

Thank Guthrie Perry

By Chris Reed

When I was writing this in January, our road foreman Guthrie Perry was knee deep into his fourth winter of keeping East Montpelier's 62 miles of roads safe and passable for all of us.

When I caught up with Guthrie, he and the rest of the crew had just finished their morning runs and were busy installing a new air brake canister on one of the town's ten-wheelers. It is no small task to keep all the equipment we take for granted maintained and in good working order. There are chains to tighten and mend, hydraulic lines to check, reservoirs to fill, grease fittings to lubricate, plow blades to check and replace and a host of other details. I'm certain the knowledge Guthrie gained building plow trucks for seven years in Maine is of no small consequence to him now. Maintaining the roads in a town like East Montpelier is a difficult task, but you can tell immediately when talking to Guthrie that he approaches it with great pride and good humor. He is proud of his status as a fourth-generation road foreman, and the job is clearly in his blood. He speaks fondly of spending school vacations as a child riding in the town trucks with his dad and learning many lessons from an early age.

As we spoke, Guthrie's enthusiasm



Photo by Chris Reed

Guthrie Perry is a fourth generation road foreman who maintains East Montpelier's 62 miles of roads.

for his job was clear, but what was also clear was a humble recognition that he is a member of a team; it is only with the efforts and support of those around him that he is successful. He gives great credit to his wife for being understanding on the many occasions he has to put the town's needs before holiday meals, birthday parties, and other planned activities. He attributes her level of understanding to the fact that she, too, grew up with a father employed in municipal work. Guthrie

repeatedly commented on the quality of the other members of the crew. He called them a "great team" with more than a half century of experience among them.

Ken Lorden's specialty is the grader, and "he is very consistent"; Frank Campbell's is the excavator, and "he is very skilled with a really good eye," and Craig Seadeek has become the operator of the new roadside mower.

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A Season of Rebirth

Spring comes reliably every year; it may be a little earlier or later some years, but we always know our anticipation will be satisfied. That eagerness for the season of renewal feels more exaggerated this spring. Living in Vermont with its easy access to out-of-doors activities and small-town caring and neighborliness has mitigated some of the difficulties and challenges posed by the pandemic. However, after a long year of disruption, worry about the unknown, anxiety about many things, and just plain loneliness for many, we long for the regeneration that spring always promises. Coincidentally, the season of rebirth this year comes at a time when we can start to see the potential end of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Though we are certainly not done with restrictions on our movements and activities, masks on our faces, and limitations on physical contact, we can definitely start to see that “light at the end of the tunnel” shine more brightly as we slowly start to pick up some of the pieces and resume our pre-pandemic lives.

But before we try to pick up exactly where we left off, I have a feeling that most of us will be reflecting on this past year to be fully aware of what we have learned about ourselves, our society, and the needs and wants of ourselves, our neighbors, and our broader communities. Let us move ahead in a fairer, more positive and more equitable way for us all. Let’s make things better.

—*Edie Miller is a longtime Signpost volunteer*

The *Signpost* apologizes for failing to identify Michael Duane as the author of the "Top of the Signpost" column in the last issue. Many thanks to our town moderator who articulated his thoughtful reflections on Town Meeting Day.

"After a long year of disruption, worry about the unknown, anxiety about many things, and just plain loneliness for many, we long for the regeneration that spring always promises."

Please encourage renters and other EM residents not already receiving the *Signpost* to join our mailing list by contacting alexbrown802vt@gmail.com.



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Green Up East Montpelier May 1

Green Up Day is upon us, and you can feel the excitement. People are out walking, jogging, and biking along town roads from Horn of the Moon to Muddy Brook, East Hill, Towne Hill, and beyond. Now is the time of year we clean up our neighborhoods and make our roads shine!

On Saturday, May 1, join your community in picking up trash off our roadsides. Green garbage bags are available at the Town Office, Dudley Store, Bragg Farm, and Morse Farm. OR you can bring your own.

Wear long pants, bright tops, gloves, cap, masks, and use bug spray before heading out your door to pick up cans, bottles, tires, and all manner of discarded artifacts. If you can, pull large items to the side of the road and contact me with the location. Do the same for any hazardous waste (dead animals, needles, suspected toxic materials) you come across. When done, bring your bags to East Montpelier Elementary School parking lot.

The Green Up crew always seeks volunteers to help sort and recycle trash at the school. If you have a few hours to spare, call **Chris Racanelli** at **802-793-6687**. Unfortunately, the pandemic, once again, prevents us from hosting lunch this year.

Resources on safety rules and avoiding ticks while outdoors may be found at greenupvermont.org.

—Chris Racanelli



Photo by Chris Racanelli

A socially distanced Paul Erlbaum and Steve Campbell are ready for EM Green Up May 1 from 9 am to 1 pm at EMES parking lot.

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In addition to their specialties, they use other skills to perform a multitude of tasks, and each has the ability to fill in for the others as needed. Their team spirit, skill level, and experience make most projects proceed smoothly and quickly as each of them understands the goals and anticipates the tools, materials, and actions necessary to achieve them.

Another way that Guthrie thinks himself fortunate and that contributes to his success is the level of support he feels from the residents of the town and particularly from the Selectboard. The Board is always willing to hear him out and assist him in identifying projects, both new and recurrent, that need his attention. He said he feels appreciated by the Board and tries to keep the members informed at all times.

I was interested to learn that most of what Guthrie and his crew do on the roads—and how they do it—is dictated by the Municipal General Permit. This is a set of state rules

that East Montpelier has adopted with requirements ranging from dust control to gravel selections to slope and stormwater runoff. A great deal of expertise is needed to comply with these standards. Failure to do so risks the erosion of expensive materials and a state requirement to redo the work.

Guthrie enjoys the ever-changing daily routine. Winter requires plowing and sanding; spring brings the challenges of mud season; summer is a time to make improvements such as replacing worn-out surfaces and infrastructure like signs, culverts, and ditching. He feels they are already starting to see the effects of the in-house mowing program but admits it will be some time for the battle against roadside invasive plants to really pay off. This coming summer they plan to replace two important culverts on the County Road, one near the Morse Farm and one on Mallory Brook, just beyond Barnes Road. He asks everyone's patience with traffic changes during these projects.

After meeting Guthrie and interviewing him for this article, I can say he is a glass half full kind of guy.

Of all the things we discussed, the only frustration he mentioned was a problem I know is not peculiar to East Montpelier: the issue of drivers speeding through work zones and particularly folks on cell phones who are not paying attention to the flaggers and possible dangers ahead. He rightfully worries about the safety of his people and the public.

Throughout our conversation, Guthrie used the words “family” and “team” to describe the people he works with. He also shared how he loves to see the sunrise and has a collection of 40-50 pictures of sunrises on his phone, taken while he is working and most of us are still in bed. I came away feeling how lucky we are to have such a caring, optimistic, and talented person working proudly at a tough job that we so often take for granted. Thanks to Guthrie and all the town crew for their hard work.

—Chris Reed is retired from the Montpelier Fire Department and lives with his family on their homestead in East Montpelier Center.

A Love Affair with Plants

By Hilari Farrington

“My work is rooted in the premise that the heart of healing lies in remembering that we belong to each other and to the land. In all I do, I hope to increase awareness of the capacity of not only medicinal plants, but of all nature and wildness, to sustain and heal.”

— Larken Bunce

Most of us in East Montpelier have spent more time than usual outdoors during this pandemic. Being surrounded by natural beauty, especially in a year of lockdown, has been a blessing that we will likely never again take for granted. Given all this, it would be hard to find a more inspiring person to talk to about plants this spring than Larken Bunce, a renowned herbalist and educator living in East Montpelier.

This season is the time, says Larken, to watch for woodland ephemerals like hepatica, blue cohosh, trillium, wild ginger, Solomon’s seal, maidenhair fern, and trout lilies. In fact, she sees the month of May as a kind of “plant cathedral” in the richness and variety of new plant life. She added that East Montpelier and Plainfield are notable for having roads where one can find amazing and rare plants right by the roadside, without actually going off trail and risking damage to the delicate ecosystem.

Larken Bunce came to Vermont through Goddard College, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Sustainable Health, and she has called Vermont home ever since. With her husband, Keith Taber, she moved to East Montpelier from Middlesex in December 2018. Because they’d been living in a wooded area, they were looking for an affordable house in a more open location where they could fulfill their dreams of having lots of space for their plant and animal



Photo by Rosalee de la Floret

Larken Bunce is the executive director of the Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism.

companions.

In fact, for her quarantine birthday present last year, she had a big plot tilled for herbs. Without too much planning, it took shape as a spiral, with bark mulch on the paths. Ever an educator, she found herself making sure that the paths were wide enough so that she could offer a display garden of medicinal herbs to potential visitors.

Larken has taught widely across the country, at universities and colleges and at conferences and symposiums. But most importantly, she is the executive director of the Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism, an internationally known non-profit that attracts students from all over

the country and the world. Originally located in Montpelier, the center recently moved to the Goddard College campus. With a rich offering of educational programs and individual consultations available on a sliding fee scale, the Center will have more space to expand on Goddard’s historic campus. With infectious enthusiasm, Larken said that she especially loves the Center’s Family Herbalist Program, meant for folks who are not looking to become professional herbalists, but want to be a resource for family and friends. Every neighborhood should have an herbalist—just as every family needs a good cook, she added.

Born in redwood country in

Northern California, to parents who lived off-grid during the 1960s, Larken grew up in an environment filled with tinctures, herbs, and books on herbalism. The family's focus was on natural living and vegetarianism, so it's little wonder that this herbalist sees herself as one with the natural world. And while she lauds the movement toward wild foods and foraging, she recommends that if you're in the wild, admire but don't dig up plants or walk off trail if you can help it. It's better to buy plants or seeds and cultivate them yourself. For example, lemon balm, echinacea, thyme, and even stinging nettles can offer years of pleasure and medicine direct from your own garden.

On that subject, I asked about foraging for ramps, a local pastime at this time of year. She suggested that if you have a long-term relationship with a particular patch, you may know well how to keep it healthy. However, if the patch is new to you, it's important not to assume that you're the only one there. She suggests not harvesting where there is evidence of activity by others, and when you do harvest, never dig the bulbs, and leave at least one leaf

to photosynthesize so that the patch can sustain itself.

"You'll find me happiest on an afternoon spent in a field with a harvest basket, a blue sky, and the sun on my face or kneeling in the dirt meeting a new plant."

I asked Larken what she would suggest to those of us wondering how to bring our bodies out of the winter doldrums as the season warms. She pointed out that we naturally have a heavier diet during the winter. So come spring, she suggests that anyone with even the smallest patch of yard make spring "yard salads," with dandelion greens, chickweed, violet leaves, and daisy leaves. Then add anything you like such as avocado, nuts, cheese, olive oil, and vinegar (including an herb vinegar). That gets green back in your body. Furthermore, these plants serve as a mineral-rich spring tonic to enliven digestion and metabolism, a common practice in traditional

seasonal diets. These gently bitter and nourishing herbs wake up your digestive function and also help with elimination of waste products. As human animals it's really a good time to reconnect with plants through our guts and our hearts, she said.

In addition to teaching and writing, Larken's love of plants comes through in her stunning photographs of plant life, glowing with color. It's clear that these are like family photos, each one reflecting a deep appreciation and understanding of their subject. Perhaps her website best sums up her way of seeing the world: "You'll find me happiest on an afternoon spent in a field with a harvest basket, a blue sky, and the sun on my face or kneeling in the dirt meeting a new plant. I am tickled beyond belief that I get to do these things regularly and get paid for it."

—Hilari Farrington, formerly director of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library, now teaches Irish traditional music with her husband, Benedict Koehler. She also gardens, paints, and lets their cat in and out of the house.

Our Elected Officials: The Selectboard

By Duncan Schrader

The Selectboard plays a huge part in accomplishing the town's business. According to East Montpelier Selectboard Chairman Seth Gardner, the Board runs all the operations of the town: oversees the roads, sets policies, hires and fires employees, creates budgets, and sets the tax rate.

When asked why he likes being on the Selectboard, Mr. Gardner replied, "I've learned a huge amount about a variety of things, from grassroots government to how to manage a board to get a result that will benefit the majority of the constituents of East Montpelier." He always approaches issues from the perspective of what will help the most people in town, which isn't always the same as who might be complaining about an issue the most. He finds it especially exciting serving as chairman. He gets to do many different things such as checking the town payroll and running vicious dog hearings.

One very important issue that the Selectboard dealt with recently was how and when to conduct our annual Town Meeting during the Covid-19 pandemic. After lots of discussion, the board decided to cancel the meeting itself but to continue with Australian ballot voting on the traditional Town Meeting Day. Ballots were mailed to all. Voters could decide whether to complete and submit early or vote in the traditional method on Town Meeting Day. Chair Gardner noted, "These measures may increase participation in the democratic process which would be really gratifying!"

Another recent topic that Mr. Gardner mentioned was that there were questions about temporary parking signs that were placed along a back road in East Montpelier without a necessary permit. After a discussion, the board came to a conclusion that temporary signs were appropriate.

The Selectboard meets on the first and third Mondays of every month. To get information on how to attend the meetings and other information about the Selectboard go to the town website at eastmontpeliervt.org

—Duncan is a 7th grader at U-32, where he plays soccer, hockey, and lacrosse.

Potential catamount sighting?



Photo by Pixabay.

Catamounts were declared extinct in 2018. But sightings of big cats in Vermont continue.

Catamount sightings in Vermont? From time to time there are creditable ones. The following comes from our own town. The observer did not want his/her name used.

East Montpelier Observer:

It was May 3, 2020 at 12:30 pm. It was a clear day. I looked out the windows often to see if there were deer, turkeys, chipmunks, or other animals in the yard. There's a tiny stretch of unused land just outside the lawn on the east side. This abuts a field and a row of my neighbor's tall trees. At this time there were not many leaves or tall grasses to interfere with vision. There was nothing out of the ordinary but then, I saw an animal that didn't fit the landscape. It was standing still near the tree line about 25-30 yards from where I was. Its back was angled toward me but I could see almost all of it. I first saw the long, generously sized, graceful tail with a large black or dark brown tuft on the end. Since it was standing still, I had time to look carefully. It was no kitty! I remember thinking, "What??? A female lion?"

It did not appear frightened and clearly did not see me looking at it through the window. I noted the large feline body and the golden greyish tan of the fur, which was short and sleek, but I especially noted the startling size. It turned its large feline head, with smallish upright rounded ears, toward me. Some dark markings on the face, but these I cannot remember clearly enough to describe. This large creature was unhurried. It gave me about 30 seconds to

observe it and then walked into the trees on my neighbor's property. observe it and then walked into the trees on my neighbor's property.

NONA ESTRIN, OUR RESIDENT NATURALIST, COMMENTS:

This account is NOT the only creditable report of a large cat in Vermont in recent years. Catamounts are extirpated from Vermont, but they are not extinct. The last known breeding population here was killed in 1881, but there are still small populations not too far from here, in Canada.

So, a sighting here would be one of the following:

- 1) Escaped illegal "pets"—either tan or black animals. Black animals are from South America.
- 2) Animals passing through from other locations, or
- 3) Animals here, attempting to establish. This last is the least likely, but not impossible.

Some years ago, in late winter, a number of us from around the state were asked to track a large cat seen crossing Vincent Flats Road. Tracking conditions were perfect and left no doubt. But neither the large cat nor its fresh tracks were seen after that day.

If you see a big cat, don't think you are imagining things; it happens. Call the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, and let the town animal officer know.

Looking Forward with Heinz Hill Farm

It began with three rams from the Tunbridge World's Fair; Phillip Heinz wanted to teach his daughters about responsibility and hard work. At the time, he was a science teacher, so this enterprise was conducted after hours. Gradually, they added sheep, poultry, and pork, which they started selling through Front Porch Forum.

In December 2019 they registered with the State of Vermont under the name Third Generation Farming—"third generation" because daughter Ivy, 17, is Phillip's partner. Because he is working full-time elsewhere and weathering aging pains, Phillip says that Ivy and her sister, Ester, 9, are the core, caring for the animals day in and day out.

It took a while to get to this stage—an interesting and expensive set of lessons (being self-taught is not always the cheapest way.) Through local partnership and mentoring of other farmers such as Mike Noyes in Berlin, they made it work. Ivy, the muscle and energy according to Phillip, will be matriculating soon at Vermont Technical College to add further expertise.

And now they are going retail. Starting in April, their Heinz Hill Farm products will be available at Plainfield Hardware's grocery section. They are offering pork and lamb sausages, pork chops, ribs, and the ultimate in local pork experience—BACON. Eggs and other related products will follow shortly.

Stay tuned for their ambitious plans for extending the farm further into educational and agricultural businesses. For now, though, enjoy local meat grown by girl-power.

—Ann Stanton is East Montpelier Eats Coordinator



Photo by Jessica Heinz

Philip Heinz and daughters Ester (left) and Ivy (right).

News Items from the Past

By Nora Duane

"I live on a dirt road." While this statement may often draw inquisitive looks from those unfamiliar with these parts, it is often not fully digested. However, it's the visual of the "Pavement Ends" sign at the end of East Montpelier Center that, for first-time visitors, makes my earlier statement a reality. It is at THIS sign where the questions and the hesitation to keep the foot on the gas quickly start coming—often not quickly enough, as the car immediately starts bumping down unpaved Center Road.

Our dirt roads are part of the beauty and uniqueness of this town, but as we all recently experienced, our beloved back roads also take on a different look in Vermont's fifth season: Mud Season. Each year we mutter, "Isn't this worse than last year?" Looking back in the archives, it seems we are not the first to declare the conditions of the roads each

spring to be a "quagmire."

Page two of the April 10th, 1905 *Barre Times*, declared that maybe, just maybe, East Montpelier had solved the problem of mud season with this headline: "The Town of East Montpelier Has As Fine a Piece of Permanent Road as There is in the State of Vermont. Firm and Smooth in Muddy Times. Formerly it Was Almost An Impossibility for a Single Carriage to Pass Over it in the Spring of the Year." The article goes on to describe the process of building a section of the road between East Montpelier and Barre in the Telford Style with three layers of stones. It touts the work done by town Road Commissioner E.E. Pray and his crew, citing their ingenuity and resourcefulness in sourcing the stones, flint, and limestone from the roadside and nearby

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Assistant: Amber Perry 498-5140

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Photo by Peter Maksimow

pasture lands, and boasts with true New England frugality, “None of it had to be carried a mile. Consequently, there was a considerable savings in expense.”

Despite the impressive work in the fall and the “excellent satisfaction of the smoothness and hardness,” there were some naysayers who feared what might happen in the spring. “It was said by some that the winter weather would cause the bottom layer to heave, and the melting of snow would reveal a road full of hummocks and depressions. Consequently, the coming of spring with the loosening up of the ground was awaited with expectancy and some anxiety.” The nervousness in 1905 was well founded since before the rebuilding, this section of road was described as “a mudhole,” and “nothing but a quagmire,” where “single carriages have been known to sink to the hub.”

How many of us today feel this same anxiety as we, too, watch the snow melt and the puddles appear? How well did this new section of road fare? So well, in fact, that “At the worst period of the spring thus far the road has been comparatively dry, and the loads that have gone over it have hardly started a rut.” And if one were not yet convinced of the success of this new section of road, the article continued on to report that, “one can walk over the new strip and scarcely dampen the sole of the shoe.” I guess mud boots were not necessary that year.

Our little town was exceedingly proud of this project and declared that if “other towns and cities might find in this a model pattern for their own use, it is safe to say that there would be little outcry against the poor quality of roads in Vermont if here after permanent road building was done after this pattern.”

Today we realize that neither Vermont, nor even East Montpelier, met this lofty goal set in 1905. Perhaps enduring the mud season “quagmire” is the rite of passage for us, the lucky few who live on these beautiful roads in our little town. Just watch out for the ruts...

—Nora Duane grew up in East Montpelier exploring the back roads and the trails, just like she does now.



Photo by Gary Ann Lewis

Town Weathervane

BIRTHS

- Addyllynn Rose Perkins, a daughter, was born to Shenia Manning & Gage Perkins in February

DEATHS

Survivors living in East Montpelier are listed, when known.

- Everett L. Jones died in January
- Manuel A. Piro, father of Edward Piro, died in February
- Joan S. Witham, wife of Carroll and mother of Susan, died in February
- Philip H Bushey, husband of Roberta, father of Pam Adams and her husband Mike, died in March
- Millicent M. Seguin, mother of Paul Perry and grandmother of Daniel & Brittany Perry, died in March

LAND TRANSFERS

Transfers relative to estate planning or corrective deeds are not included.

- David Antonovich, et. al. to Paulus & Cassia Leendertse, 3 acres of open land on North St
- Gloria A. Biron Living Trust to Soren Pfeiffer & Irene Facciolo, 31.63 acres and dwelling on Lyle Young Rd
- Laura R Brown Revocable Trust to Margaret O'Connor-Fitzpatrick & Mark Fitzpatrick, 11.50 acres and dwelling on VT14N
- Anne Carver to Karl Hammer, 130.11 acres and dwelling on Casavant Rd
- Loretta M. Chapes Trust to James & Marybeth Blakeney, 0.47 acre and dwelling on US2
- Gary & Carole Hass to Michael Thompson & Margaret Grant, 2.30 acres and dwelling on Cummings Rd.
- Matthew Kaier & Sarah Perrault to Matthew Kaier, 1.7 acres of open land on Towne Hill Rd
- Blair Nance to Bryant Nance, 11.93 acres and dwelling on Mabuhay Dr
- Megan Riley to Joseph & Jamie Carroll, 1.40 acres and dwelling on County Rd
- Richard & Joyce Wolkomir to David Pope & Pamela Bockes, 16.5 acres of open land off County Rd

Following are excerpts from minutes of EM's governing boards. Complete minutes are on the town and school websites. All meetings were held online using the Zoom

conferencing platform with public participation options.

SELECTBOARD

January 18, 2021

Motions Passed

- to approve Access Permit 21-003 to replace curb cut at 440 East Hill Rd, subject to the listed conditions and authorize Chair Gardner to sign the permit on behalf of the SB
- to approve the proposal for parking control signage as presented and explained by Mr. Beyer on a trial basis for the remainder of the 2020-21 ski season or April 15, 2021, whichever comes first
- to authorize the mailing of the 2021 Town Meeting Day Election town and school district ballots to all active voters subject to the following conditions: the mailing of ballots to all active voters must be legal; the mailing of the school district ballot to all active voters must be both legal and otherwise acceptable to the WCUUSD; and, the cost of this unforeseen and unbudgeted ballot distribution methodology will be borne by the town with the expectation but not the requirement that the expense will be reimbursed by the state

February 21, 2021

Discussion of open forum on 2021 Town Meeting Warning articles and other items of interest to town residents. With no public attending the open forum, Mr. Etnier played the part by asking questions.

Motions Passed

- to authorize Chair Gardner to sign the letter of support for the East Montpelier Trails, Inc. application for Recreation Trails Program funding for the proposed Bobolink Farm Trail
- to accept the 2022 CAI Technologies tax map maintenance contract and authorize TA Johnson to sign on behalf of the SB
- to appoint Chris Racanelli as the town's 2021 Green Up Day coordinator

February 15, 2021

Discussion of recent Public Utility Commission filings and conversation with Julie Potter, PC Chair and CVRPC representative

Motions Passed

- to certify that there are no appeals or suits pending relating to the 2020 Grand List and, due to Covid-19 constraints, authorize TA Johnson to sign the certificate on behalf of the SB
- to accept the 2021 CAI Technologies tax map maintenance contract and authorize TA Johnson to sign on behalf of the SB
- to approve the liquor license renewals for Dudley's Store and Plainfield Hardware and, due to the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, authorize TA Johnson to sign the applications on behalf of the SB
- the SB finds that it has considered "complete streets principles" for this project area and the cost is disproportionate to probable use, due to natural resource constraints imposed by long stretches of ledge near the road (19 VSA §309d(2))
- the SB finds that incorporating complete streets principles is outside the scope of the project because of its very nature (19 VSA §309d(3))
- to authorize TA Johnson to notify VTrans that the town would like its FY21 VTrans Class 2 Roadway Paving Program grant application for the proposed paving project on County Road be considered under the FY22 VTrans program
- to authorize TA Johnson to complete and submit a FY22 VTrans Structures Program grant application for the proposed culvert replacement project on County Road

March 1, 2021

Discussion

Conversation with State Representative Kimberly Jessup; East Montpelier Town Forum

March 15, 2021 (U)

Discussion of State Police Community Advisory Board Report; Town Meeting review; Paul Winters has declined reappointment to the Recreation Board; Charles Johnson has declined reappointment to the Conservation Fund Advisory Committee; Julie Potter will step down as our CVRPC representative at the end of May

Motion Passed

- to enter Executive Session at 7:55 pm; exited at 7:59 pm
- to approve the contract for VSP services at the level of 20 hours/month and authorize TA Johnson to sign the contract on behalf of the SB
- to approve Board reorganization: Seth Gardner, Chair; Carl Etnier, Vice-Chair
- to give Chair Gardner approval authorization for the following: regular payroll warrants; and special warrants for standard expenditures under the town-approved budget and reserve fund expenditures authorized by the SB when such warrants are necessary due to required payment timing
- to approve the FY22 highway financial plan, certify that the town will raise by municipal taxes at least \$300 per mile for each mile of Class 1, 2 & 3 town highways and authorize TA Johnson to sign the form on behalf of the board
- to authorize the submission of an Arbor Day Tree Planting Grant application to the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program
- to approve the slate of 2021 appointments and authorize TA Johnson to complete the board representation form for CVSWMD
- to provide Town Clerk Laquerre with 24 hours of sick leave in compensation for recent evening and holiday work

PLANNING COMMISSION

The PC met on Jan. 21, Feb. 4 and 18, March 4 and discussed cell towers, village zoning, and proposed projects at Fairmont Farms and rb Technology. On March 4 the PC passed a motion to recognize Jack Pauly for his 18 years of service on the Planning Commission and express our thanks for his help in planning for the town's future.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

February 2, 2021 (U)

Motions Passed

- to approve Application #21-004 as presented, submitted by Norman and Carla Messier, for a reconfiguration & subdivision of the 3-parcel, 33.5-acre Messier property located at 440 East Hill Rd
- to approve Application #21-005 submitted by Chris and Patti Morrison, to change the use of the parcel located at

1678 US2 from single-family residential to a combination of single-family residential and kennel including the proposed sign with the condition that no dog waste will be disposed of within 100' of the riverbank

WCUUSD

January 20, 2021

Discussion of diversifying educator work force

Motions Passed

- to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters
- to approve extension of the Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Family Medical Leave changes to account for circumstances of the pandemic
- to set the tuition for 2021-2022, at the following: kindergarten \$20,265; other elementary \$20,265; secondary \$20,647
- to have each town mail ballots to all registered voters in all five towns that comprise WCUUSD, and that the district will cover the extra cost of mailing
- to approve the hiring of Honi Bean Barrett
- to approve the hiring of Caitlin Morgan, long-term substitute
- to approve the hiring of Kimberly Bolduc, Coordinator of Early Ed and Expanded Learning Opportunities

February 3, 2021

Discussion of Table of Organization

Motions Passed

- to enter executive session for personnel, administrative, negotiations and student matters at 6:06; exited at 6:59
- to approve the CVCC request to establish a Governance Study Committee to determine if a change is appropriate for the Central VT Career Center
- to appoint Flor Diaz Smith to serve as the WCUUSD District representative on the CVCC Governance Study Committee
- to approve the position of M[ulti-]T[iered] S[ystem] of S[upport] Resource Developer using grant funds for the remainder of the school year
- to change the FTE for Mary Carpenter, as presented
- for WCUUSD to apply for the AmeriCorps VISTA program for the FY22 school year

February 17, 2021 (Unapproved)

Discussion of budget forum

Motions Passed

- to enter executive session at 6:01 for legal, negotiations and personnel matters; exited at 7:10
- to authorize the Capital Project Budget of \$981,064 subject to a reduction in state and/or federal aid
- to authorize the superintendent, board chair and board vice chair to sign a letter to the House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs on behalf of the Board, as presented in the Board packet, dated February 17
- to approve the job description for Speech Language Pathologist

March 1 Annual Meeting

Discussion of proposed WCUUSD Budget and Articles of District Warning

March 3, 2021

Motions Passed

- to reorganize the Board as follows: Chair, Flor Diaz Smith; Vice-Chair, Karoline May; Clerk, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet; (appointments to committees are detailed in the full minutes on the WCUUSD website)
- to have one board meeting on the third Wednesday of the month, at 6 pm
- to enter executive sessions at 7:13 to discuss personnel/superintendent evaluation; exited at 7:49
- to formally join the coalition of other Vermont School Boards to support legislation this year calling for implementation of the equalized pupil weighting study
- to approve the new teacher nomination of Erika Moore, School Social Worker

March 17, 2021 (U)

Motions Passed

- to authorize WCUUSD to enter a contract with Washington Central Friends of Education to support the Equity Scholar in Residence, at a cost no greater than \$79,184, for the 2021-22 school year, and to use the fund balance to pay for this
- to approve the nominations of Erica Smith and Gwyn Gauthier, SLPs for 2021-2022
- to accept the retirement of Anne Carter, with appreciation for thirty years of service
- to accept the resignation of Emily Heckler, WCUUSD SLP



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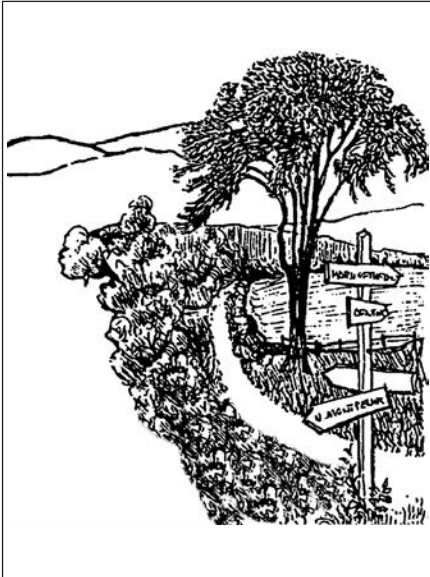



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CALENDAR

Sat. May 1, 9 am – 1 pm, EMES parking lot, Green Up Day drop off

Mon. May 17, by 5 pm, second installment of taxes due. Payments may be mailed, dropped in the drop box, or brought to the front door during regular business hours for personal service.

**Deadline for contributions for the next Signpost issue is
Mon. May 31, 2021.**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Conservation Fund Advisory Committee
Development Review Board (DRB)
East Montpelier Fire Department (EMFD)
East Montpelier Historical Society
East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative
Four Corners Schoolhouse Assn
Planning Commission (PC)
Recreation Board
Selectboard
WCUUSD Board Meeting

as needed
1st Tues. 7 pm
every Tues. 7 pm
suspended
as needed
2nd Wed. 7 pm
1st & 3rd Thurs. 7 pm
2nd Mon. 7:15 pm.
1st & 3rd Mon. 6:30 pm
3rd Wed. 5:30 pm

contact: blusig@aol.com / 229-5441
Town Office Building
EMFD Community Room
Four Corners Schoolhouse/E. Calais
contact: rhazel@ezcloud.com
Four Corners Schoolhouse
Town Office Building
Elementary School
Town Office Building
one of the district elementary schools

Historical Society Update

The East Montpelier Historical Society will not meet in person until, perhaps, July for our annual Croquet Tournament and Ice Cream Social. We will soon announce a Zoom meeting at which Nathan Phillips will share the stories behind a selection of old town photos.

If you would like to be added to our group email list, please contact *Sandal Cate*, sandal@sover.net. We also email out various websites of interest to our members from time to time. New members are always welcome.