

Town
of
Bennington, Vermont
ANNUAL REPORT
2004



1749 — 2004

The Annual Report for the Town of Bennington does not include the Annual Report for the Bennington School District, an incorporated school district. It also does not include the Villages of Old Bennington and North Bennington. Each of these governing bodies publishes a separate Annual Report.

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IN MEMORIAM

This year we fondly remember the following individuals who served the Town of Bennington with distinction and dedication. They will not be forgotten.



Virginio "Max" Perrotta
1915 - 2004

Zoning Board of Adjustment (1970 - 1972)
Select Board (1972 - 1974)
VT State House of Representatives (1979 - 1981)



Gerald P. Morrissey
1946 - 2005

Select Board (1974 - 1978)
(Served as Chair in his last term)
Bennington School District Board (1983 - 1986)
VT State House of Representatives (1995 - 1998)
VT State Senate (1999 - 2003)

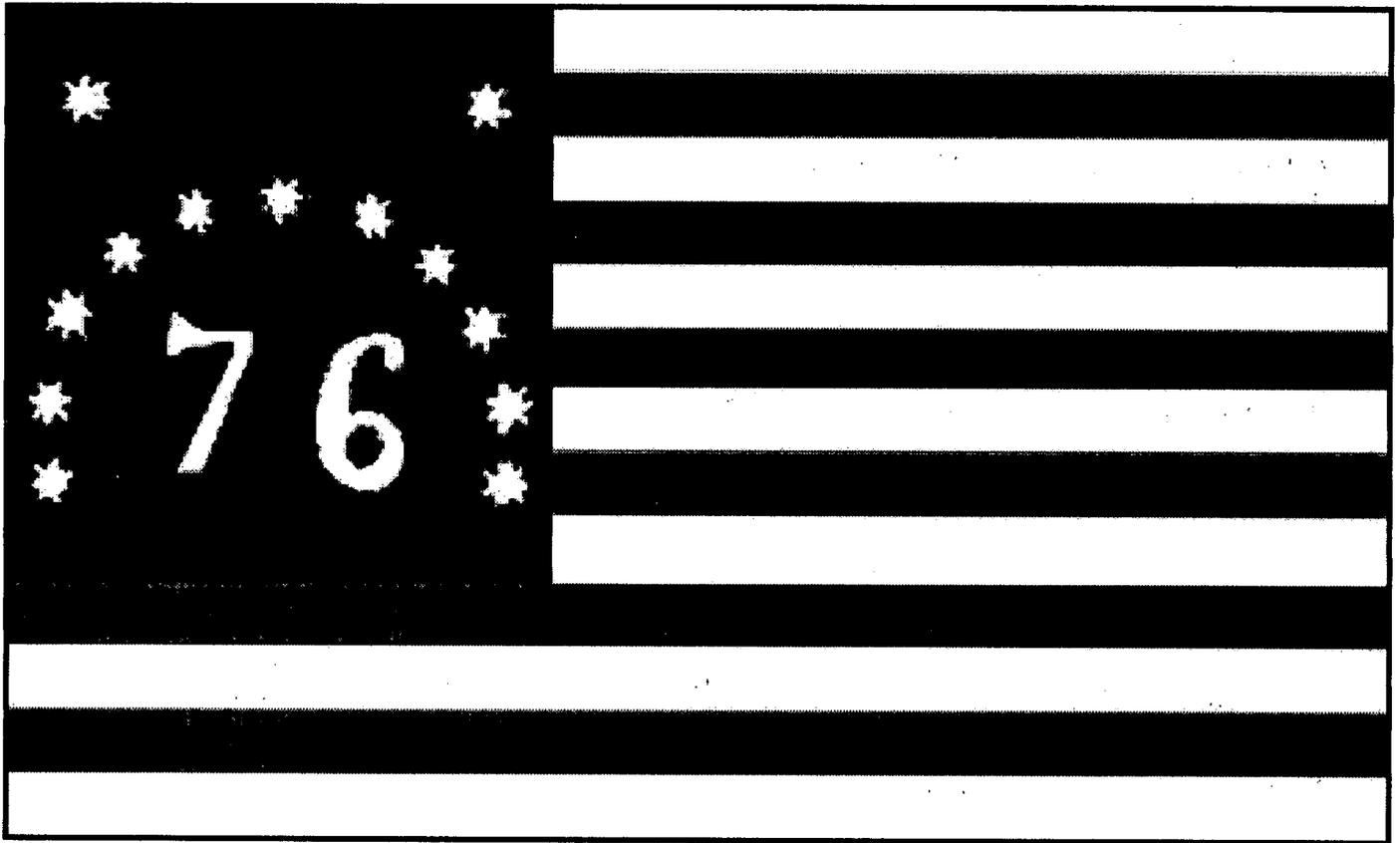


Ronal P. Hall
1942 - 2004

Served on the Bennington Planning Commission (1992 - 1998)
Served on the Bennington Select Board (1998 - 2004)

-Photographs courtesy of the Bennington Banner-

Dedication



This year, in addition to those individuals memorialized herein, we proudly dedicate the 2004 Annual Town Report to the members of the Armed Services and the National Guard now serving throughout the world.

Our thoughts, prayers, and best wishes are sent to you all.

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

FIRE DEPARTMENTS (VOLUNTEER)

Emergency - Bennington: Jeff Gauthier, Chief..... 9-1-1
Emergency - Rural Fire: Kevin Goodhue, Chief..... 9-1-1

POLICE DEPARTMENT, 118 South Street, P.O. Box 1563

Police Chief: Richard Gauthier

Animal Control..... 442-1048
Emergency..... 9-1-1
Information..... 442-1030

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, P.O. Box 469

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Highway Superintendent, Patrick Kinney..... 442-1037
Water Resources Superintendent, Terrance A. Morse..... 442-1037

RECREATION CENTER, 655 Gage Street, P.O. Box 469

Recreation Director: Tracy Knights

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday

9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Sunday

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Center..... 442-1053
Stark Street Playground..... 442-6286

RESCUE SQUAD..... 9-1-1

SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTER, P.O. Box 469, 124 Pleasant Street..... 442-1052

Senior Center Director: Susan Hoag

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

TOWN OFFICE, 205 South Street, P.O. Box 469

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Town Office Building Switchboard..... 442-1037

Town Manager, Stuart Hurd

Economic & Community Development Director, William Colvin

Human Resources & Contracts Administrator, Michele Johnson

Town Accountant, David Essaff

Permitting, Planning & Code Enforcement.... 442-1040

Building Inspector, Kevin Goodhue

Facilities Manager, Larry McLeod

Permitting, Planning & Code Enforcement Director, Dan Monks

Treasurer, William Burfeind..... 442-1041

Assessors Office, Richard Dorsett, Jr..... 442-1042

Town Clerk, Timothy Corcoran..... 442-1043

Director of Collections, Joan Pinsonneault..... 442-1046

TRANSFER STATION SCALE HOUSE, Houghton Lane..... 447-8737

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

MISSION STATEMENT PREAMBLE

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

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

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

SELECT BOARD

Again, we have come to the end of another busy year. We finally opened the first leg of the Bennington Bypass, the Hampton Inn project has been started, The Vermont Country Store is locating its call center at 210 South St. and Vermont Composites is expanding its production space and reusing existing manufacturing space.

The Select Board set a list of priorities to include the pathway project, ice rink and highway garage. We will start working on a Capital Plan during the spring and summer months. We have a woodlot management in place and are realizing some revenues from the sale of timber. Some of these funds are to be set aside for start-up cost for the skate park, once it is presented to the Board.

Again we have worked hard on the budget for next year keeping projected increases to a minimum and within the rate of inflation. We reallocated some of the funds to more paving projects. The Board felt that it was in the interest of safety for our citizens to fund two new dispatcher positions at the Police Department.

We are coming to the end of the revision of our Zoning Bylaw. Many thanks to the Planning Commission and my fellow Board members for the hours spent in putting forth a good bylaw to allow for growth, but not losing sight of what Bennington is all about.

We continue to make progress here in Bennington. With the opening of the Bypass, there will be new interest in the Town from outside Bennington and we hope to see growth continue and jobs increase. The Board will continue to work toward making Bennington a better place to live and truly become the gateway to Vermont.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharyn L. Brush, Chair

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The following list of the Town of Bennington Boards and Commissions includes a brief description of the duties of each office and those positions that will be available in March and May, 2005.

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

(elected 3 year term)

Lodie Colvin	3/05
James A. Gulley, Sr.	3/05
Scott Creedy	3/06
Michael L. Lochner	3/06
Sharyn L. Brush	3/07
Joseph L. Krawczyk, Jr.	3/07
Christopher H. Oldham	3/07

BENNINGTON FREE-LIBRARY MEMBER FROM TOWN OF BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD

(appointed to 1 year term)

Christopher H. Oldham	05/05
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CONSTABLES - An appointed position paid hourly for a term of one year, which requires an oath and bonding by the Select Board. The constables may act as law enforcement officers or serve civil process.

(appointed to 1 year term)

1ST Peter Lanfair	3/05
2ND Lawrence W. Walsh	3/05

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

(appointed to 3 year term)

Ron Alderman	5/05
Janet G. Thompson	5/05
Michael C. vonOuhl	5/05
Michael E. Brady	5/06
Charles W. Copp	5/06
Barry Horst	5/06
William Barney	5/07
Robert C. Burgess	5/07
Randy G. Maxon	5/07

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD - *continued...*

Alternates

Albert T. Ray	5/05
Andrew M. Anderson II	5/06
Richard Owens	5/07

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of five years. The Downtown Improvement Commission is charged with administering the taxes generated by the Downtown Taxing District, and acts as a liaison between those groups advocating for Downtown and the Select Board.

(appointed to 5 year term)

Ryan Hassett	3/05
POSITION OPEN	3/06
Mark Vaughan	3/07
Richard Haviak	3/08
David J. Newell	3/09

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

(appointed to 5 year term)

VERMONT TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN - Walter A. Clark, Jr.	06/30/09
VERMONT DEPUTY TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN - Roger Hughs	06/30/09

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

(appointed to 3 year term)

HEALTH OFFICER - Larry D. McLeod	06/31/07
DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER - Kevin J. Goodhue	07/31/07

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of three years and requires expertise or qualifications in the fields of architecture, historic preservation, etc. Meetings are held twice per month.

The Historic Preservation Commission is empowered by ordinance to act in the preservation and identification of Bennington's historic sites and structures; oversee the survey and review of historic sites eligible for the National Register, educate and advise other boards and commissions as well as the general public with regard to historic preservation matters.

(appointed to 3 year term)

David B. Aldrich	3/07
Anne G. Bugbee	3/07
Tordis Isselhardt	3/05
Sharon L. Yorke	3/05
Margaret B. Campbell	3/06
John J. Dostal	3/06

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

(appointed to 5 year term)

Scott A. McLaughlin	3/05
Nancy Elaine Shay	3/06
Kim M. Livingston	3/07
Sandra Sharpe	3/08
Judith Adams	3/09

Bennington
New York

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

(elected 2 year term)

Robin Andrew	1/31/07
John F. Behan	1/31/07
Hope Colvin-Owens	1/31/07
Linda Corcoran	1/31/07
Leonard Farrington	1/31/07
Michele Hogan	1/31/07
Ronald Knapp	1/31/07
Albert Krawczyk	1/31/07
Mary Madkour	1/31/07
Anne Mook	1/31/07
Mary Morrissey	1/31/07
David S. Jareckie	1/31/07
D. Justine Scanlon	1/31/07
James H. Marsden	1/31/07
Freida Sears	1/31/07

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

(appointed to 2 year term)

Donna Poulen	3/05
Henry J. Edwards	3/05
Leonard G. Morse	Life-Time Ex-Officio
Shirley Archibald	3/06
Sam Carrara	3/06
Lawrence Powers	3/06

TOWN MODERATOR

(elected to 3 year term)

James H. Colvin	3/06
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PLANNING COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of four years. Meetings will be established when the Commission meets. This is a five member board. The Planning Commission drafts, revises, updates and upholds the provisions of the Town Plan; makes recommendations to the Select Board regarding amendments to the Zoning Bylaw, sign ordinance, and subdivision regulations; actively participates in the preservation of historic sites and agricultural lands; and is charged with the overall planning of Bennington.

(appointed to a 4 year term)

Charles W. Copp	5/05
Michael P. McDonough	5/05
Robert C. Burgess	5/06
Sharon L. Yorke	5/07
Barry Horst	5/08

REGIONAL COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of two years.

The Regional Commission, part of a county-wide planning commission charged with development of the overall regional planning policies, is empowered to develop budgets, employ staff and assist in development of a regional plan.

(appointed to 2 year term)

Robert C. Burgess	3/05
Jeannie Jenkins	3/06

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

(appointed to 1 year term)

Kendy Skidmore	3/05
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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Last year at this time, the community was beginning discussions about the relative worth of "big box" developments. As 2004 closed, the Select Board was considering amendments to the Zoning Bylaw which will regulate the maximum size of these retail uses and require an impact study for such uses in excess of 30,000 square feet in size.

The Town's financial health improved again this year. The recently completed and accepted Audit, included in this report, highlights the growth in net assets and provides a comparison with last year, part of the required GASB rules.

We sold our first waters from Morgan Spring this year. Although it took a lot longer than expected to develop the infrastructure to fill tanker trucks from Vermont Pure, we have finally completed the task and are ready to move forward. The money from these sales is to be placed in reserve to help offset borrowing costs associated with the new water treatment facility upgrade. The Select Board set priorities this year placing in order the following: the pedestrian pathway/bike path to North Bennington (the FY06 budget contains monies for the first phase to Molly Stark school from the Station), the ice rink/multi-purpose facility, and the consolidation of the Town's highway department garages. There are a host of other projects receiving mention: a wireless hot spot within the downtown, a youth center, improved marketing of our tourist assets such as the covered bridges and the "park" spaces nearby, increased downtown parking, and improved sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities. Some of these lesser priorities are also being addressed in the next year. It surely is an exciting time for the community.

The development of 210 South Street and the decision by Vermont Country Store to open a call center there was the top economic development news this year. Vermont Composites purchase of the former Bijur building with expansion plans there also ranked high. Other developments continue to move towards completion such as the Hampton Inn, the State Offices at 324 Main Street, the Micro-Tech Center in North Bennington, Tractor Supply and other smaller retail and offices uses. In the coming year, we will hear about proposals for the former middle school, including perhaps a youth center, the former Tuttle lot between North and Depot Streets, a new home for the Car Show, perhaps, and several other developments now under consideration.

The Select Board has taken a "can do" approach to a host of ideas. The community is responding. The coming year holds plenty of promise if we all continue to work together for the best for Bennington.

I believe I speak for the Town's employees in wishing you all the best for the coming year. We are here to serve you in the most professional and cost-efficient manner we can. Please enjoy the Annual Report. It contains a wealth of information about your community. If you have any questions at all, please contact me at the Town Manager's Office, PO Box 469, Bennington, Vermont, 05201, or give me a call at 802-442-1037.

Respectfully submitted,
Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager

BENNINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Activity

As usual, the year 2004 was a busy one for the Bennington Police Department. We responded to 7924 incidents or calls for service. A complete breakdown of our activity would be impossible in the space allotted here, but some of the offenses for which an arrest was made or a citation issued are noted below:

Assault (all forms)	114
Disorderly Conduct	50
Violation of Abuse Prevention Order	36
Larceny/Theft/Checks	138
Sex Offenses	25
Vandalism	33
Violation of Conditions of Release	230
Drug Offenses	101
DUI/DUI Refusal	133
DLS	24
Minors Possessing Alcohol	117
Furnishing Alcohol to Minors	29
Other Motor Vehicle Operation Offenses	35

In addition, the Department investigated 545 motor vehicle accidents that resulted in property damage or personal injury.

Personnel/Training

Deputy Chief Steven Brookman retired with 33 years of service; Detective Sergeant Paul Doucette was promoted to Lieutenant; Corporal David Rowland was promoted to Sergeant and assigned to the Bureau of Criminal Investigation; and Officer Gary Towne was promoted to Corporal. Bill DiNunzio rejoined the department after a brief stint with the Wilmington Police Department. Robert Zink and Sam Morris joined us as part time officers.

Iola Jarvis retired from her Administrative Assistant position after almost 30 years of service. Nicole Woodward, our Records Clerk, assumed her position and Heather Harrison became the Records Clerk.

The K-9 Program has been off to a good start. Officer Emily McGann was named the K-9 officer, and the dog, Cory, successfully completed the first phase of his training in drug detection.

Officers received enhanced training in specialty areas such as drug investigations, child abuse investigations, police patrol supervision, and use of special weapons. Officers from the department also served as instructors and training assistants at the Vermont Police Academy.

The School Resource Officer Program is now in its third year, and continues at both the middle school and the high school.

Members of this agency also gave of their free time by volunteering for such projects as the Special Olympic/Law Enforcement Torch Run, Child Safety Fingerprinting Program, the Gunlock Giveaway Program, the Women's Firearms Training Program, the Civilian Academy, and other events, as well

as sitting on the boards of various non-profit agencies around the area.

As always, if anyone has any questions or comments, please feel free to call me at 442-1030.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard B. Gauthier, Chief of Police

BENNINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

This year the department responded to 193 calls for service. They break down as follows:

Structure Fires / 14
Vehicle Fires / 10
Motor Vehicle Accidents / 9
Good Intent / 12
False Alarms / 11
Smoke Detector Activated / 7
Furnace Malfunction / 7
Medical Assist / 10
Police Assist / 4
Alarm Activations / 53
Mutual Aid / 8
Co Detector Activated / 6
Propane leak / 5
Spills / 2
Chimney Fires / 3
Landing Zone Set Up / 2
Pole Fires / 4
Water Leaks / 1
Fuel Leaks / 8
Electrical Fire / 8
Open Fire (no permit) / 5
Ventilation / 1
Haz-Mat De-Con / 2

I would like to thank all the members of the department for their response to all of these calls throughout the year. You have once again shown the citizens of Bennington that they have a Fire Department that they can be proud of.

The department continued to move forward in a positive direction. Over the course of Fall 2003 and early 2004, our truck committee worked hard to spec out two new engines to replace engine 934 and 935. The department took delivery of these new apparatus in mid summer. These units were designed to be very similar with engine 936, with top mount pump panels and similar controls, which will increase our over all efficiency at calls.

This year the department purchased a 2004 GMC pickup truck with money we received through a Homeland Security Grant. This truck will be used for Haz-Mat support situations and also will respond with our Haz-Mat De-Con trailer. We also received monies for supplies and equipment to help us train for Haz-Mat incidents.

The department has continued its efforts in fire prevention, and over the last three years this program has continued to grow and improve. This is the third year that the fire prevention team has worked in collaboration which has increased the number of children and adults we serve. This includes, the handicapped, independent living and those in home schooling. I am proud of the fact that the fire prevention team received its first ever public recognition award from the Bennington County Child Care Association. I would like to say a special thank you to Bonnie Wilkins for taking the lead position as fire prevention officer. It is her dedication to the department that has made this program so successful. Since 2001, we have gone from a count of 707 children and 158 adults to our ending the year 2004 with 1733 children and 769 adults. Thanks to community donations this program continues to be successful. Our goal for 2005 is to increase the number of members on the team and update our programs.

This year we hosted the 39th Battle Day Parade and again it was a great success. This event is something that the people of Bennington look forward to each year. I look forward to 2005 when we will host the VT. State Firefighters Convention in conjunction with Battle Day weekend. A special thanks to our Battle Day committee for all the hours of hard work.

This year we formed a committee to rewrite our bylaws under which our department operates. This is a long and tedious job, and I thank the members who took on this responsibility and made all the proper changes, updates and additions. One of the most important additions will be lowering the age limit of entry into the department to 18 years of age. This major change will allow us to seek out new members. It will also allow us to begin a junior fire fighter program which should benefit our department in years to come.

Respectfully submitted,
Philip J Frasier, Chief.

PUBLIC WORKS Highway Division

In the spring, the State finished the paving project on Route 9 Main Street, and coincident with that project, the Town replaced 2,200 feet of curb and sidewalk from Valentine Street to Bradford Street on the north side.

Paving

Private contractors hired by the Town completed paving on County Street, North Branch Street, Benmont Avenue, and Depot Street.

Highway Department employees completed paving on Park Street, Union Street, Weeks Street, Bradford Street, Norton Street, Whipstock Road, Cardinal Lane, Willowbrook Drive, Shepard Street, Niles Road, Morse Road, and Rice Lane.

The County Street project included a new waterline, sewer manholes, and storm water drop inlets and piping.

The milled material from Main Street, Route 9 and Old Bennington along with Route 7 North & South Street was used on 3 miles of our back roads; 1 mile on Orebed Road, ½ mile on Murphy Road, 1 mile on Vail Road, ½ mile on Whipstock and Walloomsac Road. A chip seal was added to complete these roads.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN'S FUNDS

This section summarizes the significant changes in the Town's governmental and business-type funds. As noted earlier, the governmental funds account for current activities only. Therefore, this section does not discuss the long-term financial health of the Town's governmental funds. In addition, because the governmental fund statements are presented in basically the same format as in the prior year, the numbers from the prior year audit can be used for comparison purposes.

The overall financial condition of the Town has improved for the second year in a row. The general governmental activities fund reflected a fund balance deficit of \$17,884 at the end of 2001. With the year ended June 30, 2004 closing with a positive fund balance of \$1,701,175, it is apparent that the Town has made some very positive movement to gain financial stability.

A department by department analysis in the General Fund indicates that the Town did very well in managing expenditures throughout all funds. Several exceptions should be noted:

- 1) Police Department salaries expenditures including overtime continue to be problematic. Short staffing and overtime management continue to lead to over expenditures in the overtime category. In the 2004 fiscal year, this resulted in a \$40,490 deficit in that category. Although some overtime cost is reimbursed through various grants, it still highlights a continuing problem. The Town and its union representing the police and public works employees agreed to changes in the Working Agreement which may help the Town better manage overtime costs in the Police Department. Health care costs and the cost of other insurances also contributed to a departmental deficit this year.
- 2) Several unanticipated repair projects were done this year. Roof repairs at the Police Station and the Recreation Center, costing a combined \$38,200, and repairs to the footbridge and a culvert/bridge on Prospect Street, costing a combined \$65,000, were undertaken and completed, although not included in the original, budgeted repair projects. In all cases, the Select Board was advised of and approved the projects before construction.

The winter of 2003-2004 was again difficult for the Highway Fund. Salaries, overtime and equipment supply costs were all overspent. Associated expenses relating to equipment operation and maintenance continued to be difficult to control. However, at year end, the Highway Fund ended with a positive balance, due in part to a payment from the Mt. Anthony Union High School for a sidewalk scheduled for construction in the next fiscal year.

The Enterprise Funds, especially, the Water and Sewer Funds, continued to show improvement. In the Water Fund, revenues were down due in part to the continuing, mandated switch to meters for all public buildings. This policy, established by the Select Board (Water Board), requires all these buildings to be metered by June 30, 2004. Some customers have failed to meet this deadline, and Town staff are working with them to meet this requirement as soon as possible. The Town completed necessary improvements to the Morgan Spring pump station which will allow it to sell water to Vermont Pure. However, at year end, State permits to operate the Springs were not in place. This prohibited Vermont Pure from purchasing water. In the future, the agreement with Vermont Pure may generate as much as \$130,000 annually. A grant payment (final) from the project to construct a water storage facility on Burgess Road also was

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

not received. A final State determination has reduced the anticipated payment to \$21,490. This should be received in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005.

The water treatment facilities at Bolles Brook (intake) and at the Treatment Plant are in need of major upgrades. The Town is having difficulty meeting new State and Federal regulations relating to turbidity and disinfection byproducts. The upgrade, estimated to cost \$7 million, is at the final design stage and was placed before the voters in March 2004. The impact on water rates is estimated to increase the \$180 flat rate to \$260 by 2006 when the project is completed. A positive bond vote was achieved in March 2004. Bid and construction work should begin in early 2005. Engineering expenses for the Plant contributed to a deficit at year end; however, the reimbursable portion should be received in the next fiscal year.

A review of the Wastewater Treatment Fund indicates an operating loss of approximately \$229,000. The principle reason for this is the depreciation applied at \$694,090 and the reconstruction of the compost facility, even though this was funded with insured dollars. The Fund is otherwise in very good shape, and met its goals from a budgetary perspective.

Looking to the future, the Town's General Activities Funds (General and Highway) should continue in good stead. The land values in the community, the basis for the Grand List, continue to increase. New construction projects in the commercial sector promise additional growth in the Grand List.

Planned infrastructure improvements in streets, sidewalks, water, and sewer systems, bode well for continued growth in the community.

The Community's debt is relatively small. The proposed \$7 million bond for Water Facility improvements will not have a significant negative impact on the Town's financial health.

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Net Assets
June 30, 2004

	Primary Government		
	Governmental Activities	Business-type Activities	Total
Assets:			
Cash	\$ 1,151,858	-	1,151,858
Accounts receivable, net	286,423	441,917	728,340
Property taxes receivable, net	1,271,469	-	1,271,469
Interest receivable	9,425	-	9,425
Notes receivable, current	92,092	-	92,092
Internal balances	150,133	(150,133)	-
Notes receivable, non-current	1,425,007	-	1,425,007
Capital assets:			
Land and construction in progress	-	524,620	524,620
Other capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation	6,810,163	9,294,620	16,104,783
Total assets	\$ 11,196,570	10,111,024	21,307,594
Liabilities:			
Accounts payable	\$ 174,780	159,727	334,507
Accrued liabilities	249,435	27,746	277,181
Due to other governments	1,284	-	1,284
Accrued landfill post-closure costs:			
Due within one year	18,605	-	18,605
Due in more than one year	809,314	-	809,314
Bonds payable:			
Due within one year	187,859	15,000	202,859
Due in more than one year	1,957,141	370,115	2,327,256
Lease payable:			
Due within one year	183,204	-	183,204
Due in more than one year	525,227	-	525,227
Total liabilities	4,106,849	572,588	4,679,437
Net assets:			
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	3,956,732	9,434,125	13,390,857
Restricted for:			
Capital projects	43,988	-	43,988
Community development projects	1,517,099	-	1,517,099
Other purposes	419,090	-	419,090
Unrestricted	1,152,812	104,311	1,257,123
Total net assets	7,089,721	9,538,436	16,628,157
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 11,196,570	10,111,024	21,307,594

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2004

Functions/Programs	Expenses	Program Revenues			Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Assets		
		Charges for Services	Operating Grants and Contributions	Capital Grants and Contributions			
					Primary Government	Business-type Activities	Total
Primary government:							
Governmental activities:							
General government	\$ 1,686,772	142,101	75,848	-	(1,468,823)	-	(1,468,823)
Public safety:							
Police	2,105,378	120,287	7,271	14,171	(1,963,649)	-	(1,963,649)
Fire	238,855	-	-	-	(238,855)	-	(238,855)
Public works	296,654	46,967	-	-	(249,687)	-	(249,687)
Community development	143,162	-	78,750	-	(64,412)	-	(64,412)
Health and welfare	39,298	-	-	-	(39,298)	-	(39,298)
Recreation	685,096	104,216	-	-	(580,880)	-	(580,880)
Highways and roads	1,874,979	19,539	-	561,925	(1,293,515)	-	(1,293,515)
Library	289,700	-	-	-	(289,700)	-	(289,700)
Interest on long-term debt	134,946	-	-	-	(134,946)	-	(134,946)
Total governmental activities	7,494,840	433,110	161,869	576,096	(6,323,765)	-	(6,323,765)
Business-type activities:							
Water	998,275	1,157,411	-	-	-	159,136	159,136
Wastewater treatment	1,609,694	1,136,113	-	-	(473,581)	(473,581)	(473,581)
Parking	15,208	6,451	-	-	(8,757)	(8,757)	(8,757)
Total business-type activities	2,623,177	2,299,975	-	-	(323,202)	(323,202)	(323,202)
Total primary government	\$ 10,118,017	2,733,085	161,869	576,096	(6,323,765)	(323,202)	(6,646,967)
General revenues:							
Property taxes					6,634,083	-	6,634,083
Grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs					118,717	-	118,717
Investment earnings					61,239	633	61,872
Miscellaneous					422,175	244,394	666,569
Transfers					50,000	(50,000)	-
Total general revenues and transfers					7,286,214	195,027	7,481,241
Change in net assets					962,449	(128,175)	834,274
Net assets - beginning					6,127,272	9,666,611	15,793,883
Net assets - ending					\$ 7,089,721	9,538,436	16,628,157

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Balance Sheet
Governmental Funds
June 30, 2004

	General Governmental Activities Fund	Special Revenue Funds		Total Governmental Funds
		Community Development Fund	Downtown Improvement Commission	
Assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 605,448	546,410	-	1,151,858
Delinquent taxes receivable, net of allowance for uncollectible accounts of \$235,818	1,271,469	-	-	1,271,469
Accounts receivable	286,423	-	-	286,423
Interest receivable	-	9,425	-	9,425
Notes receivable, net of allowance for uncollectible accounts of \$70,000	-	1,517,099	-	1,517,099
Due from other funds	251,024	-	14,523	265,547
Total assets	\$ 2,414,364	2,072,934	14,523	4,501,821
Liabilities:				
Accounts payable	\$ 174,727	53	-	174,780
Accrued liabilities	249,435	-	-	249,435
Due to other governments	1,284	-	-	1,284
Due to other funds	-	115,414	-	115,414
Deferred revenue	287,743	-	-	287,743
Total liabilities	713,189	115,467	-	828,656
Fund Balances:				
Fund balance:				
Reserved	463,078	-	-	463,078
Reserved for delinquent taxes	1,271,469	-	-	1,271,469
Reserved for notes receivable	-	1,517,099	-	1,517,099
Unreserved	(33,372)	440,368	14,523	421,519
Total fund balances	1,701,175	1,957,467	14,523	3,673,165
Total liabilities and fund balances	\$ 2,414,364	2,072,934	14,523	4,501,821

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Reconciliation of the Governmental Funds Balance Sheet
to the Statement of Net Assets
June 30, 2004

Total fund balances - governmental funds (from page 13) \$ 3,673,165

Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the funds. 6,810,163

Other long-term assets are not available to pay for current-period expenditures and are deferred in the funds. 287,743

Long-term liabilities, including bonds payable, are not due and payable in the current period and therefore are not reported in the funds. (3,681,350)

Net assets of governmental activities (page 11) \$ 7,089,721

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances
Governmental Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2004

	General Governmental Activities Fund	Special Revenue Funds		Total Governmental Funds
		Community Development Fund	Downtown Improvement Commission	
Revenues:				
Property taxes	\$ 6,596,835	-	45,000	6,641,835
Permits and licenses	130,814	-	-	130,814
Intergovernmental revenues	763,761	78,750	-	842,511
Fees and charges	175,304	-	-	175,304
Fines and forfeitures	77,169	-	-	77,169
Interest	17,661	43,502	76	61,239
Rental revenue	30,284	-	-	30,284
Gain on sale of assets	51,750	-	-	51,750
Other	388,435	71,201	-	459,636
Total revenues	8,232,013	193,453	45,076	8,470,542
Expenditures:				
General government	1,400,746	-	-	1,400,746
Public safety	2,811,349	-	-	2,811,349
Public works	296,655	-	-	296,655
Health and welfare	39,298	-	-	39,298
Recreation	754,733	-	-	754,733
Debt management	318,523	-	-	318,523
Highways and roads	2,799,947	-	-	2,799,947
Project expenditures	-	83,502	-	83,502
Other	636,902	17,367	42,293	696,562
Total expenditures	9,058,153	100,869	42,293	9,201,315
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(826,140)	92,584	2,783	(730,773)
Other financing sources (uses):				
Proceeds from issuance of capital lease obligations	747,925	-	-	747,925
Operating transfers in (out)	95,000	(45,000)	-	50,000
	842,925	(45,000)	-	797,925
Excess of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures and other financing uses	16,785	47,584	2,783	67,152
Fund balance, July 1, 2003	1,684,390	1,909,883	11,740	3,606,013
Fund balance, June 30, 2004	\$ 1,701,175	1,957,467	14,523	3,673,165

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures,
and Changes in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds
to the Statement of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2004

Net change in fund balances - total governmental funds (from page 15)	\$ 67,152
Revenues in the statement of activities that do not provide current financial resources (property taxes not collected within 60 days of fiscal year end) are not reported as revenues in the funds. This amount represents a decrease in deferred property taxes.	(7,752)
Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures. However in the statement of activities, the cost of those assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation expense. This is the amount by which capital outlays exceeded depreciation in the current period.	1,234,022
When recognizing the sale of capital assets, the governmental funds report the total proceeds of the sale. Only the gain or loss on the sale is reported on the Statement of Net Assets.	(55,501)
Issuance of long-term obligations is recorded as an other financing source in the governmental funds, but increases long-term liabilities in the statement of net assets	(747,925)
Repayment of principal on long-term obligations is an expenditure in the governmental funds, but the repayment reduces long-term liabilities in the statement of net assets.	472,453
Change in net assets of governmental activities (page 12)	<u>\$ 962,449</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Statement of Net Assets

Proprietary Funds

June 30, 2004

	Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds			Totals
	Water Fund	Wastewater Treatment Fund	Parking Meter Fund	
Assets:				
Current assets:				
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$24,000	\$ 207,140	234,777	-	441,917
Due from other funds	-	-	111,294	111,294
Total current assets	207,140	234,777	111,294	553,211
Capital assets:				
Land and land improvements	18,000	-	200,356	218,356
Construction in progress	306,264	-	-	306,264
Distribution and collection systems	1,896,107	695,311	-	2,591,418
Buildings and equipment	1,848,818	17,423,564	26,667	19,299,049
Less accumulated depreciation	(2,057,318)	(10,465,136)	(73,393)	(12,595,847)
Total non-current assets	2,011,871	7,653,739	153,630	9,819,240
Total assets	2,219,011	7,888,516	264,924	10,372,451
Liabilities:				
Current liabilities:				
Accounts payable	81,394	78,310	23	159,727
Accrued liabilities	7,628	20,118	-	27,746
Due to other funds	146,318	115,109	-	261,427
Bonds payable, current portion	15,000	-	-	15,000
Total current liabilities	250,340	213,537	23	463,900
Bonds payable, less current portion	370,115	-	-	370,115
Total liabilities	620,455	213,537	23	834,015
Net Assets:				
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	1,626,756	7,653,739	153,630	9,434,125
Unrestricted - designated	203,122	204,531	50,000	457,653
Unrestricted - undesignated	(231,322)	(183,291)	61,271	(353,342)
Total net assets	1,598,556	7,674,979	264,901	9,538,436
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 2,219,011	7,888,516	264,924	10,372,451

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Fund Net Assets
Proprietary Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2004

	Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds			Totals
	Water Fund	Wastewater Treatment Fund	Parking Meter Fund	
Operating revenues:				
Fees and charges for services	\$ 1,157,411	1,136,113	6,451	2,299,975
Other	1,418	242,976	-	244,394
	1,158,829	1,379,089	6,451	2,544,369
Operating expenses:				
Administration	399,776	532,193	-	931,969
Buildings	51,580	-	-	51,580
Equipment	122,244	20,072	-	142,316
Water systems	66,757	-	-	66,757
Filtration plant	138,616	-	-	138,616
Sewer system	-	69,229	-	69,229
Sewer treatment plant	-	292,143	-	292,143
Parking	-	-	4,293	4,293
Depreciation	205,059	694,090	10,915	910,064
Total operating expenses	984,032	1,607,727	15,208	2,606,967
Operating income (loss)	174,797	(228,638)	(8,757)	(62,598)
Nonoperating revenues (expenses):				
Interest income	-	-	633	633
Interest expense	(14,243)	(1,967)	-	(16,210)
	(14,243)	(1,967)	633	(15,577)
Income (loss) before operating transfers	160,554	(230,605)	(8,124)	(78,175)
Operating transfers in (out)	(50,000)	(50,000)	50,000	(50,000)
	(50,000)	(50,000)	50,000	(50,000)
Change in net assets	110,554	(280,605)	41,876	(128,175)
Total net assets - beginning	1,488,002	7,955,584	223,025	9,666,611
Total net assets - ending	\$ 1,598,556	7,674,979	264,901	9,538,436

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Cash Flows
Proprietary Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2004

	Business-type Activites - Enterprise Funds			Totals
	Water Fund	Wastewater Treatment Fund	Parking Meter Fund	
Cash flows from operating activities:				
Cash receipts from customers	\$ 1,204,827	2,519,269	6,451	3,730,547
Other operating cash receipts	1,418	242,976	-	244,394
Cash payments to suppliers of goods or services	(565,448)	(1,081,285)	(4,270)	(1,651,003)
Cash payments to employees for services	(225,629)	(294,690)	-	(520,319)
Net cash provided by operating activities	415,168	1,386,270	2,181	1,803,619
Cash flows from non-capital financing activities:				
Operating transfers to other funds	(50,000)	(50,000)	50,000	(50,000)
Advances from (to) other funds	(230,493)	429,723	(39,916)	159,314
Interest on short-term borrowings	(3,493)	(1,967)	-	(5,460)
Net cash used in non-capital financing activities	(283,986)	377,756	10,084	103,854
Cash flows from capital and related financing activities:				
Principal payments on bonds	(15,000)	-	-	(15,000)
Advance from bond	205,114	-	-	205,114
Purchase of fixed assets	(310,546)	(1,764,026)	(12,898)	(2,087,470)
Interest on bonds	(10,750)	-	-	(10,750)
Net cash used in capital and related financing activities	(131,182)	(1,764,026)	(12,898)	(1,908,106)
Cash flows from investing activities:				
Interest on cash investments	-	-	633	633
Net cash provided by investing activities	-	-	633	633
Net increase in cash	-	-	-	-
Cash, beginning	-	-	-	-
Cash, ending	\$ -	-	-	-
Reconciliation of operating income (loss) to net cash provided by operating activities:				
Operating income (loss)	\$ 174,797	(228,638)	(8,757)	(62,598)
Adjustments to reconcile operating income (loss) to net cash provided by operating activities:				
Depreciation	205,059	694,090	10,915	910,064
Change in assets and liabilities:				
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable and other receivables	47,416	1,383,156	-	1,430,572
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(12,104)	(462,338)	23	(474,419)
Net cash provided by operating activities	\$ 415,168	1,386,270	2,181	1,803,619

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

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

(a) **Financial Reporting Entity**

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

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

The Town applies all relevant Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncements. Proprietary funds apply Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) pronouncements and Accounting Principles Board (APB) opinions issued on or before November 30, 1989, unless those pronouncements conflict with GASB pronouncements, in which case, GASB prevails.

(b) **Basis of Presentation**

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

Government-wide Statements

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

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

Fund Financial Statements

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

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

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

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

(b) *Basis of Presentation (continued)*

Governmental Funds

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

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

Proprietary Funds

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

(c) *Measurement Focus and Basis of Accounting*

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

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

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

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(d) Budgets and Budgetary Accounting

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

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

(e) Interfund Balances and Transfers

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

(f) Capital Assets

Property and equipment is stated at known or estimated historical cost. Net interest costs are capitalized on projects during the construction period. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of assets as follows: office furniture and equipment – 5 to 10 years, motor vehicles and heavy equipment – 5 to 15 years, buildings and building improvements – 20 to 40 years, and infrastructure – 25 to 40 years. When assets are retired or otherwise disposed of, the cost and related accumulated depreciation are removed from the accounts, and any resulting gain or loss is reflected in income for the period. The cost of maintenance and repairs is charged to income as incurred; significant renewals and betterments are capitalized. Deduction is made for retirements resulting from renewals or betterments. GASB No. 34 requires the Town to report and depreciate new infrastructure assets effective with the statement's implementation. The retroactive reporting of previously existing infrastructure is subject to an extended implementation date and is effective for the Town of Bennington for the year ending June 30, 2006.

(g) Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(j) **Encumbrance Accounting**

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

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

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

(k) *Use of Accounting Estimates*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(3) Cash

At June 30, 2004 the carrying amount of the Town's cash was \$1,151,858 and the bank balance was \$1,392,969. Of the bank balance, \$134,410 was covered by Federal depository insurance and \$1,258,559 was collateralized with securities held in the Town's name.

Certain cash balances are restricted for amounts reserved or designated, as follows:

General Governmental Activities Fund:

Capital facilities	\$ 43,518
Cherry trees	3,018
Community Built Park	15,966
Fire department donations	2,000
Fire equipment	9,422
Information signs	1,693
Police LLEBG	6,494
Reappraisal	62,793
Recreation Center fence	469
Seizure and forfeiture	704
Senior Center van	1,764
Sleeman - Recreation Center	34,410
SRS Music Instruments	285
East Road - Mt. Anthony Union High School	275,000
K-9 Donations	5,542
	<u>\$ 463,078</u>

Enterprise Funds:

Water Fund:

Improvements and equipment	\$ 203,122
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Wastewater Treatment Fund:

Machinery and equipment	204,531
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Parking Fund:

Improvements	<u>50,000</u>
	<u>\$ 457,653</u>

(4) Investments

The Town is not restricted by state statute as to the type of investments that it is authorized to hold. The Town invested primarily in collateralized and insured certificates of deposit during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2004.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(5) Capital Assets

Capital asset activity for the year was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Retirements	Ending Balance
Governmental activities:				
Buildings and improvements	\$ 6,374,301	77,841	-	6,452,142
Equipment and vehicles	3,712,489	976,806	(331,486)	4,357,809
Infrastructure	207,186	700,930	-	908,116
Construction in progress	24,000	-	(24,000)	-
Totals at historical cost	<u>10,317,976</u>	<u>1,755,577</u>	<u>(355,486)</u>	<u>11,718,067</u>
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Buildings and improvements	(3,314,475)	(117,193)	-	(3,431,668)
Equipment and vehicles	(1,368,406)	(348,135)	262,986	(1,453,555)
Infrastructure	(3,453)	(19,228)	-	(22,681)
Totals accumulated depreciation	<u>(4,686,334)</u>	<u>(484,556)</u>	<u>262,986</u>	<u>(4,907,904)</u>
Governmental activities capital assets, net	<u>\$ 5,631,642</u>	<u>1,271,021</u>	<u>(92,500)</u>	<u>6,810,163</u>

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Retirements	Ending Balance
Business-type activities:				
Land and land improvements	\$ 205,458	12,898	-	218,356
Construction in progress	1,064,582	-	(758,318)	306,264
Distribution and collection systems	2,461,262	130,155	-	2,591,417
Buildings and improvements	14,418,669	2,642,029	-	17,060,698
Equipment and vehicles	2,193,537	60,706	(15,892)	2,238,351
Totals at historical cost	<u>20,343,508</u>	<u>2,845,788</u>	<u>(774,210)</u>	<u>22,415,086</u>
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Land and land improvements	(36,013)	(10,714)	-	(46,727)
Distribution and collection systems	(782,430)	(143,854)	-	(926,284)
Buildings and improvements	(9,279,531)	(589,923)	-	(9,869,454)
Equipment and vehicles	(1,603,701)	(165,572)	15,892	(1,753,381)
Totals accumulated depreciation	<u>(11,701,675)</u>	<u>(910,063)</u>	<u>15,892</u>	<u>(12,595,846)</u>
Business-type activities capital assets, net	<u>\$ 8,641,833</u>	<u>1,935,725</u>	<u>(758,318)</u>	<u>9,819,240</u>

Depreciation expense was charged to governmental functions as follows:

General government	\$ 21,443
Public safety:	
Police	98,201
Fire	146,360
Recreation	59,930
Highway and roads	158,622
	<u>\$ 484,556</u>

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(6) Notes Receivable – Special Revenue Funds

Notes receivable - Special Revenue Funds consist of loans to individuals and businesses under the Community Development Program of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Such notes are interest bearing at various interest rates between 4 and 8%, generally require monthly payments over terms ranging from five to fifteen years, and are secured by security interests in personal property or real estate mortgages.

The Community Development Fund's fund balance has been reserved in the amount of \$1,517,099. The fund balance has been reserved in an amount equal to the Community Development Fund's net notes receivable to denote that it is not available to finance the general operations of the fund.

(7) Long-term Liabilities

Long-term liability activity for the year ended June 30, 2004 was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Amounts Due within One Year
Governmental Activities					
Bonds payable	\$ 2,328,577	-	(183,577)	2,145,000	187,859
Capital lease obligations	217,242	747,925	(256,736)	708,431	183,204
Compensated absences	14,423	-	(14,423)	-	-
Governmental activities long-term liabilities	\$ 2,560,242	747,925	(454,736)	2,853,431	371,063
Business-type Activities					
Bonds payable	\$ 195,000	205,115	(15,000)	385,115	15,000
Business-type activities long-term liabilities	\$ 195,000	205,115	(15,000)	385,115	15,000

Bonds payable mature annually in varying amounts through fiscal year 2018, and interest is generally payable semiannually at rates ranging from 0 percent to 7.14 percent.

Maturities of bonds payable are as follows:

	Governmental Activities			Business-Type Activities		
	Principal	Interest	Total	Principal	Interest	Total
2005	\$ 190,000	111,538	301,538	64,800	9,963	74,763
2006	185,000	101,580	286,580	64,800	9,162	73,962
2007	170,000	93,838	263,838	64,800	8,346	73,146
2008	170,000	85,024	255,024	64,800	7,514	72,314
2009	170,000	76,077	246,077	20,915	6,668	27,583
2010-2014	790,000	245,545	1,035,545	75,000	18,869	93,869
2015-2019	470,000	54,712	524,712	30,000	2,736	32,736
	\$ 2,145,000	768,314	2,913,314	385,115	63,258	448,373

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

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(8) Property Taxes

Property taxes attach as an enforceable lien on property as of April 1st. Property taxes for fiscal year 2004 were levied September 17, 2003 were payable November 10, 2003.

(9) Deferred Compensation Plan and Pensions

Defined Benefit Plan

The Town participates in the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System (VMERS), a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the State of Vermont.

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

Plan members in "Group B" are required to contribute 4.5% of their annual covered compensation and the Town is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The current rate is 5% of annual covered payroll. Plan members in "Group C" are required to contribute 9% of their annual covered compensation and the Town is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The current rate is 6% of annual covered payroll. The contribution requirements of plan members and the Town of Bennington are established and may be amended by the Retirement Board, Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System. Contributions made to VMERS by the Town for the year ended June 30, 2004 amounted to \$173,563. The Town also contributed \$271,784 for unfunded pension liability.

Deferred Compensation Plan

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

Subsequent to June 30, 2004 the Town terminated this plan and made available to its employees a similar Section 457 plan administered by the State of Vermont.

(10) Risk Management

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

(11) Commitments

Solid Waste Disposal

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

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(12) Leases

The Town leases certain equipment under agreements which are classified as capital leases. At June 30, 2004 equipment recorded under capital lease in the Government-wide financial statements amounted to \$1,228,385. Accumulated amortization amounted to \$133,232.

Future minimum payments required under capital leases are as follows:

Year ending June 30:	
2005	183,204
2006	150,983
2007	150,983
2008	137,943
2009	39,403
Thereafter	<u>157,611</u>
Total minimum lease payments	820,127
Less amount representing interest	<u>(111,696)</u>
Present value of minimum lease payments	<u>\$ 708,431</u>

(13) Contingencies

(a) Litigation-General

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

(b) Landfill Post-Closure Costs

In accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 18, the Town has recorded a liability for the present value of estimated post-closure repair, maintenance and monitoring costs in the statement of net assets amounted to \$827,919.

The Town's post-closure costs for the year ended June 30, 2004 amounted to \$15,185.

(c) Federal and State Grants

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

(14) Subsequent Events

Subsequent to June 30, 2004 the Town received advances under a \$3 million line of credit agreement in anticipation of property tax collections. Advances amounting to \$1,918,242 were due and paid on December 15, 2004 with an interest rate of 1.85%.

On September 28, 2004 the Town paid Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System \$287,040 for unfunded pension liability.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund
Year Ended June 30, 2004

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Revenues:			
Property taxes:			
General	\$ 4,602,210	4,569,338	(32,872)
Highway	1,816,920	1,816,920	-
Penalties and interest	-	210,577	210,577
	<u>6,419,130</u>	<u>6,596,835</u>	<u>177,705</u>
Permits and licenses:			
Alcoholic beverages	6,200	6,550	350
Dog licenses	7,800	8,016	216
Building and zoning permits	80,000	76,081	(3,919)
Landfill	19,000	40,167	21,167
	<u>113,000</u>	<u>130,814</u>	<u>17,814</u>
Intergovernmental revenues:			
State shared interests:			
Federal and State Grant	-	3,536	3,536
Highway	443,000	569,196	126,196
In lieu of taxes	90,000	118,717	28,717
Other	30,000	72,312	42,312
	<u>563,000</u>	<u>763,761</u>	<u>200,761</u>
Fees and charges:			
Police sales and services	32,000	43,053	11,053
Police insurance report fees	100	65	(35)
Sale of cemetery lots	2,000	6,800	4,800
Animal control fees	-	90	90
Recreational center charges	35,000	34,076	(924)
Pool membership fees	80,000	70,140	(9,860)
Senior citizens	26,000	21,080	(4,920)
	<u>175,100</u>	<u>175,304</u>	<u>204</u>
Fines and forfeitures:			
Police fines, seizures and forfeitures	60,000	77,169	17,169
Interest	<u>20,000</u>	<u>17,661</u>	<u>(2,339)</u>
Rental revenue	<u>27,700</u>	<u>30,284</u>	<u>2,584</u>
Gain on sale of assets	<u>10,000</u>	<u>51,750</u>	<u>41,750</u>
Other	<u>52,000</u>	<u>388,435</u>	<u>336,435</u>
Total revenues	<u>7,439,930</u>	<u>8,232,013</u>	<u>792,083</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2004

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures:			
General Government:			
Selectors	\$ 14,900	15,267	(367)
Town Manager	151,030	149,739	1,291
Elections	19,950	16,778	3,172
Treasurer	21,970	22,546	(576)
Accounting	150,310	155,574	(5,264)
Listing	63,010	70,711	(7,701)
Tax collecting	61,480	61,521	(41)
Town Clerk	51,510	52,809	(1,299)
Planning and zoning	222,730	236,636	(13,906)
Economic and community development	104,890	105,550	(660)
Plant and equipment:			
Administration	345,920	358,881	(12,961)
Buildings and grounds	147,850	154,734	(6,884)
	<u>493,770</u>	<u>513,615</u>	<u>(19,845)</u>
	<u>1,355,550</u>	<u>1,400,746</u>	<u>(45,196)</u>
Public safety:			
Police:			
Administration	1,719,120	1,804,866	(85,746)
Investigation	11,700	5,418	6,282
Training	8,950	8,264	686
Communications	44,800	81,757	(36,957)
Police building	47,500	88,339	(40,839)
Equipment	83,800	91,371	(7,571)
Special services	34,480	39,112	(4,632)
	<u>1,950,350</u>	<u>2,119,127</u>	<u>(168,777)</u>
Fire:			
Administration	41,840	52,253	(10,413)
Fire fighting	15,000	12,858	2,142
Communications	11,700	5,267	6,433
Machinery and equipment	99,640	173,971	(74,331)
Buildings	34,600	38,473	(3,873)
	<u>202,780</u>	<u>282,822</u>	<u>(80,042)</u>
	<u>2,153,130</u>	<u>2,401,949</u>	<u>(248,819)</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2004

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures (continued):			
Public works:			
Solid waste management	\$ 94,300	137,681	(43,381)
Street lights	135,000	132,414	2,586
Cemetery and mini-park	26,400	26,560	(160)
	<u>255,700</u>	<u>296,655</u>	<u>(40,955)</u>
Health and welfare:			
Health officer	5,780	5,232	548
Bennington Home Health	24,000	24,000	-
Animal control	8,210	10,066	(1,856)
	<u>37,990</u>	<u>39,298</u>	<u>(1,308)</u>
Recreation:			
Supervision	355,230	347,904	7,326
Recreation Center	10,540	7,298	3,242
Indoor pool	12,820	13,763	(943)
Parks	67,230	73,297	(6,067)
Pathway	2,240	4,884	(2,644)
Buildings	85,060	113,524	(28,464)
Vehicles and equipment	11,880	12,424	(544)
Senior Citizens' Center	141,810	109,820	31,990
Senior Citizens' - building	76,420	71,819	4,601
	<u>763,230</u>	<u>754,733</u>	<u>8,497</u>
Debt management:			
Principal	190,000	183,577	6,423
Interest - bonds	122,810	130,611	(7,801)
Interest - tax anticipation note	69,000	4,335	64,665
	<u>381,810</u>	<u>318,523</u>	<u>63,287</u>
Highways and roads:			
Administration and buildings	975,120	1,050,953	(75,833)
Construction and maintenance - town highways	480,500	496,437	(15,937)
Installing and maintaining traffic control devices	56,500	40,262	16,238
Buildings	23,040	24,766	(1,726)
Sidewalks	103,600	100,474	3,126
Bridges	7,000	73,245	(66,245)
Downtown	200,050	335,778	(135,728)
Vehicles and equipment	294,110	339,507	(45,397)
	<u>2,139,920</u>	<u>2,461,422</u>	<u>(321,502)</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2004

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures (continued):			
Other:			
Bennington County Regional Commission	\$ 12,300	12,300	-
Bennington Project Independence	10,600	10,600	-
Bennington Tutorial Center	8,000	8,000	-
Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council	7,800	7,800	-
CERCLA	18,800	15,185	3,615
Center for Restorative Justice	3,000	3,000	-
Conservation of natural resources - tree program	7,000	6,835	165
County taxes	65,000	69,337	(4,337)
Flood control program	4,000	2,714	1,286
Holiday celebrations	23,400	24,464	(1,064)
Library administration	289,700	289,700	-
Miscellaneous contingencies	5,000	5,790	(790)
North Bennington - recreation	3,700	3,700	-
Poor relief - burials	-	2,358	(2,358)
Project Against Violent Encounters	3,500	3,500	-
Retired Seniors Volunteer Program	8,000	8,000	-
Reserve fund expenditures	-	145,819	(145,819)
Vermont Council on Aging	11,000	11,000	-
Vermont Council for Independent Living	1,800	1,800	-
Vermont Interactive TV	5,000	5,000	-
	<u>487,600</u>	<u>636,902</u>	<u>(149,302)</u>
Equipment acquired by capital lease	-	747,925	(747,925)
Total expenditures	<u>7,574,930</u>	<u>9,058,153</u>	<u>(1,483,223)</u>
Deficiency of revenues over expenditures	<u>(135,000)</u>	<u>(826,140)</u>	<u>(691,140)</u>
Other financing sources (uses):			
Proceeds from issuance of capital lease obligations	-	747,925	747,925
Operating transfers in (out):			
Administrative charges:			
Community Development Fund	45,000	45,000	-
Water Fund	50,000	50,000	-
Wastewater Treatment Fund	50,000	50,000	-
Transfer to Parking Fund	(10,000)	(50,000)	(40,000)
	<u>135,000</u>	<u>842,925</u>	<u>707,925</u>
Excess of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures	-	16,785	16,785
Fund balance, July 1, 2003	<u>1,684,390</u>	<u>1,684,390</u>	-
Fund balance, June 30, 2004	<u>\$ 1,684,390</u>	<u>1,701,175</u>	<u>16,785</u>

SECTION II

COMPLIANCE AND INTERNAL CONTROL



Report on Compliance and on Internal Control Structure Over Financial Reporting Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards

The Select Board
Town of Bennington, Vermont

We have audited the financial statements of the Town of Bennington, Vermont as of and for the year ended June 30, 2004, and have issued our report thereon dated November 17, 2004. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Compliance

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

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Town of Bennington's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide assurance on the internal control over financial reporting. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. We noted no matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be material weaknesses.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management, others within the organization, the Select Board, and federal awarding agencies and pass-through entities and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

November 17, 2004

Fisk Reed & Love, P.C.

Vt. Reg. #357

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AGENCIES

The reports included herein are from those Agencies
which received Town funds in 2004.

BENNINGTON AREA HOME HEALTH AGENCY

Bennington Area Home Health provided home care services to 1,092 residents of Bennington, North Bennington, Woodford, Pownal and Shaftsbury during the time period of October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004. These visits were provided to individuals ranging in age from newborn to over 100 years of age.

<u>Service</u>	<u>Volume</u>
Nursing	14,124
Physical Therapy	2,376
Speech Therapy	492
Occupational Therapy	912
Social Work	300
Home Health Aide/PCA	18,792
Homemaker	<u>804</u>
Total Visits	37,800

Bennington Area Home Health provides access for medically necessary home care services regardless of ability to pay, and provides access to health and flu clinics. These services are made possible through town funding and charitable contributions.

Effective January 1, 2005 Bennington Area Home Health will change its name to Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice of Southwestern Vermont Health Care. Visiting Nurse Associations created the profession of home health care more than 100 years ago.

The name VNA will allow people to recognize that our agency is among the nation's home health providers who are not-for-profit and community-based. The new name will also make it clear that the agency meets a very important community need: a full-service hospice. The program is Bennington's only Medicare-certified hospice.

Thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully submitted,
Julia H. Maroney RN, CHCE, Executive Director

BENNINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL COMMISSION

The BCRC is composed of Commissioners appointed by the legislative body (2 per town, 1 per village, 1 from Glastenbury), and at-large by action of the Commission. Funding sources include a combination of federal, state, and local grants and assessments. The website is www.rpc.bennington.vt.us. The work program is divided into ten overall tasks, and some examples for each follow:

1.0 Administration – Management: Overall program management, personnel and consultants, financial statements and audit, local-regional-state issues, regular and special meetings.

2.0 Municipal Technical Assistance: Plan-zoning-subdivision bylaw assistance including preparation and advisories, BCRC review and approval of 15/17 plans (88%), municipal consultations, draft sign ordinance, scenic resource inventory, planning grant assistance, sewer project assistance, tax stabilization, cell phone coverage study, solid waste information requests.

3.0 Regional Plan and Programs: Regional Plan implementation, Solid Waste Implementation Plan (9 Towns) and household hazardous waste collection, composting and recycling, water quality – non-point source data, project reviews (Act 250, Outstanding Resource Waters, housing projects, land conservation projects, other project proposals, site plans), natural resource planning, state plans.

4.0 Transportation: Route 279/Exit 2 to Lincoln Square access management, benefit/cost study for the Bennington Airport, Molly Stark (Route 9) scenic byway and infrastructure grant-website-brochure, Malfunction Junction, public transit assistance + JARC, Monument Avenue, multi-pathway project, enhancement grants, traffic calming, bicycle routes, intersection reviews – safety audit, speed limits, bridge/culvert inventories.

5.0 Economic Strategies: Regional economic plan, telecommunication infrastructure, housing needs, project reviews and support, project priorities, data-information and brochure, commercial-industrial sites information.

6.0 Geographic Information System and Mapping: Town plans/zoning, resource mapping, culvert mapping, parcel mapping, byway mapping, conserved lands database, village designations, build-out maps, mapping for Route 9 kiosks, trail mapping, scenic inventory maps, pre-disaster mitigation maps, special public/private requests: Mount Anthony, Whipstock Hill, Equinox, Merck, forest land plans, Southern Vermont College, Batten Kill, cell tower site/location mapping.

7.0 Emergency Management: All Hazards Emergency Operations Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, emergency personnel updates, grants, training, Local Emergency Planning Committee support, damage reports, emergency exercises and preparedness assistance, Homeland Security.

8.0 Technical Reviews, Education, Data: Regulatory reviews, training, new Chapter 117 amendments and information, support for advisory committees, regular and special meetings, Outstanding Resource Waters petition, Green Mountain National Forest plan update, workshops and conferences, review/comment state rules/regulations, energy facilities, flood hazard areas.

9.0 Grant Assistance and Administration: Municipal planning grants, cell tower study, Oak Hill day school, Happy Days education and childcare, Northshire day school, transportation grants.

10.0 Special Projects: EPA Brownfields program/grant, State surplus lands, Chapter 117 intensive training and information – bylaw reviews, 604B water quality inventories.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert M. Hartwell, Chairman

Respectfully submitted,
Rex Burke, Executive Director

BENNINGTON FREE LIBRARY

The Bennington Free Library experienced a year of progress in 2003-2004. The Town of Bennington provided general operating support while many of the special projects supported by restricted funds from the Vermont Public Library/Freeman Foundation were completed: electrical & lighting up-grades, a new telephone system, and installation of 13 new windows. Office space was renovated and re-allocated. 18 new Dell computers were added, and 588 people were trained to use them.

Bennington area borrowers number 16,216. Almost 88,000 people used the Library last year, and 77,700 items were borrowed.

The Library's web site [www.bennington.lib.vt.us/index.html] has been up-graded to include the Library Newsletter, Calendar of Events, a special Collections page including the Caregiver's Collection, the new book, video and books on tape lists, and links to the Internet, the Vermont On-Line Library and Wilson First Search.

Services

178 free programs, 49 of which were fully or partially funded by other organizations, were offered to 10,676 children and adults. Bennington Free Library enjoyed the fourth highest program attendance of all public libraries in Vermont last year.

Facilities

69 local, area, state and national groups used the Library's meeting rooms.

Volunteers

147 volunteers contributed 2,556 hours to the Library. Marjorie LaRowe was the recipient of the Eugene and Elisabeth Clark Outstanding Library Service Award.

Friends of the Library

The Friends supported library projects and programs with the proceeds from their annual Book Sale. The adult reading series was well-attended with 150 participants. The Holiday Wish List netted \$550.40.

Grants and General Operating Support

The Library received financial support from the VPLF/Freeman Foundation, the Friends of the Library, Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, Success by Six, the Vermont Humanities Council, Vermont Department of Health, Catamount Rotary Club, a Smith Grant, and from the Towns of Bennington, Shaftsbury, and Woodford.

The Board of Directors and Staff join me in expressing our sincere appreciation to the Town of Bennington for its financial support in the past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Anita M. Gauthier, Director

BENNINGTON PROJECT INDEPENDENCE, INC.

Bennington Project Independence (BPI) provides Adult Day Care and Day Health Rehabilitation Services for frail older persons and younger disabled adults and their families from Bennington, North Bennington and the surrounding communities.

In 2004, the voters of Bennington and North Bennington supported a level allocation of \$10,600 for the Adult Day Care Services at Bennington Project Independence. With that excellent investment, BPI was able to provide an exceptional range of Adult Day Care and Health Rehabilitative Services for Bennington and North Bennington families in need.

Bennington Project Independence continued to provide a safe, sensitive and supportive Adult Day Program for a wide range of Bennington residents. BPI Participants include persons with delicate or chronic medical conditions that may need care or support, persons who are socially isolated or living alone without the support of close family or friends as well as a significant number of persons with Alzheimer's Disease and other types of cognitive impairments who need specialized assistance. Many of our Participants have multiple needs that place them at risk of nursing home placement. Participation in our program enables people to receive care and be as active and independent as

possible during the day and return to the comfort of their own home or their family's home at night.

Our goal is to help people get the most out of their lives and prevent premature institutional placement of persons potentially at risk. BPI is here to help family caregivers provide the best possible care for their loved ones. Knowing that an elderly or disabled family member has a safe, caring and interesting day center to attend, allows the family to continue to work, take care of their own children or take care of the other important aspects of their lives. Eldercare is predicted to surpass childcare as the number one dependent care issue facing families in less than ten years. One in four people are involved in some form of caring for a loved one. Caregiving without support or relief can have a profoundly stressful effect on all of the family as well as our community.

With continued support from communities such as Bennington and North Bennington, BPI was better able to serve working caregivers. We were able to strengthen the family support component of our program with our "Families Together" monthly gatherings and expand the range of healthcare and supportive, meaningful adult activities that we provide. We also focused on enhancing our ability to provide care and assistance for individuals from early to the end stages of Alzheimer's Disease.

Our activities are opportunities. Our professional staff offers a wide range of social and recreational activities, fitness and wellness groups, community trips and intergenerational events. Our Nurses provide an impressive range of health care services. Our handicapped accessible vans help us provide community access and individualized door-through-door assistance. We also provide social work consultation and personalized, confidential caregiver education, assistance and support.

An exciting opportunity has occurred for BPI in 2004, we purchased a historic property on Harwood Hill to create a new and expanded home for Bennington Project Independence. It will be a wonderful opportunity to expand services and be available for even more families in need throughout Bennington County. With the positive community support, we will move this neglected property "from a historic past to a caring future".

We, at Bennington Project Independence are truly grateful for the continued support from the residents of Bennington and North Bennington and we look forward to continuing to provide the highest quality of Adult Day Care and Day Health Rehabilitation Services for Bennington and North Bennington individuals and families in need. Bennington Project Independence is here to help family caregivers "share the care".

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Wichlac, Executive Director

BENNINGTON RUTLAND OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL (BROC)

BROC – Community Action in Southwestern Vermont would like to take this opportunity to thank the citizens of Bennington who have supported our agency through the balloting process over the years. BROC continues to experience a large number of low-income individuals and families coming through our doors each day.

Last year, BROC helped meet the basic needs of 689 families in the Town of Bennington. In addition, BROC weatherized 53 homes, comprised of 152 individuals through our Weatherization & Energy Conservation program, BROC's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) reimbursed 39

day care home providers for serving nutritious meals to about 390 children in their care, and BROCC's Micro Business Development Program (MBDP) worked with 46 Bennington residents interested in starting or expanding a small business. BROCC also created several new partnerships and collaborations throughout the year with local organizations and businesses to help raise food for our emergency food shelf, as well as to help raise much needed funds through events and fund raising so that the needs of our neighbors continue to be met.

With your help, BROCC is able to help many families facing the difficult decisions on how to make their budgets work with the rise in fuel and gasoline prices. Sometimes being able to access a few meals from BROCC or having a dry, warm place to stay at night can make all the difference.

Our appropriation request for the upcoming year is \$7,800.00.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda G. Rooker, Executive Director

JOHN G. MCCULLOUGH FREE LIBRARY

The John G. McCullough Free Library in North Bennington continues to offer free membership to patrons of all ages from North Bennington, Bennington, Shaftsbury and other nearby towns. Our schedule is as follows: Tuesday & Wednesday 1:00—8:00, Thursday & Friday 1:00—6:00, Saturday 10:00—2:00, Sunday & Monday closed. The Library provides meeting space at no cost for non-profit community groups.

Once again we saw a year of many changes. Using a grant from the VPLF, or Vermont Public Library Foundation, (which was funded by the Freeman Foundation), we began by painting the interior of the building, a project which also involved extensive re-plastering. We installed new carpeting. During this time we worked as hard as possible to keep the library open and our collection available to users. Exterior work followed, including repair of the brickwork on the front porch. This year we also enjoyed the use of our air conditioners, installed late last summer.

We started offering free weekly one-on-one computer tutoring on Tuesday evenings. Sign up to learn to use the Internet, word-processing, or email.

Booked For Lunch, our monthly book-discussion group, began meeting in the fall of 2003. This friendly, informal group meets at 11:30 on the last Friday of the month. The books are available on loan for no charge. This group is also funded by the VPLF. We also sponsored, with the Vermont Humanities Council, a reading series entitled "Democratic Creation".

Looking forward to the 2004 elections, the director became a notary public, enabling her to register voters, as well as notarize other documents. We also distributed Voter Handbooks, buttons and other materials.

We continued circulating our "Passports For Fun" passes which enable patrons to visit area museums and other attractions at no cost. In addition, we added a set of circulating fishing poles for children, courtesy of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

Many thanks to all our volunteers: Tabbie Bolk, Judy Kniffin, Elizabeth Brownell, Dee Leach, Jonathan Christian, Cub Scouts who graciously haul our papers for recycling, the Bennington Garder

Club, Mary Feidner, Sarah Maxfield, and any others who I may have forgotten to mention.

This November I will leave the library to become the director of the Brunswick Community Library in Brunswick, NY. For the past five and a half years, I have seen the library through many transitions and improvements. Thanks to all who helped make it possible. It has also been my pleasure to get to know all the thoughtful patrons of the library, young and old.

Kim Cushman is the chair of our Board, Rachel Schumacher serves as Sec.-Treas., and our other trustees are Forrest Snyder, Rachel Blumenthal, Anne Hunter, Joe Mueller, Mary Feidner and Wendy Woods.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Zelman, Librarian

PARAN RECREATIONS, INC.

During the summer of 2004 Paran Recreations, Inc. continued to provide local recreational services to the surrounding communities:

Activities in 2004 included our traditional concession stand, swimming, picnic, and boating offerings. It also included the very popular music series with the addition of a children's concert presented by the award winning Gary Rosen, formerly of the duo Rosenschantz.

Total 2004 memberships and daily admissions were slightly lower than 2003 due to the wet summer weather. We had 115 paid individual and family memberships, 57 from North Bennington, 31 from Bennington, 7 from Shaftsbury and 20 from other areas. Daily admissions totaled 150 from Bennington, 245 from North Bennington and 60 from Shaftsbury.

In 2004 we were able to continue and in some cases expand our service and commitment to help maintain Lake Paran's natural beauty. We continued our routine water testing, and expanded our efforts to monitor and control invasive water plant growth. The Community College of Vermont held a three credit Stained Glass course at the lake, using the pavilion as their classroom and the surrounding scenic view as their inspiration. Weeds in the swimming area were again harvested to ensure a pleasant swimming experience. The popular swimming classes for children were held for the second year, and we continue to be the only area outdoor facility to provide life guards during peak use times.

In 2005 we will continue to offer our core programs focused on swimming, boating, music and picnic services to the community. We also hope to increase our involvement in preserving the natural beauty and community accessibility to the lake through cooperative efforts with the recently announced land trust. With your continued support we can maintain and improve the service we offer Bennington residents.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Budde, President

PROJECT AGAINST VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS (PAVE)

In 2004 PAVE continued to offer comprehensive services to victims of domestic and sexual violence. Those services include: 24-hour emergency hotline, court and social service advocacy, support groups, transitional housing, emergency financial assistance, information and referrals, community education, healthy relationship curriculum for schools and access to several different types of emergency, safe housing. Services are free and confidential. In addition, at our Family Time Center we offer supervised visitation services.

The past year has been one of growth for PAVE. 348 adults and 301 children received advocacy and referral services. Our educational programs reached 648 young people and 150 adults. Our supervised visitation program, Family Time, saw the most dramatic change – we now have the Family Time Center – a family friendly space where children have safe access to their non-residential parent. Once again the size of this program doubled in the past year.

We continue to offer violence prevention programming to young people throughout Bennington County. Our educational curriculum includes five programs tailored to meet the needs of each school and age appropriate for students from age 3 to 18. In addition, we have begun to offer parents parallel programs so that they can understand first hand the material being presented to their children.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and staff I thank you for your ongoing commitment to PAVE.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan M. Sakalas, Executive Director

THE BENNINGTON COUNTY RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP)

The goal of RSVP remains one of *“reinvesting the talents and skills of a lifetime”* in our communities through volunteer service. RSVP initiates and develops programs for seniors who wish to volunteer and provides support to volunteers in the form of excess liability insurance, training, transportation, and recognition. There are currently **297** Bennington residents actively serving as RSVP volunteers in nonprofit agencies and public institutions in the Bennington area. During this past fiscal year the town of Bennington received a total of **27,897 hours** of service from RSVP volunteers. Using a modest figure of **\$10.00** per hour, this service represents a total value of **\$278,970** returned to the community!

These 297 RSVP volunteers serve in a variety of ways that benefit citizens in communities throughout Bennington County. Examples include coordinating volunteer recognition functions; serving in an advisory capacity to the RSVP project director and as board members to other area agencies; participating in fund raising events; delivering meals on wheels; knitting or crocheting lap blankets for nursing home residents, or mittens, hats and scarves for children in area daycare centers; and assembling bulk mailings for agencies with a critical need to get their service information out to community residents.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia M. Palencsar, Director

SOUTHWESTERN VERMONT COUNCIL ON AGING

The Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging provided the following services in the town of Bennington during the past year:

Senior Meals:

Through contract, the Council, helped supply 20,487 meals that were prepared and delivered to the homes of 148 older persons in your community. This service is often referred to as "Meals on Wheels". We also provided "Blizzard Bags" containing "shelf-stable" meals to Meals on Wheels participants and other isolated elders, for use in a weather related or other emergency situation. In addition, 282 Bennington elders participated at one or more of the luncheon sites available in our region, enjoying 5,442 meals.

Case Management Assistance:

380 elders in your community received help from SVCOA Case Management staff. Case Managers provided help with applications and problem solving around programs such as Fuel Assistance, SSI, Medicaid, Food Stamps, etc. Case Managers also helped frail elders facing long-term care placement, helping those who wanted to remain independent connect with available in home assistance, including Medicaid Waiver support for those who were eligible.

Other:

In addition, the Council provided: 1) Telephone assistance through our "Senior HelpLine" (786-5991 or 1-800-642-5119). The HelpLine provided easy phone access to elders and others in need of information about programs and supports available to older persons; 2) Health benefit counseling information and form filing assistance through our SHIP Program; 3) Legal service assistance through a contract with the Vermont Senior Citizens Law Project; 4) Written information about elder issues via the weekly "Elder Connection" column appearing weekly in the Bennington Banner; 5) Nutrition education and counseling services provided by a Registered Dietician; 6) Senior Companion support for frail, homebound elders; 7) Elder Care Clinician outreach services to elders dealing with mental health issues. This service is provided through a contract with United Counseling Services; 8) Transportation assistance through the Red Cross and Bennington Project Independence; 9) Community Development assistance and 10) Caregiver information and support for family members and others who are providing help to elders in need of care.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Granger, Case Management Supervisor

THE TUTORIAL CENTER

This past year at The Tutorial Center, our 33rd Anniversary in Bennington, has again been one of exciting growth. Due to the support of Bennington and other regional towns, we were able to provide a growing range of unique and vital educational services to more and more people. Literally many hundreds of Bennington adults and children benefited from our educational help. We invite all residents to visit us anytime in our learning center at our 208 Pleasant St.

The Tutorial Center is Vermont's most comprehensive educational support center, and continues to be recognized by the state as a model success story.

In addition to offering top-quality instruction, we do pride ourselves on stretching every dollar to its

limit. Once again, The Tutorial Center has been recognized by the Vermont Department of Education as the most cost-effective adult basic education provider in the state.

Overall highlights of our past year at The Tutorial Center include:

- **For adult learners-** 358 learners were enrolled in basic education classes (a 6% increase over the previous year) and received over 10,500 hours of FREE instruction; 70 adults passed the GED exam or received their high school diploma; 177 adults successfully obtained employment; 16 adults received English as a Second Language instruction; 20 adults were enrolled in our award-winning Bridge-to-College program; and more than 50 adults participated in basic computer skills classes.
- **For children-** 158 students received individual tutoring instruction to help them succeed in school, with a total of 4,167 hours of instruction provided – a 14% increase in hours provided over last year. Virtually all subject areas were taught including all levels of math, reading, writing, history, and science, plus special topics such as SAT preparation.
- **For families-** Our new “Tell Me A Story” community literacy project supported over a dozen family-centered literacy activities at libraries and community centers throughout the Bennington region, reaching over 200 children and adults with storytelling, reading, bookmaking, and other literacy-building activities.

The Town of Bennington has generously supported the work of The Tutorial Center. We are very grateful to the town for supporting our literacy efforts in the past and we look forward to your continued support.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Glade, Executive Director

VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

The Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) teaches people with significant disabilities how to gain more control over their lives and how to access tools and services to live more independently. We also conduct public education and systems change activities that promote the full inclusion of disabled people into community life.

An estimated one in five Vermonters has a disability. VCIL, a private non-profit organization, is Vermont's first and only cross-disability center for independent living and the first organization in the state to be directed and staffed by a majority of people with diverse disabilities.

Statewide, from October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2004, VCIL responded to over 2,000 requests from individuals, agencies and community groups for information and referrals on a broad range of subjects related to living with a disability. We provided one-on-one peer counseling to 355 individuals to help increase their independent living skills and life opportunities; provided 401 households with financial and technical assistance for making their bathrooms and entrances accessible to a disabled family member; provided over 345 with personal assistance and/or assistive technology; provided communications equipment to 76 Deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech-impaired individuals through the Vermont Equipment Distribution Program, and delivered meals to almost 555 Vermonters through VCIL's Meals on Wheels program for Individuals Under 60 with Disabilities.

VCIL's central office is located in Montpelier with three regional offices in Bennington, Brattleboro and Burlington. The Montpelier office houses a disability resource library and the toll-free information line, through which answers to disability-related questions are provided to callers from every Vermont community. Our locally based Peer Advocacy Counselors are available to people with disabilities in every municipality in Vermont.

During FY 2004, VCIL provided direct services to **102** residents of the Town of Bennington utilizing the following services/programs:

Information & Referral

Meals on Wheels for people with disabilities under age 60

Home and Community Access Program

Sue Williams Freedom Fund

VT Equipment Distribution Program

To learn more about VCIL, call toll-free at 1-800-639-1522

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Lisi-Baker, Executive Director

CENTER FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

In 1979 Court Diversion began as a program that offered a community's response to juvenile offenses as an alternative to the formal court procedure. The Diversion Review Board, a volunteer board of community citizens, strives to respond to the needs of the victim by mandating apologies and restitution, to the community by requiring public service and donations, and to the offender by demanding participation in programs that may change behavior such as job training, parenting skills, GED tutoring, alcohol & other drug screening, therapy, etc.

Over the years this opportunity has been expanded to include adults; other programs have been added as well. Today Court Diversion is an agency sponsoring several grant-funded programs; Juvenile Restorative Probation Program, and Community Support and Supervision Program (Street Checkers) which provide support and supervision to at-risk adolescents, as well as traditional Diversion. Additionally, in July 2000 the Teen Alcohol Safety Program (TASP) was established in response to a change in legislation that decriminalizes first-offense Possession of Malt Beverage charges. The Court Diversion Program was designated as administrator of this program by the State. Now a civil ticket, the legislature mandated that every young person be assessed and treated, if necessary, for their alcohol use. We believe prevention, education, and treatment, as well as enforcement, will help to stem the tide of underage alcohol consumption.

48% of Court Diversion referrals and **41%** of TASP referrals are Bennington residents. **91%** of all referrals are under the age of 21. **86%** of Diversion participants successfully completed the requirements of their Diversion contract. Over **90%** of those who complete their requirements do not commit further criminal acts. In addition, Court Diversion participants have returned over **\$78,000** in restitution and donations to their communities and performed over **33,000** hours of public service work. The Senior Meals Program, American Red Cross, Bennington Project Independence, Happy Days Childcare, Second Chance Animal Shelter and the Martha Canfield Library are some of the

organizations or projects that have benefited from Diversion clients' community service work or charitable donations.

Although the Juvenile Restorative Probation Program and the Community Support and Supervision Program (Street Checkers) are self-sustaining through grants from the Agency of Human Services, the Court Diversion Program and Teen Alcohol Safety Program must rely on local fund-raising to supplement the appropriation from the legislature and client fees.

We thank the voters of Bennington for their support and look forward to continuing our commitment to provide programs that respond to the needs of the victim, the community and the offender.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Kennedy, Esq., Executive Director

2004
FLOOR MEETING MINUTES
AND
ELECTION RESULTS

TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2004 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

BENNINGTON FIRE FACILITY
MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM – 3RD FLOOR
130 RIVER STREET
BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201

MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2004

MINUTES

MODERATOR: James Colvin.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Sharyn Brush-Chair; Joseph Krawczyk, Jr.-Vice-Chair; Lodie Colvin; Michael Lochner; James Gulley; Scott Creedy and Ronal Hall.

ALSO PRESENT: Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; William Burfeind-Treasurer; Timothy Corcoran-Town Clerk; Cindy Palmer-Assistant Treasurer; Joseph Carroll; Richard Pembroke; Justine Scanlon; Charles and Marta Koslovski; Sean Marie Oller; Ron Knapp; Pat Kinney; Laura Blanc; Bob Burgess; John Dostal; Linda Putney; Claude DeLuca; +/- (40) other citizens; Peter Crabtree-Rutland Herald; Andrew McKeever-Bennington Banner and Nancy Lively-Secretary.

At 7:30 P.M., Moderator James Colvin called the meeting to order.

Joseph Carroll requested that a moment of silence be observed in honor and remembrance of Oscar C. Fienberg, John McDermott, James T. McLaughlin, Sr., John E. Ahearn, Mary H. Mattison, Vincent Pizano, John E. Malone, Eric A. Halvorsen, Charles Sauer, Jr., Laura J. Lamb, Jean H. Ryan, Patricia Ann Barr, Dr. Donald W. Humphries, Dr. James S. Shea, Joseph F. Waite, William R. Thompson, Carl D. Jolivette, Robert E. Maguire, J. Duncan Campbell, Lester R. Carew, as well as, all citizens who had passed away during the previous year.

Sharyn Brush read the following Resolution to honor Richard C. "Dick" Pembroke, Sr. and dedicate this year's Town Report to him:

"Loving husband of his wife Mary Ann, father to Sharon, Richard, Jr., Ronald and Russell;

WHEREAS, Dick has served his community, his state and his country with selfless dedication;

AND WHEREAS, his service has included four years in the U.S. Navy during the Korean Conflict, eleven years on the Bennington Zoning Board of Adjustment, many of those as Chair, sixteen years in the Vermont House of Representatives serving fourteen as Chair of the House Transportation Committee;

AND WHEREAS, he has further serviced his community as a member of the Lions Club, the Knights of Columbus, as a member of the Green Mountain Chapter of the American

Red Cross, and the UVM Extension Board, currently serving on the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center Board and was recently appointed as a member of the State Environmental Board;

AND WHEREAS, for such service and dedication to this Vermont citizen, Dick has proven to be an effective leader, a respective legislator and a long time community stalwart;

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved, that the Bennington Select Board hereby honors Richard C. Pembroke for his many years of service, and through this Resolution, shows it's appreciation for all that you have done."

Mr. Pembroke graciously accepted.

Mr. Colvin read the Warning: "The residents of the Town of Bennington qualified by law to vote in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) in said Town on Monday, March 1, 2004, at 7:30 p.m., to transact the business specified to be done from the floor.

Following the completion of such business, the Meeting will stand adjourned to Tuesday, March 2, 2004, at The Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) at 7:00 a.m. for the election of officers and on all ballot articles specified. However, those on the checklist to vote in the Village of North Bennington shall vote for the election of officers and on all ballot articles at the North Bennington Firehouse in that Village. The Bennington Fire Facility above mentioned, is hereby established as the central polling place for those on the checklist to vote in said Bennington. The deadline for registering to vote is February 23, 2004 at 12:00 noon at the Bennington Town Clerk's Office.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANACTED FROM THE FLOOR

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

It was moved and seconded to accept the Town Report as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

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

The Select Board Members are presently paid \$1,300.00 annually and it has been three years since they have had an increase.

Joseph Carroll moved and Justine Scanlon seconded to increase the Select Board Members Compensation to \$1,400.00 annually. The motion carried with one opposed.

ARTICLE 3. OTHER BUSINESS: To transact such other proper business when met. (This includes discussion of articles on the Town Meeting ballot.)

ARTICLE 1. Shall the Town appropriate for the next fiscal year, July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005, the total sum of \$7,785,730.00 consisting of the following: \$2,238,370.00 for the laying out, maintaining, and repairing of the highways and bridges of the Town; and \$5,547,360.00 for the payment of the following: Any indebtedness not otherwise specifically provided for, interest on indebtedness, legally authorized State and County taxes, the prosecution and defense of the common rights and interests of the inhabitants of the Town, and for other necessary incidental expenses? The proposed budget includes \$5,000.00 for Fire Equipment, \$10,000.00 for parking improvements, and \$115,400.00 for healthcare deductibles and workers compensation insurance, any unexpended portion of which will be reserved to subsequent years for that purpose.

There was no discussion on Article 1.

Article 2. Shall the Town of Bennington issue bonds in an amount not to exceed \$7.0 million to construct improvements to its Water Treatment Facility and associated system?

Charles Koslovski is opposed to the \$7 million bond for improvements to the existing water system and cited many number comparisons and statistics to justify his opinion. He requested that the Select Board reexamine the water improvements and reduce the amount of the bond, and to include within the bond, water meter installation so that water charges are based on usage.

Stuart Hurd stated that the \$7 million bond is already a reduced amount. The Town have done a study of the water facilities with the conclusion being broken down into two phases – Phase 1, to meet federal and state Clean Water Act requirements, and Phase 2, to improve the overall system – repair leaky pipes, upgrading old lines and increased pressure in elevated areas. This bond only finances Phase 1 with Phase 2 not being considered until 2010. Users of the system are the ones paying for it, and Bennington is presently ranked 40th for water expense. If the bond is approved, we will be ranked 8th.

Joseph Krawczyk, Jr. noted that this wasn't an easy decision for the Select Board and federal and state requirements have forced them to make it.

Marta Koslovski was concerned about the continued use of chlorine.

Sharyn Brush and Michael Lochner commented that the use of ultraviolet purification is cost prohibitive and the government has yet to set the guidelines for it.

Stuart Hurd added that, in three to five years, we will be able to transform our system to the "safer" chloramines which do not generate the disinfection byproducts when they mingle with the organics in the system.

Charles Koslovski requested that the Board address our water conservation issues immediately.

Charles Koslovski moved and it was seconded that the Bennington Select Board reconsider the water meter issue and the installation of water meters in the Town.

Michael Lochner stated that, when metered, usage temporarily drops but then eventually goes back up.

Sharyn Brush stated that all multi-family residences, apartment houses and two-family houses are required to have meters in place by June 30, 2004.

Ron Knapp clarified that the uninstalled water meter cost is \$278.00 for 20 gallons/minute and \$318.00 for 30 gallons/minute.

Michael Lochner added that the installed price is \$700.00-\$900.00.

Patrick Kinney noted that we don't pay for our electric meters and the financial hardship that meter installation would cause to those on fixed incomes. He feels that the Town should pay for meter installation.

Marta Koslovski wondered if meter installation could become part of the bond.

Ronal Hall concurred that meter installation is a serious financial issue to residents.

Stuart Hurd stated that the work to Morgan Springs will be completed by the end of March 2004 and Vermont Pure will then begin taking water from the system. Initially, this will generate \$25,000/year in income which will be put into the water reserve for future projects. Our contract allows them to take up to 100,000 gallons/day which could generate \$100,000/year in income.

Bob Burgess stated that the infrastructure committee developed a report in 2002 where they cited the reasons for metering water. Those reasons were:

- meters were an accurate way of measuring the infiltration of the waste water system.
- they provide equity to system users with all residential users paying a base rate plus overage, and multi-family residences metered.
- meters will encourage the repair of leaking pipes in order to keep overall usage down.

The committee's recommendations to the Board were:

- meter all residential income property with the Town providing the meter and the property owner installing it.
- all new residential construction will be metered.
- meter readers will be supplied by the Town.
- all Bennington water users will be metered by June 2006.

Our waste water treatment plant is processing three million gallons a day more than water used. An engineering firm will be doing a complete analysis of our waste water system this year and into next.

John Dostal stated that the water quality is terrible and the Board should disseminate the information that they have gathered on the water system to the voters.

The motion carried with several citizens opposed.

Article 3. Shall the voters of the Town of Bennington call upon the Governor, our State legislators, and regulatory agencies to support and actively work for: 1. the mandatory labeling of all genetically engineered (GE) food and seed; 2. legislation that will shift all liability for any damages resulting from the growing of GE crops from farmers to the commercial developers of the GE technology; and 3. a moratorium on the further growing of GE crops for commercial use in the State of Vermont until there is credible and independent scientific evidence that these products are not harmful to our health, the environment, and the survival of family farms. (Advisory only)

Linda Putney stated that genetic engineering is a "new technology that forces genetic materials from different species into the foods that we eat in order to create new varieties", and feels that it may be harmful to our health. GE may cause allergic reactions, disease bacteria may be more resistant to antibiotics, seeds are more expensive, they require increased amounts of herbicides, they are not allowed in Europe

and it is inevitable that GE crops will contaminate natural and organic crops. Seventy other towns in Vermont already have a moratorium on GE crops until further studies establish their safety to people and the environment.

Joseph Krawczyk, Jr. noted the need for buffer zones if our neighboring states adopted GE and we did not, and asked that all voters become informed about the issues before voting.

Claude DeLuca stated the Vermont Pure agreement isn't mentioned by the auditors.

Stuart Hurd stated that's because the agreement hasn't been implemented yet.

John Dostal feels that those that support an ice skating rink should pay for it instead of making it a financial burden on the Town.

At 8:40 P.M., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy H. Lively
Secretary

TOWN MEETING ELECTION MARCH 2, 2004

Pursuant to the foregoing warning, the legal voters of the Town of Bennington met at 7 o'clock AM on Tuesday, March 2, 2004 and after the ballots had been counted, the following named persons and articles received the number of votes set opposite the names and articles designated.

<u>TOWN MODERATOR</u>	<u>Bennington</u>	<u>N. Bennington</u>	<u>Total</u>
James H. Colvin	2139	205	2344
Blanks	607	58	

And the said COLVIN was declared elected.

TOWN CLERK

Timothy R. Corcoran	2361	207	2568
Blanks	385	55	

And the said CORCORAN was declared elected.

TOWN TREASURER

William E. Burfeind	2137	196	2333
Blanks	616	67	

And the said BURFEIND was declared elected.

TOWN SELECTBOARD (3 to be elected)

Sharyn L. Brush	1197	107	1304
Claude M. DeLucia	823	92	915
Ronal Hall	954	52	1006
Joseph L. Krawczyk Jr.	1685	105	1790
Joel Aaron Lentzner	897	99	996
Christopher Oldham	1362	129	1491
Blanks	1371	207	

And the said BRUSH, KRAWCZYK and OLDHAM were declared elected.

ARTICLE 1: Budget

Yes	1986	204	2190
No	651	45	696
Blanks	136	15	

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 2: WATER TREATMENT FACILITY BOND

Yes	1537	166	1703
No	1048	71	1119
Blanks	189	27	

And it was so voted.

ARTICLE 3: GENETIC ENGINEERED FOOD (ADVISORY ONLY)

Yes	1750	191	1941
No	827	50	877
Blanks	197	23	

And it was so voted.

Recorded March 3, 2004 at 11:00 AM by Timothy R. Corcoran, Town Clerk, Bennington VT

2005
TOWN MEETING
WARNING

-WARNING-

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2005 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The residents of the Town of Bennington qualified by law to vote in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) in said Town on Monday, February 28, 2005, at 7:00 p.m., or immediately following the Bennington School District's Annual meeting should that run over, to transact the business specified to be done from the floor.

If you are a resident of the Town of Bennington, intend to be present at the meeting and are hearing impaired, arrangements will be made for a sign interpreter to be present at this meeting. For necessary arrangements, please contact Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager at the Bennington Town Offices, 205 South Street, P.O. Box 469, Bennington, VT - (802) 442-1037 no later than Wednesday, February 23, 2005.

Following the completion of such business, the Meeting will stand adjourned to Tuesday, March 1, 2005, at The Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) at 7:00 a.m. for the election of officers and voting on all ballot articles specified. However, those on the checklist to vote in the Village of North Bennington shall vote for the election of officers and on all ballot articles at the North Bennington Firehouse in that Village. The Bennington Fire Facility above mentioned, is hereby established as the central polling place for those on the checklist to vote in said Bennington. The deadline for registering to vote is February 21, 2005 at 12:00 noon at the Bennington Town Clerk's Office.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED FROM THE FLOOR

Monday, February 28, 2005

7:00 P.M.

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

**BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED BY BALLOT
TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2005
THE POLLS TO BE OPEN FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M.
AT THE POLLING PLACES SPECIFIED ABOVE**

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

ARTICLE 1. Shall the Town appropriate for the next fiscal year, July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006, the total sum of \$8,673,680. consisting of the following: \$2,531,420. for the laying out, maintaining, and repairing of the highways and bridges of the Town; and \$6,142,260. for the payment of the following: Any indebtedness not otherwise specifically provided for, interest on indebtedness, legally authorized State and County taxes, the prosecution and defense of the common rights and interests of the inhabitants of the Town, and for other necessary incidental expenses?

The proposed budget includes \$25,000. for Fire Equipment, \$10,000. for parking improvements, \$141,640. for healthcare deductibles and workers compensation insurance, and \$40,000. for the Pathway Project, any unexpended portion of which will be reserved to subsequent years for that purpose.

YES
NO

ARTICLE 2. Shall the Town of Bennington amend the Town Charter, Section 506-510, relating to the creation, operation and dissolution of the Bennington Downtown District, as warned? (The complete wording is in the booth.) This amendment eliminates the Downtown Improvement Commission and places responsibility for the District with the Select Board and Manager. It does not eliminate the District Tax on properties within the District.

YES
NO

ARTICLE 3. Shall the Town of Bennington increase the veterans exemption from \$10,000. to \$20,000. of assessed property value? (The exemption is for qualified veterans with a minimum 50% disability.)

YES
NO

ARTICLE 4. Shall the Town of Bennington appropriate \$25,000. as one time start up costs for the Bennington Youth Center?

YES

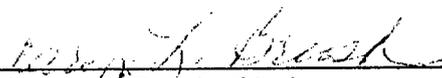
NO

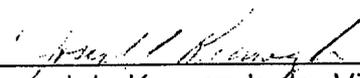
ARTICLE 5. Shall bonds in an amount not to exceed \$250,000. be issued for the purpose of purchasing 17 acres ± known as the Bijur field? This purchase, intended to incorporate the Bijur field into Willow Park, may require additional private funds.

YES

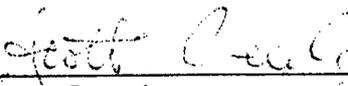
NO

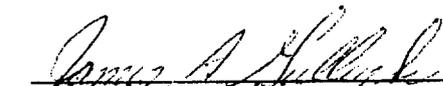
BY THE SELECT BOARD


Sharyn L. Brush, Chair

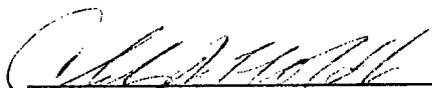

Joseph L. Krawczyk, Jr., Vice Chair


Lodie Colvin

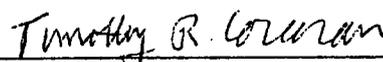

Scott Creedy


James A. Gulley, Sr.


Michael L. Lochner

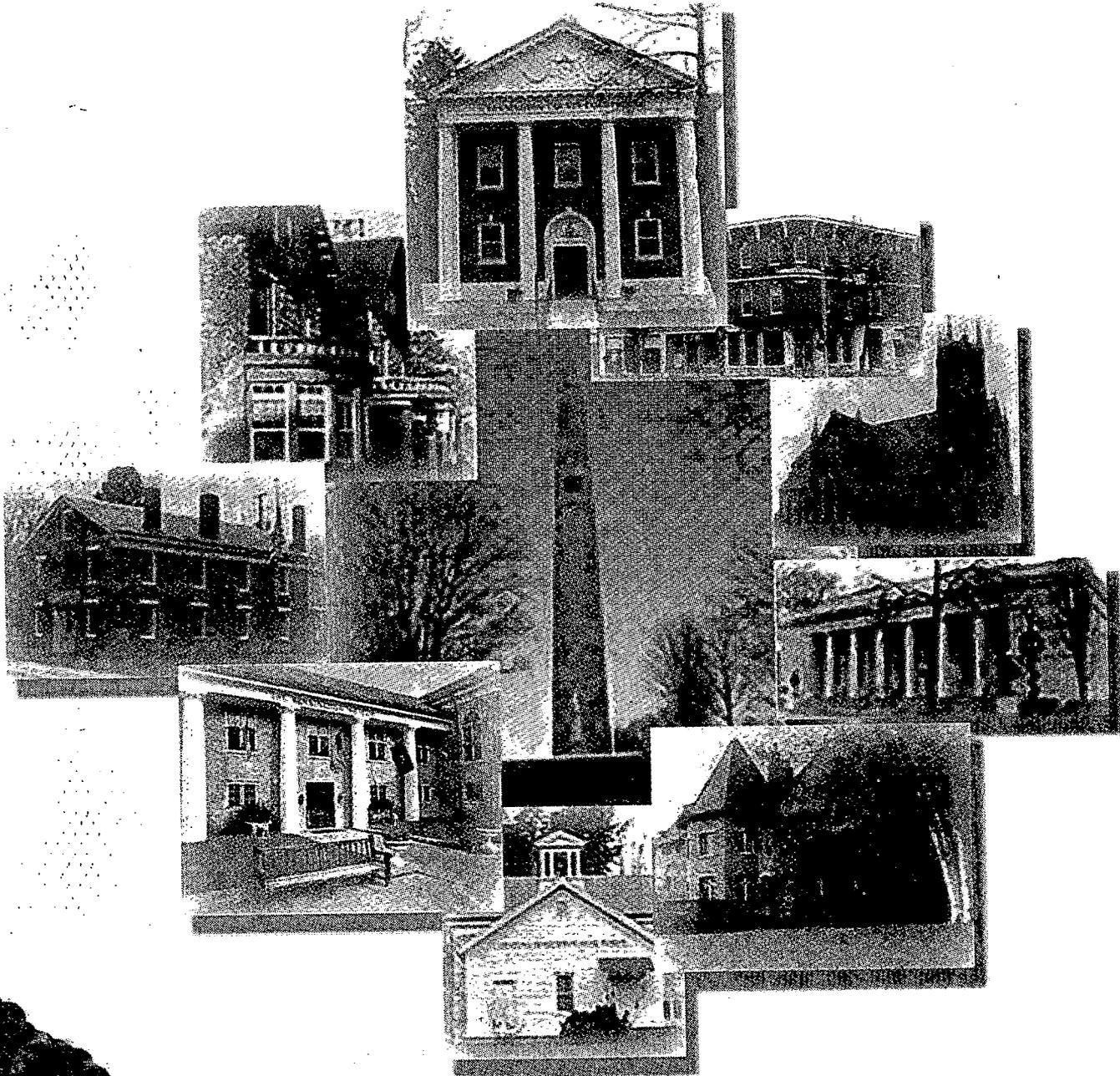

Christopher H. Oldham

Dated at Bennington, Vermont this 24th day of January, 2005.

Recorded January 25, 2005 at 11:00 AM by 
Town Clerk, Bennington, Vermont

SAH/mmj

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Vermont
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 STATE OF VERMONT
 DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

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

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total Primary Government	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
Land and land improvements	\$ -	-	172	170	172	170
Construction in progress	-	24	306	1,064	306	1,088
Distribution and collection systems	-	-	1,665	1,679	1,665	1,679
Buildings and improvements	3,021	3,060	7,191	5,139	10,212	8,199
Equipment and vehicles	2,904	2,344	485	590	3,389	2,934
Infrastructure	885	204	-	-	885	204
Totals	\$ 6,810	5,632	9,819	8,642	16,629	14,274

Reconstruction of the sewer treatment facility damaged by fire in 2002 was completed in the year ended June 30, 2004. Future major projects include water treatment facility upgrades, capital improvements that will be necessary in order to comply with storm water discharge requirements, and the construction of a new public works garage.

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

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total Primary Government	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
General obligation bonds	\$ 2,145	2,329	385	195	2,530	2,524
Capital lease obligations	708	217	-	-	708	217
Totals	\$ 2,853	2,546	385	195	3,238	2,741

The majority of the Town's existing long-term debt was incurred in the construction and renovation of the fire and police facilities. The Town uses capital lease obligations to finance the acquisition of certain vehicles and equipment.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

Net assets of the Town's governmental activities increased by approximately 16% or \$962 thousand for the year ended June 30, 2004, including net operating transfers from business-type activities of \$50 thousand. Unrestricted net assets comprise approximately 16% of the total net assets of governmental activities at June 30, 2004.

The net assets related to business-type activities decreased by approximately \$128 thousand for the year ended June 30, 2004.

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

	2004		2003	
	Total Cost of Services	Net Cost of Services	Total Cost of Services	Net Cost of Services
General government	\$ 1,687	1,469	1,508	1,215
Police department	2,105	1,964	1,899	1,781
Fire department	239	239	313	313
Public works	297	250	426	279
Community development	143	64	206	86
Health and welfare	39	39	37	37
Recreation	685	281	741	628
Highways and roads	2,874	1,294	1,865	1,557
Library	290	290	281	281
	\$ 8,359	5,890	7,276	6,177

The costs of providing governmental services amounted to approximately \$8.4 and \$7.3 million for the years ended June 30, 2004 and 2003, respectively. The cost of providing services is offset by charges for services and program-specific operating and capital grants, resulting in a net cost of services amounting to approximately \$5.9 million for the year ended June 30, 2004 as compared with \$6.2 million in the prior fiscal year. The net cost of services is funded by property taxes, investment earnings and grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

The Town's capital assets, such as infrastructure, buildings and equipment, less outstanding debt used to acquire them, amounted to \$13.4 and \$11.5 million at June 30, 2004 and 2003, respectively. These assets represent the largest portion of the Town's net assets. Although the Town's investment in its capital assets is reported net of related debt, it should be noted that the resources needed to repay this debt must be provided from other sources, since the capital assets themselves cannot be used to liquidate these liabilities.

At June 30, 2004 net assets of \$2.0 million have been restricted by the voters or sources external to the Town to be used for specific purposes. The June 30, 2004 unrestricted net assets of \$1.3 million may be used to meet the Town's ongoing activities.

**Table 2
Changes in Net Assets
(in Thousands)**

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
Revenues:						
Program revenues:						
Charges for services	\$ 433	534	2,300	2,175	2,733	2,709
Grants and contributions	738	564	-	-	738	564
General revenues:						
Property taxes	6,634	6,308	-	-	6,634	6,308
Other general revenues	602	255	245	67	847	322
Total revenues	<u>8,407</u>	<u>7,661</u>	<u>2,545</u>	<u>2,242</u>	<u>10,952</u>	<u>9,903</u>
Program expenses:						
General government	1,687	1,508	-	-	1,687	1,508
Public safety	2,344	2,212	-	-	2,344	2,212
Public works	297	426	-	-	297	426
Community development	143	206	-	-	143	206
Health and welfare	39	37	-	-	39	37
Recreation	685	741	-	-	685	741
Highways and roads	1,875	1,865	-	-	1,875	1,865
Library	290	281	-	-	290	281
Interest on long-term debt	135	149	-	-	135	149
Water	-	-	998	941	998	941
Wastewater treatment	-	-	1,610	1,549	1,610	1,549
Parking	-	-	15	17	15	17
Total expenses	<u>7,495</u>	<u>7,425</u>	<u>2,623</u>	<u>2,507</u>	<u>10,118</u>	<u>9,932</u>
Excess (deficiency) before transfers	912	236	(78)	(265)	834	(29)
Transfers	50	100	(50)	(100)	-	-
Increase (decrease) in net assets	<u>\$ 962</u>	<u>336</u>	<u>(128)</u>	<u>(365)</u>	<u>834</u>	<u>(29)</u>

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN AS A WHOLE

This section summarizes information and data as related to the Statements of Net Assets as of June 30, 2004 and 2003 and the Statement of Activities for the years then ended.

Government-Wide Statements

The Town's combined net assets increased by approximately \$834 thousand to \$16.6 million at June 30, 2004. Our analysis below focuses on the net assets (Table 1) and changes in net assets (Table 2) of the Town's governmental and business-type activities.

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

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
Current and other assets	\$ 4,387	4,262	292	1,882	4,679	6,144
Capital assets	6,810	5,632	9,819	8,642	16,629	14,274
Total assets	11,197	9,894	10,111	10,524	21,308	20,418
Current liabilities	(815)	(645)	(203)	(677)	(1,018)	(1,322)
Long-term liabilities	(3,292)	(3,122)	(370)	(180)	(3,662)	(3,302)
Total liabilities	(4,107)	(3,767)	(573)	(857)	(4,680)	(4,624)
Net assets:						
Invested in capital assets, net of debt	3,957	3,086	9,434	8,447	13,391	11,533
Restricted	1,980	1,863	-	-	1,980	1,863
Unrestricted	1,153	1,178	104	1,220	1,257	2,398
Total net assets	\$ 7,090	6,127	9,538	9,667	16,628	15,794

The Town's liquidity - the ability to pay for its most immediate obligations - is measured by comparing current assets to current liabilities. The Town has current assets approximately 3.2 times greater than its current liabilities.

The Town's solvency - the ability to fulfill its total obligations - is measured by comparing debt-to-assets ratio and debt-to-net assets ratio. Debt-to-assets ratio, which equals 22%, computes the percent of assets financed with debt. Debt-to-net assets ratio, which equals 28%, computes the amount that is owed for debt on every dollar that the Town has available for use providing programs.

Based on liabilities of \$4.7 million and total assessed property value of \$743.3 million, the Town's total obligations represent approximately \$0.63 per \$100 of 2004/05 assessed property value. Per capita obligations - the amount of total liabilities per person - is approximately \$293 for the Town, based on total population based on the 2000 Federal Census Report of approximately 16,000.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

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

Major Features of the Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements

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

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

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

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

Fund Financial Statements

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

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

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

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2004**

The management's discussion and analysis of the Town of Bennington, Vermont's financial performance provides an overview of the Town's financial activities for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2004. It focuses on the year end results and provides an objective analysis of the various funds the Town operates in the conduct of its business from a management perspective. It discusses both the government-wide and fund-based financial statements. Please read it in conjunction with the Town's financial statements, which immediately follow this section.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- The Town's combined net assets were \$16,628,157 at June 30, 2004, an increase of \$834,274 over last year.
- During the year, the Town's governmental activities' net assets increased by \$962,449.
- Net assets for the Town's business-type activities decreased by \$128,175.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

Government-wide Financial Statements

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

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



Independent Auditors' Report

The Select Board
Town of Bennington, Vermont

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Town of Bennington, Vermont as of and for the year ended June 30, 2004, which collectively comprise the Town's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents. These financial statements are the responsibility of Town of Bennington, Vermont, management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Bennington, Vermont, as of June 30, 2004, and the respective changes in financial position and cash flows, where applicable, thereof for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated November 17, 2004 on our consideration of Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

The management's discussion and analysis, on pages 2 through 10, and budgetary comparison information, on pages 30 through 33, are not a required part of the basic financial statements but are supplementary information required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We have applied certain limited procedures, which consisted principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation of the supplementary information. However, we did not audit the information and express no opinion on it.

Fisk Reed & Love, P.C.

November 17, 2004

Vt. Reg. #357

115 Elm Street • P.O. Box 319 • Bennington, Vermont 05201-0319
(802) 442-5552 • (800) 894-5511
Facsimile: (802) 442-7314 • e-mail: mail@frlcpa.com
www.frlcpa.com

SECTION I

FINANCIAL SECTION

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SECTION II - COMPLIANCE AND INTERNAL CONTROL

Report on Compliance and on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with <i>Government Auditing Standards</i>	
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TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Financial Statements and Schedules

June 30, 2004

(With Independent Auditors' Report Thereon)

FISK REED & LOVE
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, P.C.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON
OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD FROM JULY 1, 2003 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2004

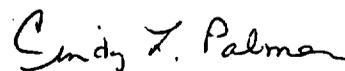
BEGINNING BALANCE - July 1, 2003 (per prior report)	\$ 773,484.83
ADD:	
Sollwan & Mary Alexander Sleeman transfer	\$ 14,038.70
Town taxes, water/sewer and other receipts	10,488,342.68
VLCT payments - wastewater	1,502,588.64
BSD, Inc.'s portion of tax collection	11,137,841.00
Benn. Rural Fire's portion of tax collection	268,536.02
Mount Anthony Middle School sidewalk funds	275,000.00
Interest earned on investments	17,848.07
Tax Anticipation Line-of-Credit draws 1.75%	<u>1,747,846.45</u>
Total Receipts	25,452,041.56
Total Available Cash	<u>\$26,225,526.39</u>
SUBTRACT:	
Disbursements made under warrants:	
Payroll	\$ 3,981,930.38
Vendor	8,699,649.93
payment of tax collection to the BSD, Inc.	11,137,841.00
payment of tax collection to the Benn. Rural Fire	268,536.02
12/10 Tax Anticipation Line-of-Credit - principal	1,747,846.45
Chittenden Bank 1.75% - interest	<u>9,795.04</u>
Total Disbursements	25,845,598.82
Cash Balance June 30, 2004	<u>\$ 379,927.57</u>

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD FROM JULY 1, 2004 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2004

BEGINNING BALANCE - July 1, 2004	\$ 379,927.57
ADD:	
Town taxes, water/sewer, and other receipts	9,085,220.30
BSD, Inc. and Benn. Rural Fire tax collection	10,050,150.39
Interest earned on investments	19,044.80
Tax Anticipation Line-of-Credit draws 1.85%	<u>1,918,242.05</u>
Total Receipts	21,072,657.54
Total Available Cash	<u>\$21,452,585.11</u>
SUBTRACT:	
Disbursements made under warrants:	
11/30 tax collection to BSD, Inc. & Benn. Rural	\$10,050,150.39
Payroll	2,154,039.60
Vendor	4,558,212.61
12/15 Tax Anticipation Line-of-Credit - principal	1,918,242.05
Chittenden Bank 1.85% - interest	<u>12,391.66</u>
Total Disbursements	18,693,036.31
Cash Balance December 31, 2004	<u>\$2,759,548.80</u>

Respectfully submitted,

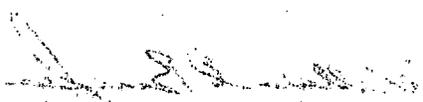

William E. Burfand
Town Treasurer


Cindy L. Palmer
Assistant Town Treasurer

1/06/05

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
12/14/04	Autum Marie Bradish	Granville, NY
12/15/04	Vivian Olivia Green	Granville, NY
12/17/04	Emma Elizabeth Jansch	Bennington, VT
12/17/04	Oliver Sturgiss Wade	Hoosick Falls, NY
12/18/04	Connor Joseph Harrington	Bennington, VT
12/19/04	Sarah Magdalene Beagle	Salem, NY
12/19/04	Samantha Danielle LaRoche	Bennington, VT
12/19/04	James Thayer Mahon	Dover, VT
12/20/04	Peter Robert Miller	Eagle Bridge, NY
12/20/04	Gavin James Rawson	Bennington, VT
12/21/04	Arianna Heather Angell-Brinn	Bennington, VT
12/21/04	Sean Thomas MacDonald	Shaftsbury, VT
12/22/04	Conner William Caron	Bennington, VT
12/22/04	Andrew James Kaulfuss	Bennington, VT
12/22/04	Foster Brant Savitsky	Williamstown, MA
12/24/04	Caleb Robert Bourn	Bennington, VT
12/24/04	Kaydence Marie Burdick	Bennington, VT
12/25/04	Justin Jacob Cooper	Bennington, VT
12/25/04	Jocelyn Kimball Thompson	Wells, VT
12/26/04	Henrik Conroy Bingemann	North Adams, MA
12/26/04	Raegan Elizabeth Joly	Bennington, VT
12/26/04	Julia Page Manney	Eagle Bridge, NY
12/26/04	Isaac David McCauliffe	Buskirk, NY
12/26/04	Jevaun Sherrod Russell	Bennington, VT
12/28/04	Mattison Catherine Jackson	Salem, NY
12/30/04	Griffyn Elrick Bowen	Rupert, VT
12/30/04	Skye Andrea Colvin	Shaftsbury, VT


 William E. Murray
 Town Treasurer

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
11/15/04	Miles Francis Smith	Hoosick Falls, NY
11/15/04	Karli Mae Granger	Hoosick Falls, NY
11/15/04	Kyrea Elizabeth Becker	Bennington, VT
11/16/04	Hannah May Welch	Pawlet, VT
11/16/04	Matthew Cary Simon	Woodford, VT
11/16/04	Deanna Lauren Oakes	Whitingham, VT
11/17/04	Brett Michael Rosenbauer	Pawlet, VT
11/17/04	Kiana Ava Lenoir	Greenwich, NY
11/18/04	Emma Rose Chirasello	Hoosick Falls, NY
11/19/04	Caleigh Elizabeth Gordon	Bennington, VT
11/19/04	Sierra Marie Cross	Bennington, VT
11/19/04	Benjamin Patrick Caron	Bennington, VT
11/20/04	Hayden Charles Ross	Manchester, VT
11/22/04	Tanner Jon Coon	Hoosick Falls, NY
11/23/04	Lexie Morgan Trombley	Bennington, VT
11/23/04	Matthew James Reynolds	Cambridge, NY
11/23/04	Dominik David Oakes	Bennington, VT
11/24/04	Noah Aidan Bassler	Bennington, VT
11/24/04	Emma Marie Perrotta	Wilmington, VT
11/25/04	Lacey Morgan Winslow	Salem, NY
11/25/04	Emma Mackenzie Blockburger	Arlington, VT
11/28/04	Bailey Robert Gordon	Shaftsbury, VT
11/28/04	Peter James McKenna	Bennington, VT
11/29/04	Oscar Jackson Waller	Dorset, VT
11/29/04	Hope Winifred Chinian	Cambridge, NY
11/29/04	Eion Hunter Curtis	Bennington, VT
11/29/04	Russell Scott Miller	Buskirk, NY
12/1/04	Brodie Gerald Gallant	Bennington, VT
12/1/04	Makayla Sharee Best	Buskirk, NY
12/2/04	Caedance Alexandra Bartholdi	Bennington, VT
12/4/04	Kyleigh Elizabeth Campbell	Bennington, VT
12/5/04	Joseph Robert Wilcox McCray	Bennington, VT
12/5/04	Jadyn Nicole Randolph	Bennington, VT
12/5/04	Emily Ann Yeung	Hoosick Falls, NY
12/8/04	Annabelle Rebecca Dean	Bennington, VT
12/9/04	Alex Robert Green	Cambridge, NY
12/10/04	Areanna Malynn Cummings	Pownal, VT
12/10/04	Shayley Nicole Getty	Salem, NY
12/12/04	Camden William Colloton Laney	Manchester, VT
12/12/04	Elijah Asher Maley	Glens Falls, NY
12/12/04	Mackenzie Noelle Rebecca Powers	Hoosick Falls, NY
12/12/04	Amelia Marie Sherwood	Manchester, VT
12/12/04	Stacey Lauren Taffi	Cambridge, NY
12/13/04	Gabriel Joseph Harrington	Bennington, VT
12/14/04	Sebastian E. Arbogast	W. Dover, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
10/17/04	Colby Michael Granger	Bennington, VT
10/18/04	Brandon Russell Mazza	Bennington, VT
10/19/04	Kevin Christopher Brock	Petersburgh, NY
10/20/04	Ethan Dean Robertson	Cambridge, NY
10/20/04	Leslie Guadalupe Tamayo Becerra	Petersburgh, NY
10/21/04	Kerrigan Cheryl Westbay	Sunderland, VT
10/21/04	Gwendolyn Marie Gardner	Bennington, VT
10/21/04	Samuel Carlton Greene	Berlin, NY
10/22/04	Jonathan Earl Lazelle	Wilmington, VT
10/22/04	Jada Cristine Weeks	Bennington, VT
10/23/04	Ashley Elizabeth Miller	Cambridge, NY
10/24/04	Michael Arthur Rudiakov	Manchester, VT
10/25/04	Cale Vincent Bisson	Pownal, VT
10/27/04	Acsha Ryan Bray	Bennington, VT
10/27/04	Emily Rose Gongola	Cambridge, NY
10/28/04	Grace Kathryn Schmidt	Bennington, VT
10/28/04	Sophie Marie Angeline Reese	Bennington, VT
10/28/04	Noah Edgar Albert	Pawlet, VT
10/29/04	Timothy Walter Southworth	Pawlet, VT
10/29/04	Parker Shiras Reeves	Wilmington, VT
10/29/04	Kooper Mace Potter	Bennington, VT
10/29/04	Dylan Michael Mullen	Schaghticoke, NY
10/29/04	Mckaylei Mae Galipeau	Bennington, VT
10/31/04	William Finley Bell	Bennington, VT
11/2/04	Christian Tyler Stevens	Granville, NY
11/2/04	Avery Kathleen Sinclari	Manchester, VT
11/5/04	Adrianna Vennessa Smith	Bennington, VT
11/5/04	Jesse James Kinney	Woodford, VT
11/5/04	Emily Laura Gates	Shaftsbury, VT
11/5/04	Kamali Beth Iris Joseph	North Adams, MA
11/6/04	Andrew David Senecal	Readsboro, VT
11/6/04	Nevaeh Desire Camp	Manchester, VT
11/6/04	Carson Maurice Matteson	Bennington, VT
11/7/04	Ezra Thomas Garrison	Peru, VT
11/7/04	Domenick Theron Peters	Bennington, VT
11/8/04	Jacen Ryan Blair	Canandaigua, NY
11/9/04	Aubryn Eva Cavagnaro	Bennington, VT
11/9/04	Madeline Isabella Phillips	Cambridge, NY
11/11/04	Wesley Louis Hurley	Bennington, VT
11/12/04	Tyler Corey Jaenecke	Bennington, VT
11/12/04	Luke Dennison Eggsware	Shaftsbury, VT
11/12/04	Evan Arthur Eggsware	Shaftsbury, VT
11/12/04	Jadyn Emily Clark	Bennington, VT
11/12/04	Calvin Michael Cameron	Eagle Bridge, NY
11/14/04	Corbyn Dallas Knapp	Bennington, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
9/15/04	William Joseph Mayer	Bennington, VT
9/15/04	Alexander Vincent Realmuto	Shaftsbury, VT
9/16/04	Landon Everett Davis	Bennington, VT
9/16/04	Johnathan Paul Crilly	Pownal, VT
9/16/04	Clifford Terry Grover Jr.	Hoosick Falls, NY
9/16/04	Camille Boyd Keefe	Quincy, MA
9/17/04	Leanna Jo DiCantio	Whitingham, VT
9/18/04	Avarie Jade Taylor	Hoosick Falls, NY
9/21/04	Maclain Michael Campbell	Bennington, VT
9/21/04	Joseph James Nason	Pownal, VT
9/22/04	Elizabeth Grace Spurr	Shaftsbury, VT
9/22/04	Thomas William Farkas-Watson	Wilmington, VT
9/22/04	Christopher James McCart Rayner	Eagle Bridge, NY
9/22/04	Amos Gunther Smithwick	Bondville, VT
9/23/04	William Jacob Sparks	Hoosick Falls, NY
9/23/04	Jordan Elizabeth McIntire	Bennington, VT
9/23/04	Catherine Emiy Rose Dykeman	Hoosick Falls, NY
9/26/04	Dominic John Kelly	Bennington, VT
9/26/04	Avery Karlen Bayse	Johnsburg, NY
9/27/04	Ella Marie Moses	Arlington, VT
9/27/04	Abbie Elizabeth Morse	Pownal, VT
9/27/04	Stasia Mary Epler	Cambridge, NY
9/29/04	Garrett Gerald Taylor	Hoosick Falls, NY
10/1/04	Kyia Taylor Woodworth	Valley Falls, NY
10/1/04	Erica Jean Weber	Buskirk, NY
10/1/04	Garrett Camper Rhoads	Berlin, NY
10/1/04	Hailey Elizabeth Lane	Bennington, VT
10/1/04	Marley Annghe Lane	Bennington, VT
10/2/04	Eli Caton Thetford	Salem, NY
10/2/04	Brook-Lynn Cadence Tellstone	Salem, NY
10/2/04	Nathan Michael Smilko	Londonderry, VT
10/3/04	Jameson Ray Haviland	Lohnes, NY
10/4/04	Kenzie Jade Schroeder	Shaftsbury, VT
10/7/04	Damien Diondre Myers	Troy, NY
10/8/04	Paige Reegan Gunther	Manchester, VT
10/9/04	Aspen Janice Williams	Fair Haven, VT
10/11/04	Carter Francis King	Pownal, VT
10/12/04	Keegan Patrick Keough	Hoosick Falls, NY
10/13/04	Emily Lou Elmer	Bennington, VT
10/13/04	Ava Rose Elmer	Bennington, VT
10/14/04	Carissa Elizabeth Davis	Cambridge, NY
10/15/04	Megan Libby Robart	Dover, VT
10/16/04	Randoph Lawrence Dennison Jr.	Pownal, VT
10/17/04	Regan Irene Hurley	Bennington, VT
10/17/04	Clare Elizabeth Monahan	Sandgate, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
8/19/04	Matthew Richard Cone	Sunderland, VT
8/21/04	Scott Edward Burdick Jr.	Pownal, VT
8/25/04	Keegan John Babson	Bennington, VT
8/25/04	Mayleen Jean Derosia	Bennington, VT
8/25/04	Christian Olaf Farland Jr.	Rutland, VT
8/25/04	Micheal Ernest Charles Macomber	Bennington, VT
8/25/04	Dillon Shay Hughes	Cambridge, NY
8/26/04	Austin John Reed	Cambridge, NY
8/26/04	Abigail Lee Bowen	Arlington, VT
8/30/04	Tyler Clifford Whitney	Bennington, VT
8/30/04	Lily Alva Cole	Rupert, VT
8/30/04	Ethan Mark Sibley	Bennington, VT
8/31/04	Zackary Paul Berube	Sunderland, VT
8/31/04	Bryan Allen Austin	Pownal, VT
8/31/04	Kathryn Hannah Gentry	Pownal, VT
8/31/04	Gareth Darrell Hill	Greenwich, NY
8/2/04	Jasmine Raine Peters	Bennington, VT
9/2/04	Devin James Hogan	Bennington, VT
9/2/04	Alexander Guy Clark	Cambridge, NY
9/2/04	John Peter Duffany	Arlington, VT
9/2/04	Anders Finnian Gibb Buursma	Jacksonville, VT
9/3/04	Leah Mae Smith	Pownal, VT
9/3/04	Trenten Marshall Reed	Bennington, VT
9/3/04	Russell Walter Endres	Shaftsbury, VT
9/4/04	Theodore Sage Harvey-Wilson	Bennington, VT
9/5/04	Aidan James Fahy	Schaghticoke, NY
9/6/04	Henry James Frechette	Bennington, VT
9/7/04	Sydney Paige Kasulinous	Bennington, VT
9/7/04	Hannah McKenzie Darrow	Valley Falls, NY
9/8/04	Christopher Alan Pierson	Manchester, VT
9/9/04	Nevaeh Jade Wright	Bennington, VT
9/9/04	Shane William Fleming Spendiff	Eagle Bridge, NY
9/10/04	Dylan James Piritz	Hoosick Falls, NY
9/10/04	Chloe Abigail Chase	Jacksonville, VT
9/10/04	Pierce Michael Zimmer	Londonderry, VT
9/10/04	Hannah Maria Anuszewski	Cambridge, NY
9/13/04	Alex Joseph Brown	Bennington, VT
9/13/04	Ethan George Hunt	Buskirk, NY
9/13/04	Dominick Christopher Miceli	Wells, VT
9/13/04	Owen Patrick Kelly	Hoosick Falls, NY
9/13/04	Ethan Thomas Kane	Shaftsbury, VT
9/13/04	Owen William Wilson	Hoosick Falls, NY
9/13/04	Stephen James Rocha Gaj	Berlin, NY
9/15/04	Karissa Ann Vazquez	Bennington, VT
9/15/04	Mackenzie Rosman Grvais	Bennington, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
7/24/04	Teague James Murphy	Williamstown, MA
7/28/04	Nadav Hanoach Asal	Albany, NY
7/29/04	Alexis Paige Harrington	Bennington, VT
7/29/04	Colby Scott Moses	Eagle Bridge, NY
7/29/04	Rebecca Claire Casey	Petersburg, NY
7/28/04	Alexandria Danielle Lacoste	Pawlet, VT
7/30/04	Lucas Matthew Granger	Bennington, VT
7/30/04	Colin Joseph King	Hoosick Falls, NY
7/30/04	Ameer Fuad Abdul-Monem Naser	Manchester, VT
7/30/04	Lillian Mildred Varga	White Creek, NY
8/1/04	Lilli Katherine VanDerKar	Pownal, VT
8/2/04	Devon John Sullivan	Bennington, VT
8/2/04	Hannah Mary Gardner	Bennington, VT
8/3/04	Theodore Malcolm Galipeau	Bennington, VT
8/3/04	Meghyn Kelsey McMullen	Pawlet, VT
8/3/04	Gabriella Lynne St. Hilaire	Hoosick Falls, NY
8/3/04	Taylor Vy Amaral	Pawlet, VT
8/4/04	Ashlynn Crystal Ruggles	Bennington, VT
8/4/04	Aaron Michael Barney	Bennington, VT
8/4/04	Meghan Riley Barilone	Bennington, VT
8/5/04	Tara Ann Bolio	Bennington, VT
8/5/04	Eve Elizabeth Becker	Arlington, VT
8/6/04	Haley Brianne Green	Bennington, VT
8/6/04	Thomas William Duncan	Wilmington, VT
8/7/04	Keller James Virgilio	Arlington, VT
8/7/04	Cassidy Riley Hurley	Salem, NY
8/8/04	Ayana Lily Glass	Peru, VT
8/9/04	Sarah Ann Mulhall	Salem, NY
8/9/04	Kylee Devotion Reynolds	Bennington, VT
8/9/04	Kain Gregory Buell	Greenwich, NY
8/9/04	Elijah Christian Danio	Cambridge, NY
8/10/04	Madison Marie Coonradt	Shaftsbury, VT
8/10/04	Maya Kathryn Danaher	Eagle Bridge, NY
8/13/04	Joseph Michael Carista IV	Hoosick Falls, NY
8/13/04	Jacob Logan Onorato	North Adams, MA
8/13/04	Brock Glenn Bascom	Pownal, VT
8/13/04	George Frederick Gratton	Pownal, VT
8/13/04	Griffin Alden Briggs	Manchester, VT
8/15/04	Celia Izola Murphy	Bennington, VT
8/16/04	Caz Garry-Martin Amoroso	Bennington, VT
8/16/04	Aiden Brew Moscarello	Arlington, VT
8/16/04	Coleman Christopher Reece	Stratton, VT
8/17/04	Perrin Lucille Delano Marion	Manchester, VT
8/17/04	Aidan Bower Buggee	Bennington, VT
8/19/04	Carter Robert Ferguson	Bennington, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
5/7/04	Casey Elizabeth Steele	Bennington, VT
5/8/04	Micayla Rose Price	Bennington, VT
5/10/04	Piper Mae Chapman	Londonderry, VT
5/10/04	Daniel Alexander Yurschak	Greenwich, NY
5/11/04	Cordelia Grace Finney	Bennington, VT
5/12/04	Meaghan Grace Millette	Pownal, VT
5/12/04	Caleb Joseph Palmer	Cambridge, NY
5/12/04	MaKayla Pearl Peterson	Bennington, VT
5/13/04	Noah Matthew Abbott	Hoosick Falls, NY
5/13/04	Katey Elizabeth Barnes	Salem, NY
5/16/04	Hunter Allen Cole	Manchester, VT
5/18/04	Jaida Ann Lawton	Bennington, VT
5/18/04	Reghan Bonnie Raney	Greenwich, NY
5/18/04	Corbin Bryston Tole	Bennington, VT
5/18/04	Jewel Marie Wood	Bennington, VT
5/19/04	Molly Amber McGuire	Hoosick Falls, NY
5/19/04	Hannah Lynn Spizowski	Petersburgh, NY
5/20/04	John Joseph Byrnes IV	Greenwich, NY
5/20/04	Noah Emerson Forest	Shaftsbury, VT
5/21/04	Lucy Elise Deroche	Hoosick Falls, NY
5/21/04	Brandyn Philip Long	Bennington, VT
5/21/04	Alivia Jae Reed	Bennington, VT
5/21/04	Jay Edward Wilkinson	Bennington, VT
5/24/04	Gabriell Marie Gates	Bennington, VT
5/24/04	Cloe Mariah Lee Tracy Morey	Bennington, VT
5/25/04	Jade Elise Crockwell	Bennington, VT
5/25/04	Lawrence Joseph Gates III	Bennington, VT
5/25/04	William Harry Towne III	Manchester, VT
5/26/05	Lindsey Susan Joy	Buskirk, NY
5/26/04	Damon Smith Stratton	Bennington, VT
5/27/04	David Albert Niemi	Bennington, VT
6/1/04	Nora Kathleen Hanlon	Jacksonville, VT
6/1/04	Alexis Olivia Seacord	Cambridge, NY
6/2/04	Madox Reynolds Mathews	Bondville, VT
6/2/04	Hunter Ryan Phillips	Bennington, VT
6/3/04	Sierra Avery-Mae Brown	Shaftsbury, VT
6/3/04	Sarah Frances Emmons	Arlington, VT
6/3/04	Morgan Elizabeth Lindsay	Bennington, VT
6/3/04	Kento Rush	Bennington, VT
6/4/04	Tianna Lee Anderson	Berlin, NY
6/4/04	Tiverius Jack Gordon Auspland	Bennington, VT
6/4/04	Brayden James Rogers	Bennington, VT
6/5/04	Erin Lynn Brooks	Grafton, NY
7/23/04	Hailey Jean Mellow	Danby, VT
7/23/04	Joshua Lee Taylor	Salem, NY

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
4/12/04	Sophia Grace Esch	Winhall, VT
4/13/04	Jesse Gunnar Cameron	Cherry Plain, NY
4/13/04	Peton Marcus Webb	Bennington, VT
4/15/04	Leah May Clark	Hoosick Falls, NY
4/15/04	Simon Issac Free	Bennington, VT
4/15/04	Kaitlyn Elizabeth Hamilton	Wilmington, VT
4/16/04	Spencer Madeline North	Dover, VT
4/16/04	Jedidiah James O'Reilly	Readsboro, VT
4/16/04	Maya Loren Perry	Shaftsbury, VT
4/16/04	Faith Ann Ross	Manchester, VT
4/17/04	Sophia Marie Granger	Arlington, VT
4/17/04	Stella Kathleen Southwick	Arlington, VT
4/19/04	Kai Wyld Blom	Bennington, VT
4/20/04	Andon Edward Dwyer	Bennington, VT
4/20/04	Lee Joseph Finefrock	Bennington, VT
4/20/04	Shontia Marie Gates	Berlin, NY
4/20/04	Autumn Sue Hayes	Bennington, VT
4/20/04	Jazmine Marie Rodd	Bennington, VT
4/21/04	Morgan Ann Mould	Bennington, VT
4/21/04	Henri Stuart Nicolas	Bennington, VT
4/22/04	Faith Margaret Matteson	Sunderland, VT
4/24/04	Rachelle Al Remeh	Beirut, Lebanon
4/24/04	Leah Marie James	Pownal, VT
4/25/04	Jackson Donald Gawtry	Arlington, VT
4/25/04	Aiden Reed Lewis	Manchester, VT
4/26/04	Makenzie Catherine Livingston	Bennington, VT
4/29/04	Katharine May Fitzgerald	Shaftsbury, VT
4/30/04	Ian Foster Philip	Danby, VT
4/30/04	Jadyn Lillian Spencer	Pownal, VT
5/1/04	Naia Yacine Gueye	Argyle, NY
5/1/04	Colby Patrick Minbiole	Cropseyville, NY
5/3/04	Jesse James Ferrante	Dorset, VT
5/3/04	David Tyler Lape	Manchester, VT
5/3/04	Conner Douglas Randall	Bennington, VT
5/4/04	Ethan Everett Bowen	Arlington, VT
5/4/04	Miranda Jane Collette	Bennington, VT
5/4/04	Aaron Thomas Cutler	Bennington, VT
5/4/04	Rainey Edward Dumas	Bennington, VT
5/4/04	Isabel Odell Iris	Manchester, VT
5/4/04	Logan Russell Seidler	Manchester, VT
5/4/04	Mackenzie Leigh Wilcox	Greenwich, NY
5/6/05	Trent Lee Bolognani	Bennington, VT
5/6/04	Thomas John Donald Doyle	Berlin, NY
5/6/04	Madeline Rose Senecal	Readsboro, VT
5/7/04	Phoebe Janine Carson	Pownal, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
3/14/04	Hannah JoAnne Lacroix	Shaftsbury, VT
3/15/04	Maria Louise Blay	Arlington, VT
3/16/04	Brady Matthew Hudson	Bennington, VT
3/17/04	Keagan Cody Harrington	Bennington, VT
3/17/04	Ryan Scott Holland	Hoosick Falls, NY
3/17/04	Warren James McIntyre III	Manchester, VT
3/18/04	James Augustaf Larson IV	Hoosick Falls, NY
3/19/04	Zanynah Rae Amidon Pratt	Bennington, VT
3/19/04	Christopher Allen Boyd Jr.	Dover, VT
3/21/04	Charles Alfred Kunz	Manchester, VT
3/21/04	Peyton Joseph LaBonte	Petersburgh, NY
3/21/04	Essence Jade Nystrom	Bennington, VT
3/22/04	Hayden Edward Gaudette	Bennington, VT
3/22/04	Marissa Jo Landry	Bennington, VT
3/22/04	Marley Grace McLellan	Bennington, VT
3/22/04	Samuel Joseph Roy	Pownal, VT
3/22/04	Kyra Morgan Tiff	Pownal, VT
3/24/04	Sophia Marie Kipp	Pownal, VT
3/25/04	Emma Jayne Johnstone Hayford	Mechanicville, NY
3/25/04	Calvin Simeon Hoag	Shaftsbury, VT
3/25/04	Catherine Joi Samson	Williamstown, MA
3/26/04	Haley Alise Krawczyk	Bennington, VT
3/26/04	Gabriel Thomas Luce	Dorset, VT
3/26/04	Jason Andrew Luce	Dorset, VT
3/27/04	Dakota Ivy Davis	Pownal, VT
3/27/04	Caleb Lee Keith	Shaftsbury, VT
3/27/04	Trentin Michael David Meyer	Wilmington, VT
3/28/04	Gregory Alan Post Jr.	Cambridge, NY
3/29/04	Richard Allen Jordan Jr.	Eagle Bridge, NY
3/30/04	William Everett Murphy	Bennington, VT
3/31/04	Dalton Chaney Furforo	Cambridge, NY
4/1/04	Brandon Charles Bouplon	White Creek, NY
4/1/04	Andi Giovanni Miner	Hoosick Falls, NY
4/1/04	Jordan Russell Persson	Jamaica, VT
4/2/04	Victoria Jennings Hall	Pownal, VT
4/2/04	Logan Ann Lachance	Bennington, VT
4/2/04	Katelyn Marie Longe	Halifax, VT
4/2/04	Arron Zachery O'Shea	Bennington, VT
4/2/04	Chloe Morgan Pound	Bennington, VT
4/6/04	Marketa Grace Matuscik	Londonderry, VT
4/6/04	Jacob Kendall Tibbetts	Bennington, VT
4/7/04	Carrie Lee Smith	Bennington, VT
4/9/04	Devin Nicholas Calef	Bennington, VT
4/9/04	Brady Keith Pendlebury	Bennington, VT
4/9/04	Fiona Grace Young	Bennington, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
2/3/04	Connor Stephen Guertin	Bennington, VT
2/3/04	Kirstin Ruby LeBarron	Cambridge, NY
2/5/04	Tiah Zane Potter	Shaftsbury, VT
2/6/04	Damiën Quincy Diaz	Bennington, VT
2/9/04	Cole Hansen Loveland	Shushan, NY
2/9/04	Emily Elizabeth Talmadge	Greenwich, NY
2/10/04	Emily Alexis Briggs	Pownal, VT
2/10/04	Abigail Elizabeth Hill	Londonderry, VT
2/10/04	Jackson Reb Thomas	Cambridge, NY
2/10/04	Ashton John Towsley	Arlington, VT
2/13/04	Allysson Felicity Bornt	Hoosick Falls, NY
2/13/04	Dylan Patrick Herrington	Sunderland, VT
2/16/04	Cameron Lee McDermott	Arlington, VT
2/16/04	Therese Marie Potvin	Stamford, NY
2/17/04	Alyssa Lynn Vandecar	Glens Falls, NY
2/17/04	Shayden Brooke Wood	Pawlet, VT
2/19/04	Rhiannon Victoria Lane	Hoosick Falls, NY
2/19/04	Colby Matthew OShea	Bennington, VT
2/21/04	Otto Ernest Ostler	Pownal, VT
2/23/04	Sophia Maxine Record	Greenwich, NY
2/25/04	Hunter Gore Brandi	Bennington, VT
2/25/04	Brittney Lyne McFarland	Salem, NY
2/25/04	Caleb James Wilson	Petersburgh, NY
2/26/04	Alexander Thomas Hawley	Bennington, VT
2/27/04	Lola Giselle Davidson	Cambridge, NY
2/27/04	Aidan Lily Forrest	Woodford, VT
2/28/04	Cameron Issac Becker	Bennington, VT
2/28/04	Riley Clare Hayes	Hoosick Falls, NY
2/28/04	Grace Gabrielle Porter	Rupert, VT
2/29/04	Jasmine Lee Surdam	Bennington, VT
3/1/04	Abigale Jean Harding	Shushan, NY
3/2/04	Nathan Patrick Reilly	Bennington, VT
3/3/04	Mara Jean Cole	Wilmington, VT
3/4/04	Anabelle AeLotia Beach	Sunderland, VT
3/5/04	Emma Kathleen Cross	Eagle Bridge, NY
3/6/04	Adelyn Rhea Breault	Buskirk, NY
3/6/04	Cassidy Clara Pickering	Arlington, VT
3/6/04	Kailyn Raye Ploski-Skinner	Sunderland, VT
3/8/04	Kyle Joseph Wellspeak	Bennington, VT
3/9/04	Christopher Allen Dumas Jr.	Hampton, NY
3/9/04	Shannon Nicole Thompson	Arlington, VT
3/10/04	Skylar John Barker	Bennington, VT
3/10/04	Jay Robert Betit	Hoosick Falls, NY
3/10/04	Stella Hannah Granger	Hoosick Falls, NY
3/11/04	Brittney Elizabeth Onorato	Shaftsbury, VT

2004 Births

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Child</u>	<u>Residence</u>
1/1/04	Cole Farnum Boisvert	Readsboro, VT
1/1/04	Landen Zachorie Caron	Bennington, VT
1/1/04	Josef Edward Ouellette	Manchester, VT
1/2/04	Hunter Michael Chiorgno	Hoosick Falls, NY
1/2/04	Tucker Edward Gates	Bennington, VT
1/3/04	Caleb Austin Matteson	Eagle Bridge, NY
1/4/04	Calvin Stanley Burdick	Hoosick Falls, NY
1/4/04	Merritt Elizabeth Perkins	Shaftsbury, VT
1/5/04	Blake Stephen Eugene Hallock	Cambridge, NY
1/6/04	Megan Maryellen McGann	Shaftsbury, VT
1/9/04	Luukas Harrison Kindel	Shushan, NY
1/10/04	Alexander Michael Bushee	Hoosick Falls, NY
1/10/04	Karsen Emily Dunican	Bennington, VT
1/10/04	Skyler Reese Pratt	Pownal, VT
1/11/04	Colby Michael Phillip Camara	Bennington, VT
1/12/04	Andre Rocky Burdick	Cambridge, NY
1/12/04	Alexandria Madonna Schembeck	Bennington, VT
1/13/04	David Michael Keyes	Manchester, VT
1/13/04	Karter Riley Noyes	Bennington, VT
1/13/04	Evie Trafton Roy	Shaftsbury, VT
1/15/04	Lucy Willa Tyler Farrell	Pawlet, VT
1/16/04	William John Shiland IV	Hoosick Falls, NY
1/17/04	Adam Moussa Al Assaad	Salem, NY
1/18/04	Cyrus James Tetreault	Hoosick Falls, NY
1/19/04	Joshua Matthew Colegrove Jr.	White Creek, NY
1/20/04	Adam Hunter Agresta	Sandgate, VT
1/20/04	Caleb James Morse	Arlington, VT
1/21/04	Zachary Ryan Lourie	Cambridge, NY
1/22/04	Lauren Rose Gervais	Bennington, VT
1/22/04	Masson Marie Knapp	Hoosick Falls, NY
1/22/04	Emma Theresa Lewis-Tifft	Danby, VT
1/23/04	Franklin Thomas Chalue Jr.	Bennington, VT
1/23/04	Callum David DeBoer	Bennington, VT
1/24/04	Adrian Micheal Gilbert	Bennington, VT
1/24/04	Anna Elizabeth Hogan	Bennington, VT
1/29/04	Savannah Marie Redcross	Eagle Bridge, NY
1/30/04	Lucas Andrew James Corey	Bennington, VT
1/31/04	Rylie Eric Burr	Cambridge, NY
1/31/04	Brody William Mullen	Hoosick Falls, NY
1/31/04	Brooks Walton Robson	Shaftsbury, VT
2/1/04	Keely Dale Greene	Bennington, VT
2/1/04	Travis John Koziol	Buskirk, NY
2/1/04	Isaac Alden Martin	Hoosick Falls, NY
2/1/04	Matthew John Wasielbeuski	Bennington, VT
2/3/04	Michael David Cornell	Hoosick Falls, NY

2004 First Class Liquor Licenses

1. Alldays & Onions
2. American Legion Post #13
3. Apple Valley Inn & Café
4. Bennington Club
5. Bennington College Restaurant & Caterers, Ltd.
6. Bennington College Restaurant & Caterers
7. Bennington Lanes
8. Bennington Pizza House
9. Bennington Station
10. Bennington Station ©
11. Thomas J. Carmody's ©
12. Thomas J. Carmody's
13. Dogs Breath Bar and Tap Room ©
14. Dreaming Tree, Inc.
15. Eagles, Fraternal Order of, Aerie #1861
16. Elks, B.P.O Bennington Lodge #567
17. Four Chimney's Restaurant and Inn
18. Hunter's An American Grill ©
19. Hunter's an American Grill
20. Izabella's Eatery
21. JC's Tavern ©
22. Jensen's Restaurant, Inc.
23. Kevin's at Mike's Place III ©
24. Kevin's at Mike's Place
25. Lulu's Classic Cuisine
26. Madison Brewing Company, Pub & Restaurant
27. Moose, Loyal Order of Lodge #1233
28. Mt. Anthony County Club ©
29. Mt. Anthony Golf & Tennis Club
30. New Fortune Cookie, The
31. New Fortune Cookie, The ©
32. Pangaea
33. Peppermill's of Bennington
34. Pizza Hut
35. Ryan's Café ©
36. Sodexho, Vermont, Inc.
37. Talk of the Town Restaurant ©
38. Talk to the Town Restaurant
39. Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #1332
40. Your Belly's Deli

2004 Second Class Liquor Licenses

1. Apple Barn, The
2. Bennington Beverage Outlet, B.B.O
3. Beshara's Discount Beverage & Groceries
4. River Street Variety
5. Brooks Pharmacy #346
6. Caslin's Grocery
7. Dashboard Deli
8. Cumberland Farms #8006
9. Charlie's Mobil & More
10. East Road Variety
11. Fantastic Gifts
12. Fleming Oil Company, Inc
13. Hannaford Food & Drug Store
14. Henry's Market
15. Krush., Inc
16. Madison Brewery Company
17. Maguire's Market
18. Martin's Mini Mart & Beverage Discount
19. Mincer's Mini Mart
20. North Bennington Variety
21. Powers Market
22. Price Chopper #171
23. Rite Aid Pharmacy #432
24. Short Stop #117
25. Short Stop #145
26. Smoker's Den and Discount Beverage Center
27. Stewart's Shop #195
28. TPW Enterprises, Incorporated
29. True's Country Store
30. True's Country Store & Deli
31. Walter Smith, Incorporated
32. Willy's Variety
33. Yott's Market, Inc

The properties below have been posted in accordance to the provision of 10 V.S.A section 5201 not allowing hunting shooting or trapping.

<u>Owner Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
1. Randall Bates	Michaels Drive, Houghton Lane	13.67
2. George P. Brumbelow III	333 Carpenter Hill Rd.	5.31
3. Meridy Capella	Silk Road, Vail Road	10.72
4. Lia Diamond	Carpenter Hill	200 plus
5. Harold Harrington	River Road	100
6. Barbara R. Hogan	2323 Monument Avenue	98
7. Wayne M. Kachmar	514 Ore Bed Road	50
8. David Kelso	Park Street	50
9. Jane & Adam Kunin	175 Eaton Road	10
10. New England Tropical Conservatory	Pownal Road	96
11. Robert Newsome	Fox Hill Road	80
12. Howard S. Smith	Houran Road,	150
13. William T. Tronsen	Whipstock Road, RT 67A, Madison Road, College Road	550

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

2004 Dog Licenses Issued

4	@	\$2.00.....	\$ 8.00
994	@	4.00.....	3,976.00
276	@	6.00.....	1,656.00
187	@	8.00.....	1,496.00
3	@	10.00.....	30.00
46	@	12.00.....	552.00
1	@	29.00...(kennel).....	29.00
1	@	56.00...(kennel).....	56.00
			<u>\$ 7,803.00</u>

2004 Disbursement

To Town of Bennington.....	\$ 7,803.00
=====	

2004 Liquor Licenses Issued

30 – 2004 1 st Class Liquor Licenses @ 100.00.....	\$ 3,000.00
10 – 2004 1 st Class Cabaret Licenses @ 100.00.....	1,000.00
33 – 2004 2 nd Class Liquor Licenses @ 50.00.....	1,650.00
<u>\$ 5,650.00</u>	
=====	

2004 Disbursement

To Town of Bennington.....	\$ 5,650.00
=====	

2004 Tobacco Licenses Issued

6 – 2004 Tobacco Licenses @ 5.00.....	\$ 30.00
=====	

2004 Disbursement

To Town of Bennington.....	\$ 30.00
=====	

**DEPARTMENT OF ASSESSMENT
BOARD OF LISTERS**

This office mailed 398 Change of Appraisal notices on the 10th of June 2004. The Board of Listers heard 48 grievances, with thirteen (13) appeals forwarded to the Board of Civil Authority. Five (5) appeals were submitted to the State Board of Appraisers and two (2) appeals to Superior Court.

The grand list for 2004 increased 1.69 percent from \$731,196,100 to \$743,800,600. The State's Equalization Study for 2004 shows Bennington's common level of appraisal at 93.54 percent and our coefficient of dispersion at 11.14 percent. Over the past year we have become very familiarized with the new assessing software, which was installed in the fall of 2003. This software is compatible with the Town's accounting and tax programs, as well as, State of Vermont tax laws. After successfully completing a four year town wide reappraisal for the grand list of 2003, our listers and data collectors began inspecting properties in August, for the first phase of the next rolling re-val, for the grand list of 2005.

I joined the Town of Bennington's employment as its Chief Assessor effective December 1, 2004. My family and I have moved to the area from Tallahassee, Florida. Former Chief Assessor Steve Wright, continues to offer his valued expertise on a contract basis. He is expected to slowly phase out his contract over the next fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Dorsett, Jr., Chief Assessor

BENNINGTON ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Bennington Energy Committee was appointed in June, 2003 to look into energy efficiency and conservation specifically as it relates to public education, initiatives in other towns, pedestrian and bicycle friendliness, and renewable energy. The Committee reported its recommendations to the Select Board in May, 2004. The report can be obtained from the Town Manager. The Committee has recently submitted many of its recommendations to the Planning Commission for inclusion in the updated Town Plan.

Public education initiatives of the committee have included the following:

- an ongoing series of energy tips on the CAT-TV bulletin board.
- two professionally produced energy education videos on CAT-TV.
- distribution of a U.S. Dept. of Energy energy education publication to local schools
- participation with Efficiency Vermont at Energy Star Center opening at H. Greenberg & Sons.

The Committee networks with other town energy committees through SERG (Sustainable Energy Resource Group) to keep updated with initiatives of other town energy committees. The Committee has supported the development of pedestrian and bicycle paths as well as thoughtful planning and design when upgrading roads to ensure that they are bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The Committee has been exploring renewable energy options for the Town of Bennington.

The Energy Committee meets monthly. Notice of meetings are published in the Bennington Banner. Interested persons are welcome to attend its meetings and participate in its work.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Putney, Chair

Rental Housing

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

Other Public Health Issues

The balance of time was spent investigating such matters as garbage complaints, inadequate water supplies, rodent/roach complaints, failed septic systems, lead and asbestos concerns from tenants in rental housing and complaints about excessive smoke from wood burning appliances in private dwellings.

Another persistent health concern is burning garbage/paper outside in burn barrels. We remind all residents that this practice is illegal in the State of Vermont. I was successful in obtaining voluntary compliance with all public health problems this year and appreciate the cooperation from all involved. A special thank you to the Local Department of Health Office. Please feel free to contact us regarding any questions or concerns you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry McLeod, Chief Building Inspector, Fire Marshall & Health Officer

Kevin J. Goodhue, Building Inspector/Fire Marshall, Code Enforcement Officer & Deputy Health Officer

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

In 2004, the Planning Commission, proposed and the Select Board adopted new Land Use and Development Regulations. These regulations govern all aspects of zoning and sub division. The Planning Commission also proposed Design Guidelines for the Planned Commercial Zoning District (the Northside Drive, North Bennington Road Commercial corridor) and regulations for large scale retail stores. The Select Board adopted the design guidelines and has indicated that it will adopt the large scale retail regulations in January of 2005. With the help of the Bennington County Regional Commission, the Planning Commission completed a Scenic Resource Inventory for Bennington and a proposed new Sign Ordinance. The new Sign Ordinance will be submitted to the Select Board for adoption in early 2005. Finally, the Planning Commission has begun revising the Bennington Town Plan. A draft of the revised Town plan is scheduled to be completed by March of 2005.

The Development Review Board is responsible for reviewing and issuing land use permits for all significant development within the Town. 2004 was another busy year for the Development Review Board. Among the more notable projects reviewed by the Development Review Board were the renovation of 210 South Street, a new Chili's Restaurant on North Bennington Road, a new Pavilion at Willow Park and a new Tractor Supply Company on Depot Street.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel W. Monks, Permitting Director

BUILDING INSPECTOR'S REPORT

During the past year there were 280 permits issued with an estimated value of \$10,620,833.00. The following is a breakdown of permits issued in 2004 with a comparison to the previous year.

Type	2003 Permits	Dollar Volume	2004 Permits	Dollar Volume
Single Family Dwelling	30	\$3,108,574.00	25	\$3,691,634.00
Mobile Homes	10	\$346,000.00	5	\$199,000.00
Apartments	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Condominiums	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Residential Renovations	47	\$357,850.00	34	\$462,340.00
Residential Additions	27	\$973,660.00	14	\$334,025.00
Apartment Renovations	11	\$116,500.00	10	\$342,000.00
Commercial Construction	3	\$565,000.00	5	\$923,200.00
Commercial Renovations	29	\$2,329,340.00	14	\$3,176,570.00
Industrial Construction	3	\$86,900.00	4	\$55,395.00
Industrial Renovations	0	\$0.00	1	\$50,000.00
Garages	28	\$291,800.00	14	\$158,400.00
Sheds	29	\$54,654.00	37	\$62,343.00
Decks	43	\$109,060.00	50	\$104,189.00
Pools	13	\$52,919.00	6	\$33,885.00
Institutions	17	\$6,165,500.00	13	\$728,450.00
Signs	41	\$96,920.00	16	\$11,235.00
Subdivisions	1	\$0.00	6	\$0.00
Use and Zoning	5	\$0.00	3	\$0.00
Septic Systems	6	\$25,100.00	9	\$66,600.00
Home Occupation	4	\$0.00	2	\$0.00
Propane/Storage Tank	3	\$19,965.00	2	\$2,000.00
Boilers/Furnaces, A/C	3	\$28,282.00	10	\$219,567.00
Tents	1	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Totals	354	\$14,728,024.00	280	\$10,620,833.00

HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT

My new three-year appointment as Health Officer began on April 1, 2004 and will expire on March 31, 2007. This year the Select Board also appointed Kevin Goodhue to serve as Deputy Health Officer for a similar three year period. The Health Officer is the Town Official who is responsible for Public Health Problems in their Town. Health Officers have the power of the Vermont Commissioner of Health and are agents of the State Health Department. Health Officers have the authority to enforce any of the Vermont Health regulations in their Town. The Select Board is the local Board of Health with the Health Officer serving as the Secretary and Executive Officer for Bennington, North Bennington and Old Bennington. The responsibilities of the Health Officer can be wide ranging, however, most of the time is spent in the following categories:

Rabies Management

We received and investigated 49 reported animal bites to humans in 2004. 27 from dogs, 20 from cats, 1 bat and 1 rabbit. This compares to 47 in 2003, 55 in 2002, 45 in 2001, 30 in 2000, 38 in 1999, 40 in 1998. 120 pets were vaccinated at the annual Town of Bennington Rabies Clinic held on March 13, 2004. Many thanks to the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center Emergency Department for their prompt and accurate bite reports.

PERMITTING, PLANNING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

The Town of Bennington's Permitting, Planning and Code Enforcement Department administers many Town issued permits (including Building Permits, Zoning Permits, Sign Permits, Taxi Licenses, Vendor's Licenses and others), provides staff support for the Town of Bennington Development Review Board and Planning Commission and enforces the Town of Bennington Land Use and Development Regulations, Sign Ordinance, Building Code and other local ordinances (The Town's Fire Marshals' also enforce the Vermont Fire Prevention and Building Code on behalf of the State for public buildings).

The Permitting, Planning and Code Enforcement Department is made up of the following staff members: Daniel W. Monks, Planning Director, Larry McLeod, Chief Building Inspector/Fire Marshal, Kevin Goodhue, Building Inspector/Fire Marshal and Code Enforcement Officer, and Kelly Lemieux, Administrative Assistant. The Building Inspector's report and Planning Director's report follow.

The large construction projects completed or started this year included the Mount Anthony Middle School, Dunkin Donuts, Wendy's, Home Depot, Carbone Honda The House of Tile Warehouse, Hampton Inn, 210 South Street, Panda Garden Restaurant and Synergy Gas.

The Town has completed its seventh year under the Fire and Building Code Agreement with the Vermont Department of Labor and Industry. Applicants have saved significant money in fees they didn't have to submit to the state over the past seven years. The agreement includes all occupancy types except for State owned buildings and nursing home facilities. The agreement assigns to Bennington the responsibility for Plan Review, Fire Inspections and Enforcement of the Vermont Fire Prevention and Building Code.

The past year has been spent closing out previous open permits and performing various types of inspections. Significant time is also spent on investigating housing code complaints, issuing notices of unsafe structures, ordering demolitions and closing down unfit dwellings. The Town also issued 390 Certificates of Building and Zoning Compliance which netted the Town \$9,750.00. The Town issued 280 Zoning and Building Permits with fees that netted \$58,318.21. 48 Sign Permits with fees that netted \$3,896.00 and 7 Vendor Permits with fees that netted \$1,100.00.

We would like to remind all residents that almost all types of renovations and construction requires building permits. If you replace any existing structure, such as a deck, porch, shed stairs, garage etc., you need a permit. If you perform any renovation work inside your home such as adding a room in your basement, any plumbing, electrical or furnace replacement, removing/adding walls or rooms, a permit is required. If you install a septic system, propane tank, fabric building or a swimming pool a permit is required. Please contact the Code Enforcement Office 442-1037 before you start any work to determine if a permit is needed.

Don't forget..... all rental properties now require wired in Smoke Detectors with battery back-up!

3. *This Fund will be expended on a fifteen (15) year basis to address maintenance issues at the Bennington Community Built Park.*

4. *One thousand dollars is restricted to purchase skateboard ramps. This money was given to the Friends by Phoenix Inc.*

Donations to this restricted fund and Memorial plantings are encouraged and are to be handled by the Town of Bennington.

The original balance contained \$17,700. As of June 30th, 2004, the balance was \$15,965.19 including interest earned. In F.Y. '04 \$1,908.90 was expended on repairs and maintenance of the Park.

Respectfully,

Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager

SOLLWAN AND MARY ALEXANDER SLEEMAN MEMORIAL FUND

I am pleased to acknowledge the creation of the Sollwan and Mary Alexander Sleeman Memorial Fund.

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

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

The original fund contained \$52,156.27. During this year, \$7,669.84 in expenditures were needed to offset ADA improvements at the Recreation Center. Interest earned was added to the Fund leaving a reserve fund balance of \$34,409.59.

The Town will use the funds over the next four (4) years to address accessibility issues at the Center. We are most fortunate to have this Fund available to us.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager

Aqua-Dynamics, Girl/Boy Scout swims, Summer Playground, T-Ball, Sports Camps, Swim Lessons and holiday activities are a few examples of programs offered by the Department at a minimal fee. A total of \$20,133.00 was brought into the Recreation Center in 2004. Other miscellaneous sales totaled \$5,602.00.

The Recreation Center offers the pool and the multi-purpose room for children's birthday parties. Parties are scheduled on Saturday afternoons from 12:00 - 1:00 and include pool time. The fee of \$50.00 which includes reserved pool time, certified lifeguard and the room which can be used for cake, ice-cream, pizza, games, etc... If the pool is booked for a party but the room is available, it can be reserved for \$20.00 per hour. Total income for this year was \$1,050. arising from 27 parties.

The various adult and youth leagues held practices, games and tournaments at Willow Park, Wellings, Beech Street and Memorial Park fields. Special events include the Egg Hunt, Memorial Softball Tournaments, Chamber of Commerce/Bennington Rotary Club Antique Car Show, Hometown 4th of July Celebration, Catamount BMX races which use Willow Park. The Bennington Rotary Club continues work on the new pavilion at Willow Park which will be called the Jim Ross Pavilion while the Town continues work on the Lower Willow portion of Willow Park. The pavilion at Willow Park, located off East Road is rented out for reunions, picnics, weddings, etc... The pavilion can be rented out from April through the end of October. Rental fees are based on the number of people using the facility. A total of \$815.00 in rental fees were accumulated.

The Recreation Department works with a variety of non-profit and local organizations helping coordinate, run or participate in special events including Softball Tournaments, Egg Hunt, Tree Lighting Ceremony, Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Road Race, Boy and Girl Scouts and the American Red Cross.

If there are any questions, comments or suggestions pertaining to the above information, you may contact me at 802-442-1053.

Respectfully submitted,
Tracy E. Knights, Parks & Recreation Director

BENNINGTON COMMUNITY BUILT PARK RESERVE FUND

I am pleased to acknowledge the creation of the Bennington Community Built Park Reserve Fund.

This Fund was created in April, 2003, in concert with the Friends of the Bennington Community Built Park from funds collected to maintain the playground equipment, lower bathrooms and stage. As custodian of the funds, the Friends preserved them and helped establish this Fund to assist the Town with long term care issues at the Bennington Community Built Park (Willow Park on East Road). The Fund guidelines follow below.

1. This fund is for the exclusive use of the Bennington Community Built Park located on East Road in Bennington, Vermont.

2. Special consideration will be given to annual sealing of all wooden structures at Willow Park with environmentally safe sealant. The Fund will be used to replenish the wood carpeting under playground equipment, for signs and other equipment as needed.

The Bennington Senior Center is open Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:00pm. We are a small staff; if you need personal attention, please call first.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan L. Hoag, Director

BENNINGTON PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Bennington Recreation Center is located on 655 Gage Street and is the administrative office of the Town of Bennington Parks & Recreation Department.

We undertook a few improvement projects at the Recreation Center during 2004. New carpeting was installed in the weight room over the August shutdown period, and the roof over the weight room, lobby and locker rooms was repaired.

The purchase of a new Sports Art Stationary Bike and Sports Art Treadmill 6310 proved to be a necessary addition to the weight room. This helped tremendously to alleviate the pressure on the other pieces of equipment. The weight room is now equipped with an 8 station Universal Machine, Hack/Leg Press Machine, Olympic Benches, free weights, dumbbells, 2 steppers, 2 rowers, 2 stationary bikes, 2 treadmills and an Elliptical Machine. The weight room gets much use from seniors, adults and teens.

A membership or daily fee entitles the user to the six lane, 25 yard heated pool, sauna, showers, weight room, game room and a discount on programs offered by the Recreation Department. The pool is used by members and non-members for many programs, therapeutic and recreational swimming opportunities. The pool is maintained at a comfortable level to suit the needs of the variety of ages who use it.

The Recreation Center has a total of 2,230 members. The following is a breakdown of memberships:

141	Resident Adult year @ \$58.50 =	\$ 8,248.50
46	Resident Adult 6 month @ \$43.00 =	\$ 1,978.00
82	Resident Adult 3 month @ \$31.00 =	\$ 2,542.00
147	Resident Youth year @ \$22.00 =	\$ 3,234.00
119	Resident Family year @ \$93.50 =	\$11,126.50
77	Resident 6 month Family @ \$55.00 =	\$ 4,235.00
89	Resident Sr. Citizen year @ \$55.50 =	\$ 4,939.50
8	Resident Sr. Citizen Family year @ \$89.25 =	\$ 714.00
9	Non-Resident Adult year @ \$183.00 =	\$ 1,647.00
7	Non-Resident Adult 6 month @ \$136.50 =	\$ 955.50
4	Non-resident Adult 3 month @ \$108.00 =	\$ 432.00
9	Non-Resident Youth year @ \$84.00 =	\$ 756.00
6	Non-Resident Family year @ \$247.50 =	\$ 1,485.00
4	Non-Resident Family 6 month @ \$157.50 =	\$ 630.00
21	Non-Resident Sr. Citizen year @ \$152.50 =	\$ 3,202.50
7	Non-Resident Sr. Citizen Family year @ \$206.25 =	\$ 1,443.75
94	Corporate Single year @ \$47.50 =	\$ 4,465.00
126	Corporate Family year @ \$76.50 =	\$ 9,639.00
	TOTAL:	\$61,673.25

BENNINGTON SENIOR CENTER

The Bennington Senior Center continues to successfully meet its mission with an exceptionally dedicated staff, top-notch programming, and an enthusiastic level of involvement by our participants. Our mission is to: engage persons 50 plus (and their guests) in the life-long learning process by developing social, recreational, creative, and cultural programs which promote physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being and enable active participation in the center and community.

Our center, a town-owned and taxpayer-funded facility, occupies the second floor of the Senior Citizen's Service Center at 124 Pleasant Street. We offer a wide variety of programs and activities including painting and sculpture classes, quilting and sewing, music lessons, exercise and dance, bridge, scrabble and other games, BINGO, and travel, with a focus on art and culture. We design our programming based on the requests of our participants and our budgetary constraints. There are no membership fees and program costs are based on a non-profit concept.

Participation in the center's activities has increased in all programs this year, and lack of space remains an ongoing problem. Our painting classes are so popular that our participants are literally "elbow-to-elbow" while trying to create their artwork. The Wednesday movie matinee program instituted last year continues to be extremely popular, and the senior's perennial favorite, BINGO, has also seen increased participation.

Staffing structure remains essentially the same with a full-time Director and Ann Pistocco, as my part-time Administrative Assistant. A part-time driver, Bob Condon, was hired in July. Our maintenance man, Ted Dow, celebrated 16 years as a town employee this year. Other part-time staff members include Josie Shepard, Administrative Assistant, and Muriel Jacobs, Activities Assistant; both funded through the National Able Network.

Our dedicated volunteers – without whom we couldn't operate – have given over 2,700 hours of their time, knowledge and expertise during the past year. We only hired one paid program instructor this year; the rest of our programs have been taught by volunteers and/or staff. The commitment of these dedicated men and women is the key to our success and represents tremendous savings in paid labor.

Our aging building has required several unexpected repairs this year, including roof repairs, air conditioning upgrades, and the installation of new emergency lights. Much needed interior painting was completed. We added new lighting in the kitchen area and replaced the worn rug in the Director's office.

My goal as Director has been to increase the use of the facility by offering new and more varied no cost, in-house programs which do not have a negative impact on our budget. To that end, I have added a ukulele instruction class and the R.S.V.P. Osteoporosis exercise program, which meets twice a week. I have limited our overnight trips, and have been endeavoring to keep our trips to within two hours of the Senior Center. Shopping service and BINGO pick-up are now provided by the Red Cross which has freed up the staff and made a considerable savings.

Our quarterly publication *Senior Community News*, which lists all of our ongoing and up-coming activities is the best source of information about the senior center. You may pick up a copy of *Senior Community News* at many locations around town or by subscription. Anyone may receive a free first copy by calling the center at 802-442-1052 or 447-9714.

Business Retention

The committee is new and is planning to offer seminars and programs in 2004. Topics of interest are financial management, marketing, computer systems, management, personnel, and regulatory compliance. The concern for better marketing has drawn the greatest attention.

2) Design Committee:

Bennington in Bloom

This sub-committee now has responsibility for the planting and maintenance of downtown flowers in planters and baskets, and help with the development of the Memorial Park next to the Welcome Center, and ultimately the further development of green space in the downtown area.

Plans call for new panels to the downtown directory installed at the Four Corners Kiosk. The Kiosk itself has been designated as one of six that will feature information on the newly created Molly Stark Byway, linking Bennington with Brattleboro. The reworking of the Design Assistance Program provides more small grants to cover the cost of architects' fees on projects such as facade improvements or the design of signs.

3) Marketing:

Another new full color downtown advertisement will appear in 2004 in the *Bennington Area Guide*, *The Summer Previews Guide to Activities in the Berkshires, Southern Vermont and New York*, *101 Things to Do* and other publications.

Mayfest Arts Festival, our nineteenth juried arts festival, took place on May 29th, 2004. Special acknowledgment goes to our corporate underwriter, The Bank of Bennington. **Summer in the Park**, **Midnight Madness**, and the **Holiday Tree Lighting** broke records in 2004 for attendance and are endearing features of our seasons.

4) Organization Committee:

In 2003, BBC obtained the status of a 501c3 tax-exempt organization so that charitable contributions can be made to us and we can apply for grants that were closed to us. In partnership with the Town of Bennington and the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce, BBC participated in the redesign of bennington.com.

Summation:

Lest you think BBC's effort is only for downtown, we like to remind you that a healthy downtown is good for the entire community. BBC's success also would not be possible without our partnerships and the cooperation and support we receive from individuals within the community. Our thanks go to the Select Board, the Town of Bennington, the Downtown Improvement Commission, the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce, the Community College of Vermont, Bennington College, Southern Vermont College the Bennington Garden Club, the Bennington Museum, our corporate sponsors, and the many citizens who have been involved in our task force process and events. Thank you for supporting our effort to realize this vision.

Respectfully submitted,
Ted Corbett, Executive Director

BETTER BENNINGTON CORPORATION

Following the lead of the Vermont Council on Culture and Innovation for a "Creative Economy," BBC assumes that quality of life issues are paramount in developing this much praised economy of creative people: scientists, designers, writers, publishers, artists. The Council contends that jobs come to where the creative people are, rather than the opposite. Creative people seek vibrant, authentic places that spur creativity. They like old buildings because they provide a sense of authenticity, credibility, and history. They like active street life with street cafes. They desire a music scene, an art scene, and a community filled with diversity-- ethnic, racial, age, lifestyle, appearance, and sexual orientation. This is the kind of place that BBC also seeks to create.

BBC is also making a stronger effort to be in direct contact with its constituencies, especially the downtown business community. Visits to individual businesses have been stepped up and special meetings of business members have been held. Surveys have been carried out to pinpoint the needs of business persons and on their concern for "Big Box" development. A separate intercept survey was begun to identify those who enjoy Main Street. We have found, for instance, that one in three of them is a visitor.

Implementation of Vision in 2003-2004:

The Welcome Center

Having opened in 2003, the Center is identified by a blue banner-flag with the words "Downtown Welcome Center" contains brochure racks in the entranceway which hold information on the historic, cultural and hospitality attractions of downtown and the region. A Map Directory locates downtown businesses. Downtown Docents maintain the information desk.

History & Heritage

BBC has reconstituted the Task Force on History and Heritage. The group is preparing for development of television programs on local history and for an archeological exhibit on recent Bennington excavations done in conjunction with highway construction.

Arts & Culture

The Arts Committee has made the June Arts Celebration a priority for 2004 and 2005. The event appeared last year, featuring twelve galleries or shops, and four exhibits by fine arts photographers. BBC cooperated with the Vermont Arts Exchange in the June Arts Weekends to extend the open hours of their Stark Hose Gallery. The now broader June Arts Festival for 2004 will cover music and dance, fine arts, drama and writing, and craft demonstrations, taking place on June 4-6, 11-13, 18-20, 25-27.

BBC's Mandates:

BBC is Bennington's designated downtown organization. Internally, BBC follows the example of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program, dividing its activities into four major areas.

1) Economic Development Committee

This committee had the chief responsibility for analyzing the vision reports of the task forces and setting priorities.

Business Recruitment

Through the Committee's effort downtown vacancies have declined from 12% to 8% of the spaces. The Committee now uses an attractive business recruitment packet that was designed and printed in 2003.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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

During the past year, the HPC continued to work closely with local government and community organizations in efforts to identify and strengthen preservation goals within the community, while encouraging responsible economic development. Of special note, was the opportunity to provide input to the Development Review Board on projects located within the Design Review District.

During 2004, the HPC utilized grant funding to update the community resource manual "Time & Place in Bennington: A Handbook for the Central Bennington Historic District." The 129-page handbook is a lay person's guide to appropriate treatments for changes to historic buildings within Bennington's downtown historic district. Our goal was to integrate new zoning changes in the handbook and provide information about the application of new construction materials on the market. The handbook is used extensively by commission members and property owners who are making changes to their buildings. These updates are the first phase of a full reprint of the manual.

The Historic Preservation Commission also worked on preliminary planning for the 2005 statewide Historic Preservation Conference which will be held in May 2005 in Bennington. Typically attended by 250 people from around the state for a day of workshops and seminars, the conference also presents a wonderful opportunity for Bennington to share some of its historic resources and expertise with a large group of visitors from around the state.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Campbell, Chair

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

The DIC is comprised of 4 volunteer members appointed by the Select Board. We meet every other month on the 4th Wednesday at 8 a.m. in the town offices. These meetings are open to the public. Our purpose is to oversee the expenditure of taxing district funds, currently \$50,150. These funds are used by the Better Bennington Corporation and the Bennington Chamber of Commerce to continue our ongoing work to revitalize downtown Bennington. With the help of the Town Community Development Department, we utilize the "National Main Street Strategy" which has been proven effective in many downtowns. I believe the results we have seen recently in Bennington validate that this approach is working.

Respectfully submitted,
David Newell, Chair

loan program. The Townwide Housing Rehabilitation Program makes loans available to income qualified owners and landlords providing housing for income-qualified tenants for housing rehabilitation activities. The Bennington Revolving Loan Program makes loans available to new or expanding businesses for improvements and equipment purchases. A new fund created as Abacus Automation repays a CDBG loan was established in 2000. This money will be available to assist businesses who will retain or add jobs available to persons of low or moderate income.

Townwide Housing Loan Program

Present Loan Portfolio Principal:	\$277,497	
Number of Loans in Portfolio:		22
Available to Loan as of December 31, 2004:	\$162,241	

Bennington Revolving Loan Program

Present Loan Portfolio Principal:	\$441,779	
Number of Loans in Portfolio:		18
Available to Loan as of December 31, 2004:	\$358,790	

Bennington Low & Moderate Income Job Program

Available to Loan as of December 31, 2004:	\$ 84,497
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Special Projects

The Community Development Department was involved in a variety of other projects this year. These included grant applications and administration, and activities related to advocacy for legislation important to the Town and the region.

**LIST OF GRANTS RECEIVED
2004**

<u>Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
State of VT	\$100,000	East Road Sidewalk Project
VCDP	\$290,500	Mt. Anthony Student Center
VCDP	\$ 25,000	Bennington Project Independence Planning
VTRANS	\$168,000	West Main Street Enhancement Project
CLG	\$ 2,000	Design Guidebook Update

Please feel free to contact me with your questions, concerns, and suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,
William B. Colvin, Economic & Community Development Director

The Bennington Microtechnology Center attracted another Federal appropriation and began to hire staff in 2004. This facility will be the only one of its kind in the country and will provide state-of-the-art research capabilities for both governmental and private sector entities developing micromanufacturing capabilities. The Center's first client will be the United States Navy. The Bennington Microtechnology Center will put Bennington in a strategic position in this developing industry.

Applejack Development Ltd. became involved in Bennington in a big way in 2004, acquiring the former Hemmings facility on West Road, the former Paradise Restaurant, the former ChemFab building in North Bennington, and a commercial site on Harwood Hill. These acquisitions follow the company's purchase of 210 South Street in 2003. Applejack has been instrumental in some of the most positive economic news of 2004, including Vermont Country Store, Church Insurance Company of Vermont, R. John Wright Dolls, and the Panda Garden restaurant.

Commercial development, especially along the Rte. 67A Corridor, was significant in 2004, with the long-anticipated opening of the first leg of Route 279. The new Hampton Inn hotel is under construction and a new Chili's restaurant will soon be underway.

2004 also saw the completion of a new Bennington County Regional Economic Development Plan. This effort, co-sponsored by the Bennington County Industrial Corporation and the Bennington County Regional Commission, will provide valuable information and a blueprint for our economic development efforts for the next several years.

Downtown Revitalization

Downtown Bennington welcomed several new and expanded businesses in 2003, and the Town was pleased to assist some of them through our revolving loan program.

At 210 South Street, Church Insurance Company of Vermont began operations and Vermont Country Store announced its intent to occupy the entire second floor of the building in early 2005.

Work is nearly completed on the new State office building on West Main Street, and construction of a new 80+ unit assisted living facility at the site of the former Middle School on East Main Street will commence early in 2005.

Enhancement Projects

The Town completed street scape improvements on Depot Street similar to those completed on Main, North and South Streets. The work included sidewalk, drainage and lighting upgrades, greatly enhancing pedestrian access along this corridor, while improving safety for both pedestrians and motorists. In December it was announced that the Town was successful with its application for a 2005 Transportation Enhancement grant to continue these improvements along West Main Street out to the Dewey Street/Benmont Avenue intersection. That work will take place in 2006.

Historic Preservation

The Community Development Department acts as part-time staff to the Historic Preservation Commission. Please see the Historic Preservation Commission's report.

Revolving Loan Programs

The Department administers a housing rehabilitation loan program and an economic development

rebuilt 83 manholes along the collection system. The water department again hired a private contractor to conduct leak detection for over 26 miles of water mains for our water system.

Our final project of the year might be one of the most rewarding. The water department staff took on the responsibility of plumbing in a new pump system at Morgan Springs. All of the work done was to accommodate the sale of water from this site. We had attempted to bid this project on two separate occasions earlier in the year but both times the bids returned in excess of \$40,000. Our crews rolled up their sleeves and took this project on without hesitation. With the help of local plumbing and electrical contractors the job was completed at almost half of the bid price. On December 6, 2004 the water department assisted with the loading of the first tanker of water.

Throughout the year the Water Resources Department involved themselves in a number of community events. Our people participated in a several events at the Career Development Center interacting with students and giving seminars. We assisted the North Bennington Graded School with a sewer and storm water study. Our staff volunteered time to help out with the Jim Ross Pavilion at Willow Park installing the necessary water and sewer piping for the new building. Working with the highway department we were a part of the demolition process at the Y-pool in an attempt to make this a safe and level play area for the community.

Respectfully submitted,
Terrance A. Morse, Water Resources Superintendent

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The activities of the Economic & Community Development Department include encouraging job retention and creation, assisting downtown revitalization efforts, promoting housing rehabilitation, assisting the Historic Preservation Commission, administering the revolving loan programs, and working on special projects.

Economic Development

The Economic & Community Development Department serves as the liaison between the Town and the various groups working on economic development issues. In this capacity, the Department interacts regularly with the Bennington County Industrial Corporation, the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce, the Bennington County Regional Commission, the Better Bennington Corporation, the Downtown Improvement Commission, the Vermont Department of Employment and Training, and the School and Workforce Partnership.

Economic Development issues received a great deal of attention during 2004. The Economic and Community Development Department participated with the aforementioned partner organizations through the Bennington Economic Development Committee (BEDC) to support business recruitment, expansion and retention efforts.

Two of the most exciting announcements of 2004 were the continued growth of Vermont Composites and the announcement that Vermont Country Store will be establishing a presence in Bennington. Following an expansion in 2002-2003, Vermont Composites is again expanding, and purchased the former Bijur building to accommodate the new growth. Vermont Country Store will be developing a customer service center at 210 South Street in downtown Bennington. The company will employ upwards of 175 people at full employment.

Fund at very low interest rates. The remainder will be funded through the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank. It is the Town's hope to bid this project in early 2005 and begin construction in the spring of 2005.

The wastewater staff was busy with their own evaluation and planning project. An engineering firm performed a complete wastewater facility and system evaluation. New EPA and State of Vermont regulations require municipal wastewater departments to provide long term plans for maintenance and upgrades to their wastewater facilities necessary to comply with state and federal regulations. Wastewater crews took on the task of performing evaluations on each individual piece of mechanical equipment at the sewer treatment plant. Once this information was cataloged, our staff focused their attention on the 60 miles of sanitary sewer mains and 1400 sewer manholes that are part of the town's collection system.

As part of our sewer system evaluation process the wastewater staff, with the assistance of our engineering firm, performed the first phase of an Infiltration/Inflow study. We placed 13 inline flow meters in the sanitary sewer lines at strategic locations throughout the town to monitor flows during March, April and May. The information gathered will help us determine where the biggest problems are in the system as they relate to the influence of ground water infiltration and inflow produced primarily by sump pumps and roof drains. The Town of Bennington's sewer use ordinance prohibits the use of the sanitary sewers to dispose of this type of water.

The second phase of this work will begin in March of 2005 with additional flow testing and data collection. The staff has also been busy updating our sewer base map information. We have identified and added new or missed manholes to the map that was originally done in 1985. Our staff also added new developments and accurately identified all existing sewer lines in relation to line size and distance for each segment. This work was performed in Bennington, North Bennington and Shaftsbury where the current sewer collection system lies.

The new 2004 EPA regulations now require all municipal water systems to do complete evaluations of their systems in relationship to security. With the assistance of the Department Homeland Security, the EPA issued guidelines to each municipality on how to produce these documents required by the new rules. The first document was called a Vulnerability Assessment. This document helped water systems determine where they may fall short in the security and/or protection of their water systems. The second document, the Emergency Response Plan, gave town officials a picture of how their individual water system components operate and what to do in case of an emergency or possible terrorist event. Completing these two documents was not an easy task but both were submitted on time.

Both water and wastewater crews continued to work with the private contractor, hired by the State of Vermont, to complete the paving of Routes 7 and 9 through downtown Bennington. This did require some night work for our people since much of the paving work was done at night. Phase III of our County Street rehabilitation project was also completed. This portion consisted of replacing water and necessary sewer mains between Grove Street and Branch Street. The last Phase between Park Street and Division Street will take place in 2005.

During 2004, the sewer department hired contractors to clean and televise approximately 6500 feet of sewer lines across the system, searching for line breaks and pinpoint possible problem areas. Sewer department employees also continued their program treating sewer lines with tree root intrusion. Approximately 3000 feet of lines were treated this year. Our wastewater road crews also

Sidewalk Rebuilds

Projects undertaken included East Main Street from Valentine Street to Bradford Street, County Street from Grove Street to Bradford Street, and Elm Street from Washing Avenue to Jefferson Heights.

The winter of 2003 & 2004 started slow. December 6, 2004, was the first time we needed to plow & sand. As of December 31, 2004, the Town has used 500 tons of salt and 450 yards of sand.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick M. Kinney, Highway Superintendent

PUBLIC WORKS

Water Resources/Water & Sewer Divisions

Water Resources Statistics

Our Permit System provides us with the following Year-End Statistics:

Total Water Line Repairs Made:	24
Lead Water Lines Replaced/Disconnected:	20
Total Water System Bacteria Samples Taken:	217

Our Water Filtration Plant Instrumentation supplies us with the following totals:

Total Water Processed at Woodford Plant:	640 million gallons
Total Water Pumped from Morgan Spring:	5.2 million gallons
Average 2004 water used per day:	1.75 million gallons/day

Our Wastewater Treatment Plant Instrumentation supplies us with the following totals:

Total Gallons Treated:	1.6 billion gallons
Average Gallons per day:	4.4 million gallons
Average % Solids Removed:	95 %
Average % BOD Removed:	95 %
Total Septage Received	580,861 gallons
Total Compost Produced:	2,979 cubic yards

The 2004 year has been very productive for the Bennington Water Resources Division. Planning for the coming year's projects consumed a great deal of the early winter months of 2004. From budgets and a water bond vote preparation to engineering a long term maintenance plan for the Town's wastewater system, there always seemed to be plenty to keep the staff very busy.

Early in the year, we held informational presentations at the bi-monthly select board meetings for the proposed water treatment improvements. These meetings culminated with a public hearing on the proposed improvements. A successful bond vote at the March Annual Town Meeting was necessary to move forward with the project. The voters passed the bond for the water improvements, and we moved into the permitting stages of the process. These updates are required to bring our water system back into full compliance with the latest EPA and State of Vermont drinking water standards. The proposed water project is estimated to cost the town's water ratepayers approximately seven million dollars. The project is being partially funded through the State of Vermont Revolving Loan.