

Opinions

Office of the Vermont Secretary of State



Vol. 9, #7

July/August 2007

A Message from the Secretary



I was once told that a life in politics is like eating at a smorgasbord – it includes a vast array of life experiences. This was never truer for me than one warm Thursday night this past June when I found myself behind the wheel of a race car at the Thunder Road International Speedbowl in Barre.

Few people would guess that in middle school I dreamt of growing up to be a race car driver. Indeed, I have never been known for my skills behind the wheel. I didn't learn to drive until my 20's and to this day driving in traffic makes me nervous. But as a child I wanted to be just like my cool Aunt Beverly who, inexplicably (to the rest of the family), had begun to drag race on weekends at a local track.

To explain how I found myself in a race car at Thunder Road, you need to know that as Secretary of State I oversee the Vermont Motor Vehicle Racing Commission. A couple of new members had been appointed to serve on the commission, and when I welcomed them I mentioned my childhood dream. To my surprise, I received an invitation to "lap a car" at Thunder Road. I was to run a half a dozen laps in the Vermont Army Guard/Ultramar HomEnergy car before the "real" races began.

My family had a mixed reaction to the news. My 12-year-old son begged to be allowed to come in the car with me. My 14-year-old daughter thought the whole thing was pretty embarrassing, and my husband kept asking me "Are you really sure you are up to this?"

In the weeks before the race I began to get nervous. I realized that it had been years since I drove a stick shift, and what if I couldn't reach the pedals? Did they realize that I am only 4'10"!? And then people started telling me racing car horror stories – like the one about how the Governor of North Carolina crashed a race car he was lapping at Lowes – destroying the car. It felt very much like the weeks leading up to childbirth, when every mother, seeing your condition, feels compelled to share the gory details of her childbirth experience. By the time the race day finally came I had worked myself up into a true panic!

I made it to the track in plenty of time and my nerves steadied when I was greeted by my sponsors. It was great being in the pit, seeing everyone preparing their cars. "My" car was fitted up with wood blocks so I could reach the pedals; and after getting into a jump suit, helmet and five-point harness I was ready to go...except for one minor detail. I sat so low in the seat I couldn't see the road at all! But it was too late for that. The flag dropped and it was my turn to take a spin.

All I can say is that it was lucky there was no one else on the track that evening at Thunder Road. I had the ride of my life – even though I had to crane my neck to see through the steering wheel. Of course I was no Mario Andretti. I went embarrassingly slow (according to my daughter) and the announcer appropriately commented that I would be better off sticking to political races. But I was proud that I really did it – and it was exhilarating. (In case you are wondering, it feels much faster than it looks – especially when you can't quite see the track.)

So now I know that anything is possible and that you never know when your childhood dreams might come true. In fact, in the event that I didn't become a race car driver my back-up plan was to become a spy. Today I noticed an advertisement in the newspaper for a free shooting clinic for women. You can't be a spy if you can't shoot straight – so sign me up!

Deborah L. Markowitz, Secretary of State

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Running on Empty

We should create a loan program and tax credits to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes and to require new construction to meet energy standards. We should explore alternative, renewable energy sources from solar to wind to wood to hydro. We should use methane from livestock manure to generate power. We should commit to conservation from energy efficient appliances to carpooling. States should be allowed to set fuel mileage targets for cars, coupled with tax incentives for buying fuel efficient automobiles. UVM should make a stronger commitment to energy research. We should be careful of committing to coal and not reduce clean air requirements. We should look at nuclear power only within the context of public safety and solutions to nuclear waste.

Thirty years can dim our collective memory. The above ideas, which sound familiar to us today, were proposed in the mid-1970s as part of Vermont's response to the 1973 oil embargo launched by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The resulting energy crisis opened up a collective examination of sustainable and renewable energy that anticipated current energy concerns (though climate change had not yet been added as a major component within that discussion).

That earlier energy crisis cut across all levels of society. On November 11, 1973, Human Resources Commissioner Paul Philbrook wrote Governor Thomas Salmon, "It seems apparent that we are going to be one of the first departments in State government to feel the brunt of the results of the fuel crisis. It takes little...to imagine that very early this winter we are going to have folks coming to us and saying, 'We are almost out of fuel...[and] we do not have cash'...[We] ought to try to find a way to keep the fuel prices from impacting most immediately and most severely on low-income people." (Governor Salmon Papers, Box BBB, File 517). At the same time

the tourism and recreation businesses, facing a Sunday prohibition on gas sales and possible rationing, plead with the governor to mitigate the impact of high costs and limited supplies of energy on travel, snowmaking, snowmobiling, and other activities upon which their economic lives depended. Other economic interests from service stations (which had already experienced a 20% decline before the embargo) to utility companies sought state support.

Former Governor Philip Hoff, who Governor Salmon appointed chair of a Commission on Electrical Energy, saw an even deeper problem beneath the immediate crisis. On May 4, 1973, he wrote Governor Salmon that, "The primary problem in terms of electrical energy...deals with the problem of growth...A 10.3 annual increase or growth factor means we are doubling our need for electrical energy in approximately seven years. This is intolerable. Unfortunately, from a straight business economic point of view, it may be virtually impossible for the utility industry to operate without a continuing growth factor. As a matter of fact, the whole business economy of this nation...is built upon growth and there is not a single economist...who would dare predict what would happen to the economy...if that growth cycle were interrupted." (Salmon Papers, Box CCC, File 521).

Governor Hoff was not the only Vermonter who questioned our basic economic assumptions because of the crisis. Representative Steve McLeod of Barre, among others, felt that Vermont state government should no longer support tourism and marketing since tourism was a significant consumer of energy and should be self-sustaining rather than subsidized (Box ZZ, Folder 513). Secretary Martin Johnson of the Agency of Environmental Conservation bemoaned decisions made in the 1960s, such as a commitment to four lane highways



and motels that encouraged car-based tourism. He also expressed ire with “a fourth rate College of Engineering at the University” that frustrated Vermont’s efforts to attract a solar energy research institute (Box CCC, Folder 527).

Secretary Martin was not the only Vermonter disgruntled with UVM’s engineering department. Jeff McDonald of Vergennes wrote the governor that the search for alternative, renewable energy had overlooked an obvious source that could also bolster Vermont agriculture: “Vermont has 3,312 farms (1974) and 196,678 cows, plus countless other livestock...[A] cow produces 96 lbs of manure a day, or roughly 18 tons per year. This manure, in a natural process known as anaerobic digestion, will produce 38,000 cubic feet of methane gas a year...[which] can be used for heating and running machinery.” Mr. McDonald went on to explain how he and a group of friends had developed such a digester but his request for a state grant lost out to a proposal to study the practicality of digesters from the UVM’s Engineering Department. The department ultimately produced a report saying such digesters were impracticable. Governor Salmon sent Gilbert Parker, Director of Market Development, to visit Mr. McDonald. He reported that the digester worked and could not only produce \$5,370 worth of gas a year, but also increased the value of manure as fertilizer by \$4,790 a year. Subtracting annual maintenance and depreciation costs, Mr. Parker calculated that the digester provided a net profit of \$2,000 a year (Box K, File 92).

Many of us recall the more obvious reactions to the energy crisis: lower temperatures in public buildings, lower speed limits on the interstate, and the Sunday prohibition on gas sales. Governor Salmon’s records reveal a government

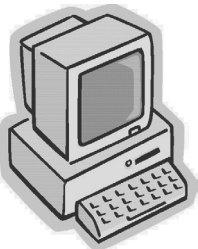
and a society that, in the face of crisis, was willing to work together not only to explore new ideas, but also to revisit basic social understandings.

The range of exploration is astounding: carpooling for migrant workers in Vermont’s orchards; making Vermont food self-sufficient; development of local energy sources such as a wood pellet plant in Wallingford; and a host of other ideas. This was indeed a dialogue. The Vermont Chamber of Commerce weighed in on Governor Salmon’s State Energy Plan; businesses offered alternatives to ideas they feared carried competitive disadvantages; public power advocates made counter proposals to utility plans; etc.

Governor Salmon ended his 1975 inaugural with a quote from Walter Lippman capturing a similar social essence that emerged immediately prior to World War II: “We shall turn from the soft vices in which a civilization decays. We shall return to the stern virtues by which a civilization is made. We shall do this because at long last, we know that we must, because finally we begin to see that the hard way is the only enduring way.” For a brief moment, it appeared we would not shrink from the hard way. And then fuel prices fell.

A final reflection: archival management is sometimes represented by the Roman god Janus who had two faces, one turned to the past, the other to the future. As the Salmon records suggest it is not often the course of wisdom to leave the past behind when trying to peer into the future.

Tip of the Month



This idea was submitted by Cathy Archibald of West Windsor.

As you purge your voter checklist, here's a suggestion to keep in mind for the future. When a property transfer occurs and the sellers are leaving town, send the sellers a challenge letter at that time. If they return the response card or letter, you can remove them from the checklist immediately.

If you have a tip you would like to share, please email it to Clyde Jenne, VMCTA President, at hartlandvtclerk@vermontel.net.

Opinions of Opinions



- 1. Selectboard must hold new hearing if it substantially changes proposed bylaw amendment.** Vermont law permits the legislative body to make minor changes to a proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal so long as it does so at least 14 days prior to its final public hearing on the bylaws. However, if the legislative body at any time makes substantial changes in the concept, meaning, or extent of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal, it shall warn a new public hearing or hearings. 24 V.S.A. § 4442 (b).
- 2. Selectboard may appoint one or more acting zoning administrators.** The selectboard may appoint one or more persons to serve as acting zoning administrators so long as the planning commission nominates individuals to serve in that position. An acting zoning administrator has the same duties and responsibilities as the regular zoning administrator and serves in his or her absence. There should be clear policies in place that articulate the authority of the zoning administrator in relation to the acting or assistant zoning administrator. 24 V.S.A. § 4448(b).
- 3. Selectboard may establish and change the size of the planning commission.** Vermont law provides that the Planning Commission must be between three and nine members. 24 V.S.A. §§4321– 4323. At least a majority of the commissioners must be residents of the municipality. So long as the size of the board conforms to the statute, the number of planning commission members is determined by the legislative body. It is best practice not to specify the size of the commission in the bylaws so that the selectboard can have the flexibility to make changes if needed. Note that when planning commissioners are elected, the selectboard cannot eliminate positions until they are vacant.
- 4. Clerk of the board keeps minutes.** The selectboard appoints a clerk of the board when it organizes. 24 V.S.A. § 871. It is the clerk of the board who keeps the minutes of the meeting and must make them available to the public upon request within five days of the meeting. It is customary for the board to file the minutes with the town clerk because it makes it more convenient for the public to access the records, but this is not strictly required by law so long as the clerk of the board is able to make the minutes available upon request. 1 V.S.A. § 312(2).
- 5. Minutes do not have to be posted.** The open meeting law requires minutes to be made available upon request within five days of a board meeting. Many towns post minutes of meetings in the clerk's office and in other public places, but this is not required by law. 1 V.S.A. § 312.
- 6. Public may video tape or audio tape public meetings.** The open meeting law gives the public the right to attend public meetings of the board. So long as they do not unduly disrupt the meeting, this right extends to the ability to video tape or audio tape the meetings since no statute gives the board the authority to limit this activity.
- 7. Towns may share an assistant clerk.** There is no reason why two towns could not share an assistant clerk so long as the clerks of both towns are happy with the arrangement. Assistant clerks are hired by the town clerk and serve at their pleasure. There is no requirement that an assistant be a resident of the town where he or she is working. 24 V.S.A. § 1170.

8. **There is no “proxy voting” at town meeting.** In order to vote at an annual or special town meeting that votes its articles on the floor, the voter must be present. Vermont law has no provision that would allow a voter to give his or her proxy to another person to vote on his/her behalf.
9. **No liability when performing governmental function.** In Vermont, sovereign immunity will protect a municipality from liability when the act involved is a governmental function, unless the community has waived its immunity by purchasing insurance. Where there is insurance, immunity is waived only to the level in which the insurance will apply. *Gretkowski v. City of Burlington*, 50 F. Supp. 2nd 292, affirmed 181 F.3rd 82 (D.Vt. 1998).

10. Minors under 16 may not be hired to operate lawn mower (unless it is non-motorized).

Towns must follow Vermont and Federal child labor laws which provide that no person who is under 18 years old may work in any occupation declared hazardous by the Secretary of the US Department of Labor or the Commissioner of Labor & Industry. These include, in part, driving a motor vehicle and being an outside helper on a motor vehicle, using power-driven hoisting apparatus, power-driven circular saws, band saws, and guillotine shears, roofing operations, or excavation operations. Indeed, the department of labor website emphasizes that minors under 16 can not operate power mowers or cutters! There are additional limitations on the kinds of jobs a child who is 14 or under may work. For a complete list visit www.state.vt.us/labind or www.dol.gov/elaws/esa/flsa/docs/haznonag.asp



11. Children may only work during limited hours. Fourteen- and 15-year-old minors may not be employed:

- During school hours. (Exceptions are provided for minors employed pursuant to a work experience and career exploration program, for batboys and batgirls, and for performers and actors.)
- Before 7:00 a.m. or after 7:00 p.m. (after 9:00 p.m. between June 1st and Labor Day)
- More than three hours per day, on school days.
- More than eight hours per day, on non-school days.
- More than 18 hours per week, in school weeks.
- More than 40 hours per week, in non-school weeks.
- More than six days in a week.
- A child over 16 and under 18 years of age shall not be employed in a manufacturing or mechanical establishment more than nine hours in any one day or more than 50 hours in any one week.

12. Selectboard can request fence viewer to examine fences and divide costs between landowners. Upon request of the selectboard, the fence viewers shall examine fences within the town and must determine who is responsible for maintaining the fence dividing two parcels. 24 V.S.A. § 3810. When the land is being pastured without a division fence by both adjoining property owners then the fence viewer can be asked to decide how many animals each property owner can put on the land. 24 V.S.A. § 3804. The fence viewer can also determine where a fence should be placed if the fence cannot be placed along the property line because of water or other impediments, and the owners can not agree on where it should be built. The fence viewer may not decide a boundary line or decide on ownership of land. 24 V.S.A. § 3802. See *Camp v. Camp*, 59 Vt. 667 (1887); *Shaw v. Gilfillan*, 22 Vt. 565 (1850).

13. Fence viewer cannot require landowner or occupant to pay for fence if he /she keeps no livestock. In 1989 the Vermont Supreme Court found 24 V.S.A. § 3802 unconstitutional. Section 3802 requires abutting landowners to pay a portion of the costs to maintain a fence that separates his or her property from the neighboring parcel. *Choquette v. Perrault*, 153 Vt. 45 (1989). The court reasoned that the

change in land use patterns in Vermont means that the fence law more and more often applies to landowners without livestock. The court concluded that in such situations the fence law is burdensome, arbitrary and confiscatory, and is thus, unconstitutional. For this reason, the fence viewer can only require the landowner or occupant who owns livestock to pay the cost of maintaining the fence.



- 14. Appeals from decisions of fence viewers must be made within two hours of the decision.** It is a little known fact that the shortest period for bringing appeal is from decisions of the fence viewer. Vermont law permits fence viewer decisions to be appealed to the district or superior court – but only if the appeal is taken within two hours of when the decision is issued. 24 V.S.A. § 3810.
- 15. Towns can elect or appoint the road commissioner.** A road commissioner can be elected or appointed - depending upon whether the town has voted to elect the road commissioner. 17 V.S.A. §§ 2646 (16), 2651. Whether the commissioner is elected or appointed, the road commissioner has no independent authority to act. He or she takes direction from the selectboard who are responsible for the maintenance of the roads. 19 V.S.A. § 304. The road foreman can be elected or appointed to be the road commissioner - but this is not necessary by law. In many towns one of the selectboard members serves as road commissioner and acts as a liaison between the road foreman and the selectboard.
- 16. Selectboard may increase taxes to cover a deficit.** When a town ends a fiscal year with a deficit, Vermont law gives the selectboard the authority to retire the deficit by increasing the taxes in the town. Without an additional vote, the law permits the board to add a tax of five percent, or a multiple of five percent, in addition to the tax vote already authorized by law when it makes up the next annual tax bill. 24 V.S.A. § 1523(a).
- 17. School board may only retire deficit with voter approval.** Vermont law provides that "when a school district at the end of the fiscal year has . . . a deficit, unless the voters have voted to borrow funds to repay the deficit over a term of three years or less, or unless the deficit has been refunded . . . , the school board shall add an amount sufficient to pay the deficit to its next adopted budget and report the total to the commissioner of education for purposes of calculating education spending." 24 V.S.A. § 1523(b).
- 18. Highway funds may be carried forward to a new year without voter approval.** Because highway projects are often multi-year projects, state law permits highway funds to be carried forward into a new year when there is money left over at the end of a fiscal year. However, the carried-forward funds cannot be used for non-highway expenses. The law provides that "funds raised from town highway taxes shall not be used for any purpose other than that for which the tax was voted. If in any year money so voted is not expended, it shall be applied for the same purpose the following year." 19 V.S.A. § 312.
- 19. Meeting with lawyer is not a permitted reason to go into executive session.** Vermont law sets out a limited number of reasons that a board may exclude the public from its discussions. While it is logical that one of those reasons would be to consult with the town attorney, the law does not list this as a reason for going into an executive session. That being said, the law permits the board to go into executive session to discuss issues that would involve the advice of an attorney such as pending litigation or certain personnel matters. In these cases it is natural that the board would include the town attorney in their session, but the reason for the executive session cannot be simply to talk with the attorney. 1 V.S.A. § 313.

20. Town may permit zoning administrator to perform an administrative review of development applications. Towns may adopt bylaws that establish procedures under which the zoning administrator may review and approve new development and amendments to previously approved development that would otherwise require review by an appropriate municipal panel. Such bylaws must clearly specify the thresholds and conditions under which the zoning administrator classifies an application as eligible for administrative review and these rules must not permit the administrative approval of new development that results in a substantial impact under any of the standards set forth in the bylaws. In addition, administrative review decisions may be appealed to the development review board or zoning board of adjustment. 24 V.S.A. § 4464(c).

21. Interested parties may appeal a decision of the zoning administrator. Any interested party may appeal a decision or an act of the zoning administrator by filing a notice of appeal within 15 days of the date of the decision or act with the secretary of the zoning board or the development review board. If there is no board secretary, the appeal may be filed with the municipal clerk. A copy of the notice must also be given to the zoning administrator. 24 V.S.A. §4470.

22. Board may choose to reject an appeal without holding a hearing on the matter. When an action or decision of the zoning administrator has been appealed, the zoning board or development review board may hold a hearing on the matter or it may reject the appeal without hearing. If it decides to proceed without a hearing it must issue a decision, including findings of fact, within 10 days of the notice of appeal being filed. The board may only reject an appeal outright when it determines that the issues raised by the appellant have been decided in an earlier appeal or are based on substantially or materially the same facts by or on behalf of the appellant 24 V.S.A. §4470.



23. Land use appeal decisions must be made within 45 days of the final hearing. Vermont law is designed to produce a decision in a zoning appeal within a reasonably quick time frame. Once a final hearing in the matter has been closed, the board will have 45 days to make its (written) decision. Copies of the decision must be mailed (by certified mail) to the appellant, and copies must also be sent to everyone who appeared or was heard as part of the hearing. Failure to issue the decision within 45 days will result in “deemed approval.” 24 V.S.A. §4470.

24. Fire district can only join property that is contiguous to the district. A fire district may be established by the selectboard upon application in writing of 20 or more landowners or voters of the district, after holding a public hearing on the matter. The selectboard may change the limits of the fire district upon application of 20 or more voters or landowners within the district, subject to the approval of the district at an annual or special meeting of the district, and with the consent of a majority of the landowners newly included within or newly excluded from the district. In addition, the law is clear that only property that is contiguous to the fire district can be incorporated into the district. 20 V.S.A. § 2481.

In our monthly Opinions, we provide what we believe the law requires based upon our legal judgment, years of observing Vermont's local government practices, and Vermont Court decisions. This information is intended as a reference guide only and should not replace the advice of legal counsel.

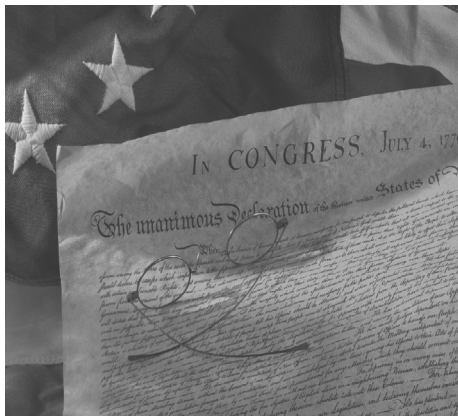
Civics Behind the Scenes

by Missy Shea, Civics Education and Voter Outreach

I'm excited. Last week was the 4th of July, our nation's birthday. And next week I'll be attending the National Association of Secretaries of State annual summer conference in Portland, Oregon, with Secretary Markowitz, that organization's current president.

This convergence of events has me contemplating the principles on which our country was founded, and how, particularly in my professional capacity, I can try to instill those same values in our contemporary citizenry, especially our youth.

In the Declaration of Independence, it is clear that along with our unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, come some inseparable responsibilities. The founders were required to use prudence in organizing and constructing a government "...as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."



I believe the best way to ensure the safety and happiness of Americans today is to make certain every segment of our population understands, and is able to fully exercise, the rights and responsibilities inherited with citizenship. That is basically my job as Civics Education and Voter Outreach Coordinator here at the Secretary of State's office, and I love it. We work with schools, town clerks, and a myriad of other civically-minded organizations to collaborate in enfranchising our citizenry at every level.

In Portland, I'll be facilitating a roundtable discussion of best practices in civics education and voter outreach across the country. In preparation, we put together an inventory of initiatives sponsored by Secretary of State's offices across the country. Vermont's efforts are impressive. Since the New Millennium Survey on American Youth Attitudes on Politics, Citizenship, Government and Voting was published in 1998, Vermont, under Secretary Markowitz's leadership, has done a tremendous amount to ensure that our citizens really do know and understand their rights and responsibilities. We're contributing hope and promise to our great state's future.

I'll be proud to share our work with other states trying to do the same. And I look forward to being inspired by new ideas shared at the roundtable, because there is still much more to be done.

Quote of the Month

"The person who has lived the most is not the one who has lived the longest, but the one with the richest experiences."

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Municipal Calendar

July 2007

- 22 Last day that listers shall hear grievances in towns of 5,000 or more inhabitants. 32:4221, 4341
- 25 State Withholding Tax Return is due (*actual date by which return must be postmarked is shown on the printed form*) if reporting less than \$2,500 per quarter. More than \$2,500 requires monthly report; more than \$9,000 requires semi-weekly report. 32:5842
- 30 Last day for town clerk in municipality with fiscal year ending June 30 to publicly disclose fees kept as compensation for that fiscal year. 24:1179
- 31 Last day to file Form 941 (*Quarterly Withholding Return*) with Internal Revenue Service.

August 2007

- 15 Last day for town clerk to electronically transmit a copy of the grand list, tax rates, and assessed tax amount to the director of Property Valuation and Review. 32:5404(b)
- 16 Bennington Battle Day. 1:371
- 31 TBD (Date dependent on caucus date, which is set by state chairman) First day for the chairman of a state committee of a political party to mail a notice of the date and purpose of the caucuses to each town clerk and to each town chairman of the party. 17: 2302 (14 days before date set for caucus which is set for a date between September 10 and September 30.)

September 2007

- 3 Labor Day. 1:371
- 10 First day for members of political party to meet in caucus in their respective towns. 17: 2302
- 15 By September 15 of each odd-numbered year the board of civil authority shall review the most recent checklist name by name and consider, for each person whose name appears on the checklist, whether that person is still qualified to vote. 17: 2150(c)
- 15 Last day for town clerk to remit to the state treasurer an accounting of dog and wolf-hybrid licenses sold and remit the license fee surcharge for an animal and rabies control program. 20: 3581(f)
- 17 **(This could change depending on what the date of the caucus is set for)** Last day for the chairman of a state committee of a political party to mail a notice of the date and purpose of the caucuses to each town clerk and to each town chairman of the party. 17: 2302
- 20 Town clerks must send a letter certifying compliance with 17: 2150 to the secretary of state. 17: 2150
- 30 Last day for members of a political party to meet in caucus in their respective towns. 17: 2302
- 30 Within 72 hours of hours after the caucus, the chairman and secretary of the town committee shall mail to the secretary of state, the chairmen of the state and county committees, and the town clerk a copy of the notice calling the meeting and a certified list of the names and mailing addresses of the officers and members of the town committee and delegates to the county committee. 17: 2307

The Municipal Calendar is provided by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns/Chittenden Bank and the Secretary of State's Office.

Upcoming Elections Grant Opportunities!

Funding from the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) will provide two grant opportunities to improve the administration of, and access to, elections in Vermont.

Grants for the Improved Administration of Federal Elections

The first grant program, the Improved Administration of Federal Elections, is available to towns for equipment or services that will improve the administration of the Primary and General Election in 2008 and future years. The funding is intended for desktop computers, laptop computers, printers, installation of a telephone line at the polling place, Access or Excel training or software to prepare entrance checklists and reports, IT consultant services, installation of broadband or a high speed internet connection, or any other equipment or services needed to improve the administration of the Primary and General Election.

This is the second year this program has been offered. The maximum amount available for the two years combined is \$6,000. A list of towns and the amount available to each in this round will be available at: <http://vermont-elections.org/elections1/2007fundinglist.xls>

The Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued on July 19, 2007. It will be posted at: <http://vermont-elections.org/elections1/HAVAElecAdminRFPJuly2007.doc> . Upon request to Katie Lane-Karnas (802-828-2464 or klane-karnas@sec.state.vt.us), a paper copy will be sent. Applications are due August 31, 2007.

Grants for Voting Access for Individuals with Disabilities (VOTE)

The second grant program, Voting Access for Individuals with Disabilities (VOTE), is intended to help ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to polling places and may vote privately and independently. Funding will be available to municipalities and organizations that serve individuals with disabilities. There are two activities that are eligible for funding:

1. Polling Place Accessibility: Municipalities may apply to receive funds to ensure that their polling facility is accessible to individuals with a full range of disabilities. This may include activities such as paving parking areas, building ramps inside/outside buildings, building curb cuts, and replacing door knobs with lever handles.
2. Information for Voters With Disabilities: Grants may be awarded for the development of written, audio and visual materials intended to provide individuals with disabilities information about the accessibility of polling places and to promote voting by these individuals.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued on September 4, 2007. It will be posted at: <http://vermont-elections.org/elections1/HAVARFP9-07.doc> . Upon request to Linda Hall (802-828-0586 or llhall@sec.state.vt.us), a paper copy will be sent. Applications are due September 26, 2007.

Ethics in Municipal Government / Internal Controls

July 23, 2007

Sponsored by Vermont Municipal Advisory Commission

Location: Manchester Town Hall, Manchester

Contact: John Cushing

Phone: 802-893-4111

Web site: <http://auditor.Vermont.gov>

Morning workshop followed by lunch, to be presented by the Vermont Attorney General's office and Vermont State Auditor Thomas Salmon.

Repeats on Wednesday, July 25 at the Milton Municipal Complex.

New Water Line Extension / Existing Consecutive Water Systems Regulation

July 31, 2007

Sponsored by Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Supply Division

Location: Pavilion Auditorium, 100 State Street, Montpelier

Time: 9:30 am

Contact: Jean Nicolai (Jean.Nicolai@state.vt.us)

Phone: 802-241-3400

Web site: <http://www.vermontdrinkingwater.org>

Price: Free

A public meeting to brainstorm about 1) how the Water Supply Division should regulate new water line extensions (follow-up to the January 18, 2007 meeting) and 2) how the Water Supply Division should regulate existing consecutive water systems. The Division will use the input it gathers as it drafts its recommendations to Agency of Natural Resources Secretary George Crombie, due by the end of September 2007.

Introduction to Computer Mapping (GIS)

August 8, 2007

Sponsored by Vermont Center for Geographic Information

Location: 133 State Street, Montpelier

Time: 12:30 pm

Contact: Leslie Pelch (lesliep@vcgi.org)

Phone: 802-882-3002

Web site: <http://www.vcgi.org>

Price: \$50

This course will teach basic Geographic Information Systems (GIS) knowledge and skills to Vermont municipal officials and volunteers. Participants do not need to have any prior experience using GIS.

PLEASE NOTE: This class is two-part; the second part will be offered on August 15, 2007 (same time and location as the first part). The class will also be repeated in Rutland on August 22 and 29, 2007.

Mailing List Updates!

Help us keep our mailing list up to date!

Let us know if:

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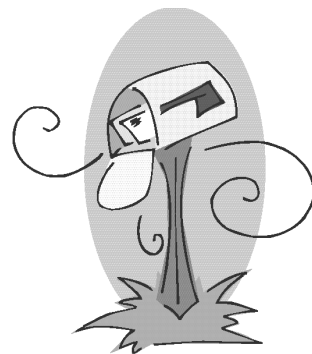
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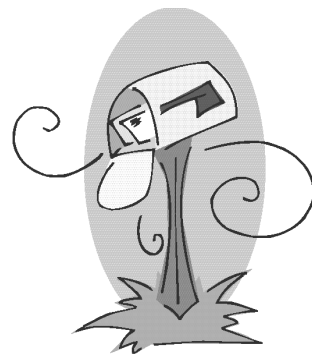
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