) I would need this ASAP.

From NOAA 7 Day forecast as of this am:

Friday A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 4pm. Patchy fog before 8am. Otherwise, partly sunny and hot, with a high near 90. Calm wind becoming west 5 to 9 mph in the morning. New rainfall amounts of less than a tenth of an inch, except higher amounts possible in thunderstorms.

Friday Night A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before 8pm. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 64. Southwest wind around 5 mph becoming calm in the evening. New rainfall amounts of less than a tenth of an inch, except higher amounts possible in thunderstorms.

Saturday Partly sunny, with a high near 89. Light and variable wind becoming west 6 to 11 mph in the morning.

Saturday Night Partly cloudy, with a low around 66. West wind around 6 mph becoming calm in the evening.

Sunday Mostly sunny, with a high near 88. Calm wind becoming west 5 to 9 mph in the morning.

Sunday Night Partly cloudy, with a low around 66. Southwest wind around 6 mph becoming calm after midnight

Once I hear the items are all set and I get a copy of the revised insurance I can take it to the AAG for revision.

I think at some point, given the very late date in which the rain date issue was brought up, the energy we have from the organizers is better spent on pulling off a successful Saturday event. Everyone, organizers, volunteers, resources are just about tapped out.

I am hoping for good weather on Saturday as forecast.

Thanks, Tom

Tom Anderson
State Airport Operations Specialist/Pilot
Aviation Program, Policy, Planning and Intermodal Development Division
802.498.5892 (c) - primary contact number
802.828.2723 (w)
thomas.anderson@state.vt.us
www.aviation.vermont.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2013 12:28 PM
To: Anderson, Thomas
Cc: Bob Flint; Rouelle, Guy
Subject: RE: Springfield

Hi Tom - any movement on this?

From: Anderson, Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, July 02, 2013 5:17 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Bob Flint; Rouelle, Guy
Subject: Re: Springfield

There really isn't time. I will do what I can and report back to all.

Thanks, Tom

Tom Anderson
State Aviation Ops Specialist/Pilot
Cell: (802) 498-5892
Office: (802) 828-3983
thomas.anderson@state.vt.us

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 2, 2013, at 17:07, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

> As soon as I hit "send", I wondered if I should have typed out "thomas".
>

> In any event, let me know if you need me to do anything. I'll keep my fingers crossed for good weather.

>
> Are you going to pursue the 7th as a possible rain date? Or is there even time?

>
>
> _____

> From: Anderson, Thomas
> Sent: Tuesday, July 02, 2013 5:04 PM
> To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
> Cc: Bob Flint; Rouelle, Guy
> Subject: Re: Springfield

>
> Kiersten,
>
> Thanks so much for your understanding and support. I am hoping for good weather.

>
> First email went to the wrong Tom Anderson - I'm thomas.anderson@state.vt.us.

>
> Tom
>
> Tom Anderson
> State Aviation Ops Specialist/Pilot
> Cell: (802) 498-5892
> Office: (802) 828-3983
> thomas.anderson@state.vt.us

>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On Jul 2, 2013, at 16:51, "Anderson, Tom" <Tom.Anderson@state.vt.us> wrote:

>
>>
>>
>> Tom Anderson
>> District 6
>> Project Manager
>> tom.anderson@state.vt.us

>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
>> Sent: Tuesday, July 02, 2013 4:51 PM
>> To: Rouelle, Guy; Anderson, Tom
>> Subject: Springfield

>>
>> Hey Guys - I just talked with Bob Flint from SRDC and he gave me the overview of the situation...let me know if you need anything from me.

>>
>> Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2013 11:26 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Can you pls call me re: VTEL?

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, July 02, 2013 9:34 AM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Colman, Devin; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FW: Barton

Hi Jamie -

I wanted to offer an idea that might help the Barton HP piece of the VTel project. VTel has let me know that with the installation of their equipment in Barton, 2300 rooftops will benefit and 930 of those are RUS-funded.

Is there any way that we could:

- a) consider the economic benefit of this installation to the greater public?
- b) appropriately photograph/document the site prior to VTel hanging equipment on it, as has been done with other building projects, to accurately depict the 'original' state of the silo? Then, put it in an agreed-upon location?
- c) And this isn't exactly a suggestion, but a question - if this is a privately owned silo, can't the property owner decide how he/she wants to deal with this?

Thanks,
Kiersten

-----Original Message-----

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, July 01, 2013 5:07 PM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Colman, Devin
Subject: Barton

Hey Jamie - any news yet on Barton?. VTel just sent me another msg.

Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2013 10:08 AM
To: Duggan, James
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Mackay, Noelle; Ehrlich, Judith
Subject: RE: VTEL projects

Hi Jamie - Thanks for this.

Were you able to talk with them directly about Rutland and/or Barton? Those two seemed to be the most pressing at this time.

And I thought that Underhill was reconsidered and isn't historic?

It looks like the majority of sites require adjustment on VTel's part for silo installations. Do you happen to know whether they have been able to design something that will suffice – and perhaps have used it on other silos?

Thanks – Kiersten

From: Duggan, James
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2013 9:56 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Mackay, Noelle; Ehrlich, Judith
Subject: VTEL projects

Good morning Kiersten,

As we discussed, I would like to send out (ASAP) the following list of projects w/ brief description of design issues to Beth Kohler & Will Dodge at Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC – the attorneys representing VTEL through PSB filings and “supervisors” in direct communication with the sub-consultants who are submitting the FCC forms on VTEL's behalf.

Please take a look and let me know if you have any comments or suggestions.

Thank you,
Jamie

James P. Duggan
Historic Preservation Review Coordinator
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
National Life North Building
One National Life Drive -- 6th Floor
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-0501

Tel 802-828-3045
Fax 802-828-3206
James.Duggan@state.vt.us

Miller, Lawrence

From: Leigh Appleby <leighrappleby@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 14, 2013 6:36 AM
To: Appleby, Leigh
Subject: MEDIA CLIPS FOR FRIDAY JUNE 14

TIMES ARGUS/ RUTLAND HERALD

Citizens seek probe of Shumlin deal sent

By Peter Hirschfeld

MONTPELIER — Gov. Peter Shumlin's controversial land deal has spawned calls from citizens for an independent investigation, though it remains unclear whether state officials have launched a probe.

Attorney General William Sorrell confirmed Thursday that at least six Vermonters have asked for a formal review of a transaction last fall in which Shumlin purchased a 16-acre homestead for about one-third of its current assessed value.

Sorrell said citizens have expressed a particular concern for the mental acuity of the man from whom Shumlin purchased the acreage and whether the transaction constituted abuse of a vulnerable adult.

Sorrell, who first disclosed the complaints during an interview on WDEV's "The Mark Johnson Show" Wednesday, said he's referred the correspondence to the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, the state agency responsible for investigating claims of abuse or exploitation of a vulnerable adult. A lawyer at that department said the state can neither confirm nor deny the existence of the complaints or whether they have prompted an investigation into Shumlin's land deal.

"Whether any reports were made or emails forwarded, and how they're being treated by DAIL, and more specifically by Adult Protective Services, is a confidential matter," said Stuart Schurr, assistant attorney general for the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living.

Sorrell, however, said the allegations "seem to be serious contentions and worthy of at least some review."

"They're not likely to be dismissed out of hand," Sorrell said.

A written statement provided by Shumlin's personal lawyer Thursday seemed to suggest that state investigators have already been in touch with the Democratic governor.

"We have been in contact with (Adult Protective Services) and will continue to be involved in any way they request," attorney Jerry Diamond said in an email.

Diamond, who also said Shumlin "believes strongly that all such complaints should be thoroughly investigated with the participation of the parties," declined to comment further.

The citizen complaints came mostly in the form of emails to Sorrell's office and express dismay over a real estate transaction that began making headlines last month when East Montpelier resident Jeremy Dodge first went public with his seller's remorse.

Dodge and his children say Shumlin used the specter of a looming tax sale to lowball Dodge on the homestead he inherited from his parents in 2009. One of Dodge's daughters has characterized their father as a "16-year-old mind inside a 54-year-old body," and they say he lacked the mental acuity to evaluate Shumlin's offer. Dodge did not have a lawyer to represent him in the transaction.

Shumlin has said the deal was a fair one for both him and Dodge and that he has no reason to suspect the seller's mental faculties are in any way diminished. He said he urged Dodge to get a lawyer but that Dodge refused.

Both Shumlin and Dodge have since retained high-powered attorneys. Diamond, a former three-term attorney general, is handling the case on behalf of Shumlin; Brady Toensing, a Charlotte lawyer with ties to the Republican Party, is representing Dodge. Joy Karnes Limoge, a Williston property lawyer, will also be working on behalf of Dodge.

Correspondence to Sorrell's office, released Thursday after a records request, question both the legality and ethics of the land deal.

"I would like to know if your office intends to investigate Shumlin's land deals," Sally Minor wrote May 28. "For the governor of Vermont to take advantage of any mentally challenged person is despicable."

In another May 28 message, East Montpelier resident Walter Zeichner called for "a very transparent investigation."

"The public has a right to know what kind of person is in the governor's office," Zeichner wrote.

On June 8, Rich Hollenbeck Sr. asked that Shumlin be investigated for "taking advantage of one that clearly isn't in complete touch with reality, not knowing what direction to turn to get even the basic help afforded to folks in his position."

Kristin Anderson on May 29 told Sorrell in an email that “it is obvious that Gov. Shumlin scammed a mentally deficient neighbor out of his rightful inheritance.”

“Please create a transparent plan to look into the details of this apparently unjust dealing, and see if this wrong can be righted,” Anderson wrote.

Speaking about the process at Adult Protective Services generally, Schurr said the division’s screeners vet claims to see whether they merit investigation by a field supervisor. That vetting process, Schurr said, centers largely on whether the alleged victim meets the statutory definition of a “vulnerable adult” and whether the alleged behavior constitutes the “abuse, neglect or exploitation” needed to launch an investigation.

A vulnerable adult, under Vermont law, includes anyone who “is impaired due to brain damage, infirmities of aging, or a physical, mental, or developmental disability.” “Exploitation” of a vulnerable adult, according to statute, includes “willfully using, withholding, transferring or disposing of funds or property of a vulnerable adult for the wrongful profit or advantage of another.”

Schurr said that if the complaints pass muster with screeners, they’re handed off to field supervisors who investigate the merits of the claims. Two investigators in the financial exploitation unit would likely handle probes dealing with real estate transactions.

When claims of malfeasance are substantiated, Schurr said, the perpetrator’s name is generally placed on a statewide registry. The registry is not a public document.

Schurr said the state also has the authority to levy fines, though it rarely uses that power.

1,000 and counting: Doyle reaches a TV milestone

By Gayle Hanson

MONTPELIER — You want to know what the worst job experience has been for Lt. Gov. Phil Scott in his well-documented attempt to try on the jobs of workers around the state?

The surprising and shocking answer will be revealed during the airing of the 1,000th public access interview of Sen. Bill Doyle’s eponymous ORCA Media interview show that has been on the air for more than two decades.

“I think that one of my earliest interviews was with Gov. Madeleine Kunin,” recalled the Republican state senator from Washington County. “It was during the last couple of weeks of her term, and she was very, very articulate. But she was a journalist herself, and as the interview proceeded she began interviewing me. She caught herself and we got back on track.”

Since that early success Doyle has sat down with hundreds of Vermonters, a few Canadians and a handful of folks from even farther afield for 30-minute interviews on a dizzying range of subjects.

He’s talked with mayors, governors, athletes, artists, parliamentarians and farmers. The experience, says the 89-year-old statesman and longtime history professor at Johnson State College, has been that of a remarkable education where he’s never quite sure exactly what he is going to learn.

“Everyone I interview knows more than I do about their topic,” he said. “So whatever the situation, I am always going to learn something.”

On Thursday, the venue was Scott’s Statehouse office. The elegant room, with its yellow brocade sofa, polished wood desk and highboy, and pastoral oil painting, is the perfect backdrop for a conversation. Two armchairs were angled toward each other; an umbrella light stood in the corner to illuminate the scene. ORCA camera operator Chris Diego and program director Rob Chapman were busy setting up the cameras.

Three minutes before the interview was scheduled to begin, Doyle entered the room pushing a wheeled walker in front of him. He adjusted his blazer and sat down across from the lieutenant governor, advising Scott to relax.

Doyle is a consummate politician and handy interviewer, alternating the soft with the curve balls. But his interviewees generally know what kind of road he’s going to lead them down.

“When I’m interviewing I generally let people understand where I’m going beforehand” he said. “This isn’t ‘Meet the Press.’”

“Meet the Press” it might not be, but Doyle and the folks at ORCA are looking to compile a “best of” program that would include some of the more interesting interviews the senator has conducted over the years. Next week, Doyle will sit down with the cable programmers and start looking through the hundreds of tapes now lining the walls of his home office — all in an effort to see which programs on videotape might be able to be digitized.

In the end it will be a “Who’s Who” of Doyle’s subjects through the years.

Thursday Doyle got the lieutenant governor to speak on one of his favorite topics: auto racing.

The conversation quickly got personal.

The two started reminiscing about then-Treasurer James Douglas' 50th birthday, when a slew of folks headed up to Thunder Road to take a spin around the track in one of Scott's cars.

Scott joked that Doyle kept giving him a thumbs-up every time he was asked whether he wanted to go faster. "I said, 'Let me see what you got,'" recalled Doyle.

The senator paused, chuckled and then recalled being asked by a reporter what he thought of Scott after the ride. "I said he banks well, corners well and beats the whole field," said Doyle.

It has been Doyle who has interviewed the field, chronicling our local history, one show at a time. Now, he can no longer say he's filmed "hundreds of shows."

"Bill Doyle on Vermont Issues" airs Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. on Montpelier's ORCA Media Channel 15.

Church neighbors protest VTel tower in Castleton

By Lucia Suarez

CASTLETON — Amy Whipple has lived next to the historic Hydeville Baptist Church her entire life and does not want to see a 90-foot telecommunications tower erected in its parking lot.

The 45-year-old said her family and the other abutting neighbors to the church recently received a notice letter from Vermont Telephone Co., or VTel, saying the company would file for a permit with the Public Service Board for construction of a telecommunications tower in the church's parking lot.

Whipple said her family and many neighbors are not happy about the news.

"We have supported several projects in town — that are for the responsible growth of the community," Whipple said at a Castleton Planning Commission meeting this week. "Who wants to look at the lousy tower from our backyard?"

She added: "Aesthetically, this is going to spoil the beauty of the church and my property."

John Caceras, a spokesman for VTel, said the proposed tower is part of the company's statewide effort to expand 4G/LTE wireless broadband Internet service through a federal stimulus grant received in 2010.

He said it should not be confused with cellphone reception in the area.

"It's not a mobility product," Caceres said. "We want to provide Internet coverage to the most homes, or rooftops as we call them."

It will just be wireless — meaning VTel customers would need a router or radio in their house to receive the Internet signal, he said.

Caceres said the project designers considered putting the telecommunications equipment on the church's steeple, but it was not workable and they went with the next best location that would offer the best service to the most people.

"It was just going to work to make it viable," he said.

Whipple said if the telephone company had moved forward with its plan to keep it on the steeple, neighbors would not oppose it.

"We are not against telecommunications towers," she said.

The Rev. James Hogan said the church has heard the concerns of residents, but believe the project is beneficial for the community and the state. He said church officials were approached by VTel several months ago and that they agree with the policies of Gov. Peter Shumlin and former Gov. James Douglas to expand broadband access across Vermont.

"We are seeing this as an opportunity to help a local Vermont business," Hogan said, adding that the service VTel provides will help bring the state to the 21st century. "We are look at this on a broad scale."

He said the church is being compensated but declined to say the amount.

Caceres also declined to comment on the agreement.

A major complaint raised by residents is the size and location of the proposed tower — in the middle of the already limited parking lot.

“What would happen if it fell?” Whipple said. “If the pole fails and it falls, it has nowhere to go. It will fall on the church or one of our houses.”

She said the tower will be easily 30 feet higher than the mature treeline at the church.

The discontent over the project does not end with neighboring residents. Town officials have also voiced their opinions against the project, though an official statement of opposition has not been filed.

“I don’t see anything good coming from that,” Selectwoman Cristine Smith said at a meeting this week. “It’s a bad location.”

Select Board Chairman Thomas Ettori said at that meeting that the board wants to meet with representatives from VTel to discuss the project before they submit an opinion to the Public Service Board.

Caceres said there are at least two other tower projects in Rutland County — one in Fair Haven and another in Pawlet — that are in the pre-filing stage. He said others were in negotiations, but he would not disclose those locations.

BURLINGTON FREE PRESS

Monkton reaches accord on gas line

Free Press Staff

Monkton’s Selectboard has approved an agreement for construction of a natural gas transmission line through town.

The accord, a Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, between the town and Vermont Gas, was approved by the Selectboard at a special meeting Tuesday, according to Vermont Gas.

The proposed 41-mile line, expected to cost \$92 million, would extend from Colchester to Middlebury through a series of towns including Monkton. None of the towns along the route actively oppose the line, according to Steve Wark, Vermont Gas spokesman.

“For more than six months, we’ve worked closely with town residents and the Monkton Selectboard to negotiate the route for the project and other details,” said Don Gilbert, president and CEO of Vermont Gas, in the news release.

“We’re incredibly grateful to everyone involved for the suggestions that helped make this project even better, and we’re excited to bring a less expensive, cleaner energy choice to the residents of Monkton.”

The line would provide hookups for about 100 customers in Monkton.

“Monkton’s approval of the MOU with Vermont Gas serves the town’s best interests,” said John Phillips, chairman of the Monkton Selectboard.

Exposing sexual assault in the military

Sam Hemingway

The case of a Navy veteran who spent time in Vermont is helping push Congress to approve legislation to upgrade services for veterans victimized by sexual assault while in the armed forces.

The measure, called the Ruth Moore Act of 2013, is named for Ruth Moore, who now lives in Milbridge, Maine, but was a teacher in Danville back in 2009.

That’s when she sat down with Rebecca Robinson, a therapist who works with military sexual trauma victims at the Veterans Administration complex in White River Junction.

Moore’s story was one Robinson had heard in different forms many times before: As a young Navy enlistee serving in her first Navy assignment in Europe back in 1987, she was sexually assaulted by her supervising officer.

“I was raped by my supervisor outside a local club,” she said in testimony before Congress last year. “Not once, but twice.”

The rapes devastated Moore, who was 18 at the time. She was unable to get help from anyone within the Navy and, after an attempted suicide, was discharged from the service. Her supervising officer went unpunished.

“It was easier for the military to get rid of me, than admit a rape,” she said.

Moore has since struggled with depression, post traumatic stress syndrome and gynecological problems — including nine miscarriages — resulting from chlamydia she contracted as a result of the sexual assaults.

Over the next 22 years, Moore tried and failed to convince anyone in the VA that her troubles were related to the the long-ago rapes. That changed in late 2009, when she met with Robinson in White River Junction.

Robinson decided to conduct a review of Moore’s medical records and, in the course of the review, discovered that someone had removed information related to the rapes from Moore’s paperwork.

“The records were tampered with,” Moore said. “They had taken out the records that were related to my military sexual trauma.”

Robinson declined to discuss Moore's case in particular, citing confidentiality, but said her connections with the benefit administration side of the VA at White River helped her to better understand how to look at a veteran's records.

(Page 2 of 3)

"I went where therapists usually don't go," Robinson said.

Moore, armed with what Robinson had discovered, appealed to U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., to investigate why the VA had rejected her claim. In early 2010, the VA changed its position and finally adjudicated her claim.

This week, the Ruth Moore Act of 2013 was on the meeting agenda of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, which Sanders chairs. A companion version of the measure passed the House on June 4.

The bill calls on the VA to upgrade its regulations for helping veterans get help, including disability payments, for service-connected sexual trauma.

Confronting sexual assaults

Thanks to cases like Moore's, the issue of sexual assault inside the armed forces is getting increased attention in Congress and in all branches of the military, including the Vermont National Guard.

Last month, a study released by the Pentagon found that 26,000 people in the military were sexually assaulted in 2011. Of the 26,000 incidents, 3,374 were reported and only 238 led to convictions.

The discrepancy between the number of assaults and how many were reported and prosecuted has gotten the attention of Congress. This week, U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., joined a chorus of senators who say it might make sense to have state prosecutors, rather than the military, handle investigations of such cases.

In Vermont, the Legislature passed a law requiring the Guard to make annual reports about the number of sexual assault reports within the organization and how they were handled.

Data provided to the Burlington Free Press by the Guard shows that there have been seven reports of sexual assault from within the Guard over the last two years, two of which were turned over to local police for criminal investigation.

"We're a military organization, not a police organization," said Brig. Gen. Michael Heston, deputy adjutant general for the Guard and head of the Guard's "Cultural Transformation Task Force" that oversees issues involving gender and race discrimination.

(Page 3 of 3)

At least one of the two cases referred to police remains pending at Vermont Superior Court in Burlington.

According to a police affidavit from that case, a male Guard member sexually assaulted a female Guard member in January 2011 after the two had attended a Guard-related party in Burlington's Old North End.

The affidavit said the assault occurred after he offered to drive the female Guard member home and then made an unexpected stop at an area hotel where he was staying.

"He said he needed to stop at his hotel room first in order to retrieve his cell phone charger due to his cell phone battery being low," the affidavit said, recounting the woman's story.

She said she went in with him to use the bathroom, and he then sexually assaulted her. She told police that she was intoxicated at the time, but did tell him to stop and tried to fend him off, the affidavit said.

Heston said the reason why five of the seven sexual assault reports received at the Guard weren't passed on to police was because the alleged victim opted not to request a formal investigation. In those cases, the reports were classified as restricted, or confidential cases.

Heston, asked if such a policy might discourage people from requesting an investigation out of concern it could affect their status in the Guard, said he hoped that wasn't so.

"I'd be concerned if someone would think that way," he said. "We want them to come forward." He said when one does file a sexual assault report, efforts are made to rearrange people's assignments to keep the alleged victim and offender in separate units doing different tasks.

Heston also said the Vermont National Guard was recently asked by the Pentagon to conduct a pilot project on developing procedures for fully integrating women into combat units.

The 2,826 soldiers in the Vermont Army National Guard include 350 women; of the 1,096 members of the Vermont Air National Guard, 183 are women.

My Turn: On Flag Day, a reflection on 'true colors'

Lt. Gov. Phil Scott

Flag Day is celebrated every year on June 14, the day when — in 1777 — the Stars and Stripes became the official banner of our nation.

It's mind-boggling to think about how much has changed in this country since 1777. It's hard to imagine a day when the flag that we now see everywhere was brand-new, and when Americans looked upon it with fresh eyes.

On the other hand, many of us can remember a day when that flag did look different — when there were only 48 stars, for instance. I was only a year old when Alaska and Hawaii joined the union, so I don't actually remember those last two stars being added, but it did happen in my lifetime.

Even in one person's lifetime, big change is possible.

In recent years, it's become commonplace to refer to a state that's predominantly conservative as a "red state," and one that's predominantly liberal as a "blue state." The concept of breaking the country down into red and blue started as a convenient way to present election results on television. But more recently, it's almost become the backbone of our country's political discourse.

The colors of our flag are red, white and blue. When our founders presented this flag on June 14, 1777, they never thought about taking those colors apart. They wanted a symbol under which we could be "indivisible" — unified as a nation.

Throughout my own political career, I've personally resisted — and at times defied — these kinds of labels. When I think about a change I'd really like to see happen, and help bring about, during the remainder of my lifetime, it might be to erase the labels that have divided us and allowed us to dismiss each other.

As soon as we put someone into a category — liberal or conservative, blue or red — we assume we know them. We believe we know what they're going to say before they say it. At that point, we begin to think we don't really need to listen to them anymore. In our eyes, they become irrelevant.

Flag Day is the day when we're called upon to contemplate our flag, and to think about the fact that America was once a novel concept: something that needed a "logo." That logo that our founding fathers presented was a banner that wasn't just red, and wasn't just blue. It was both, with just enough "white space" to bring them together.

It's a fitting image for our nation, and one we should still aspire to.

Phil Scott of Barre, a Republican, is Vermont's lieutenant governor.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 4:19 PM
To: Appleby, Leigh; Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Vermont 2nd in South Korea Says NCTA CEO

Sure, I can ask our crew to do it.

From: Appleby, Leigh
Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 3:27 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Vermont 2nd in South Korea Says NCTA CEO

I assume this would come from @VTEconDev?

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 1:10 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Appleby, Leigh
Subject: Re: Vermont 2nd in South Korea Says NCTA CEO

We can both do it! I'll ask Leigh to look out for tweets and MT or RT it so it gets hits. Thanks...

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Jun 12, 2013, at 12:43 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

I'll confirm and have our folks tweet this unless Gov's office wants to?

From: Michel Guite [mguite@vermontel.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 12:35 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth; Diane Guité; Ted.Brady@leahy.senate.gov; David.Weinstein@sanders.senate.gov; Megan.Rodriguez@mail.house.gov
Cc: Kevin Ellis
Subject: Vermont 2nd in South Korea Says NCTA CEO

Vermont is 2nd only to South Korea, for fastest Internet on earth, said National Cable Television Association CEO Michael Powell, in an opening address to NCTA annual conference, in Washington, DC, Monday morning. The slide is copied in attachment.

It seems a good opportunity to boast, take out full-page ads in worldwide media, and turn it into Vermont jobs. VTel can run fiber to almost anywhere in the state, integrated with wireless.

Please note also we are having VTel Wireless Open World ribbon cutting July 6th, 2013, at Springfield Airport, with ribbon cutting and fireworks. Peter Shumlin can't attend, but

if anyone on this list -- or any of Peter Welch, Pat Leahy, or Bernie Saunders might want to speak and take credit for our progress -- we are sending out 125,000 post cards.

Best,

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

354 River Street

Springfield, VT 05156

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

Get the latest news and updates on VTel GigE, VTelevision and VTel WOW – Like us on [Facebook!](#)

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E-mail messages may contain computer viruses or other defects, may not be accurately replicated on other systems, or may be intercepted, deleted or interfered with without the knowledge of the sender or the intended recipient. If you are not comfortable with the risks associated with e-mail messages, you may decide not to use e-mail to communicate with Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.

Vermont Telephone Company, Inc. reserves the right, to the extent and under circumstances permitted by applicable law, to retain, monitor and intercept e-mail messages to and from its systems.

<Michael Powell Keynote Address_NCTA June 2014_Fastest Internet Globally.jpg>

Miller, Lawrence

From: Spaulding, Jeb
Sent: Thursday, June 06, 2013 9:54 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Follow-up

Terrific. Thanks.

-----Original Message-----

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, June 06, 2013 9:53 AM
To: Spaulding, Jeb
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Follow-up

Hi Jeb -
Thanks for inviting us in yesterday for an update.

We'll let you know when LM and I head to VTel and the outcome of that meeting.

We are traveling to Mylan today and we'll bounce around ideas for the post-2013 group. I will also FW a one pager that I developed that outlines what we should consider for our goals following this year.

thanks - Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 9:36 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Checking in with VTel

Okay. We should spend 10 minutes (you and I) talking about the dev agreement that Lively has drafted. It's a mess. He's being a little P/A.

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 9:35 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Re: Checking in with VTel

Yes. At pavilion already.

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 371-9075

"Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Yes, exactly.
I still haven't looked at that database.

Do you want to be a part of the 10:30 w/ Jeb?

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 9:06 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Porter, James
Subject: Re: Checking in with VTel

Sounds good. Make sure you let them know that you are not relying on the database access they granted you for information.

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 371-9075

On Jun 5, 2013, at 9:02 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Lawrence –
I just had a lengthy conversation with Jim about the "300" addresses. It looks like the VTA Board will adopt the following policy, pasted below. The first bullet is authority granted in statute.

The larger problem lies in the end-of-the-year goals. I am very confident in saying that we will have solutions identified for every Vermonter, but implementation may take a little longer. This is due in part to VTel's deployment. I'd like to suggest that we travel to Springfield to do a "mid-year" check and really see where they are.

Thoughts?

> *Proposed policy:*

>

> *When determining whether an address is "served" for purposes of delivery of broadband Internet access under Act 79, the VTA will consider as served those locations:*

>

>

> 1. *identified as served as reported by the Secretary of Administration*

>

> 2. *that a service provider has reported in writing are already served within its existing plant*

>

> 3. *that a service provider has reported, or it is generally known, that the service provider is obligated to a third party, such as a regulatory agency or grant administrator, to provide service to the locations, or*

>

> 4. *that a service provider has stated it is committed to serve as part of a deployment plan effective in the next 18 months, subject to the VTA's substantiation of (a) the verification and specificity of the service provider's deployment plan, (b) the predictability of the technology upon deployment to provide service to the location, and (c) the implementation of the plan through recurring inquiries by the VTA.*

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Trombley, Shana
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2013 10:07 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: FYI - VTel

Thx. I'm talking to him about this on Wednesday and will let them know after that. It isn't likely... thx

-----Original Message-----

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2013 7:39 PM
To: Trombley, Shana
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FYI - VTel

Just wanted to let you know that VTel again asked about GPS's availability on the 6th for their 4th of July event. Told them that I passed it on to you.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 9:19 AM
To: Johnson, Harriet
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: State Communications Site - Williston Police Barracks [DRM-ID.FID638708]
Attachments: LOA by AOA - permit of new cell site on state land - Williston Police Barracks VTel Burlington 02 5-29-13.docx; JS MEMO RE VTEL_WILLISTON.doc

Hi Harriet - attached please find 2 documents. One describes what I am asking Jeb to sign and the other is the document that needs to be signed.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kiersten

From: Spaulding, Jeb
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:16 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Johnson, Harriet
Subject: Re: State Communications Site - Williston Police Barracks [DRM-ID.FID638708]

Kiersten,

I think it would be safer if I signed these letters and do not think it will take much time. If you could work with Harriet to prepare the documents, along with a succinct memo explaining the deal, I would appreciate that.

Jeb Spaulding, via mobile
Secretary of Administration
State of Vermont

On May 30, 2013, at 4:02 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

It looks like it is a ConnectVT role according to my quick read of:

<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/statutes/fullsection.cfm?Title=03&Chapter=045&Section=02222b>

Specifically, § 2222b(b)(6) – this is the section that describes DII's responsibility of having to aggregate state-owned sites, etc. The document that requires a signature is part of a process created by DII, VTA, Karen, et. al. (not by statute) which ensures that all agencies have signed off on a project and allows the applicant to proceed to permitting.

But I could be completely off-base...

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:58 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Spaulding, Jeb
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: State Communications Site - Williston Police Barracks [DRM-ID.FID638708]

Up to Jeb – it may be that the AOA has a statutory responsibility to sign off, in which case Jeb's shop should do it; if instead ConnectVT is the reviewer/signer then that would not apply since we have publicly said and had blessed as far as I am concerned the transfer of ConnectVT to ACCD rather than AOA

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:41 PM
To: Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FW: State Communications Site - Williston Police Barracks [DRM-ID.FID638708]

Good afternoon –
In the past, Karen signed off on letters of authorization that allowed applicants (in this case, VTel) to proceed with permitting once they have gone through the state sites review process. Is it okay if I sign off on this? Or should it come from someone directly in Jeb's shop?

Thanks,
Kiersten

From: Will Dodge [<mailto:wdodge@drm.com>]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:16 PM
To: Groschner, Holly; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Malko, David; LaValley, Terry; Kipp, Peter; Laferriere, Bill
Subject: RE: State Communications Site - Williston Police Barracks [DRM-ID.FID638708]

All:

Attached please find revised drawings for the site, inserting the junction boxes (A-1 and A-4 – per Dave Malko's request), and removing the microwave dish based on a determination that it will not be necessary. If at all possible, we'd very much appreciate receiving the letter of authorization this afternoon in order to put the site into permitting tomorrow.

Dave:

Please remove the microwave dish on the application that you were working with.

William J. Dodge
Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC
P.O. Box 190, Burlington, VT 05402-0190
Tel: 802 846 8395

Email: wdodge@drm.com

From: Groschner, Holly [<mailto:hgroschner@telecomvt.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 4:31 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Will Dodge; Malko, David; LaValley, Terry; Kipp, Peter; Laferriere, Bill
Subject: State Communications Site - Williston Police Barracks

Dear Kiersten,

In February the VTA prepared, and VTel signed, a license agreement to install equipment at the location of the communications tower at the Williston State Police Barracks (Route 2A). At the time (February 2013) that document was circulated for signature by the State, but the specifics for the VTel installation were not yet finalized. The license has not yet been signed by the State (more on that below).

VTel's installation plans on the existing communications tower are now finalized and VTel requests permission to proceed to permitting. The attached is a **standard form of letter authorization** that the Agency of Administration (Vermont Connect) **for your signature**. VTel will use this to submit permit applications. In the meantime, we will update the form of license agreement with finalized equipment references (updated application, site drawings, and references) and then forward the document for VTel's initials. When it is returned for DII signature, I would request that it go directly to Commissioner Boes for signature since the form of site agreement (absent the height of the equipment) will then have been through four months of agency review.

Please let me know if you have questions. Please sign the attached, and return an electronic copy to me and/or Dave Malko, copy to Will Dodge (copied above). Many thanks.

<image001.jpg>

Holly Groschner
General Counsel
Vermont Telecommunications Authority
802.262.0322 hgroschner@telecomvt.org

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 9:14 AM
To: Colman, Devin
Cc: Duggan, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel HP questions/concerns

Thanks, Devin - this is helpful.
Their other request was about the silo in Addison.

From: Colman, Devin
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 9:09 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Duggan, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel HP questions/concerns

Sure. Jamie and I just reviewed two of the projects that have issues – Underhill and Barton.

Underhill: We learned on Wednesday that the silo proposed for the installation was actually built in 1987, so it is not a historic resource. The historic preservation consultant did not include this information in his Section 106 report, which indicated the silo was from the early 20th century. With this new information, we have no concerns about the Underhill project and will issue a “No Adverse Effect” letter shortly.

Barton: We are asking the consultant to research and confirm the date of construction for this silo, to avoid the same situation that arose in Underhill.

Are there other specific projects that we need to discuss?

Thanks,

Devin

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 7:46 AM
To: Colman, Devin
Subject: RE: VTel HP questions/concerns

Turns out that I am in Burlington for much of the day. Can we either schedule a call or communicate via email today?

From: Colman, Devin
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 4:55 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Duggan, James
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel HP questions/concerns

Jamie has a site visit in the afternoon, but I'll check in with him in the morning and get an update on the projects.

Devin

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:57 PM
To: Colman, Devin; Duggan, James
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel HP questions/concerns

Damn, I forgot that I booked another appt tomorrow AM. How about tomorrow – early afternoon?

From: Colman, Devin
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:49 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Duggan, James
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel HP questions/concerns

Hi Kiersten,

Jamie is at a training session today so let's talk tomorrow morning. He knows the details about these projects.

Thanks,
Devin

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:08 PM
To: Duggan, James; Colman, Devin
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: VTel HP questions/concerns

Hi Team HP –

I received an email today from VTel expressing concern over two silo sites that they want to utilize – one in Addison and one in Barton.

Can we please find some time to discuss either later this afternoon (I am booked from 2-3, but otherwise available) or anytime tomorrow after 9:30?

Thanks,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2013 12:44 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Porter, James
Subject: Re: Addresses for VTel

But isn't it a timing issue - if Vtel succeeds it won't be on our timeframe...? I am worried about the dec deadline and whether we will meet it (or virtually, nearly darn well close meet it) - is the larger VTel timing issues such that the 330 will be only a drop in the bucket and therefore we have a larger problem etc...?

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On May 17, 2013, at 12:27 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

I hate to bother you with this level of minutiae, but I need some guidance. Jim and I spoke about this earlier this week and didn't really land on a solution.

The Broadband subcommittee of the VTA agreed to remove the 330 or so addresses from the unserved list based on statements that Michel (and Diane, too) made which confirmed they would serve them. (these are the ones that were to be served w/ VTA funding) Diane and I had a follow-up conversation where she said that VTel's priorities are meeting contractual agreements with RUS, FCC and NTIA and these addresses would be behind these commitments. I get that - we don't have any \$ agreement with them. She did say that they'd guarantee serving them 100% w/ funding. I also asked her to let me know ASAP if they run into any problem with any of the 330, beyond circumstances like the ones that Rochester is facing (local in-fighting, there is nothing that can be done about that). We basically have a handshake agreement w/ the back-up of the statements that VTel has made publically re serving them.

So, let me get back to the funding piece. These 330 addresses were actually on the RFP list for one round and there were no takers. I think that ECF bid on three locations. The VTA DOES have \$ left over - but I can't see them approving funding for VTel to serve these 330 under any circumstance - which would have to be under competitive bid. These addresses (I believe) all fall into the greater VTel network that they are building out. Further, I don't think that it is a good idea to use public \$ to allow competitors into this space.

When we take these 330 addresses off the list, our unserved number plummets to about 38. I'd like to focus on those and work out some way to monitor the 330 - maybe through a monthly check-in? Perhaps this would be a good idea for all providers that are working with us to help achieve the 2013 goal?

The full board needs to okay the action of the subcommittee, so we have a little time. I am out next week, but will have access to email and phone. (yep, I have no problem checking email on the beach).

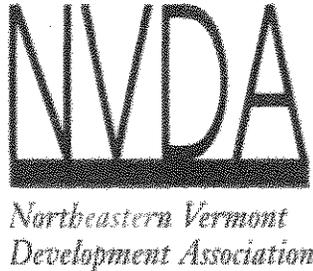
This is a little rant-y, sorry. I am trying to be concise and also paint the full picture.

Jim, have I missed anything?

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

From: Northeastern Vermont Development Association <lhiggs@nvda.net>
Sent: Monday, May 06, 2013 3:21 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: NVDA News & Announcements - May 2013



Regional Planning & Economic Development in the Northeast Kingdom

NVDA News & Announcements - May 2013

Act 250 Permits Issued

Two permits were issued to Jay Peak Resort on April 30th for "Stateside Hotel 3 & Day Lodge" and Phase II of the "Lodge & Townhouses." Permit details will be included in NVDA's [May 30th Progress Report](#). "Stateside" is the first of Bill Stenger's NEK Economic Development Initiative projects to reach construction phase. It is fully funded from the EB-5 foreign investment program.

NEK Scenic Byway Updates

Northeast Kingdom Travel & Tourism in partnership with NVDA and communities throughout the Kingdom worked together to support the development, launch and management of the byway located within our geographic region. Gloria Bruce at NEKTTA is pleased to report on the work in progress. Contact her for more information: director@travelthekingdom.com

- A logo has been created for the Vermont website and upcoming brochure.
- Themed itineraries have been created
- A draft signage plan has been submitted for the byway corridor.
- A new website has been developed: <http://www.northeastkingdombyway.com>

It's Not Too Late to Sign Up: Way to Go! Vermont Commuter Challenge

Employers in the NEK and across the state will be challenging each other this month to use transportation options for one full week and compete for the championship in carbon and fuel savings. From May 13-17 employees are encouraged to embark on a healthy or more efficient way to get to work. NVDA will recognize the top performer in the NEK and send the regional

winner to compete for the state-wide Vermont Carbon Cup! [Questions?](#) Gail Aloisio
galoisio@nvda.net (802) 424-1419

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

VAST recently signed an agreement with VTrans to be reimbursed for approximately \$200K for repairs to the LVRT right-of-way as a result of Tropical Storm Irene. This reimbursement will allow VAST to utilize approximately \$800K of dedicated federal funds to implement Phase I of the trail conversion project. Phase I consists of fifteen miles of trail conversion from Mt. Vernon Street in St. Johnsbury to the Park-and-Ride in West Danville. Construction will begin this summer on the installation of two bridges along this stretch as well as brush and ditch clearing. A final trail surface should be in place by the end of the following construction season. [Questions?](#) Morton@nvda.net (802) 748-1221.

Energy Generation Siting Policy Commission Completes Final Report

VT Public Service Department issued the final report to Governor Shumlin and the Legislature. The Commission's recommendations, developed with broad public and stakeholder input, focus on bolstering local and regional energy planning processes - ensuring that local and regional plans receive greater consideration before the Public Service Board. The Energy Generation Siting Policy Commission was created in October 2012 and conducted site visits and public hearings across Vermont. A copy of the full report is available at <http://sitingcommission.vermont.gov/publications>

Looking for Broadband Services?

Vermont Telephone Company (VTel) has a community outreach team that will meet with your group to offer a presentation about broadband expansion in rural under-served areas. Contact Tess Gauthier, Community Broadband Team Director with the text below
tgauthier@vermontel.com (802) 885-7728

- *I am a member of a planning commission, chamber of commerce, or community group and I would like to host a VTel presentation in my town.*

Foreign Trade Zone Informational Meeting

Friday, May 10th / 9:00 AM at NVDA, 630 Eastern Avenue, St. Johnsbury. This is an informational workshop for economic service providers and businesses importing into the region. A second meeting will be offered in Newport on May 31st (location to be announced). Contact Dave Snedeker (802) 748-8303 dsnedeker@nvda.net

Wheeling, Walking and Water - a forum on biking, walking and water activities in Newport will take place Saturday, May 11th / 9:00-11:00 AM at the Gateway Center (84 Fyfe Drive). Topics for discussion include bike rack locations, transportation updates from NVDA, favorite activity spots, and bike inspections. For more information contact Jen Black: jenblackvt@gmail.com Patricia Sears: Patricia.sears@discovernewportvt.com

VCDA Spring Conference: *Your Community as a Workforce - How to Make it Happen!*

Vermont Community Development Association's 2013 Spring Conference will be held on Thursday, May 16th / 9:00 AM-3:00 PM at the VFW Club in Montpelier (1 Pioneer Street). Annie Noonan, Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Labor will be the keynote speaker.
www.vtcda.org (802) 229-9111

VT Employee Ownership Conference: Friday, June 7th / Champlain College, Burlington.

The 2013 conference will give business owners and managers an opportunity to investigate employee ownership for their companies. Seventeen workshops led by representatives of local employee-owned companies and nationally known experts, will cover a range of topics from introductory to advanced levels. Conference details and registration are available at www.veoc.org Contact Don Jamison for information don@veoc.org

Pete Johnson, SBA's Small Businessman of the Year in Vermont

The federal Small Business Administration has named the owner of Pete's Greens, Small Businessman of the Year for 2013. Pete's Greens is a certified organic four-season vegetable farm in Craftsbury. Johnson was selected for his outstanding leadership related to his company's staying power, employee growth, sales increase, innovative ingenuity and contributions to the community. The farm employs fourteen people full time, has 500 members in its community supported agriculture program, and supplies more than 100 stores. Congratulations Pete!

Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation Issues Alert!

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has been found on ash trees in New Hampshire near I-93 in Concord. While this non-native forest pest has never been seen in Vermont, outlying isolated EAB infestations are now known to occur on all sides of the state. For more information: *Know the Threat / Slow the Spread / Get Involved* www.vtinvasives.org Neil Monteith, (802) 751-0118 neil.monteith@state.vt.us www.vtfpr.org

Save the Date: Saturday, June 15th / 8:00 AM - 12:30 PM

NVDA is joining forces with the Vermont Council on Rural Development to host a summit conference on *Managing Change in the NEK*. All are welcome to join regional and local organizations, municipal leaders, businesses, and state and federal officials in a dialogue about economic development, housing, education, tourism and the working landscape. This timely event will be held at Lake Region High School in Barton. info@Vtrural.org <http://vtrural.org/nek>

- Guest Panelists & Facilitators include Paul Costello (VT Council on Rural Development), Steve Patterson (NVDA), Bill Stenger (Jay Peak Resort), Lawrence Miller (VT Agency of Commerce & Community Development), Carol Moore (educational consultant), Claudio Forte (North Country Hospital), Charlie Browne (Fairbanks Museum), Patricia Sears (Newport City Renaissance Corp), Grant Spates (Spates Construction & Derby Selectboard), Katherine Sims (Green Mountain Farm to School), and Bill McMaster (UVM Extension). Governor Shumlin and Senator Leahy have been invited.

Looking for Space? Industrial Building Lots, Warehouse, Office, Conference or Classroom space: contact Shannon Bedor, NVDA Property Manager (802) 748-5181 Shannon@nvda.net

Northeastern Vermont Development Association www.NVDA.net

PO Box 630 / 36 Eastern Avenue Suite 1
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
Ph: 802-748-5181
Fax: 802-748-1223

Newport Office: 79 Coventry St., 4C
Newport, VT 05855
Ph: 802-334-5861
Fax: 802-334-5862

The regional planning and development organization serving Caledonia, Essex and Orleans Counties. NVDA is an equal opportunity lender, provider and employer.

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Northeastern Vermont Development Association | PO Box 630 | 36 Eastern Ave. Suite 2 | St. Johnsbury VT | 05819

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, May 02, 2013 5:33 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Tomorrow's Meeting with VTA

Sure. I can be there a little earlier. Are we on 5th floor or in ceremonial?

Sent from my iPad

On May 1, 2013, at 9:32 PM, "Miller, Elizabeth" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

> That is great - he also will want to hear about the next steps for the VTA, but I am hoping Jeb can prep/download to him at least briefly before the meeting on that last issue since I was not able to stay for last week's meeting; and it would be helpful to know where (if anywhere) H Comm is on that - are we going to see a bill/study/any action on that issue or is it instead fully within our side of the court until next year. I don't know the latest update on that. If you are able to come on the earlier side of the meeting time, we can download as a team prior to the remainder of the folks joining us. Thanks very much. Liz

>

> Elizabeth H. Miller
> 802-522-3090, cell
> elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

>

> On May 1, 2013, at 8:11 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>

>> Hi Liz -

>>

>> I wanted to give you some background on recent VTA activity in advance of tomorrow's meeting.

>>

>> First, the Mobile Subcomm voted to approve \$2.5million for VTel for the purchase of the IMS core. There wasn't a tremendous amount of support to fund more; that can be further discussed at the full board meeting on Friday, however. I did receive an email from Diane Guite asking whether there is an opportunity to get more \$ - she was really fantastic about it - she basically asked whether she should rock the boat, but acknowledged that she can't push too hard.

>>

>> Also, there is a weird issue w/ an open RFP and addresses. As you know, the VTA puts out available addresses that are unserved in RFPs and respondents base their request on which addresses they can serve (and of course, the cost to do so). After the VTA pulled the VTel grants, VTel said repeatedly that they'd still serve the ones that they requested funding for in the 2 RsFP. But VTA maintained that they had to keep the 350 or so addresses in the open RFP, therefore, allowing other providers to bid on addresses that VTel is going to serve. The good news is that ECF was the only respondent to the RFP and applied for funding to serve a few addresses in Randolph. I think that I can get the board to vote on removing the damn addresses from the open RFP and get beyond this. Actually, if we pull the 300 or so addresses from the real list of unserveds, I think that we are down to about 38.

>>

>> The other thing that the VTA folks asked is why GPS wants to meet with them. I let them know that it was a follow-on to Jeb's meeting with us and that there might be 3 areas that the Gov wants to cover: a) are we on track for the end of the year? b) whether there is a solution to what I now call the Wilner Projects (those that have some \$ to contribute and a decent amount of participants...and a willing provider) and c) something he brought up during our most recent

discussion w/ Mrowicki - whether the served addresses are really served. I think that the answer to all 3 is yes - they are totally on board with the Wilner projects and I rec'd calls from Thetford and another muni recently w/ this same idea. Re: c: - I made Public Service, VTA and Stone get together to compare and share data, so we are all now working from the same #s.

>>

>> If I am totally off base, please let me know. I wasn't 100% sure what to tell them...

>>

>>

>>

>> Thanks,

>> Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, May 01, 2013 9:39 AM
To: Spaulding, Jeb
Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: VTel/VTA

Perfect. See you then.

Sent from my iPad

On May 1, 2013, at 9:19 AM, "Spaulding, Jeb" <Jeb.Spaulding@state.vt.us> wrote:

How about 11:30 at my office?

Jeb Spaulding, via mobile
Secretary of Administration
State of Vermont

On May 1, 2013, at 8:34 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Good morning – can we find a few minutes to chat later today about the above? There are two items that I should brief you on; Lawrence and I spoke quickly about them late yesterday and we need to bring you in to the mix. I am downtown for much of the day – w/ VTA from 9-11.

Thanks,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Michel Guite <mguite@vermontel.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2013 10:16 AM
To: Frank Cioffi; Evans, John N
Cc: Bob Zider (bzider@vmec.org); Christopher Allen (christopher.allen@uvm.edu); Farewell, Corine; David Binch (binchdavid76@gmail.com); David Bradbury (david.bradbury@uvm.edu); Domenico.Grasso@uvm.edu; Donovan Admin; Elaine Sopchak; Fred Hackett (pburritt@hvm.com); Hersh, Melissa; Hill, Beth M; Horseman, Ken; Jack Glaser (jack@mbfbioscience.com); Judith VanHouten (judith.vanhouten@uvm.edu); Larry Reilly (ljreilly@att.net); Laura E. Amell (lamell@norwich.edu); Miller, Lawrence; Lee Bouyea (lee@freshtrackscap.com); Camp, Lori; Michelle Atherton; Rich Tarrant (rtarrant@marathon-health.com); Richard Schneider (pres@norwich.edu); Robert Clarke (robertgclarke@verizon.net); Frank Cioffi; Evans, John N; Robert D. Hofmann; Seth Bowden; Steven Arms (steven.arms@gmail.com); Thomas Sullivan; Timothy Donovan (tim.donovan@vsc.edu)
Subject: RE: Innovate Vermont Beta Site

Hi all,

Attached is some weekend global news coverage about VTel's new GigE-to-homes project based in Springfield VT, supported by our multi-100 Gig data circuits, lowest-cost cloud storage, and 4G/LTE. It seems to be the most widely covered Vermont technology story in history, on 150 technology blogs including Gigaom, theverge and reddit, in the Wall Street Journal and Forbes, translated into Chinese, Hebrew, Spanish, and many other languages, reaching 22 million sets of eyeballs or 0.3% of all the humans on earth since Friday. If anyone on this list might be interested in using one of the most advanced networks on earth, don't be shy about calling me.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2013/04/26/look-out-google-fiber-35-a-month-gigabit-internet-comes-to-vermont/>

<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/article/20130429/BUSINESS/304290021/VTel-s-gigabit-connection-draws-oohs-Internet-rural-Vermont>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/parmyolson/2013/04/29/government-money-helped-a-small-rural-phone-company-undercut-google-fiber/>

<http://gigaom.com/2013/04/26/vermont-gets-a-gigabit-network-and-it-only-costs-residents-35-a-month/>

<http://www.theverge.com/2013/4/26/4271702/vermont-telephone-company-offering-35-per-month-gigabit-internet>

http://www.reddit.com/r/technology/comments/1d63zz/look_out_google_fiber_35amonth_gigabit_internet/

<http://hothardware.com/News/LookOut-Google-Fiber-VTel-Vermont-To-Offer-Gigabit-Internet-Speed-At-35-A-Month/>

<http://live.drjays.com/index.php/2013/04/28/a-rural-phone-company-offers-fiber-internet-cheaper-than-google/>

<http://network.pconline.com.cn/327/3277038.html>

<http://www.fayerwayer.com/2013/04/influencia-de-google-fiber-isp-de-vermont-ofrece-1-gbits-a-us-35-mensuales/>

Michel Guite
President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

From: Frank Cioffi [<mailto:frank@vermont.org>]

Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2013 9:10 AM

To: Evans, John N; Frank Cioffi

Cc: Bob Zider (bzider@vmec.org); Christopher Allen (christopher.allen@uvm.edu); Farewell, Corine; David Binch (binchdavid76@gmail.com); David Bradbury (david.bradbury@uvm.edu); Domenico.Grasso@uvm.edu; Donovan Admin; Elaine Sopchak; Fred Hackett (pburritt@hvm.com); Hersh, Melissa; Hill, Beth M; Horseman, Ken; Jack Glaser (jack@mbfbioscience.com); Judith VanHouten (judith.vanhouten@uvm.edu); Larry Reilly (ljreilly@att.net); Laura E. Amell (lamell@norwich.edu); Lawrence Miller (lawrence.miller@state.vt.us); Lee Bouyea (lee@freshtrackscap.com); Lori Camp; Michel Guite; Michelle Atherton; Rich Tarrant (rtarrant@marathon-health.com); Richard Schneider (pres@norwich.edu); Robert Clarke (robertgclarke@verizon.net); Robert D. Hofmann; Seth Bowden; Steven Arms (steven.arms@gmail.com); Thomas Sullivan; Timothy Donovan (tim.donovan@vsc.edu)

Subject: Innovate Vermont Beta Site

Hello all,

John and I wanted to follow up with you about the Innovate Vermont website that we presented at a previous Tech Council meeting.

Many of you may be receiving a similar email as your programs and organizations have already been included on the site; apologies for the duplication.

As the content becomes more finalized, we wanted to share the Beta site for your input. The test site can be found at: <http://innovatevt.usmblogs.com/>

If you have comments, please feel free to contact Seth Bowden (seth@vermont.org).

We are in the final stages of preparing to have the Governor launch the site after we receive your feedback and hear from all of the resource providers listed on the site.

After hearing from you and the providers, John and I will be working w/ Secretary Miller to schedule the site launch.

Best Regards,

Frank

Frank Cioffi

President

GBIC~Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation and Cynosure, Inc.

60 Main Street Burlington, Vermont, USA 05401

Office: 802-862-5726 ext. 12

Cell: 802-238-4535

email: frank@vermont.org

Website: www.gbicvt.org

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2013 11:53 AM
To: Spaulding, Jeb
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Porter, James; Miller, Elizabeth
Subject: Re: FYI re VTel

Yes. Sorry -

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 29, 2013, at 11:32 AM, "Spaulding, Jeb" <Jeb.Spaulding@state.vt.us> wrote:

> Do you mean 2.5 mil to VTEL?

>

> Jeb Spaulding, via mobile

> Secretary of Administration

> State of Vermont

>

>

> On Apr 29, 2013, at 11:29 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>

>> The VTA Mobile Subcommittee just voted to approve \$2.5million to VTA. Has to go to full board.

>> They had a higher \$ request, but committee was most comfortable w/ providing funding for ims core only. Pls let me know if q's.

>>

>> Thanks -Kiersten

>>

>> Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Michel Guite <mguite@vermontel.com>
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2013 7:09 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth; Spaulding, Jeb; Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Diane Guité
Subject: RE: VTel Dinner Next Tuesday

Hi Liz, Jeb, Susan, Lawrence, and Kiersten,

Governor Shumlin's helpful quote Thursday contributed to VTel's GigE to homes getting picked up by Wall Street Journal Friday, and within hours it seemingly went viral with translations into Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Hebrew, and 150 blogs and publications worldwide, making us – apparently – the most popular technology story in Vermont history. I have no idea how blog eyeballs get accurately measured, but one report said 22 million eyeballs (sets of eyeballs?) had looked at this by noon Saturday, and 22 million is 0.3 percent of the human race. Can you please pass this good news on to the Governor?

<http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2013/04/26/look-out-google-fiber-35-a-month-gigabit-internet-comes-to-vermont/>

<http://gigaom.com/2013/04/26/vermont-gets-a-gigabit-network-and-it-only-costs-residents-35-a-month/>

<http://www.theverge.com/2013/4/26/4271702/vermont-telephone-company-offering-35-per-month-gigabit-internet>

http://www.reddit.com/r/technology/comments/1d63zz/look_out_google_fiber_35month_gigabit_internet/

<http://hothardware.com/News/LookOut-Google-Fiber-VTel-Vermont-To-Offer-Gigabit-Internet-Speed-At-35-A-Month/>

<http://live.drjays.com/index.php/2013/04/28/a-rural-phone-company-offers-fiber-internet-cheaper-than-google/>

<http://network.pconline.com.cn/327/3277038.html>

<http://www.fayerwayer.com/2013/04/influencia-de-google-fiber-isp-de-vermont-ofrece-1-gbits-a-us-35-mensuales/>

Best,

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

Miller, Lawrence

From: Michel Guite <mguite@vermontel.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 28, 2013 3:59 PM
To: pmackenzie221@comcast.net; Meyer, Peter; stephan@sover.net; tcrist@inntopia.com; Campbell, Chris; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: GigE

Hi All,

This is a heads-up in case questions about GigE in Vermont might come up.

The Wall Street Journal's friday article about VTel's GigE to homes at \$35 a month initiated a weekend of more than 150 articles, including on three of the largest technology blogs in America. Seemingly some 20 million sets of eyeballs had looked at this by mid-Saturday, translated into Chinese (5 articles), Hebrew (Israel), Spanish, and other languages. Here's a sample.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2013/04/26/look-out-google-fiber-35-a-month-gigabit-internet-comes-to-vermont/>

<http://gigaom.com/2013/04/26/vermont-gets-a-gigabit-network-and-it-only-costs-residents-35-a-month/>

<http://www.theverge.com/2013/4/26/4271702/vermont-telephone-company-offering-35-per-month-gigabit-internet>

http://www.reddit.com/r/technology/comments/1d63zz/look_out_google_fiber_35amonth_gigabit_internet/

<http://hothardware.com/News/LookOut-Google-Fiber-VTel-Vermont-To-Offer-Gigabit-Internet-Speed-At-35-A-Month/>

<http://live.drjays.com/index.php/2013/04/28/a-rural-phone-company-offers-fiber-internet-cheaper-than-google/>

<http://network.pconline.com.cn/327/3277038.html>

<http://www.fayerwayer.com/2013/04/influencia-de-google-fiber-isp-de-vermont-ofrece-1-gbits-a-us-35-mensuales/>

Michel Guite
President
Vermont Telephone Co, Inc.
354 River Street
Springfield, VT 05156
Phone: 802 885-7000
Mobile: 914 572-7664
E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2013 2:29 PM
To: Trombley, Shana
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: FW: Meeting with Gov. Shumlin

Is this about VTel?

From: Pam Mackenzie [pmackenzie221@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2013 2:27 PM
To: Campbell, Chris; Groschner, Holly
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: Fwd: Meeting with Gov. Shumlin

Chris/Holly

Just spoke with Shana - and Governor Shumlin would like to meet with Chris, Holly and me Thursday, May 2 at 1p.

I rsvp'd for the three of us - Kiersten, if you want me to call her back and add you I am more than happy to do so.

Thanks,

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Trombley, Shana" <Shana.Trombley@state.vt.us>
Date: April 26, 2013 2:10:40 PM EDT
To: "'Pmackenzie221@comcast.net'" <Pmackenzie221@comcast.net>
Subject: Meeting with Gov. Shumlin

Hi Pam,

Are you all (Chris, Heather and you) able to meet with Gov. Shumlin on May 2nd at 1pm?

Thank you,

Shana Trombley
Scheduler
Governor's office
802.828.3333 (o)
802.371.7499 (c)
shana.trombley@state.vt.us

Visit Governor Shumlin's Online Resources:
[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)

Miller, Lawrence

From: Ari Wengroff <Ari@ksepartners.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2013 1:30 PM
To: Allen, Susan; Miller, Elizabeth; Porter, James; Spaulding, Jeb; Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence
Cc: Kevin Ellis
Subject: VTel Fiber in The Wall Street Journal

Hi Everyone,

Please check out the link below, it leads to a new *Wall Street Journal* Digits piece on VTel's fiber network from the embargoed release Kevin sent you earlier today.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2013/04/26/look-out-google-fiber-35-a-month-gigabit-internet-comes-to-vermont/>

Thanks very much,
Ari

Ariel Wengroff
KSE Partners
Office: 802-778-0315
Cell: 802-676-4086

Miller, Lawrence

From: Kevin Ellis <kevin@ksepartners.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2013 10:39 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Allen, Susan; jim.porter@state.vt.us; Miller, Elizabeth
Subject: VTel press release

Please see below. Thank you for your help.

The Wall Street Journal "Digits" blog is writing this today. We will then spread out from there.

KE

--

Kevin Ellis
Partner
KSE Partners, LLP

Cambridge **Montpelier** Washington

O: 802.229.4900 x107
M: 802.371.8112
www.KsePartners.com
Kevin@KsePartners.com

"GigE for All"

*\$35 per Month for GigE at Vermont Telephone Co.
Low Price Made Possible by Federal Stimulus Funding*

Springfield, VT – 500 rural Vermont homes and farms have now been connected to the Internet at full gigabit speeds, downstream and upstream, over optical fiber, by Vermont Telephone Company (VTel).

Bob Metcalfe, inventor of Ethernet and founder of 3Com, said, "VTel is doing what Google is doing in Kansas City and Austin, but in rural Vermont – gigafication of the Internet. It's a tremendous win for rural America."

VTel is "fiberizing" 100% of its 17,500 customers, and the company's remarkable \$35/month GigE price – with no catches or "gotchas" – has been made possible by funding from U.S. broadband stimulus awards from Rural Utilities Service and NTIA, totaling \$94 million for 1,200 miles of fiber construction and network upgrades.

Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin said, "Vermont has been ranked #1 for Internet connection speed by Akamai's latest State of the Internet report and VTel has been among the providers helping us achieve this impressive distinction." He added, "VTel's commitment to innovation and technology has enabled the company to provide high-speed Internet to rural areas of Vermont. This is good news for VTel customers and for Vermont jobs, economic development and quality of life."

VTel CEO Dr. Michel Guité noted, "Google, a great tech company, is building its Kansas City and Austin networks with technology almost identical to VTel's, enabling a full gigabit downstream and a full gigabit upstream. In VTel's fiber network, 32 Springfield homes get about 32 gigabits of bandwidth. By contrast, in Verizon's FiOS network, 32 homes

share only 2.4 gigabits. VTel offers more than ten times the capacity of Verizon's FiOS, and is more than 100 times faster than most U.S. cable TV connections."

No residential provider anywhere in the country has a more powerful and robust network. The VTel GigE network services and technology include:

- One gigabit downstream and one gigabit upstream active Ethernet, over dedicated fiber, to every home. The network core is made by Alcatel, integrated with routers from Juniper Networks of Sunnyvale, CA, and supported by Calix Networks of Petaluma, CA. Wherever possible VTel has sought to purchase US-made technology. Almost all VTel network components have been developed in the U.S.
- The VTel GigE backbone is powered by Alcatel with multiple 100-gigabit data cards, the fastest commercially available. VTel can deliver 100 gigabits to almost anywhere in Vermont, including to any business or home location that wants the speed, and over its four-state fiber network. This ensures that VTel can handle any conceivable peak demand, even traffic spikes such as those experienced during Hurricane Irene or 9/11.
- VTel has its own direct 100-gigabit connections to major Internet peering points in New York City, Boston and Montreal, providing network redundancy crucial for both commercial and residential customers.
- VTel uses Actiontec routers, which have three times the effective capacity of most gigabit routers. The Actiontec router is IPTV capable, integrating with a Mediaroom video head-end developed by Microsoft. VTel engineers discovered most standard gigabit home routers delivered much lower speeds. Despite higher router costs, VTel switched to Actiontec routers, and – consequently – VTel fiber customers are typically experiencing speeds of 925 to 950 million bits per second.

VTel field teams are adding more than 200 GigE homes per week, with the project on target to reach every location in the VTel service territory by mid-2014. VTel is also offering television ("VTelevision"), and high-definition voice telephone service over its new fiber network, as well as cloud storage and statewide 4G/LTE broadband wireless. The company's IPTV head-end system is being tested today for 500 channels, and VTel expects to launch IPTV services this summer. VTel will continue to offer voice with the reliability of a century old incumbent rural phone company, but with enhanced sound clarity, and improved telephone services.

VTel has a history of rural Internet innovation. The magazine Telephony in 2001 reported VTel had the highest penetration of DSL in America at 15 percent. "We broke through 50 percent in about 2006, and our goal today is near 100 percent," said Guité. "Our significantly upgraded GigE speeds will be offered at the same monthly fee as our existing DSL service. We're trying to prove that a standalone high-speed rural network, with GigE to every home, high-definition voice, unlimited voice calling, 500 channels of state-of-the-art video, and 4G LTE wireless can survive in rural America. The jury is out but we're optimistic".

###

Technology Overview of the VTel GigE Internet Service

The VTel GigE network is a "true" gigabit network. The network design matches the state-of-the-art systems Google is building in Kansas City and in Austin. Following are some technical details:

- **"True Gig" at VTel is delivered by a dedicated fiber to every home, not a shared fiber.** "Point-to-point active Ethernet," chosen by VTel, offers the highest performance of any residential network design in the world. The VTel GigE network core is comprised of elements from Alcatel, and Juniper Networks of Sunnyvale, CA, with last mile fiber-to-the-home components from Calix Networks of Petaluma, CA.
- **Most U.S. and international "gigabit" systems, including Verizon FiOS, share a single fiber among multiple users.** For example the Verizon FiOS GPON shares 2.4 gigabits downstream and 1.2 gigabits upstream among 32 homes. This design worked very well for a decade, but offers an average of only 75 megabits down per home. Groups like US-Ignite are working with GigE commercial and research networks around the world to implement next-generation applications using vastly higher speeds. The VTel "true" GigE delivers 32 gigabits to 32 homes. That is more than more than ten times the total bandwidth of FiOS, and more than 100 times the speed of most cable TV companies.

- **The Actiontec router delivers 925-950 megabits around the home.** Testing of common "one-gigabit" home routers disappointed VTel, when the company saw that many delivered barely a third of the speeds promised. So the company made available the Actiontec V1000H, one of the few routers able to implement true GigE at a reasonable subscriber price.
- **Alcatel 100 gigabit routers connect the VTel offices, and the company's Internet backbone, to the Internet grid in New York, Boston and Montreal.** 100 gigabit routers are only now becoming common in the high speed core of the Internet, where many connections still exist at 10 gigabits or slower. VTel can deliver 100 gigabits to virtually any business, school, library or other facility in the state, a richness of bandwidth found in few other places. The company's robust data capacity means VTel can meet almost any demand on the VTel GigE network. VTel currently delivers Internet and data capacity to institutions such as Dartmouth College, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, and McGill University.

Photo Caption: VTel uses Alcatel 100 gigabit routers at each of its 14 rural central offices serving its GigE customer base

- **VTel has multiple connections to New York, Boston and Montreal, redundantly connecting to multiple backbones.** Every exchange point in New York could lose connectivity and VTel would still have enough capacity to serve its users. Within its networks, VTel's fiber rings self-repair in less than a second.

With these world-class manufacturing partners, no residential provider anywhere in the world has a more powerful and robust network than VTel GigE in rural Vermont.

Contact: Dr. Michel Guité
Telephone: 802.885.7000
Email: mquite@vermontel.com

###

About VTel

Headquartered in Springfield, Vermont, VTel is a small family-owned communications company serving 21 rural Vermont communities. VTel prides itself on world-class communications services, while answering customer phone calls with a friendly voice on the first ring. The VTel plain old telephone services (POTS) copper network has continuously provided telephone service to southern Vermont farms and homes since it began operations in 1890. As a part of the company's service tradition, VTel provided the phone line that enabled Calvin Coolidge to be sworn in as United States President, at Plymouth Notch, VT, on August 3, 1923.

Today, VTel is upgrading its copper network to all-fiber, with the fastest Internet service in the country. The VTel GigE fiber optic network service will deliver billion-bit-per-second Internet to every one of the 17,500 homes and businesses within the company's ILEC service area. The VTel fiber optic network serves as the backbone for all the company's enhanced services with 100-gigabit speeds, including high definition voice, cloud storage, and a soon-to-be-launched IPTV product featuring more than 500 channels, as well as backhaul to the company's wireless sites.

VTel is proudly a part of a U.S. tradition of small rural telephone companies that are also innovators. For example, VTel was first in Vermont to offer Internet services in 1994.

Since 1994, VTel has invested over \$100 million of its own capital to upgrade the company's Vermont network, extend fiber to New York, Montreal and Boston, and acquire FCC wireless licenses, creating local jobs and helping build Vermont's economy. VTel strives to offer its customers the lowest costs in Vermont, with the highest service quality. The company takes pride in public data showing it typically has the fewest complaints per 1,000 people served by any carrier in the state.

VTel also operates a 1,400-mile optical fiber network from Vermont to New York City, Cambridge, Boston and Montreal, serving some of the most intensive data users and research universities in the northeast.

In 2010, VTel became one of the largest U.S. federal government rural broadband ARRA awardees, with grants from Rural Utilities Service, National Telecommunications Information Administration, and the FCC, in addition to a 10-year agreement with Vermont's largest public utility, Green Mountain Power, for wireless Smart Grid communications, and VTel matching funds, for a total capital investment of over \$150 million.

For more information on VTel, please call 802.885.9000 or visit the company's website at www.vermontel.com.

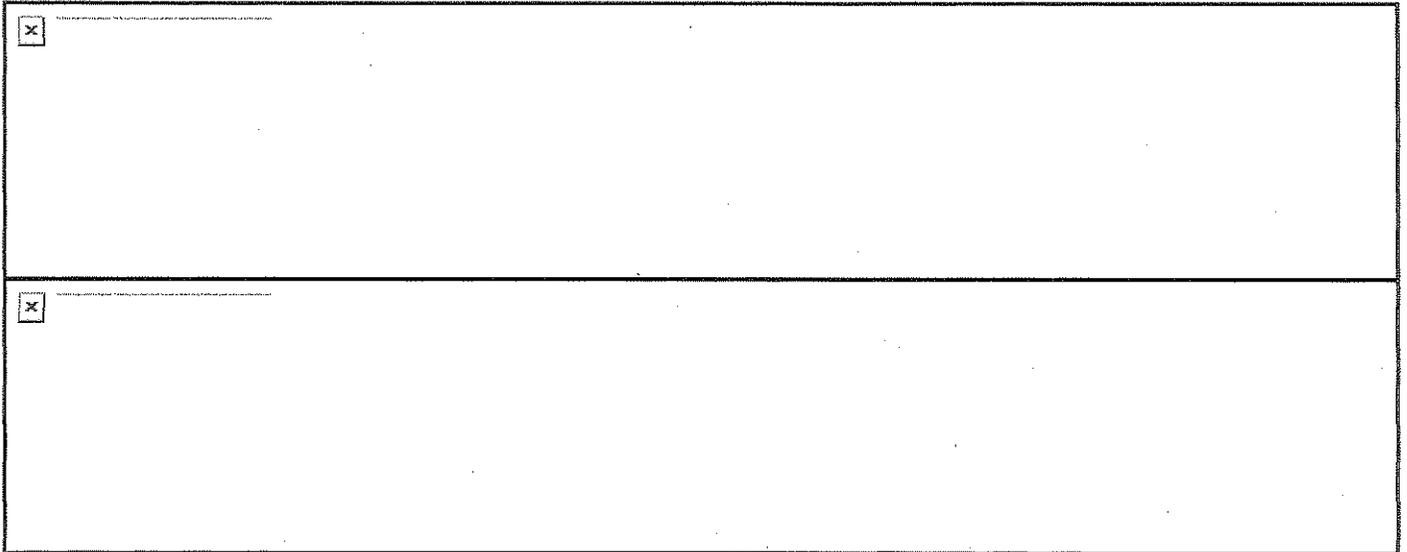
Contact: Dr. Michel Guité
Telephone: 802.885.7000
Email: mguite@vermontel.com

Miller, Lawrence

From: Newport City Renaissance Corporation <patricia.sears@discovernewportvt.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2013 8:00 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: This Concerns New Food. Delicious Destination. 2013 Taste of Newport VT.

If you're having trouble viewing this email, you may [see it online](#).

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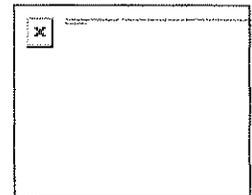
You are important to us.

Because you joined us for last year for Taste of Newport or otherwise expressed interest in this year's 2013 Taste of Newport, You are receiving this special invitation to purchase your tickets before we start advertising to the general public on May 1st. Last year, we sold out 10 days before the event.

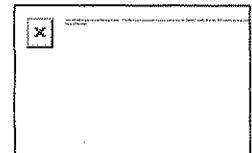
There are only 100 tickets. Only 20 VIP tickets that include the sunset cruise on The Northern Star are available.

*Community National Bank Presents
2013 Taste of Newport
Wednesday 19 June 2013
4.30p - 8.30p
In walkable downtown Newport, Vermont*

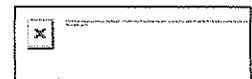
"Newport has experienced a culinary renaissance sparked by the Newport. Fresh by Nature. campaign, which has transformed traditional



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downtown restaurants into dining venues focused on food system sustainability." Vermont's Best Farm-To-Table Restaurants | AboutNewEngland.com

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The third annual 2013 *Taste of Newport* is a one-of-a-kind culinary festival in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. Join many of Newport's downtown restaurants for signature dishes from celebrated Newport chefs made with local products, a sunset-cruise sponsored by *Downs Rachlin Martin* and live entertainment sponsored by *Route 802*.

This special event is made possible by Community National Bank, Northpoint Chrysler Dodge Ram & Jeep, AARP Vermont and VTel.

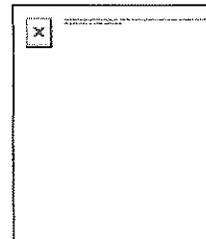
A local farmer responsible for tending the ingredients you're enjoying will be at each participating restaurant. You will enjoy tastings at Newport Natural Cafe, Baan Thai Cuisine, Lago Trattoria, Le Belvedere, Hoagies, Pizza and Pasta and The East Side Restaurant & Pub. There will also be locally-produced beverages served, such as Eden Ice Cider.

Make your reservations. [Click here to order your tickets.](#)

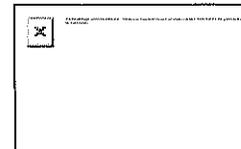
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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2013 4:54 PM
To: Kevin Ellis
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: VTel release

KE- can we tweak the 2nd sentence in first para re 17,500 customers? I think that we posed this q, but don't think that we resolved it. We don't want to confuse anyone; our goal is 100% coverage by end of year and our 'to be served' #s are much, much lower. We don't want a reader to think that we have that many addresses left to serve.

Thx- KB
Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 11:38 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: RE: Note from Vermont

As an aside -

I also just spoke to Megan Sullivan from Welch's office. She met with Guite yesterday and said that he mentioned that the state is really trying to be helpful to him, which is nice feedback.

He did share with her his concern about the VTA as well.

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 9:46 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Allen, Susan; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: Re: Note from Vermont

I thought we had landed at a Lawrence Miller quote on this - my problem was not with the project (great project!) but with the level of detail and description in the press release - it didn't scream high level gov quote to me. But I don't want to further offend Michel unnecessarily. Can you offer a Lawrence quote (if Lawrence is ok with it) and finesse it so that they are not offended? If not let us know...not worth a fight

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Apr 24, 2013, at 8:43 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Do we want to put in a quote from GPS?? I can draft something if so.

Re: previous conversations - Please note that the \$10/month "lite" service is not for FTTH; it's for wireless.

From: Michel Guite [<mailto:mguite@vermontel.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2013 5:35 PM
To: Kevin Ellis; Karen L. Marshall; John Caceres; Justin M. Robinson; Fran Stocker; Sam Coleman; Dave Burstein; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: FW: Note from Vermont

Hi all,

Thanks for all the input into the press release.

We have now sent "as is" to Peter Welch, Bob Metcalfe, and Carl Russo to seek their confirmations for quotations. A final step will be - once these quotes are final - to ask for Peter Shumlin's quote.

For better or worse, it is too late to change. However I would love to see Peter Shumlin say something like "We love this VTel project. Akamai's newest 'State of the Internet' lists Vermont as the fastest in America in Internet speeds. VTel has done a lot to help make this happen, and VTel's GigE to every home is an example of the innovation and technology excellence Vermont wants to support".

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

From: Michel Guite

Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2013 5:09 PM

To: 'scott.corieill@mail.house.gov'

Subject: FW: Note from Vermont

Hi Scott,

Please don't be offended butattached is a possible Peter Welch quote, comprising Paragraph 2 of a potential VTel press release about rural GigE. Might Peter be willing to say something like this, as his own quote, to be sent to Vermont and national media reporters and placed on VTel web page?

Best,

Michel Guite

President

Vermont Telephone Co, Inc.

354 River Street

Springfield, VT 05156

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

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<FTTH Press Release April 23 2013_DG revised.docx>

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 11:30 AM
To: Sullivan, Megan
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Davis-Bacon - VTel

I have given this some thought since we spoke earlier.

When LM and I met with the new RUS Acting Administrator and the Acting Assistant Administrator, they did raise a D-B snafu, but very much implied that VTel had/was working through it. I seem to recall that they said that one of the wage determinations was off by about \$8 (which is huge). This, of course, would be quite a hit to VTel and their budget for labor.

Wage determinations vary by county/region and I am guessing that they have the same crews working across the state, so I am wondering if they got tripped up that way?

If there is anything that I can do, please let me know. I have become skilled (sadly) at slogging through this issue b/c of my work with other federal agencies. Also, there are constant updates being made, so for example, in early August some Chitt Cty data was updated, but Windsor county was changed in early Jan.

Anyway, let me know if you need help w/ this. I'll let you know if there is anything further we learn on this, too.

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2013 8:39 AM
To: Spaulding, Jeb
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Meeting with VTA - 4/24

Hi Jeb,

Pam, Holly and Chris asked me for specifics about tomorrow's meeting with you. I explained that we had met with VTel recently and were told of some strife between the two entities – and, in particular, their frustration around the termination of two grants totaling \$3.3million. I further explained that the reason for the discussion tomorrow is to basically get the VTA's perspective on all things related to VTel so that you can have both sides of the story.

I did have a chance yesterday to talk with Holly and Chris about VTel generally and how it might be a good idea to start to mend the fractured relationship. Holly got it; Chris seemed less receptive.

I didn't tell them that VTel wants "their" money back – should I convey that to them?

Thanks,
Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

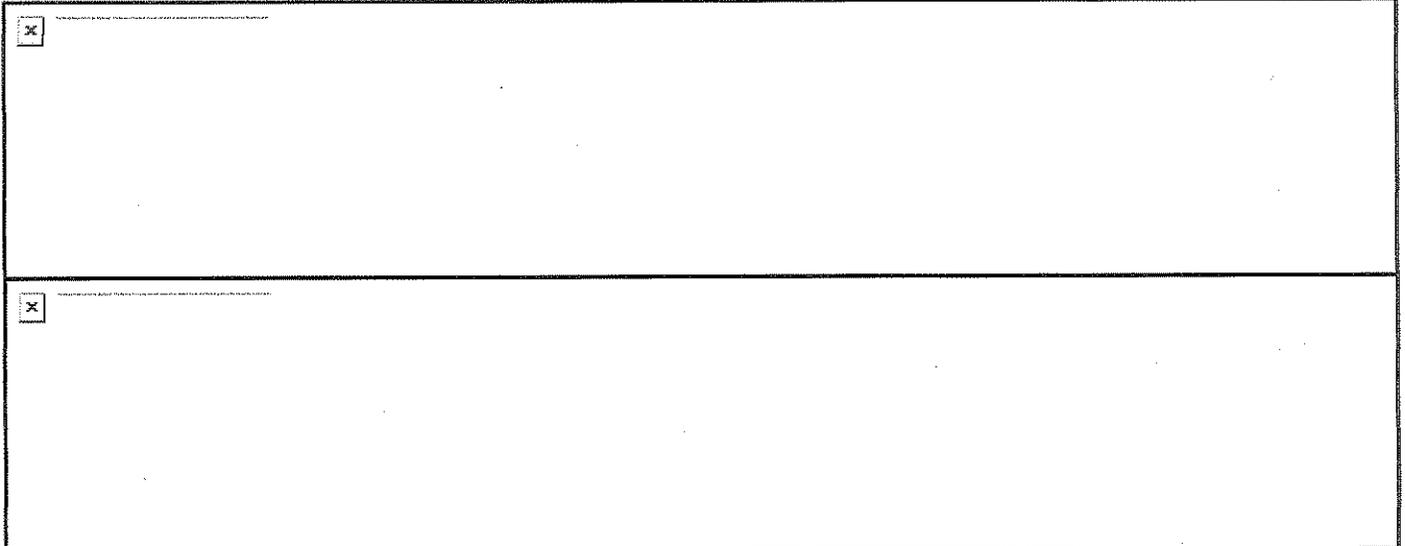
o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Newport City Renaissance Corporation <patricia.sears@discovernewportvt.com>
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 8:00 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Stop What You're Doing. Pre-Publication Opportunity. 2013 Taste of Newport Vermont

If you're having trouble viewing this email, you may [see it online](#).

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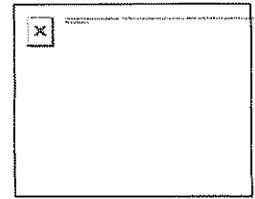
For You. Limited Edition. Pre-Publication Opportunity.

Because you joined us for last year for Taste of Newport or otherwise expressed interest in this year's 2013 Taste of Newport, You are receiving this special invitation to purchase your tickets, now. Before we start advertising to the general public on May 1st. Remember, we sold out last year 10 days before the event.

There are only 100 tickets. And Only 20 VIP tickets that include the sunset cruise on The Northern Star are available.

*Community National Bank Presents
2013 Taste of Newport
Wednesday 19 June 2013
4.30p - 8.30p
In walkable downtown Newport, Vermont*

"Newport has experienced a culinary renaissance sparked by the Newport. Fresh by Nature. campaign, which has transformed



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traditional downtown restaurants into dining venues focused on food system sustainability." *Vermont's Best Farm-to-Table Restaurants* | AboutNewEngland.com

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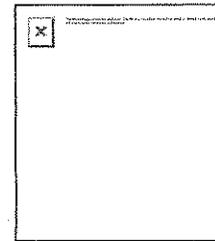
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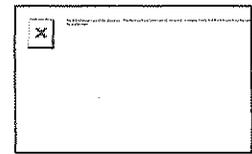
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Miller, Lawrence

From: Kevin Ellis <kevin@ksepartners.com>
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 5:42 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: VTelFTTPUpdate

We got stalled being so busy yesterday. As soon as we have it, Ill forward.

And thank you very much for yesterday. It was an excellent step forward.

KE

--

Kevin Ellis
Partner
KSE Partners, LLP

Cambridge **Montpelier** Washington

O: 802.229.4900 x107
M: 802.371.8112
www.KsePartners.com
Kevin@KsePartners.com

From: <Bourgeois>, Kiersten <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
Date: Friday, April 19, 2013 5:43 AM
To: "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us>, Microsoft Office User <kevin@ksepartners.com>
Subject: Re: VTelFTTPUpdate

Any revision? We're happy to provide a quote
Sent from my iPad

On Apr 16, 2013, at 1:29 PM, "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 371-9075

----- Original Message -----

Subject: VTelFTTPUpdate
From: Kevin Ellis <kevin@ksepartners.com>
To: "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us>
CC:

Vtel press release.

Press release draft for your review. Feel free to add quote about Econ. Dev. If you wish.

Many thanks.

Ke

--

Kevin Ellis
Partner
KSE Partners, LLP

Cambridge **Montpelier** Washington

O: 802.229.4900 x107

M: 802.371.8112

www.KsePartners.com

Kevin@KsePartners.com

<VTelFTTPUpdatePR130410d DRAFT 9(LM).doc>

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 9:24 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: Re: Spreadsheet - Putney, Dummerston and Westminster

Hi Everyone -

I think that the Putney/Westminster/Dummerston meeting went well. I will follow up with my mapping team to see if they can at least highlight which properties are in Westminster West.

Michael Wilner called me 2x over a two hour period yesterday, so I'll get back to him today.

Overall, Michel was pretty pleased, too. We definitely need to talk further about the VTA, but I think that he was pleased to get in to see the Gov

Other things that I have on my follow up list:

- confirm what Michel said about serving communities...not necessarily every address
- work with Ellis to see what events might be coming down the road for GPS participation
- detail VTA issues that we can discuss in more depth - Michel was more specific with his concerns w/ Jeb and me later in the morning. I'll get this to you later this AM.

Thanks -Kiersten

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 17, 2013, at 7:35 PM, "Miller, Elizabeth" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

Thank you for this thorough and clear presentation. Looking forward to tomorrow - expect many questions!

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Apr 17, 2013, at 5:09 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Hi Liz -

I have printed three copies of the maps and the above for GPS, Mrowicki and Deen, which I will bring in the AM.

Let me summarize the table below quickly for you in advance:

Town Name	Served	To be Served	Unserved	To be Served by VTel	Potentially Served by VTel	Total
DUMMERSTON	783	45	25	80	10	94
PUTNEY	854	46	26	129	70	1,12
WESTMINSTER	1,417	20	88	41	11	1,57
Total	3,054	111	139	250	91	3,64

Served = you guessed it: served. We can't, due to legal reasons, say who the provider is for each served location.

To be served = to be served by a provider other than VTel

Unserved = no solution + those that would have been served by VTA/VTel award*

To be served by VTel = RUS/WOW

Potentially served by VTel = part of the "581" that VTel said they'd serve, but we are waiting for confirmation from them

*In speaking with the VTA and VTel this week, VTel said that they will still serve the locations that were originally in their VTA awards, so the numbers shake out like this:

- Dummerston – there are 25 addresses on the VTA/VTel list which brings the unserved total to ZERO
- Putney – there are 18 addresses on the VTA/VTel list which brings the unserved total to 8
- Westminster – there are 83 addresses on the VTA/VTel list, bringing this town's unserved to 5.

I went through all of the lists and can tell you exactly where the remaining unserved are in Putney and Westminster.

And, on the first sheet that shows the state #s, the 519 that are considered unserved, please note that the 398 that VTA/VTel was not pulled out, so the grand total is 121 unserved. Public Service claims that this might even be less...

Thanks. Questions? Let me know.

Kiersten

<BroadbandStatus_Release4_WDataVerif_3Towns.xlsx>

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 8:42 AM
To: Allen, Susan
Cc: Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: Misc Events

Hi Sue -

1) with all of the good telecom news happening in the NEK (NBRC; EDA grant), there are several parties - including some folks from the Quebec government - that are interested in holding some sort of press event. Another neat angle is the fact that Tivoly (employer in Derby who is literally on the QC border) will be able to use this improved broadband service. I will get a range of dates next week.

2) ECFiber wants to do something to tout some of their recent investment, perhaps in Vershire. I think that I have mentioned this before, but improved broadband will help a Vermonter that runs a small non-profit from her house that helps prevent domestic abuse against women. She's located in Vershire, so actually doing an event there might be tough, but I think that it is a great way to highlight the different ways broadband deployment is benefiting Vermonters and their small businesses. Again, I will get some dates for this.

My guess is that both can fall in mid-May, early June.

Yesterday, we also had a meeting (well, several actually) with Michel Guite from VTel. There might be a couple of events planned around some of his successful project milestones, too.

Thanks,
Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2013 4:32 PM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: VTel - RUS

No

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 16, 2013, at 4:17 PM, "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

Thinking about hitting "send" Your opinion?

Michel,

You have already set the expectations extremely high. Our objective is to help you meet them. In my opinion equivocating on the stated goals and reducing expectations from what you have set would be detrimental. We would all rather you be able to focus on rollout than spend valuable time on dealing with

Whether or not there is state cash to VTel involved there is a hell of a lot of effort across a number of agencies to facilitate your success. And Vermonters' federal taxes are into these projects in a BIG way.

Finally, I would urge you not to get hung up on the VTA. It is what it is, as the saying goes.

Respectfully,
Lawrence

—
Lawrence Miller, Secretary
Agency of Commerce and Community Development
One National Life Drive, Sixth Floor
Montpelier VT 05620-0501
(802) 828-5204 Office
(802) 371-9075 Cell
[Parking at National Life](#)

Our mission is to help Vermonters improve their quality of life and build strong communities.

From: Michel Guite [<mailto:mguite@vermontel.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2013 3:45 PM
To: Diane Guité; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VTel - RUS

Goal is to keep expectations low.

Also it seems VTA is being so impossible to work with, it is likely the State of Vermont will have no financial part in VTel's network except asking us to pay taxes.

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

From: Diane Guité

Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2013 2:39 PM

To: Kiersten Bourgeois; Michel Guite

Cc: Miller, Lawrence

Subject: Re: VTel - RUS

Hi Kiersten - I think its fair to say "the majority". Rather than "vastly all". Given that we're still, for example, negotiating on mobile corridors for the with vta and its april, I don't want to over-promise. The majority will certainly be finished! The second sentence starting "This decision..." Is accurate.

Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T

From: "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>

Date: Tue, 16 Apr 2013 13:24:18 -0400

To: Diane Guité <dguite@vermontel.com>; Michel Guite <mguite@vermontel.com>

Cc: Miller, Lawrence <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us>

Subject: VTel - RUS

Good afternoon Team VTel –

I have had two inquiries from folks (one from Woodbury and the other I can't remember off the top of my head) this AM both basically misconstruing the "2015" date. I'd like to make sure that my talking point is correct when I say, "VTel intends to have vastly all of this project finished by the end of this year. This decision to extend the deadline to was made by the federal granting entity and applies to all grantees; VTel is one of several recipients." It's essentially what we in the Digger interview, too.

I will FW you all of the requests that I receive, if you'd like.

Thanks – Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois

Senior Project Manager

Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development

National Life Drive

Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220

m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Sevoian, Noelle
Sent: Monday, April 15, 2013 8:22 AM
To: andy kehr; Bob Rathbun ; cynthia belliveau; george putnam; gil livingston; Jackie Folsom ; jim wood; Jonathan Rooney; joss besse; ken gagnon; kevin hastings; len bull; lynn coale; mark curran; Paul Harlow; sam cutting IV; warren hill; Amanda Thurber; Brian Kemp; DeGeus, Robert; deluca.eric@gmail.com; Ela Chapin; Eleanor & Albert Leger (leger@edenicecider.com); Ellen Kahler; Emma Marvin; Seelig, G; Ibey, Alex; Janice St.Onge; Bradley, Jo; Kathleen Wanner; Kurt Zschau (terrestreal@gmail.com); LaClair, Jolinda; Leonard, Colleen; Moon, Melissa; Mike Rainville; Miller, Lawrence; robin scheu ; Ross, Chuck; Sevoian, Noelle; Snyder, Michael
Subject: FW: Current Use article in Seven Days

Lawmakers Look to Crack Down on "Current-Use" Abuse

By Kathryn Flagg [04.03.13]

Is the state's "current-use" program a tax break for rich property owners or a crucial safeguard to prevent Vermont from becoming one big subdivision? It depends on who is assessing the state program that reduces taxes for some landowners of ag and forestlands by an average 88 percent.

But many Vermonters agree it's due for an update, and that's the goal behind H.329, a House bill passed last Friday that is now en route to the Senate.

Enacted in 1978, current use — formally known as use value appraisal — gives property owners lucrative tax breaks to keep land undeveloped. As its name implies, eligible landowners using property for agriculture or forestry are taxed on the value of their land as it's currently being used, rather than the much higher potential value if the land were to be developed.

Critics complain that developers can game the system to reap short-term tax benefits and develop land later on, and there's little oversight once a landowner is enrolled in the program. They also note the policy is costly — the state is obligated to reimburse towns a total of \$13.3 million in lost municipal tax revenues for tax year 2012 — and that average taxpayers are paying for it. The price tag for current use has increased 8 percent per year, on average, over the past decade.

Supporters such as Rep. Alison Clarkson (D-Woodstock) call current use the most important conservation program in Vermont. More than a third of the state's land is enrolled in the program — more than 1.7 million acres of forestland and 550,000 acres of farmland.

"If it had been taxed on its market value and not its use value, we would not have the same landscape that we have today, because the economic pressures would have driven them all into subdivisions and development," says Clarkson, the lead sponsor of H.329.

But as it stands now, the penalties are so low that would-be developers can enroll in current use, enjoy the resulting tax breaks and still come out ahead when they turn around and subdivide or develop their land. In some cases the break-even point on that equation is less than a year. Critics call the practice "parking" land in current use.

Clarkson's bill proposes a tiered system of penalties. The penalties would be higher than they are now in most cases, but the system would also reward landowners with lower penalties the longer they keep their land undeveloped.

"Even people who don't like current use should be pleased about this," Clarkson says, "because it's more money coming back to taxpayers." H.329 marks the third attempt to reform the current use program in recent years. Then-governor Jim Douglas vetoed a bill in 2010 that would have increased penalties, and a second attempt subsequently stalled out for a year and a half in the Senate Finance Committee.

Indeed, plenty of Vermonters dislike current use. Some are upset that there's no income sensitivity in the program, meaning wealthy landowners who could afford to pay higher taxes benefit from generous breaks. Others complain about landowners who enjoy the tax reduction while simultaneously posting their land to prohibit hunting and recreation.

"Then we can't even use the land, which many times has been used for decades," says Mary O'Brien, a selectboard member in Hartland. "People who don't understand or respect that tradition have the money to buy huge tracts of land and use the rest of us to pay their share."

Current use was a hot topic on Town Meeting Day in Hartland last month. Every year, the town publishes an annual report with a list of property owners who are enrolled in the program; in a small town like Hartland, the list always generates a lot of interest.

Hartland lister Pat Rosson says she's concerned about the potential for fraud or abuse. When the self-described "flatlander" moved to Vermont 27 years ago, an adjoining property owner had 30 acres of farmland enrolled in current use.

"They were having it brush-hogged," says Rosson. "That's not ag to me. Miss busy-body here called the state, and they said they don't have the time to go out and check on everybody."

Bill Johnson, the director of property valuation and review at the Vermont Department of Taxes, concedes that while forestland enrolled in the program should meet a rigorous forest management plan, the ag side of current use is largely conducted in "good faith."

"We only have three people doing this," he says, referring to the small staff in the current-use division, "and they can't go running around looking at millions of acres."

Reading from her list, Hartland's Rosson ticks off a couple of large properties receiving equally large discounts, including a \$960,200 reduction in property value assessment for Cobb Hill Cohousing.

Another property owner — VTel CEO and president Michel Guité — has 160 acres enrolled in the program; working with Cornell and the University of Vermont, he's planting new, high-sugar-content maple saplings for a sugarbush. That lowered the taxable value of his land, which does not include any buildings, by \$707,400. His annual property tax bill comes to roughly \$530, according to a December 2011 report in the Valley News.

O'Brien, who raises sheep and chickens on 10 acres in Hartland, feels that's deeply unfair. Her property is too small to enroll in current use, which typically requires a minimum 25 acres to join. Her property tax bill is \$9000 a year — 17 times as much as a landowner with roughly 16 times the amount of land.

"The disparity, the gap, between that \$530 and my taxes — it's so vast of a gulf, it's impossible to ignore anymore," says O'Brien. "And there's no end in sight for me. We can't afford to buy another 15 acres of land and throw our land in current use."

Guité says that his agricultural endeavors — which also include planting historic orchards modeled after the varieties favored by Thomas Jefferson — qualify him for the program. “I don’t know if it’s fair or not, but that’s just the way it works,” he says. “There’s nothing that is different from my property than the other, say, 1000 farms in Vermont. ... It’s only equitable that they should be treated all alike.”

All told, more than 13,000 acres in Hartland are enrolled in the program, resulting in a nearly \$41.2 million reduction in the town’s grand list and \$793,657 in tax savings for enrolled landowners.

And it’s not even at the top of the list: With 29,000 acres in current use, Fairfield earns that distinction. Cambridge and Averill are right up there, too. Meanwhile, the greatest tax savings are found, predictably, in towns with higher property values: Stowe, Pomfret and Woodstock, where participants in the program avoided, respectively, \$1.33 million, \$1.32 million and \$1.26 million in total tax payments in 2012.

“Everybody says, ‘Well, the state reimburses you,’” says Rosson, referring to a provision in the program under which the state pays towns for the difference in their municipal taxes.

Her retort? “Where does the state money come from?”

Johnson backs up Rosson’s assessment: “Everybody in the state is paying for the program, through one form of taxes or another.”

Proponents, meanwhile, argue that the tax policy has economic value that outweighs its cost. In 2007, a current-use task force estimated that the economic payback of leaving land undeveloped — looking at everything from specialty foods to tourism — was more than \$4 billion.

“People don’t get how essential it is to the economy and the working lands they value so much,” says Clarkson. In a perfect world, she said, bottles of maple syrup and other Vermont goods would come plastered with a label akin to “Made Possible by Current Use.”

Forests, Parks & Recreation Commissioner Michael Snyder is among those who rave about current use; he objects to the characterization of current-use as a “tax break” and instead terms it a tax fairness program. In his previous work as a county forester, he heard from landowners who said that were it not for current use, they couldn’t afford to retain ownership of their forestlands. While some are ideologically opposed to it — “There were many who said, ‘I’d never enroll in that welfare program,’” he recalls — many more depended upon it. Nearly half of all eligible parcels in the state are enrolled in current use.

“The pressure on people’s lands to subdivide, to convert to non-forests, is really staggering, and it’s growing,” says Snyder. “If you like how Vermont looks and functions and feels, it’s largely because we’re a forest state now.” That Vermont retains its forests, he says, is thanks in large part to current use.

Put Blodgett, the president of the board of the Vermont Woodlands Association, agrees. “If land is taxed at development value, that’s what it will become,” he says.

Current use’s biggest proponents — and there are many — argue that there are too many rumors about the program. The perception that rich, out-of-state landowners are tapping into the tax break is, they say, a misperception. Full-time Vermonters own 76 percent of the land enrolled in current use. That’s according to the Current Use Tax Coalition, a diverse team of advocates for the program representing conservationists, sportsmen, foresters and farmers.

Still, even many current-use supporters agree it’s time for some changes. Tom Vickery, who has worked as a lister and reappraiser in Stowe and Waterbury for more than 40 years, was a huge backer of the program in the 1970s. He’d seen firsthand the benefits of a tax stabilization program in Stowe that was a predecessor to current use, and Vickery was active in getting the original current-use law passed.

Years later, the state “watered down” the penalties associated with removing land from current-use — a decision that Vickery says made “a shambles” of the program. He and many other listers in the state were disappointed in the results.

“What we were seeing was people coming in to avoid taxes, not for the preservation and conservation we saw originally with the program,” he says. “We thought people were beginning to game the system.”

Now he’s holding out hope that tougher penalties might fix that problem. “I look at this as being a second generation of the current-use program,” Vickery says. “Let’s start fresh.”

Miller, Lawrence

From: Pariseau, Tamera
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2013 11:44 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: In today's media review

Thanks for the clarification, Kiersten.

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2013 11:27 AM
To: Pariseau, Tamera
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: In today's media review

Not exactly. All grantees that received funding from RUS have had their projects extended – by RUS – to 2015. This isn't specific to VTel.

The VTel project is well underway and we understand from them that the vast majority of their project will be completed by the end of the year.

If you have any questions, please let me know. If you want me to draft something "official" that you can use in responses, just let me know. Or, perhaps VTel would be able to do that better.

Thanks!
Kiersten

From: Pariseau, Tamera
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2013 11:23 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: FW: In today's media review

Kiersten,

I shared this with Jim Porter, also. Is this the official word now? That the WOW project completion date is 2015 instead of 2013, as we've been previously advised?

From: Paruch, Susan
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2013 10:58 AM
To: Pariseau, Tamera; Eriksen, Sunni; Peterson, Christine; Metivier, Melissa
Subject: In today's media review

"VTel's Michel Guité told VTDigger that his technical federal deadline for completing his Wireless Open World (WoW) project, backed by \$116 million in federal funds from the Rural Utility Service, is 2015, not the end of 2013."

This can't be good.

<http://www.vermontbiz.com/news/april/5-million-cell-phone-expansion-grant-vtel-under-question>

Susan

Susan Paruch
Vermont Public Service Department
Division of Consumer Affairs & Public Information
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601
800-622-4496
802-828-4015

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2013 11:56 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Cc: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Spaulding, Jeb; Porter, James
Subject: Re: VTDigger reporter, story on VTel and state pledge of universal broadband by year-end 2013

Seems like this is on target - we should make sure Nat knows that the RUS deadline issue is not "new news" - let me know if you need help or messaging advice otherwise - I'll assume Kiersten is on top of it! thanks.

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Apr 11, 2013, at 11:52 AM, "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

Good. Nat does good work.

Lawrence Miller, Secretary
VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
(802) 371-9075

On Apr 11, 2013, at 11:26 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

FYI. I can provide this.

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Nat Rudarakanchana <nrudarakanchana@vtdigger.org>
Date: April 11, 2013, 11:19:57 AM EDT
To: "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>
Subject: Re: VTDigger reporter, story on VTel and state pledge of universal broadband by year-end 2013

Hi,

Also, do you have a map of the 'target corridors' for cell service mentioned in this press release? <http://governor.vermont.gov/newsroom-gov-shumlin-state-invests-five-million-dollars-in-cell-service-expansion-grant-to-expand-cell-service>

On Thu, Apr 11, 2013 at 10:59 AM, Nat Rudarakanchana <nrudarakanchana@vtdigger.org> wrote:

Hi Kiersten,

I'm Nat Rudy, a reporter at VTDigger. We're writing a story today on VTel and the state's pledge of universal broadband coverage by end of 2013: I'll probably be at the VTA board meeting later this afternoon to hear about mobile infrastructure too. My questions were fairly general on whether the state is still on track to meet it's year end deadline of 2013, but wanted to speak on the phone, hopefully before 3pm today. I'm at [802-917-3721](tel:802-917-3721) if you have some time today. Partly, the recent news with the pulling of the VTel grants, and how that affects the state's goal: but also VTel told me its technical deadline for the fed RUS grants is 2015, not 2013, though they expect they'll have the "vast majority" of their sites up before year-end 2013. Just a few talking points in advance for you. Hope you're well and that we can talk sometime today.

Thanks,
Nat Rudarakanchana

--

Nat Rudarakanchana
Reporter, VTDigger.org
[802-917-3721](tel:802-917-3721)
nrudarakanchana@vtdigger.org
[@natrudy](https://twitter.com/natrudy)

--

Nat Rudarakanchana
Reporter, VTDigger.org
[802-917-3721](tel:802-917-3721)
nrudarakanchana@vtdigger.org
[@natrudy](https://twitter.com/natrudy)

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2013 4:26 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence; Trombley, Shana
Subject: RE: Putney/Dummerston/Westminster

It looks like we can get the maps done by tomorrow afternoon. We have are working under the assumption that the "581" that KM assumed would be served by VTel and the 398 that VTA/VTel would have served are currently unserved. I don't want any speculation at this point, but am confident that this number (which is statewide) will drop significantly. I just want confirmation – the whole "581" figure makes me uneasy. For the 3 towns that we are dealing with specifically, 98 fall into the "581" and 127 would have been served by VTA/VTel. Interestingly – or not – Vtel said that they will serve the addresses in their VTA apps anyway.

Due to confidentiality regs, we can't say WHO is actually serving the served addresses, but can show with a certain colored dot.

We will also ask Corey to sort as we discussed.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Kiersten

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2013 10:02 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence; Trombley, Shana
Subject: Re: Putney/Dummerston/Westminster

great thank you. He also wanted the re-sorted excel spreadsheet by street rather than 911 code, and he wanted added to the spread sheet the served and will be served (actually project in process) - which basically should be the text/spreadsheet version of the map corey is doing I would bet. It looks like we have some time on Friday afternoon - will you be ready for an update with him then if we can swing it?

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Apr 10, 2013, at 9:06 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Hi Liz – at our meeting with GPS last week, he said that he wanted better info for the three towns mentioned above in a week. Corey is working on mapping this and including info (using a certain colored dot) to show who is already served.

Also, Beth F. called me yesterday specifically about Putney –Mrowicki has told several of his constituents (namely Michael Wilner) that we had the discussion last week and will have updates this week.

Are we all getting together again on this? Or would you prefer that – at least as an interim step – Jim and I get together w/ Mrowicki and Deen later this week to go over the maps that Corey is working on?

Thanks - Kiersten

Kiersten Bourgeois
Senior Project Manager
Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

o: 802.828.5220
m: 802.793.4899

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 10:20 AM
To: 'Diane Guité'; 'Michel Guite'
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Data

Thanks! I am tied up from 10:30AM until about 12, then from about 2-5. Do you have a window b/t 12 and 2?

From: Diane Guité [mailto:dguite@vermontel.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 9:38 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Michel Guite
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Data

Thanks Kiersten. I can speak any time that's convenient for you re: 581 – am at my desk. Let me know what's best.

Diane Guité

Vice President of Business Development
Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.
Phone: 802 885-7702
Mobile: 802 289-2190
E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten [mailto:Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 5:02 PM
To: Diane Guité; Michel Guite
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Data

I am trying to figure out where this day has gone. I have to hop on a call shortly, but we can chat in the AM? I will also track down the "581" list. Thank you so much.

And the screenshot is very cool...congratulations!

From: Diane Guité [mailto:dguite@vermontel.com]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 4:27 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Michel Guite
Cc: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: Data

Hi Kiersten – thank you for explaining and for your words of support.

On 1) If you have that list handy, it would be great if you could send across. I'll have Ghaith, our Ericsson consultant, take a look to see which homes will be served with our current tower site configuration. I would be surprised if we're not still serving the vast majority of those homes. With \$3.4mm of reduced overall funding given the VTA broadband grants situation, we of course may not be able to achieve the exact same service coverage as we had initially anticipated, but we will

certainly try our best. If you don't have the list handy I'll check with the VTel team but would rather I own the document / correspondence to be sure we're getting you exactly what you're looking for.

On 2), thank you for passing along the nice feedback from RUS, and for the background. We are really proud to hear that news. The Governor echoed that sentiment at today's Rotary Club lunch.

Also, apologies for coming back late to you on this – just got out of a long meeting with GMP / Brian Otley and catching up on emails.

Also – if you'll permit me to brag for a moment – I wanted to send along an exciting screen shot of my iPad that I took on Friday – we recently received our VTel SIM cards, and they're working beautifully for iPads as well as Sony and Samsung 4G smartphones that we recently received as test devices, right here in Springfield. (Look at the top left!!!).

Thanks and all best,

Diane Guité

Vice President of Business Development

Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7702

Mobile: 802 289-2190

E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten [<mailto:Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>]

Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 12:21 PM

To: Diane Guité; Michel Guite

Cc: Miller, Lawrence

Subject: RE: Data

Thanks - I appreciate your concerns and let me stress that we still fully support all of the incredible work that VTel is doing. We want you to succeed and we will be more than happy to assist where possible.

I am available around 3PM, but let me answer your questions and provide better context for them:

1) Long before I arrived - I think last summer - Karen sent a bunch (maybe about 2k?) of addresses to VTel and of those, about 580 were identified by your team as likely to be served outside of the WOW project or other funded projects.

I wanted to check to see whether that's still the case. If it is helpful to you, I can find the list of those addresses and send them to you. We are quickly approaching mid-year and I am trying to get clear sense of what addresses still don't have solutions identified. Once I determine that, I can work with my team to craft possible solutions. I know that I am going to run across several instances in the coming months where there are homes located in very hard to reach places.

2) On Friday, we (Lawrence and I) were introduced to the new RUS Acting Administrator, John Padalino and Assistant Acting Administrator, Jon Claffey. The meeting was rather quick, but they did take time to let us know that VTel has been very good to work with and progress has been good. We also spent some time talking about other USDA \$ available to help initiatives like advancing digital literacy through some of their other programs. This certainly won't be a regular meeting, but we now have some names to faces - Lawrence and I are both new to this world and John and Jon are new in their roles. If you want further specifics, I can consult my notes, but overall, the message re: VTel was very positive.

Thanks - Kiersten

From: Diane Guité [dguite@vermontel.com]

Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 11:23 AM

To: Michel Guite; Bourgeois, Kiersten
Subject: RE: Data

Hi Kiersten,

Thanks for the note.

Happy to help in whatever way we can but wanted to touch base on 2 points:

- 1) What type of data are you looking for? I can be the point of contact and will track down whoever I need to internally depending on what your questions are. With that said, I'm a little confused by the following: given that we lost \$3.4mm of grant funding last week, in what capacity is the state of VT interested in and involved with our project? We of course want to be helpful and constructive wherever we can re: providing information, but I want to be sure we're on the same page and that I understand why/what you're asking. Maybe we could talk live about this?
- 2) In what context have you / VT state been in touch with RUS and who have you been in touch with there? We have a weekly call with RUS and I want to be sure I understand all elements of what is being represented to RUS regarding VTel and our project.

We're planning to go hear Gov. Shumlin speak in Springfield shortly.

Let me know when you might have some time to catch up.

Thanks,

Diane Guité

Vice President of Business Development

Vermont Telephone Company, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7702

Mobile: 802 289-2190

E-Mail: dguite@vermontel.com

From: Michel Guite

Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 9:41 AM

To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Diane Guité

Subject: RE: Data

RUS is great to work with. Experienced, constructive, fair-minded.

Michel Guite

President

Vermont National Telephone Co, Inc.

Phone: 802 885-7000

Mobile: 914 572-7664

E-Mail: mguite@vermontel.com

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten [<mailto:Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>]

Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 9:32 AM

To: Diane Guité; Michel Guite

Subject: Data

Good morning -

I hope that you both had a nice weekend. My goal of this week is to get some data scrubbed to refine some of our #s. Is this something that I should talk with Justin about or if not, can you pls direct me to the right person?

Also, had a Skype call w/ RUS for intro purposes on Friday. They had very positive things to say about VTel and the project. I am around this afternoon if you would like to chat.

Best,
Kiersten

Miller, Lawrence

Subject: VTel VTA
Start: Tue 4/9/2013 3:00 PM
End: Tue 4/9/2013 3:30 PM
Show Time As: Tentative
Recurrence: (none)
Meeting Status: Not yet responded
Organizer: Miller, Lawrence
Required Attendees: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Elizabeth
Importance: High

When: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 3:00 PM-3:30 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Note: The GMT offset above does not reflect daylight saving time adjustments.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

This is the only half hour I see on all our calendars. Kiersten and I can come to you both at Statehouse or Pavilion. Let me know.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 7:45 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth; Spaulding, Jeb
Subject: VTel

Can we pls chat about an upcoming issue?

Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 6:59 AM
To: Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Re: Today

Ok. Thx.

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 8, 2013, at 6:41 AM, "Miller, Lawrence" <Lawrence.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

> A this point I am scheduled to be in the office all day. Time to unpack!

>

> *****

> Lawrence Miller, Secretary

> VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development

> (802) 371-9075

>

> On Apr 8, 2013, at 5:44 AM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

>

>> Have to bring my car in for repair this AM. Brakes are failing...not good.

>> Need to talk VTel w/ you at some point.

>>

>> Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 3:56 PM
To: Torres, Lars
Cc: Mackay, Noelle; Murphy, Kathy; Butson, Jen; Leriche, Lucy; Smith, Megan
Subject: FW: AFTERNOON MEDIA STORIES FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3:

Great piece by Cathy Resmer. Nice work Lars.

—
Lawrence Miller, Secretary
Agency of Commerce and Community Development
State of Vermont
National Life Building, 6th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
(802) 828-5204 office
(802) 371-9075 cell
lawrence.miller@state.vt.us

The mission of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development is to help Vermonters improve their quality of life and build strong communities.

From: Allen, Susan
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 3:41 PM
To: Allen, Susan
Subject: AFTERNOON MEDIA STORIES FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3:

Vermont's Director of the Office of the Creative Economy Wants to Tell a New Story About the State By Cathy Resmer

Vermont is synonymous with snowboarding, sugaring and farming. But those activities account for a fraction of the state's economy. Traditional sectors such as manufacturing and health care play a big role, but the Green Mountain State is also home to a large and growing creative economy made up of "knowledge workers" who produce everything from software to film scores.

The Vermont Technology Alliance, a trade group representing the state's software and technical companies, estimates that its members alone brought in \$150 million in 2009; their revenue jumped to \$280 million in 2011.

That year, the state created the Office of the Creative Economy, under the auspices of the Department of Economic, Housing & Community Development, to help support and expand these industries. The OCE absorbed the Vermont Film Commission, which had focused on luring film producers to Vermont. The OCE's first director, Joe Bookchin, was the former head of the film commission; he resigned in late February.

Lars Hasselblad Torres, creator of Montpelier's coworking and community-event space, Local 64, has stepped in to take Bookchin's place. The energetic 42-year-old entrepreneur has a worldly background — he spent his childhood in Seattle and Malaysia, and went to high school in Senegal, earning his bachelor's degree at Vermont's School for International Training in 1995. He started a public-policy institute and helped craft prizes

to promote innovation and entrepreneurship for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and USAID before founding Local 64 in 2012.

Over the past year, Torres has been a vocal proponent of the state's creative economy, emceeding a "Tech State of the Union" event put on by partners including Google, Engine Advocacy and Seven Days in February, and organizing a video-game showcase in January at the Statehouse in Montpelier, where lawmakers heard from local developers hoping to grow their industry in Vermont. Last month, Torres wrote a white paper on creating coworking spaces that was published by the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies.

Torres, who lives in Cabot with his wife and daughter, came to Winooski recently for a Vermont Technology Alliance lunch and learn on "Marketing Vermont as a Technology State." We discussed his new job afterward over a pot of Rooibos at Dobrá Tea in Burlington.

SEVEN DAYS: You're the new director of the Office of the Creative Economy. What does that mean?

LARS HASSELBLAD TORRES: I think that means a couple of things, at a high level. [The office] plays a role as a doormat for people looking for information about film. This is in part the result of the unique skill set of the past director. Some of those inquiries turn on permitting — what do I need to be able to shoot here in April? — location scouting and incentives. Those seem to be the three questions that are on my phone right now.

The more exciting piece is, how do we transform that entertainment-industry-facing office into something that's broader and more relevant to the creative sectors that exist in Vermont today?

SD: Such as?

LHT: There are three that have been identified as priorities. Film and new media — emphasis on the new media. Advertising and marketing, which I'm not sure I completely understand, but it involves graphic designers, principally, illustrators, these kinds of folks. The third is software and game development.

There are lots of other areas that aren't represented by the Office of the Creative Economy — performing arts, visual arts. And I think one of the reasons is, we have the Vermont Arts Council, we have the Humanities Council, we have local arts organizations, so there's sort of an ecology there. We don't really have a good ecology formed around these other sectors.

SD: Why is the state interested in developing them?

LHT: I think for a couple reasons. One, they create employment. Second, they create wealth, and there's economic value there.

They're green jobs. They're good jobs to have in Vermont. They require a skill set that can be learned in our institutions of K-12 and higher ed, but, at the same time, they are jobs that you can grow into. You can retrain a workforce that perhaps isn't doing well in agriculture, or somewhere else — maybe there's an opportunity to advance those skills in service of a larger entity. If you were a dairy person, maybe you can become a marketing person for a cheese co-op.

SD: What do you think are the biggest opportunities?

LHT: A big one is new business starts. It's a common theme that if you have skills in coding, in design, you're not very far off from the capacity of building your own business and being self-employed, if you want.

Another goal is going to be in K-12 education, preparing young Vermonters for jobs at some of these great employers we have — IBM, for example. What kind of academic path is going to enable them to pass the math test so they can get into the programming jobs? A third opportunity is around post-secondary education and this notion of retaining more of our young workers. Creating internships and playing a matchmaking role in ensuring that young graduates know about opportunities at some really exciting companies.

Another opportunity is to encourage more seed capital for the formation of new businesses in Vermont. To be able to make that case to investors, we have to be able to tell a certain set of stories about high-growth companies that are here ... that haven't had to move to Boston or New York or elsewhere. Because of the nature of this [creative economy] work, you don't have to be near manufacturing or distribution centers.

Maybe a harder-to-put-your-finger-on opportunity is, when Vermonters tell stories, do they tell a different kind of story? And if so, how can we promote those stories on the national stage? One role a film-commission-like entity could play is to champion the fact that [there are films with Vermont connections.]

I'm thinking of Safety Not Guaranteed. This film was scored by a Vermont musician and directed by a Vermonter. This idea of "made in Vermont" needs to extend beyond our food brands and into our creative output. Would Blair Witch Project have been a different film if it had been made by a Vermonter? Probably. How? Just kind of play around with the notion of the Vermont narrative.

Likewise with [video] games. Education is a niche that Vermont could quickly occupy. We have Chris Hancock here, who produces educational reading games, and Toonuva Games. We have Birnam Wood [Games] trying to develop a different kind of strategy game. I think Vermont could get known for building a different kind of video game.

SD: How can your office help with that?

LHT: In a couple of ways. The first is brightening the spotlight. Making sure that people know about what's happening here in Vermont. A second —

SD: But how? Like, literally, how does state government do that?

LHT: As a spokesperson, that's one way. So if I'm in Boston at a digital conference, I could clearly be speaking to audiences directly and using Vermont cases to tell those stories. "Let me show you Birnam Wood Games, which went from a woman-owned company of one to Y in a period of two years because X." Inspiring stories.

A second is through writing and creating publications. One of the things I've loved to do in my various jobs is to write monographs or case studies, little briefs that shine the spotlight on actors or policies or illustrative examples that inspire people to think in those terms.

[Also] by interfacing more and getting into a position where I can speak on behalf of our organizations to the press.

I think being present at forums like Peak Pitch, which matches investors with entrepreneurs. Say, "Mr. Investor from Draper, you really need to talk to Toonuva Games, because they've got a game engine for building 3-D games that's going to change the industry a year from now." Who knows? Playing that matchmaking, one-on-one role at the right kind of forums, I think, will be really helpful.

Lawmakers Look to Crack Down on "Current-Use" Abuse

By Kathryn Flagg

Is the state's "current-use" program a tax break for rich property owners or a crucial safeguard to prevent Vermont from becoming one big subdivision? It depends on who is assessing the state program that reduces taxes for some landowners of ag and forestlands by an average 88 percent.

But many Vermonters agree it's due for an update, and that's the goal behind H.329, a House bill passed last Friday that is now en route to the Senate.

Enacted in 1978, current use — formally known as use value appraisal — gives property owners lucrative tax breaks to keep land undeveloped. As its name implies, eligible landowners using property for agriculture or

forestry are taxed on the value of their land as it's currently being used, rather than the much higher potential value if the land were to be developed.

Critics complain that developers can game the system to reap short-term tax benefits and develop land later on, and there's little oversight once a landowner is enrolled in the program. They also note the policy is costly — the state is obligated to reimburse towns a total of \$13.3 million in lost municipal tax revenues for tax year 2012 — and that average taxpayers are paying for it. The price tag for current use has increased 8 percent per year, on average, over the past decade.

Supporters such as Rep. Alison Clarkson (D-Woodstock) call current use the most important conservation program in Vermont. More than a third of the state's land is enrolled in the program — more than 1.7 million acres of forestland and 550,000 acres of farmland.

"If it had been taxed on its market value and not its use value, we would not have the same landscape that we have today, because the economic pressures would have driven them all into subdivisions and development," says Clarkson, the lead sponsor of H.329.

But as it stands now, the penalties are so low that would-be developers can enroll in current use, enjoy the resulting tax breaks and still come out ahead when they turn around and subdivide or develop their land. In some cases the break-even point on that equation is less than a year. Critics call the practice "parking" land in current use.

Clarkson's bill proposes a tiered system of penalties. The penalties would be higher than they are now in most cases, but the system would also reward landowners with lower penalties the longer they keep their land undeveloped.

"Even people who don't like current use should be pleased about this," Clarkson says, "because it's more money coming back to taxpayers." H.329 marks the third attempt to reform the current use program in recent years. Then-governor Jim Douglas vetoed a bill in 2010 that would have increased penalties, and a second attempt subsequently stalled out for a year and a half in the Senate Finance Committee.

Indeed, plenty of Vermonters dislike current use. Some are upset that there's no income sensitivity in the program, meaning wealthy landowners who could afford to pay higher taxes benefit from generous breaks. Others complain about landowners who enjoy the tax reduction while simultaneously posting their land to prohibit hunting and recreation.

"Then we can't even use the land, which many times has been used for decades," says Mary O'Brien, a selectboard member in Hartland. "People who don't understand or respect that tradition have the money to buy huge tracts of land and use the rest of us to pay their share."

Current use was a hot topic on Town Meeting Day in Hartland last month. Every year, the town publishes an annual report with a list of property owners who are enrolled in the program; in a small town like Hartland, the list always generates a lot of interest.

Hartland lister Pat Rosson says she's concerned about the potential for fraud or abuse. When the self-described "flatlander" moved to Vermont 27 years ago, an adjoining property owner had 30 acres of farmland enrolled in current use.

"They were having it brush-hogged," says Rosson. "That's not ag to me. Miss busy-body here called the state, and they said they don't have the time to go out and check on everybody."

Bill Johnson, the director of property valuation and review at the Vermont Department of Taxes, concedes that while forestland enrolled in the program should meet a rigorous forest management plan, the ag side of current use is largely conducted in “good faith.”

“We only have three people doing this,” he says, referring to the small staff in the current-use division, “and they can’t go running around looking at millions of acres.”

Reading from her list, Hartland’s Rosson ticks off a couple of large properties receiving equally large discounts, including a \$960,200 reduction in property value assessment for Cobb Hill Cohousing.

Another property owner — VTel CEO and president Michel Guité — has 160 acres enrolled in the program; working with Cornell and the University of Vermont, he’s planting new, high-sugar-content maple saplings for a sugarbush. That lowered the taxable value of his land, which does not include any buildings, by \$707,400. His annual property tax bill comes to roughly \$530, according to a December 2011 report in the Valley News.

O’Brien, who raises sheep and chickens on 10 acres in Hartland, feels that’s deeply unfair. Her property is too small to enroll in current use, which typically requires a minimum 25 acres to join. Her property tax bill is \$9000 a year — 17 times as much as a landowner with roughly 16 times the amount of land.

“The disparity, the gap, between that \$530 and my taxes — it’s so vast of a gulf, it’s impossible to ignore anymore,” says O’Brien. “And there’s no end in sight for me. We can’t afford to buy another 15 acres of land and throw our land in current use.”

Guité says that his agricultural endeavors — which also include planting historic orchards modeled after the varieties favored by Thomas Jefferson — qualify him for the program. “I don’t know if it’s fair or not, but that’s just the way it works,” he says. “There’s nothing that is different from my property than the other, say, 1000 farms in Vermont. ... It’s only equitable that they should be treated all alike.”

All told, more than 13,000 acres in Hartland are enrolled in the program, resulting in a nearly \$41.2 million reduction in the town’s grand list and \$793,657 in tax savings for enrolled landowners.

And it’s not even at the top of the list: With 29,000 acres in current use, Fairfield earns that distinction. Cambridge and Averill are right up there, too. Meanwhile, the greatest tax savings are found, predictably, in towns with higher property values: Stowe, Pomfret and Woodstock, where participants in the program avoided, respectively, \$1.33 million, \$1.32 million and \$1.26 million in total tax payments in 2012.

“Everybody says, ‘Well, the state reimburses you,’” says Rosson, referring to a provision in the program under which the state pays towns for the difference in their municipal taxes.

Her retort? “Where does the state money come from?”

Johnson backs up Rosson’s assessment: “Everybody in the state is paying for the program, through one form of taxes or another.”

Proponents, meanwhile, argue that the tax policy has economic value that outweighs its cost. In 2007, a current-use task force estimated that the economic payback of leaving land undeveloped — looking at everything from specialty foods to tourism — was more than \$4 billion.

“People don’t get how essential it is to the economy and the working lands they value so much,” says Clarkson. In a perfect world, she said, bottles of maple syrup and other Vermont goods would come plastered with a label akin to “Made Possible by Current Use.”

Forests, Parks & Recreation Commissioner Michael Snyder is among those who rave about current use; he objects to the characterization of current-use as a “tax break” and instead terms it a tax fairness program. In his previous work as a county forester, he heard from landowners who said that were it not for current use, they couldn’t afford to retain ownership of their forestlands. While some are ideologically opposed to it — “There were many who said, ‘I’d never enroll in that welfare program,’” he recalls — many more depended upon it. Nearly half of all eligible parcels in the state are enrolled in current use.

“The pressure on people’s lands to subdivide, to convert to non-forests, is really staggering, and it’s growing,” says Snyder. “If you like how Vermont looks and functions and feels, it’s largely because we’re a forest state now.” That Vermont retains its forests, he says, is thanks in large part to current use.

Put Blodgett, the president of the board of the Vermont Woodlands Association, agrees. “If land is taxed at development value, that’s what it will become,” he says.

Current use’s biggest proponents — and there are many — argue that there are too many rumors about the program. The perception that rich, out-of-state landowners are tapping into the tax break is, they say, a misperception. Full-time Vermonters own 76 percent of the land enrolled in current use. That’s according to the Current Use Tax Coalition, a diverse team of advocates for the program representing conservationists, sportsmen, foresters and farmers.

Still, even many current-use supporters agree it’s time for some changes. Tom Vickery, who has worked as a lister and reappraiser in Stowe and Waterbury for more than 40 years, was a huge backer of the program in the 1970s. He’d seen firsthand the benefits of a tax stabilization program in Stowe that was a predecessor to current use, and Vickery was active in getting the original current-use law passed.

Years later, the state “watered down” the penalties associated with removing land from current-use — a decision that Vickery says made “a shambles” of the program. He and many other listers in the state were disappointed in the results.

“What we were seeing was people coming in to avoid taxes, not for the preservation and conservation we saw originally with the program,” he says. “We thought people were beginning to game the system.”

Now he’s holding out hope that tougher penalties might fix that problem. “I look at this as being a second generation of the current-use program,” Vickery says. “Let’s start fresh.”

Will Burlington Ever Say No to Its Burgeoning School Budget?

Local Matters

By Kevin J. Kelley

On Town Meeting Day, Williston voters rejected a school budget that would have raised property taxes by 7 percent, with the “no” vote reportedly in response to a district plan to provide every fifth and sixth grader with an iPad. Voters in Milton and Colchester also defeated school budgets, sending school leaders back to the drawing board.

In all, 16 Vermont communities voted “no” on school spending increases on March 5 — a tiny percentage of the state’s 270 districts but four times as many as turned down school budgets last year.

Burlington voters, meanwhile, approved a fiscal 2014 school budget that hikes spending by 5.3 percent and local education property taxes by an estimated 6.2 percent. That’s slightly higher than statewide averages, but in recent years Burlington’s school tax increases have outpaced rates for Vermont as a whole, as well as vastly exceeding the overall U.S. inflation rate. Local education taxes in the Queen City have soared by 40 percent since 2009, while the consumer price index nudged upward by 9 percent during the same period.

Year after year, Queen City voters approve increases to the portion of the local property tax that funds the schools. Usually, the margin isn't even close. This year's school budget ballot item was approved by 57 percent of voters, while last year's drew a "yes" vote of nearly 55 percent.

"It's remarkable that we continue to approve school budgets, especially without adequate communication from the district about what we're getting for our money," observes Kyle Dodson, a write-in candidate who fell three votes short of unseating school board chairman Keith Pillsbury on March 5. A former school principal in Boston who now works as director of the Champlain College Center for Service and Civic Engagement, Dodson warns that the current spending trajectory is "not sustainable."

"In 2013," he says, "everything involving public finances has to be looked at more prudently, more thoughtfully."

The Burlington school district's budget for the coming fiscal year is close to \$63 million — \$6 million less than the combined total expenditures of all the other city departments. The biggest chunk of school spending — 75 percent — goes to teacher salaries and benefits; health care premiums for school district employees have been rising by about 10 percent a year. Special education is also a big budget item, costing about \$13 million — although special-ed spending accounts for a smaller percentage of Burlington's school budget than it does in most other districts in Vermont.

Burlington has the highest rate of per-pupil spending in Chittenden County according to the simplest calculation: total expenditures divided by the number of full-time students being educated in the district. But Superintendent Jeanne Collins notes that after factoring in the relative costs of educating disadvantaged students and English language learners, the city's per-pupil investment is average compared to those of seven other Chittenden County school systems. This comparison, which also shows Burlington's spending to be slightly below the statewide average, is the measurement included in the district's annual report.

Burlington voters have supported the city's investment in its pupils, says Alan Matson, the school board's leading finance expert, noting the district has "maintained a solid base of political capital" in consistently winning budget approvals. "But it could erode quickly," he adds, noting the heavy tax burden is borne by a small minority of Burlington residents.

"It's not equitable, the way it's shared now," Matson says.

More than half of Burlington households are renters, and tenants generally don't connect school-tax increases to rising rents. In addition, almost a quarter of Burlington's 9371 leased residential units qualified for rent rebates last year under a state program for households with annual incomes below \$47,000 — further insulating some renters from the effects of property-tax hikes.

Among Burlington's 6980 owner-occupied homes, more than half are eligible for reductions in their school property taxes based on income qualifications. That leaves about 3000 of the city's 16,350 households absorbing the full and direct impact of school-tax increases. Owners of a home valued at \$308,500 will pay \$396 more school-taxes this year than last — for a grand total of \$4412.

In the New North End, where the home ownership rate is high, voters always say no to the school budget, even though many have children in city schools. In the renter-heavy Old North End, voters always approve school budgets, often by margins better than 3-1.

"It's inevitably going to get to the point where homeowners start leaving Burlington because they can't afford the taxes," predicts City Councilor Paul Decelles, a Republican from Ward 7, which largely encompasses the New North End. Town Meeting Day results might be different, he suggests, if landlords educated tenants about the connection between rent hikes and school tax increases.

Decelles, whose daughter is a fourth-grader at C.P. Smith Elementary School, voted against the school budget last month, partly because "it isn't fair to a lot of homeowners." He adds that his daughter is getting "a good education" from teachers whose pay rates he does not view as excessive. Starting salaries for Burlington teachers — \$38,740 for the current school year — are the third lowest in Chittenden County, after Milton and Winooski.

Decelles and other critics suggest savings could be found outside the classroom — for example, from the district's plan to provide laptops or tablet computers to middle and high school students and their teachers at a projected annual cost of \$1.1 million. Starting in sixth grade, every Burlington pupil is scheduled to get a computer over the next three or four years, regardless of his or her ability to pay.

Could Burlington ever see a school-tax revolt?

It would not be unprecedented. In 2002, Queen City voters spurned school spending plans on three separate occasions, with the budget finally prevailing on a fourth vote. The main cause for resistance was disgruntlement over state school-funding formulas that were subsequently adjusted to ensure more equity for Burlington, Pillsbury notes. The unpopularity of then-superintendent Donna Jemilo also played a part in the repeated budget defeats, Pillsbury adds.

Today, there is no organized opposition to Burlington school tax increases, regardless of their size. That's mystifying to Ben Truman, a school board member for Ward 4 and longtime Democrat. "I can't explain it," Truman says, noting the city's penchant for activism and civic engagement. "Burlingtonians aren't generally shy about sharing their political opinions."

Truman himself says he has "no stomach for another large tax increase next year." The father of two Burlington-educated children says, "We've got to hold the line."

Greg Roy, a New North End homeowner who often speaks out against school spending proposals at neighborhood meetings, suggests, "It's taboo in Burlington to oppose the school budget." Proponents of higher spending routinely argue, "It's for the kids," Roy says.

"They make opponents appear anti-child," he adds. "And there's also a feeling that the school district will always get what it wants eventually. They'll just wear you down."

Reluctance to speak out against school budgets may also stem from fears related to recent controversies involving race relations among students and teachers. Potential critics may worry that they will be accused of racism if they oppose school spending in a district with minority enrollment of 30 percent.

The wording of the annual referenda on school budgets also does not inform Burlington voters how much their taxes will increase if of "yes" side prevails. The ballot item simply asks whether a listed dollar amount of spending should be approved.

School officials say the budget increases are not profligate and are caused in part by the need to compensate for drops in federal, state and city funds. The district is facing another \$265,000 reduction from the federal cuts known as sequestration, Pillsbury notes. Even Burlington Telecom is driving up school costs. The district will pay \$723,065 in interest in the coming fiscal year on \$2.3 million in debt service for bonds for capital improvements. That's \$120,156 more in interest payments than a year ago, due in part to the downgrade in the city's credit rating caused by the BT bust-up.

But school officials say some of the biggest drivers of spending increases are costs associated with Burlington's high number of low-income students and non-native English speakers, along with an overall increase in the number of students.

Unlike almost every other school district in Vermont, Burlington has been experiencing an upsurge in student enrollment. It's risen 9.3 percent in the past decade, while statewide enrollment has fallen 11.3 percent. That's partially attributable to an influx of immigrants; about 14 percent of the city's 3632 pupils take part in English language learning programs, compared to fewer than 2 percent in the state as a whole. Moreover, half of Burlington students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, compared to 40 percent of students statewide.

The challenges presented by a high poverty rate and a sizable number of non-English speakers help explain the Burlington district's lagging performance in school test scores. Last year, 31 percent of students in grades three through eight were rated less than proficient as readers, while 40 percent were given the same rating for math. The respective numbers for the state as a whole were 27 percent and 34 percent.

Superintendent Collins defends the schools' record on educating disadvantaged students and those from non-English speaking countries. "The results for students who have been in our schools for two or three years — as opposed to having just enrolled — have been excellent," Collins says. She argues the computer giveaway is essential to prepare Burlington's diverse student population for the 21st century workplace.

But Collins agrees with Matson that school-tax increases are not shared equally in Burlington. She blames the state for failing to fund education at levels promised several years ago when tax formulas were changed in order to ensure that students in poorer communities would have the same educational opportunities as those in wealthy "gold towns."

"I don't think the burden should be on local taxpayers because Burlington opens its doors to embrace those in need," Collins says.

Pillsbury says the district is lobbying for increased funding from the state to help Burlington pay the additional costs of educating English language learners, the annual cost of which schools budget specialist David Larcombe puts at \$2.4 million for the coming fiscal year — \$200,000 more than for the current year. Pillsbury says the city's school board can also save by consolidating services.

The school board itself has failed to act as an effective watchdog in recent years, admits Pillsbury, a 66-year-old retired teacher who was first elected to the board in 1987. He says the district's previous finance chief "didn't have the skills to do the job, or he didn't provide us with what we needed to know about how the money was being spent." The situation has improved with the hiring of Larcombe as the district's budget specialist last October. The new number cruncher is getting updated finance software, too, Pillsbury adds.

Inadequate oversight on the part of the all-volunteer school board may reflect a general lack of interest in the schools on the part of Burlington residents. Elections for school board seats are seldom contested, and participation is often below 20 percent of eligible voters.

"The number of people paying attention to the schools is small," Dodson says. "There's no sense of this being an urgent issue — as urgent as health care. It's also the case that the district doesn't tell a very compelling story about what it's doing for our kids."

CHICAGO TRIBUNE:

Vermont's biggest city shows how it's done

April 02, 2013 | Josh Noel

BURLINGTON, Vt. — There was a McDonald's downtown in Vermont's largest city for years, but then Vermont's largest city decided it didn't want McDonald's anymore. So the McDonald's closed.

A McDonald's closing. Who's ever heard of such a thing?

In Vermont's largest city, these things happen.

Not only did the McDonald's on Bank Street disappear, it was replaced by The Farm House Tap & Grill, a casually comfortable spot that has the town abuzz with its commitment to sourcing its meat, vegetables and cheese from more than two dozen nearby farms. And there, in one building, you have Burlington, where a McDonald's doesn't last, farm-to-table dining and taps pouring local craft beer soar. Burlington likes it that way.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Miller, Elizabeth
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 12:30 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Porter, James
Subject: RE: Unserved addresses in Dummerston, Putney and Westminster

Thanks very much!

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 11:40 AM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Porter, James
Subject: FW: Unserved addresses in Dummerston, Putney and Westminster

Liz – I am forwarding you the entire spreadsheet that Corey prepared. You will see that the second tab has the address level data that you requested.

Under the summary tab (embedded below, too) there is the quick data for each of the three towns in Mrowicki's district. There's a total of 127 that will be affected directly by the VTel/VTA situation and another 98 that might be unserved due to some ambiguous info that we are trying to clarify. The 98 have to do with the "581" that my predecessor estimated to be served by VTel outside of any funded project, which I described in an earlier email.

There's also some statewide data included in this spreadsheet. Again, we need to confirm the "581" and the "likely served", both of which could significantly lower the #. And the VTA is putting out their RFP asap that will deal with the 398.

I think that I also mentioned this in a previous email, but I have pulled the VTA, Public Service and Stone together to get on the same page w/ all locations.

For Friday's meeting, I think that we have what we need. I can format this down further so they have just the Putney/Dummerston/Westminster information. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Kiersten

From: Chase, Corey
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 10:55 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Porter, James; Recchia, Chris
Subject: Unserved addresses in Dummerston, Putney and Westminster

Kiersten,

On March 28 Stone produced a reconciliation of the list of addresses that have been identified as unserved through the Broadband Mapping Initiative and the list that further analysis by the VTA has indicated may be served. As part of that analysis, Stone identified addresses that would remain unserved, but for the VTA-funded VTel projects for which funding has been withdrawn. The analysis also identified otherwise unserved addresses that are outside the ARRA-funded service territory of VTel, but which VTel has previously projected would nevertheless likely be covered. At your request,

I pulled out the addresses identified by this reconciliation in Putney, Westminster and Dummerston. The table below relates a summary of this analysis. The addresses are in the attached excel file.

	Putney	Westminster	Dummerston	Subtotal	Statewide
Unserved	8	4		12	121
Likely served		4		4	105
Likely Off-Grid		2		2	67
VTel VTA	18	84	25	127	398
VTel Projected	74	11	13	98	581
Totals	100	105	38	243	1272

Corey Chase
 Telecommunications Infrastructure Specialist
 Vermont Department of Public Service
 112 State Street
 Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2601
 Voice: (802)-828-1257
 Fax: (802)-828-2342
corey.chase@state.vt.us

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, April 01, 2013 7:17 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Miller, Lawrence; Spaulding, Jeb; Porter, James
Subject: Re: VTel and VTA

In speaking w/Pam today, we will likely look at providers for next RFP.

Re: testimony on H. 415: we're coordinating on that tomorrow as well. I was planning on talking about all of the good work that's happened to date, some general #s that give the committee an idea of what/where service is needed, the quick decision on the part of the VTA to re-publish (?) the RFP w new funds and the fact that we'll delve into post 2013 activities soon.

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 1, 2013, at 7:07 PM, "Miller, Elizabeth" <Elizabeth.Miller@state.vt.us> wrote:

Thanks for the below, Kiersten. Appreciate any update you get tomorrow afternoon. I would be concerned if VTA wished to redeploy for its own assets, given the need to think critically and thoughtfully about its ongoing mission, and the fact of VTA asset ownership already complicates that picture. Sounds like that has not yet been seriously considered - as you point out, it would likely not be the quickest path for deployment regardless. Speed is of the essence here.

Also, do you think you could let us know what Chris and Pam plan to say re: VTA placeholder bill in H. Comm. too when you speak with them again? I see that it is on the list for Wednesday - Sam Young, as board member, mentioned VTA's retreat process and outcome at a lunch we had last week. I am not sure we yet have any way to test what the Board came up with or determine a good course forward; maybe H. Comm. will seek to put a plan in place to do that that is level and takes into consideration those in the provider community and elsewhere that have thought about this challenge...The Chair labeled it as a second-half of session priority for his committee..Liz

Elizabeth H. Miller
802-522-3090, cell
elizabeth.miller@state.vt.us

On Apr 1, 2013, at 3:59 PM, "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us> wrote:

Turns out that the RFP (per Title 30, Chap. 91) must include options for both providers and consumers as long as they serve a target community and if a provider, meets the speed requirements. We are revisiting this tomorrow afternoon. Today's discussion was largely spent talking about VTel and next steps.

Re: VTel discussion - they want to meet with VTA to discuss the mobile grant (\$5million), which I completely agree with and think that after Friday's events, both parties need to be on the same page and engage in better communication moving forward.

Thx - KB

From: Miller, Lawrence
Sent: Monday, April 01, 2013 9:48 AM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James
Subject: RE: VTel and VTA

I wouldn't necessarily be opposed to a citizen coordinated project that had a matching component AND a contract with a provider for execution. (ex: Wilner et al.)

--
Lawrence Miller, Secretary
Agency of Commerce and Community Development
State of Vermont
National Life Building, 6th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
(802) 828-5204 office
(802) 371-9075 cell
lawrence.miller@state.vt.us

The mission of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development is to help Vermonters improve their quality of life and build strong communities.

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, April 01, 2013 9:07 AM
To: Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: VTel and VTA

Good morning,

Later this week, the VTA Board will likely decide how to redeploy the 2011 Backroad Broadband funds that have been made available due to last week's decision re: VTA.

Based on a quick conversation that I had on Friday, there are three ways that these funds can be redistributed: opening up a grant round for providers; offering a grant round for consumers/customers directly and allowing the VTA to use the \$ to improve VTA-owned assets.

Unless you disagree, I'd like to propose that the \$ go back out to solicit interest from providers. Personally, I don't like the idea of offering the \$ directly to citizens, generally, and oversight of awards would be a huge challenge. And re: using it for VTA assets - that isn't going to get us to our 2013 goal.

Everyone okay with that?

Thanks. Specific unserved #s will be coming your way shortly.

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Monday, April 01, 2013 6:46 PM
To: Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: Putney/Dummerston/Westminster

Hi Liz -

We are working to get specific addresses, but here's a snapshot of what the loss of VTel \$ means for the three towns above:

For the 2011 award: 59 from Westminster will be unserved For the 2012 award: 18 from Putney, 25 from Dummerston and 25 from Westminster will be affected.

For the ones that will be covered by VTel that are not in either of these (ones that VTel said that they'd likely serve outside of VTA and presumably WOW \$): 13 in Dummerston, 74 in Putney and 36 in Westminster.

In this bucket, there are 581 total that fall into this category - which I'd like to reconcile with VTel. Apparently, this number was discussed last summer, and I'd like to confirm which have been served. This could reduce the number below by about 1/2 if all will be served...

So, totals:
Dummerston: 38
Putney: 92
Westminster: 120
Total: 250

We will have the address level data to you either by cob tomorrow or first thing Wednesday

Sent from my iPad

Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2013 12:32 PM
To: Lambert, Molly - RD, Montpelier, VT
Cc: Shippee, Rhonda - RD, Montpelier, VT; OHara, Rob - RD, Amherst, MA; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence
Subject: RE: VT Telecommunications Grant to VTel??

Hi Molly,

Yes, earlier today, the VTA Board voted to rescind/terminate two awards that were made to VTel. One of the awards was made in 2011 (from the Backroads Broadband program) and the other in 2012 (I think that this was called the 2012 Broadband Program). After a great deal of back and forth between the parties, they both realized that they couldn't reach agreement. The 2011 award will be put back into an existing NOFA and we have some options with the 2012 funding; there are three different routes we can take.

Michel was very clear in stating that this will NOT affect the WOW project and in fact, that project is moving along nicely.

Please let me know if you have any more questions.

Thanks – Kiersten

From: Lambert, Molly - RD, Montpelier, VT [mailto:molly.lambert@vt.usda.gov]
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2013 12:10 PM
To: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Cc: Shippee, Rhonda - RD, Montpelier, VT; OHara, Rob - RD, Amherst, MA
Subject: VT Telecommunications Grant to VTel??

Hi Kiersten,

I just caught the last few sentences on a VTA (I think) grant being pulled back from VTel because of performance issues. Could you fill in the blanks for us. Thanks, dear Kiersten.

Molly

Molly Lambert
State Director VT/NH, Rural Development
United States Department of Agriculture
87 State Street, Suite 324
P. O. Box 249
Montpelier, VT 05601
802-828-6080 | Fax: 802-828-6018
molly.lambert@vt.usda.gov

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**The USDA Rural Development Vermont-New Hampshire State Office and Montpelier Area Office have moved. New address, effective April 1st:
Federal Building/Post Office, 87 State Street, Montpelier, VT. The new mailing address will be P. O. Box 249, Montpelier, VT 05601.
Berlin, Brattleboro, Concord, Conway, and St. Johnsbury Offices - No Change**

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Miller, Lawrence

From: Bourgeois, Kiersten
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2013 10:43 AM
To: Allen, Susan; Spaulding, Jeb; Miller, Lawrence; Miller, Elizabeth
Cc: Porter, James
Subject: Fwd: Today's Media Release

VTA release

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Thompson, Caro" <CThompson@telecomvt.org>
Date: March 29, 2013, 10:12:16 AM EDT
To: "Bourgeois, Kiersten" <Kiersten.Bourgeois@state.vt.us>, "Joe Benning (jbenning@leg.state.vt.us)" <jbenning@leg.state.vt.us>, Louise McCarren <louisemccarren@gmavt.net>, Pam Mackenzie <pmackenzie221@comcast.net>, "Meyer, Peter" <PMeyer@telecomvt.org>, "Sam Young Business (samyoung@thinkorsink.net)" <samyoung@thinkorsink.net>, Stephan Morse <Stephan@sover.net>, "Wisloski, Stephen" <Stephen.Wisloski@state.vt.us>, Trevor Crist <tcrist@inntopia.com>
Subject: Today's Media Release

Media Release

March 29, 2013

Contact: Christopher Campbell, Executive Director
Vermont Telecommunications Authority
802-828-1799

Broadband Grant Areas Added to Current Funding Round

Montpelier, VT – The Vermont Telecommunication Authority (VTA) has created additional broadband Target Grant Areas (TGAs) to be included in their current Notice of Grant Funding. The as yet unserved addresses are being added because two previous grant awards to VTel Wireless have been terminated. All funds awarded are still available to the VTA to fund new solutions to expand broadband.

The VTA is moving forward immediately to communicate with service providers about this opportunity. The funding cycle is ongoing and has a rolling monthly deadline. One cycle has been completed and applications for the next round are due April 15. The TGAs are posted on the Funding section of the telecomvt.org website.

When the initial grant award was made to VTel Wireless in 2011, data available about current broadband service was not at the address level. Therefore, target areas were based on census blocks, which included both served and unserved addresses. For more recent grant awards, the VTA has been able to analyze service at the address level, creating a detailed understanding of the need for broadband expansion in communities.

Two awards to VTel were made by the VTA, in 2011 and 2012. Although the first contract was due to be completed November 30, 2012, that autumn VTel requested an extension of the

project delivery date and other changes as well. After extensive negotiations, VTel Wireless and the VTA were unable to reach agreement. Through that process, the VTA determined it was time to examine other solutions to bring broadband to unserved addresses included in both the 2011 and 2012 grant awards.

A varying number of addresses in each of the following communities have been added to the current funding round: Arlington, Bennington, Braintree, Brattleboro, Chittenden, Corinth, Danville, Dover, Dummerston, Lyndon, Newfane, Pittsford, Pownal, Putney, Randolph, Shaftsbury, St. Johnsbury, Stratton, Wardsboro, Westminster, Whitingham and Wilmington.

The VTA is committed to finding solutions for providing broadband to Vermonters statewide and looks forward to working with service providers who apply for awards. Bottom of Form

Vermont Telecommunications Authority
100 State Street, Suite 342
Montpelier, VT 05620