

Chickering Bog: A Local Treasure

By Sue Chickering

My parents, Art and Jo Chickering, moved to East Montpelier in 1964 when I was eight years old. I was sad to be moving away from my best friend in Plainfield Village to the end of a dead-end road. But soon, I began to realize just what a unique place we had descended upon.

My mother, in particular, took a special interest in the bog and spent a good portion of her time walking there with local naturalist Bob Jervis, learning about the rare and fragile plants. When Bob Klein from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) approached my parents to protect it, she was enthusiastic and eager to help.

In February 1982 they sold 30 acres to the Conservancy, which also purchased 28.8 acres from William Steel on the northern section of the bog. With these initial purchases, this fragile, pristine area became Chickering Bog, a forever-protected preserve. In 1990, my parents donated an additional 75 acres, in an effort to include critical buffer zones. Finally, in 2014, Richard Czaplinski sold his adjoining property on the western edge of the bog. Chickering Bog is currently 220 acres, with surrounding easements on nearby lands to help with this protection.

Back in the late 1980s, when you could tromp around on the bog, one of my fondest memories is telling my husband, John Ayers, about a “petrified log” that I wanted to show him. We traipsed out from the house until we came to what was actually a fence post. When I started pulling on it, he helped. There were three feet of rotted wood, but

the hand-hewn sharpened bottom was glistening as if it had been cut yesterday; so beautiful it was in its preserved glory. He was quite amazed, but he chuckled at my “petrified log” description—as it was nothing like what he was expecting to see.

We learned later that the bog is actually a fen—the difference being the source of the water. Bogs are typically fed by rainfall and are very acidic. Our fen is fed by groundwater and receives considerable nutrient enrichment from the surrounding bedrock. It is also much less acidic than a true bog and has an inlet, an outlet, and a small pond in the middle.

In my mid-twenties when we moved back to the farmhouse to raise our own children, I adopted an acronym so that I could memorize the important traits. “Mr. Op”—Mineral Rich, Oxygen Poor—was how I explained this unusual feature to visitors and friends, pointing out the stunted cedar trees and the rare plants.

The deep “kettle hole,” formed by a glacier that sat there 13,000 years ago, is filled with an absorbent accumulation of decomposed plant remains known as “peat.” It is up to 30 feet deep at the broader

northern expanse of the bog. It was known as a “quaking bog,” and, as children, we experienced this phenomenon when one of us would jump up and down on a hassock of peat moss causing another child to bounce up and down three feet away. Though the bog is relatively small,



photos courtesy of TNC

Lady Slipper in spring

The Chilly Charm of Spring

As I sit writing this on April 1 (no joke), I'm struck by two contradictory thoughts: I returned just yesterday from a visit to a friend in Atlanta where it was 75 degrees and sunny. While it's sunny here today, I am grumbling to myself that the sun doesn't make up for our rather cool 40-degree weather.

Then, I just caught a short, televised piece on the morning news about a Vermont sugarmaker who says this may be one his best seasons because the weather continues to provide the cool nights and above-freezing daytime temps that his work requires.



photo by Alex Brown

It suddenly reminded me how my personal desire for an early spring would actually upset in so many ways the cultural heritage of this place we all love to call home. I rethought, also, my reasons for moving here over 50 years ago, which were and are entirely related to the broad cultural appeal—including the weather—of the place.

So, I'll content myself with my friend Claudia's photos of blooming wisteria and magnolias, knowing that she always has a bed awaiting me for a springtime visit; but I'll always anticipate, with pleasure, my return home to Vermont.

spring ferns

—Edie Miller is a long-time Signpost volunteer.

Chickering, continued from p. 1

the combination of wet and dry, acid and basic (alkaline) habitats results in extraordinarily rich flora, including three rare plants, 18 species of sedges and rushes, and 11 species of orchids. It is one of the most important natural areas in Central Vermont. Some of these plants, both arctic and tropical, include lady slippers, pitcher plants, sundew, rose pogonia, arethusa bulbosa, grass pink, bladderwort, blue flag iris, sweet gale, cranberries, and three species of blueberries.*

The bog was my mother's favorite place in the world. After her stroke, when she was in her 80s, our teenage sons, my husband, my father, and I brought her out to the boardwalk in her wheelchair for one last look. Though challenging, it was a poignant moment for us all.



exploring Chickering Bog

Dogs are no longer allowed at the bog due to the fragility of the plants that can easily be harmed or trampled. To access the bog, there is a parking area on George Road in Calais. From the parking area, cross Lightening Ridge Road and walk to the right of the schoolhouse. Follow the trail, which runs along a snowmobile corridor, until you see a sharp right hand turn up a short rock staircase. Follow the signs and you will come to the Loop Trail and, eventually, a kiosk and the boardwalk. Enjoy!

* These facts come from TNC articles.

—Sue and husband John Ayers live on Chickering Rd. and love having the time to walk, ski and snowshoe in the nearby woods.

Community Building at the Crossroads

By Ann Stanton

At 5 am, Marc Fontaine and Sharon Bissell begin their day at Traditions at Fontaine Meadows. Marc starts the coffee, while Sharon cooks the breakfast sandwiches. Other culinary offerings are handmade pretzels, hot dogs, deli sandwiches and, weekly, fresh cider donuts, pies, and freshly baked bread.

We've met Marc and Sharon before, at the La Cantine food truck (Nov/Dec '23 Signpost). Traditions is act two: a post-and-beam structure with old-timey touches like a covered porch, an antique gas pump and tractor, and vintage tools—all located beyond the Fontaine Meadows arch.

After Marc moved to East Montpelier in 1999, built a house and set up a sawmill, "just for fun," he found himself enjoying the sense of community. So, he set out to build more community.

Marc's imagination spread from building a small barn for his beef cattle to the food truck and then on to the store. While working on the building, Marc called on Bill Royce and his 3 D printer to bring his visions to life, adding a full basement and many other features not originally planned. The wood for the building was locally harvested and milled at Fontaine Sawmill. The store entrance features a gorgeous wood-lined cathedral ceiling with an antique hayfork chandelier. The cozy upstairs is a workspace where Sharon works and their two Poms hang out. Sharon tells me, "Marc has an eye for design." You'll see unique details and special touches throughout the new store.

When I asked Marc about local competition, he answered, "There's room for everyone." In fact, Marc used to enjoy helping Jeff Biron stock coolers in the early mornings at Dudley's Store, and Doni Cain from Fox Market has been by to welcome them to the neighborhood. Marc's business philosophy is "Partnering with our neighbors to bring local Vermont products to our



photos by Alex Brown

Marc & Sharon prepping homemade goodies

community." Almost all store items are locally produced—from baked goods, to home-canned pickles, dilly beans, and jams, milk, eggs, pork, and their own grass-fed beef.

"How did all this happen?" I wondered. Marc bought the land after it didn't meet the needs of previous owners. Initially, he utilized the fields for pasture and was planning to build a barn. However, an engineer discovered that the area near Route 2 would perc and work for a building. Then came a long process of getting permits for the driveway, water, septic, plumbing, wetlands delineation, and river corridor determination. Vision is not enough; it took a lot of patience and persistence to get it all done.

With the addition of Fontaine Meadows, it's starting to look more like a town center around Route 2 in East Montpelier. Stop by to welcome Marc and Sharon at Traditions; stock up on local wares, try out the various

goodies, and—from May to November—enjoy the beautiful views from the picnic benches at La Cantine.

The store is open seven days a week, starting at 6 am Monday through Saturday and 7 am Sundays. Come join Marc and Sharon in building community!

—Ann Stanton is a longtime Signpost volunteer.



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Printed by L. Brown & Sons Printing 476-3164

Drumming at EMES

By Bethany Parker

“One thousand, five hundred years ago,” sang out more than 200 voices in the EMES gym on March 25 as students and staff welcomed the Burlington Taiko Drum Company at the kick-off performance of a two-week residency. Paton Sensei, owner and instructor, taught the students that 1,500 years ago temples, temple drums, and the Chinese alphabet were introduced in Japan.

The Burlington Taiko Group’s webpage states, “Our popular school residency programs are structured for school schedules and include up to 35 students per class. Participants explore the art form of Taiko, play the drums, investigate Japanese culture, and learn a Taiko piece themselves.”

Jillian Zeilenga, kindergarten teacher, and art teacher Jen Campbell worked together to utilize PTNO funds—money donated at the Harvest Feast and Monster Mash—to invite the Burlington Taiko Drum Group to EMES. The visit culminated in a performance at U-32 on April 11. Ms. Campbell noted, “I had first seen the group while participating in the Vermont City Marathon. They played at the bottom of a huge hill to motivate runners to reach the top! When I heard that EMES wanted to do a residency, I immediately thought of Burlington Taiko Group



EMES Taiko drummers

and contacted them. The residency came to fruition with the help of our principal and staff members at EMES.” Mrs. Zeilenga loved this idea, as she knew it would be an inclusive residency that would create opportunities for all students.

Paton Sensei anticipated that during the residency students will “touch music with their whole bodies, loud voices, joy, dance, and athleticism.” He hoped “they would learn to use their eyes and ears to touch a native Japanese speaker and learn Taiko, first as a language, then as music.” Paton Sensei shared his journey of arriving in Japan before his first birthday. In the summer, at the Obon festival, the Taiko would be pulled through the town. The young children would hold the “tree made of rope,” while a third grader would play the drum. It was then that Stuart Paton, now known as Paton Sensei, developed a passion for Taiko drumming. With his formal training, which started after college, he hopes to bring this piece of Japanese culture to our students.

Students have described the Taiko Drumming residency as awesome and fun!

—Beth Parker is a behavior instructional interventionist and professional development coach at EMES.

Joy of Spring

By Barbara Ploof

For many years we planted our garden the easy way. All the seeds went into the garden early in June along with the tomato and pepper plants we bought from local growers. Then, about ten years ago our church, the Old Meeting House (OMH), began having an annual plant sale in late May. A couple of folks donated veggie starts they had raised from seed. I thought I’d like to give it a try.

The next year I bought the seed starter equipment needed, put tomato seeds in the little cubes, and kept them in the kitchen—peeking at them often to see when the tiny plants would pop up—usually within a few days. It’s a real joy to see green sprouts when the snow is still on the ground. Once the

first leaves appeared, I brought them to the east window of the unheated basement; and when a second set sprouted, I transplanted them to peat pots. I loved to watch them grow, but by the time of the plant sale, they were tall, spindly, and pale. Plants grown by others sold first, of course.

So, my annual experiments began. Over the years I tried planting them later, installing a grow light over them, moving the contraption to the heated part of the basement, and even installing a grow light on the porch. Finally, I think I’ve found the best timing, lighting, and seed varieties for plants that will sell well at the OMH plant sale—May 26 this year.

Additionally, I started trying my

luck with peppers last year. It turns out their growing needs are different from tomatoes, so my experiments have once again begun. Last year I couldn’t find the seeds I wanted, so I planted another variety at the same time as the tomatoes. The plants were too small by the time of the OMH sale, and the ones I kept for myself didn’t yield many peppers.

This year I located the New Ace pepper seeds I originally wanted and planted them a month ahead of the tomatoes. I hope they will grow well and have a high yield. It’s all fun and a great way to start the garden early.

—Barbara Ploof is an active OMH member and longtime Signpost volunteer.

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East Montpelier’s Future Planning Commission Needs to Hear from You

The East Montpelier Town Plan outlines a vision for our corner of the world—how we want the town to develop its land and other resources, while also defining what we want to preserve. All this with the end goal of having East Montpelier remain the place where we want to live.

The East Montpelier Planning Commission is embarking on its (every eight years) review and update of our Town Plan and is looking for your input. The vision of the Town Plan guides the changes that we may want or need to make to our zoning regulations, and it serves as the town’s primary source of authority when intervening in state regulatory processes (e.g. the siting of large energy or telecommunications projects).

As part of this revision process, which is expected to take two years, we want to know what our residents (including renters) and business owners would like to see the town prioritize for the future. The survey contains four open-ended questions about your hopes/concerns/ideas, a section for prioritizing potential items for the plan, and a more specific section about housing needs. We also give you space to elaborate on any of your priorities or concerns.

You can find the survey at: <https://tinyurl.com/EastMontpelierSurvey> or by scanning the QR code here. We will also post the survey on the town website and will make paper copies available at the town office. If you would like a paper survey mailed to you, or if you need it in another format, please email us at eastmontpelierpc@gmail.com.



East Montpelier Trails Update

By Mary Stone

The board of East Montpelier Trails heartily thanks the townspeople for their support on Town Meeting Day, in unanimously approving funds to improve and expand our trail system. We appreciate, also, the great response to our information table during the meeting.

It is our hope to get even more involvement from the trail users. Ideally, a group of neighbors can work together, with support from the trail board to identify and resolve issues on the trail. On our website emtrails.org, you can find contact information for the board members. We would love to hear from you, or even better, we would love to welcome you to our trail work days. National Trail Day, always the first Saturday in June, marks the beginning of our guided volunteer work days each summer. Look for times and locations of our work plans on our website, Front Porch Forum, or get your name on our volunteer email list. And make sure you check out the new bridge on the new Bobolink trail.

—Mary Stone has been a member of East Montpelier Trails for as long as she can remember and considers herself lucky to live in this talented community.

Town Meeting Update

By Edie Miller

Town Meeting 2024 felt familiar, very much like it used to feel pre-pandemic. Townspeople seemed elated not only to meet and greet but also to discuss and debate. The latter included close examination of the funds disbursed to various local organizations. There were also many questions and much discussion about the selectboard's proposal to develop plans for a new town garage to be built on the current site. No doubt we will hear much more about this in the course of 2024.

In our only contest—for a seat on the selectboard—long-time resident and former selectboard member Tom Brazier garnered the votes to unseat Nik Khosla who had been appointed to fill a seat vacated last year by Jon Jewett.

We enjoyed the famous Town Meeting potluck luncheon (the highlight for many). But pay attention everyone: as we give grateful thanks to Sue Racanelli who has organized this feast for many years, she has put out the call for her replacement to make

sure the tradition continues into the future. Who will volunteer?

The biggest news coming out of Town Meeting Day was the defeat of the school budget — funded by the largest part of our tax bill — which provides pre-K through grade 12 education for the children of the five towns comprising the Washington Central Unified Union School District.

Voting on a revised budget will take place on Tuesday, May 7 at EMES.



photos by Alex Brown

Join the *Signpost*: Follow Town/School Operations

If you are a regular reader of the *Signpost*, you are probably familiar with the *Weathervane* which includes—in addition to local births, deaths, and property transfers—excerpts from the minutes of key town and school boards. The excerpts are meant to alert readers to the issues under discussion/consideration and encourage you to seek further information from the original full-length minutes of the boards; or better still, to get involved by attending the actual meetings where the action takes place.

The *Signpost* is seeking a records editor to join the *Signpost* volunteers. The new volunteer will scan the minutes

of the Selectboard, the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board and the WCUUSD Board and feature items that indicate new initiatives or directions—outside the regular routine business of each group—to summarize in the *Signpost Weathervane*.

This is a wonderful way to keep up with all things East Montpelier as well as joining and contributing to the fun of putting out the EM *Signpost* six times a year.

For more information contact Michelle Singer at michellealsinger@gmail.com.

A Delicious Potluck Lunch

Town Meeting potluck was a special delight with a delicious assortment of food and goodwill. Thank you, one and all, for bringing in such a wide range of vegetarian, vegan, and non-vegetarian entrees.

Special thanks to the volunteers who helped set-up, cook, serve, and clean during the potluck: Loring Starr, brothers Taggart and Duncan Schrader, Martha Allen, Carolyn Pastore, Renee Kievet-Kylar, Rachael Grossman, and Paul Erlbaum.

Thank you to the businesses whose thoughtful contributions added to our buffet: Hunger Mountain Coop, Red Hen, and Shaw's Supermarket. We were able to provide bread, apple cider, and a variety of salads, and pastries.

And, finally, a loud thank you to principal Alicia



photo by Alex Brown

What a great selection.

Lyford, Annie Finnegan, and Todd Hill at East Montpelier Elementary School, who graciously allow us the use of their premises, making it easy for us to prepare the space for the potluck.

This is the last year I will be coordinating the Town Potluck, and I want to give a special shout-out to the many volunteers who have helped me over the last 10 years. I COULD NOT DO THIS WITHOUT YOU! My heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for helping out.

If anyone is interested in coordinating the potluck next year, please email me at racanellis@comcast.net. It is a lot of fun and most appreciated by our neighbors and community.

—Sue Racanelli is the Town Meeting potluck coordinator.

Protecting Us All

The recently formed East Montpelier Emergency Preparedness Committee is working to ensure that everyone is safe and informed during extreme weather and power outages. We are looking at communications, shelter options, and setting up neighbor to neighbor safety systems.

In the meantime, here are some things that you can do to keep yourself safe and informed:

- Sign up for VT-ALERT for real-time alerts on pending disasters, traffic and weather conditions, public health notifications and more at vtalert.gov

- If you have a disability or special medical needs, sign up for CARE (Citizen Assistance Registry for Emergencies) at <https://e911.vermont.gov/care>

- Keep informed of power outages.

- WEC customers:

 - <https://www.washingtonelectric.coop/outage-center>

- GMP customers: <https://greenmountainpower.com/outages>

- Go to the Town Clerk's office and pick up a Family Emergency Preparedness Booklet along with other useful information

- Go to the Department of Public Safety Vermont Emergency Management website for information on how to prepare for emergencies: <https://vem.vermont.gov/preparedness>

We welcome input from East Montpelier citizens. If you are interested in taking an active role in your neighborhood or have other information or resources to share, please contact any committee member or the Town Clerk's office. We are Lydia Faesy, Patty Giavara, Rachael Grossman, Renee Kievet-Kylar, and Jennifer Zollner. We'd love to hear from you!

TVSC On the Move

By Denise Wheeler

Twin Valley Senior Center continues to add new programs and services, while maintaining its already full agenda. This includes Meals on Wheels, craft fairs, cribbage tournaments, pie sales, health clinics, exercise classes, games, and singalongs. People come to TVSC to socialize, play cards, eat lunch, and enjoy the company of others.

While all this is happening, Northern Basements Systems donated labor and materials to waterproof our basement, and install a sump pump. If the floods come again, we will not lose precious food and supplies.

We are seeking donations of unopened cleaning supplies and paper products such as dish and hand soap, paper towels and plates, trash bags, and scrubbies. Please contact us for details if you can help out.

Check our website at www.twinvalleyseniors.org/ to see a calendar of activities and what's on the lunch menu or call 802-223-3322. You might also consider volunteering for this vital part of your community. Stop in for a visit and enjoy lunch.

—Denise Wheeler is executive director of TVSC.

TOWN WEATHERVANE

BIRTHS

- Emerson Fitch, born to Robert & Christine Fitch in February
- Alexandria Shepard, born to Kelly & Scott Shepard in February

MARRIAGES

- Brittany Houghton & Harley Codling, married in February

DEATHS—survivors living in East Montpelier are listed when known

- Peter Krupkowski, husband to Amy Mattinat, died in March,
- Kenneth Libertoff, husband to Sarah Hoffman, died in March
- Michele Murphy died in March

LAND TRANSFERS

Transfers relative to estate planning or corrective deeds are not included in this listing. For further information, please contact the Town Clerk.

- Simone Fitzgerald to Cameron & Julia Fitzgerald, 2.70 acres & dwelling on Maplewood Rd.
- Jeremy & Anna Hankins to Bennett & Maria Leon, 3.65 acres & dwelling on Barnes Rd.
- George McBride & Barbara Nolan to Michael Anderson, 0.94 acres and a mobile home on County Rd.
- Moonlight Properties Inc. to John Lambert, 10.56 acres & dwelling on US2
- Eriks & Samantha Powers-Narvila to Thomas Passburg, 3.40 acres of open land on North St.
- REO Trust to Moonlight Properties, 10.56 acres & dwelling on US2
- George & Bonnie Sibley to Jenny Prosser & Sarah Lindberg, 0.77 acre & dwelling on Sodom Pond Rd.
- Jacqueline Smith-Nielson to Michael Smith, ½ interest in 0.49 acres & dwelling on US2
- David Thomas to Margaret Fawcett, 3 acres of open land on Captain Kidd Rd.
- Donald & Diane Tofani to Jeffrey & Renee Harrington, 5.92 acres & dwelling on Coburn Rd.
- Vermont State Housing Authority to The Housing Foundation, 25.58 acres of commercial property on Sandy Pines Rd.
- Doris Washburn to Tim and Diane Frazier, a contingent remainder of 0.88 acres & dwelling on VT14S

The following are excerpts from minutes of EM's and WCUUSD's governing boards. Complete minutes are on the town and school websites. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings were held in person with a remote participation option available.

SELECTBOARD

December 18, 2023

Motions Passed

- to approve the mailing of WCUUSD and Town of East Montpelier ballots to all active, not challenged voters

January 8, 2024

Motions Passed

- to approve the following funding from ARPA funding: \$25,000 Twin Valley Senior Center for their paving project; \$10,000 for the All Together Now boiler, \$10,000 for East Montpelier Trails Inc. for the Mallory Brook Trail Bridge, \$5,000 for the East Montpelier Historical Society for cabinetry
- to work with Weimann Lamphere Architects on the Town Garage project
- to allocate up to \$40,000 using \$27,600 for pre-design schematic work for Weimann Lamphere architects and \$12,000 for soil boring by Scott Associates
- to apply for two separate grants to support the ash tree management project (by consensus)
- to release RFP to obtain H&H Study and Design/Engineering of replacement structures at Sodom Pond Rd. and Sanders Circle

January 18, 2024

East Montpelier/Calais Special Joint SB Meeting

Motions Passed

- to reduce FY25 EMFD ambulance budget by \$10,000 from \$293,806 to \$283,806

January 22, 2024

Motions Passed

- to go into executive session for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body; entered into at 6:37 pm, exited at 6:52 pm
- to move forward with the necessary paperwork to secure grant funding and issue the RFP to hire a consultant for Local Hazard Mitigation Plan due to

expire December 3, 2024 (by consensus)

- to approve FY25 budget
- to authorize TA Jenkins to contract with DeWolfe Engineering Associates for the Sanders Circle project and Dubois & King for the Sodom Pond project
- to appoint Daniel Costin to the Energy Committee and Erin Borland as the Green Up Coordinator
- to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter; entered at 7:40 pm, exited at 7:54 pm
- to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter; entered at 8:09 pm, exited at 8:18 pm
- to appoint Nik Khosla to the vacant Selectboard seat

February 12, 2024

Motions Passed

- to appropriate the funds for Avenue, \$14,550 to digitize recorded land surveys
- to authorize the town clerk to approve the second-class liquor license for Plainfield Hardware Store
- to authorize the town clerk to approve the second-class tobacco license for Plainfield Hardware Store
- to authorize TA Jenkins to sign the application for the Building Resilient Infrastructure Grant
- to authorize TA Jenkins to sign the renewal agreement between the town of East Montpelier and CAI Technologies between 4/23/24 and 3/31/25
- to change the name of the Emergency Planning Committee to the Emergency Preparedness Committee

February 26, 2024

Motions Passed

- to go into executive session to discuss personnel matter (no time indicated)
- to authorize the town administrator to offer the municipal coordinator position to the agreed-upon candidate at \$25 per hour
- to authorize the town purchase of a pressure washer/culvert thawer and trailer thereto for a cost of up to \$10,345, out of the remaining ARPA funds

- to authorize TA Jenkins to submit the grant application for Towne Hill Rd paving between US2 and 300 ft. past Gallison Hill Rd.

March 18, 2024 (U)

Motions Passed

- to authorize TA Jenkins to sign the contract provided by VISCC LLC to provide owners' representative services
- to accept the 2024 rules of transaction as put forth with the amendment of the most recent edition of Robert's Rules
- to nominate Mr. Gardner for chair of the SB. Mr. Gardner recused
- to nominate Ms. Christiansen for vice chair of the SB. Ms. Christianson recused
- to authorize the town treasurer to engage Municipay as our new vendor for Town online pay portal for no more than 5 years
- to authorize TA Jenkins to contract with CVRP for hazard mitigation planning services
- to authorize TA Jenkins to contract with Berry's Forest Products for the removal of 192 trees from Center, Sodom Pond, & Haggett Rds, and 178 trees from Brazier & Lyle Young Rds
- to authorize TA Jenkins to sign an application for a \$7000 grant for ash tree removal in Adamant

March 25, 2024 (U)

Motions Passed

- to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. (no entrance time given), exited at 8:44

PLANNING COMMISSION

January 18, 2024

- Discuss next steps on Public Engagement exercise

February 1, 2024

Discussion:

- Next steps on Housing Study
- Standardization of work for group work and plan editing
- Potential change to Rules of Procedure for next year

February 15, 2024

TOWN WEATHERVANE

Discussion:

- Recognition of departing PC members: Richard Hall, Mark Lane, Gianna Petito, and Maia Stone
- Proposed amendment to PC Rules of Procedure
- Town survey for Town Plan work

March 7, 2024

Discussion:

- Welcome to new members Zoe Christiansen and Ben McCall
- Town survey next steps and discuss post -Town Meeting plans (potential need to fill vacancies)
- Work plan for 2024 and Town Plan

March 21, 2024 (U)

Motions Passed

- to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters; entered 7:43 pm, exited at 8:01 pm
- to recommend that the selectboard appoint Celina Barton and Glen Weyant to the PC for the remainder of the 2024 term

WCUUSD

February 7, 2024

Motions Passed

- to approve the charge to the Screening and Interview Committee for new superintendent
- to set the final "gauntlet day" in search for new superintendent as 3/27/24
- to approve awarding the Berlin Fire Alarm System Replacement Project contract to Local Electric, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$72,804
- to accept the resignation of Mark Kline
- to go into several executive sessions to consider multiple student disciplinary matters and a residency request; entered at 7:46, exited at 8:56
- to accept the administration's recommendations regarding student discipline issues
- no action taken on student residency issue

February 21, 2024

Motions Passed

- to maintain the proposed budget
 - to award the U-32 Baseball Field Refurbishment Project contract to Dirt Tech Company, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$201,170 and to authorize the allocation of \$73,921 additional capital reserve funds to the budget for the completion of this project
 - to approve awarding the WCUUSD 2024 Combined Construction Project contract to E.F. Wall & Assoc., Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$591,147
 - to authorize the superintendent to sign the contract with WF Project Inspections for his services as Owner Project Manager and Clerk of the Works through 2/9/25, not to exceed \$87,500
 - to accept the following resignations: James Haseltin, 5/6 Classroom Teacher, EMES; Uriah Proctor Mattingly, School Wide Student Support, Calais; Daisy Scarzello, Classroom Teacher, U-32 1.0 FTE; Kim McKellar, Work-Based Learning Coordinator, U-32 0.8 FTE
 - to approve long-term substitute for the 2023/24 school year: Bernadette "Bernie" Skrocki, Interventionist/Special Educator, EMES
- #### March 11, 2024 (Virtual)
- ##### Motions Passed
- to nominate Flor Diaz Smith, board chair; Ursula Stanley, vice chair; Diane Nichols- Fleming, Clerk; Joshua Sevits, Clerk (Nichols-Fleming was elected)
 - to keep the current board meeting schedule, first & third Wednesday of the month, the first being educational and rotating among the elementary schools; the second being the business meeting, held at U-32
 - to appoint the following committee members: Daniel Keeney, Mckalyn Leclerc, Flor Diaz Smith, Ursula Stanley - Steering Committee; Chris McVeigh, Natasha Eckart, Amelia Contrada - Policy Committee; Chris McVeigh, Joshua Sevits, Diane Nichols-Fleming - Negotiations Committee; Ursula Stanley, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Mckalyn Leclerc, Daniel Keeney, Zach Sullivan, and

Weather vane, continued from page 9

Flor Diaz Smith - Ed Quality Committee; Zach Sullivan, Michelle Ksepka, Ursula Stanley, Chris McVeigh, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Mckalyn LeClerc, Flor Diaz Smith, and Daniel Keeney - Finance Committee

- to appoint Joshua Sevits as representative to the Career Center board
- to define 'truant' as absent from school without permission and to appoint the following truant officers: Berlin-Celia Guggemos, Calais-Cat Fair, Worcester-Gillian Fuqua, Middlesex-Karoline May, East Montpelier-Alicia Lyford, U-32-JB Hilferty
- to adopt the Board Norms, subject to consensus to change as needed
- to adopt posting and communication practice
- to nominate Flor Diaz Smith as the voting delegate for statewide health insurance board

March 13, 2024

Motions passed

- to not [automatically] mail ballots for this round of the budget voting
- to approve awarding the WCUUSD 2024 Security System Project contract to Safety Systems of Vermont in an amount not to exceed \$430,531
- to approve the resignation of David Mathies, EMES School Nurse

- to go into executive session to discuss personnel issues, and to include Superintendent Roy; entered at 8:18 pm, exited at 8:34 pm

March 27, 2024

Motions Passed

- to go into executive session for the purpose of superintendent interviews to include consultants Jeanne Deweese and Mike Deweese; entered at 5:30 pm, exited at 9:59 pm
- to appoint Steven Dellinger-Pate pending successful contract negotiations
- to authorize the board chair and legal counsel to negotiate within the identified salary range

Paulie's Recipe Harwichport Potatoes



Submitted by Ellen Shedd to Country Kitchen Favorites, EM Fire Dept. Auxiliary

INGREDIENTS

- 4 C. raw cubed potatoes
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- ½ lb. cream cheese
- 2 C. thin white sauce

DIRECTIONS

Cook potatoes and onion in salted water for 5 minutes. Drain. Pour into buttered dish. Add red pepper. Add cream cheese to white sauce and pour over potatoes. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Paulie's comment: Very good. A great dish to bring to a potluck.



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IMPORTANT DATES

Sat. May 4, 9 am - 2 pm, Green Up Day, EMES
collection site and snacks

Tues. May 7, 7 am - 7 pm, WCUUSD budget vote,
EMES. Ballots available ahead of time from Town Clerk

Wed. May 15, Property Taxes 2nd installment, due no
later than 5 pm at Town Office

**Mon. May 20, 6 pm, Potluck and meeting of the E.
Mont. & Calais Historical Societies,** Old Brick Church.
Talk by Lisa Wernhoff about collecting old buttons.
You are welcome to BYOB (bring your own buttons)!
Free and open to the public, handicapped accessible.
Contact Sandal Cate, sandal.cate@gmail.com for
more info.

Sun. May 26, 11 am - 12:30 pm, Plant and Pie Sale,
Old Meeting House, East Montpelier Center

Thank you for your support

ALICE & RICHARD ANGNEY
CAROLYN & ROBERT BROWN

SUBMISSIONS FOR JULY-AUGUST 2024 SIGNPOST DUE Wednesday May 29, 2024

Practicing Democracy at EMES

The results are in! The East Montpelier Elementary School community has voted, and the East Montpelier dog tag for 2025 will be a red dog bone. It was a close race, with the dog bone coming in at 78 votes and the dog head securing 70 votes. The doghouse received a paltry 14 votes.

Voting kiosks were set up (with step stools for some of our youngest voters), and students were checked off as they entered the polling place. Ballots were dropped in an official ballot box and counted by Student Leadership Team members.

We're all set for 2025 dog licensing.



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

as needed
1st Tues. 7 pm
every Tues. 7 pm
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
TBD

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