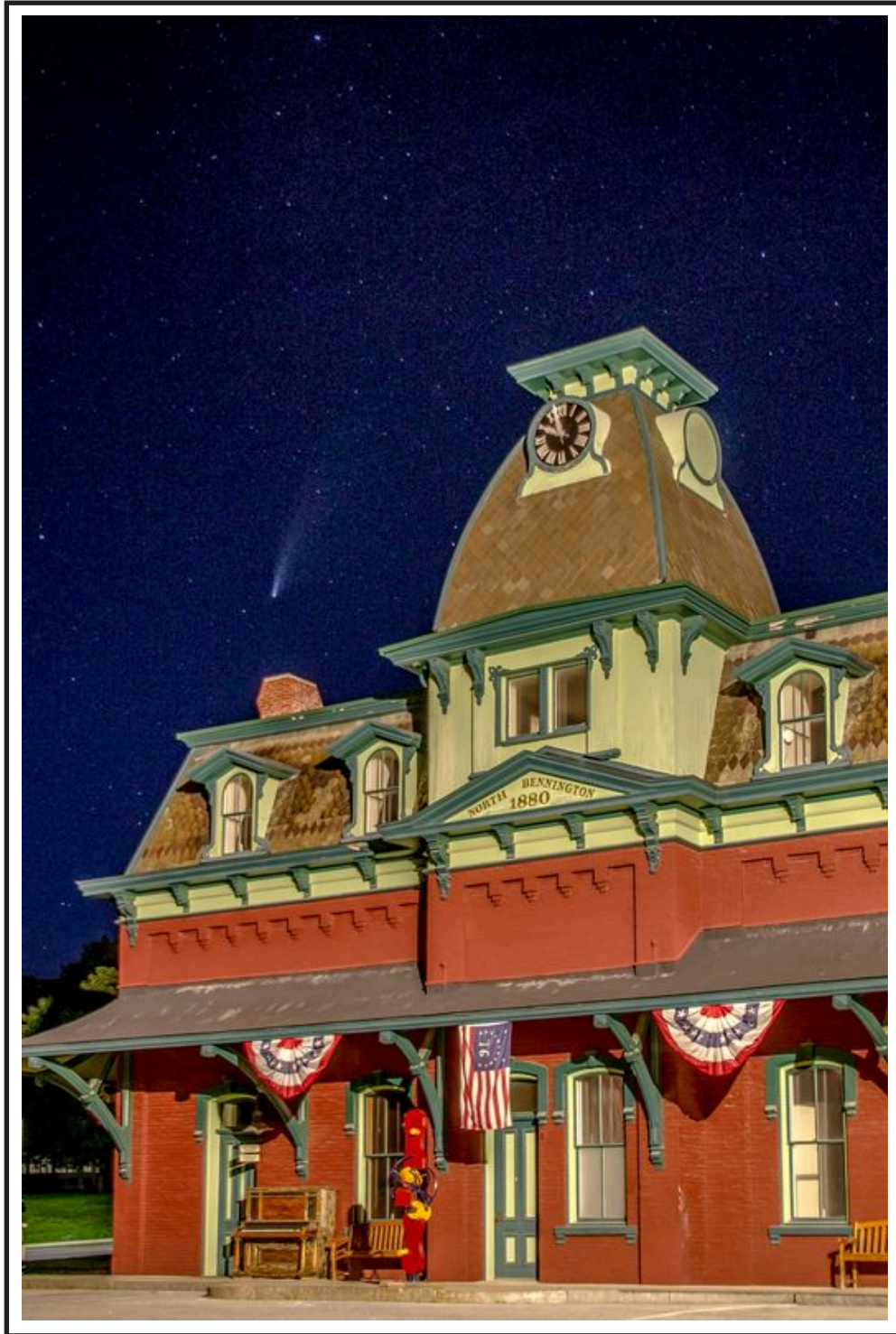


Village of North Bennington



Annual Report

2022

www.northbennington.org



Retired Fire Chief Ed Myers descends from a long, proud line of Vermonters and has spent his entire life here in North Bennington. Ed's sense of community led him to join the North Bennington Volunteer Fire Department back in 1988 after watching department practice sessions since childhood. Ed credits Homer Williams with encouraging him to move rapidly from Lieutenant to 3rd Assistant Chief to Chief all within 4 years of joining the department. It was Homer's support that instilled confidence and a desire to excel which Ed carried throughout his 30 years of service.

About 19 years ago Ed explored the idea for North Bennington to specialize in cold water rescue and coordinated that program with surrounding fire departments. Ed's project enabled specialty services to be developed and reduced duplication of efforts among area squads. As part of Bennington County Mutual Aid, North Bennington responds to emergency needs in other communities and the Village benefits from the assistance of others. Ed speaks highly of the camaraderie among all volunteer firefighters and is proud of the deep commitment in the Department. As Ed says, "in an emergency, we leave our families to take care of other families".

Ed credits his own family, wife Cindy, children Stephanie, Tera, and K.C. and 11 grandchildren with supporting his firefighting passion and long hours on call. Ed enjoys hunting season and spending quality time with his father and brothers. However, he has no plans yet for retirement. In fact, Ed is rightly proud of the fact that he has never quit or been removed from a job. Ed stayed with four prior employers until they shut the doors. That's the same sense of pride and ownership Ed displayed for 30 years as Fire Chief!

The Village is extremely grateful to Ed for his decades of leadership and continued involvement with emergency planning. When the time comes for Ed and Cindy to do some well-earned traveling, we will all bid bon voyage.

FRONT & BACK COVER: By Mark Schiffner. Mark is a local photographer who lives in Bennington. Mark's work can be seen at www.mark-schiffner.pixels.com or he can be contacted by message on his Facebook page, Mark Schiffner Photography.

Front: "Comet over Train Depot", Back: "Powers Market," "Robert Frost Trail", "Moon over Lake Paran". Production of Village Report Covers by Vermont Arts Exchange.

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Village Officers and Employees

Moderator			John Ulrich		
Treasurer			Doug Buggee	802-442-5547	treasurer@villagenorthbennington.org
Village Clerk			Lori Elwell	802-447-7450	lwell@hotmail.com
Trustees:					
3 year term expires 2024			Scott Creedy	scottcreedy711@gmail.com	
3 year term expires 2024			Mary Rogers	info@villagenorthbennington.org	518-598-9042
3 year term expires 2023			Tara Lowary	t.lowary@gmail.com	973-819-7462
3 year term expires 2025			Ray Mullineaux	rhullino@gmail.com	
3 year term expires 2023			Matthew Patterson	pattersonvnb@gmail.com	
Highway Department:					
			Normand Leblanc	1-802-442-7474	
			Kyle Harris		
Water Department:					
			Ted Fela	nbwd2009@gmail.com	1-802-442-3883
			Zachary Bull		
			James Ostrander		
Water Board Members:					
Term Expires	October	2025	Steve Goodrich		
Term Expires	October	2026	Arla Sampsell		
Term Expires	October	2027	Joe Herrmann		
Term Expires	October	2023	David Shaughnessy, Chair	david@burrandmccallum.com	
Term Expires	October	2024	Gerald Elwell		
Chief of Fire Department					
			Ed Harrington	802-380-5353	harrington53nbfd@gmail.com
Zoning Administrator					
			Ron Hatchey	to be announced on website	
Delinquent Tax Collector					
			Doug Buggee	802-442-5547	treasurer@villagenorthbennington.org
Planning Commission Members:					
Term Expires	April	2025	Kim Hall, Co-Chair	hobhouse@gmail.com	
Term Expires	April	2026	Matthew Patterson	pattersonvnb@gmail.com	
Term Expires	April	2024	Robert Howe		
Term Expires	April	2024	Chris Damon	nobzacd@gmail.com	
Term Expires	April	2025	Mary Rogers, Co-Chair	info@villagenorthbennington.org	
Term Expires	April	2026	Steve Lenox	stevelenox260@gmail.com	
Development Review Board Members:					
Term Expires	April	2024	Hugh Crowl		
Term Expires	April	2024	James Williams		
Term Expires	April	2023	Chris Damon, Chair	nobzacd@gmail.com	
Term Expires	April	2024	Tara Lowary, Vice Chair	t.lowary@gmail.com	
Term Expires	April	2025	Kim Hall	hobhouse@gmail.com	
BCRC Commissioner - Dana Rozycki					

WEBSITE www.villagenorthbennington.org

Village of North Bennington Annual Meeting Minutes

Village of North Bennington
Annual Village Meeting
Tuesday, March 15, 2022 – 7:30 PM
Carriage Barn – Park McCullough Grounds

Trustees & Public Officials Present – John Lamson, Chair; Tara Lowary, Trustee; Erin McKenny, Trustee; John Ulrich, Moderator; Mary Rogers, Treasurer; Lori Elwell, Village Clerk

Public Present – Ray Mullineaux, David Silver, Mark Rogers, Laura Novak, Bob Novak, Stuart Aldrich, Jennie Rozycki, Dana Rozycki, Jeff Gray, Arla Sampsell, Elizabeth Hopkins, Steve Goodrich, Jan Goodrich, Janice Lerrigo, George Lerrigo, Emily Hunter, Scott Creedy, Tom Fels, Alisa DelTufo, Doug Buggee, Stuart Aldrich, Timmy Bullock, Nick Disorda

The Annual Meeting of the Village of North Bennington was called to order at 7:30 PM by Moderator John Ulrich.

The Warning for the Annual Village Meeting was read by Village Clerk Lori Elwell.

Article One: To hear and dispose of the reports of the Village Officers for the year.

- Resident Ray Mullineaux requested clarification on the reserve funds. Treasurer Rogers discussed the reserve funds for the village and how they are applied.
- Trustee Boudreau reviewed the Trustees Report for 2021, highlighting specific events and occurrences.
- Ray Mullineaux made a motion to approve Article One. Bob Novak seconded this motion and it was so voted.

Article Two: To see what sum the Village will vote to cover appropriations made at this meeting and for the current and incidental expenses or authorize the trustees to borrow the necessary funds for that purpose; authorize the trustees to spend unanticipated revenue; and also authorize the trustees to set the tax rate upon completion of the Grand List.

- Treasurer Mary Rogers reviewed the overall budget noting specifics that should be detailed.
- Ray Mullineaux made a motion to accept and approve Article Two. This was seconded by Mark Rogers and so voted unanimously.

Article Three: To elect a Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Collector of Taxes, and three Auditors for the ensuing year; and two trustees for three years.

- Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for Moderator. A nomination for John Ulrich for Moderator was made. There being no further nominations, a motion was made to elect John Ulrich as Moderator. This was seconded and so voted with no discussion or opposition.
- Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for Village Clerk. Mark Rogers nominated Lori Elwell for Village Clerk. Mary Rogers seconded this nomination for Village Clerk. There being no further nominations, a motion was made to elect Lori Elwell for Village Clerk. This was seconded and so voted with no opposition or discussion.
- Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for Village Treasurer. Mark Rogers nominated Doug Buggee for Village Treasurer. Ray Mullineaux seconded this motion. There being no further nominations for Village Treasurer, a motion was made to elect Doug Buggee for Village Treasurer. This was seconded and so voted with no opposition or discussion.
- Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for Collector of Taxes. Ray Mullineaux nominated Doug Buggee for Collector of Taxes. Mark Rogers seconded this motion. There being no further nominations for Collector of Taxes a motion was made to elect Doug Buggee for Collector of Taxes. This was seconded and so voted with no discussion or opposition.
- Mark Boudreau, Trustee, explained the purpose of Village Auditors. Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for three Auditors for the ensuing year. There being no nominations, three Village auditor's seats are currently vacant.
- Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for one trustee for two years to fill the remaining term vacated by John Lamson. There was a nomination and a second for Mary Rogers. There being no further nominations it was so voted by all residents in attendance.
- Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for one trustee for two years to fill the remaining term vacated by Mark Boudreau. There was a nomination and a second for Scott Creedy. There being no further nominations it was so voted by all residents in attendance.
- Mr. Ulrich accepted nominations for one trustee for three years. There was a nomination and a second for Ray Mullineaux. There being no further nominations it was so voted by all residents in attendance.

Article Four: Shall the Village of North Bennington allocate an additional \$2,500 to the McCullough Library? This will bring their annual allocation to \$27,500.

- A motion was made by Dana Rosycki, and seconded by Ray Mullineaux, to allocate an additional \$2,500 to the McCullough Library. This will bring their annual allocation to \$27,500. This was so voted by all residents in attendance.

Article Five: To discuss any other business found proper when met.

- Treasurer Mary Rogers described the Window Dressers Program and encouraged everyone to look into its offerings. She passed out an informational sheet and is available to answer any questions at any time.
- Local Attorney, David Silver, was present to discuss the Class Action Settlement-PFOA Contamination. He reviewed the history of the PFOA situation and encouraged North Bennington residents within the Zone of Concern to complete the necessary paperwork for the settlement that will be distributed. Mr. Silver discussed the zone areas and residents were given the opportunity to ask related questions. Attorney Silver noted where the paperwork can be found and how to locate its contents. He is willing to assist anyone needing assistance with this project/paperwork.

A motion was made by Dana Rozycki to adjourn the Village of North Bennington Annual Meeting at 9:20 PM. This was seconded by Ray Mullineaux and so voted.

Lorine Elwell
Village Clerk
North Bennington

SPECIAL POLICE	250	250	0	250	0	250	0	250
FIRE EQUIP REPLACEMENT FUND	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	26,000
FIRE HOUSE RENO SINKING	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	5,000
SMALL EQUIPMENT RESERVE	4,000	4,000	0	4,000	0	4,000	4,000	4,000
New Truck Payment								18,930
TOTAL FIRE DEPARTMENT	\$ 73,100	\$ 77,747	\$ (4,647)	\$ 68,800	\$ 159,910	\$ (91,110)	\$	\$ 97,230

PUBLIC WORKS	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023		Remaining Budget	BUDGET 2023-2024
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	6 Month Actual		
Parks Maintenance	\$ 5,000	\$ 14,232	\$ (9,232)	\$ 5,000	\$ 8,693	\$ (3,693)	\$ 5,000
Parks Reserve	5,000	5,000	-	5,000	0	5,000	0
STREET LIGHTS	17,000	15,889	1,111	17,000	8,799	8,201	18,000
PARKS REVENUE	(6,000)	(6,000)	0	(6,000)	(6,000)	0	(6,000)
Public Safety							7,500
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	\$ 21,000	\$ 29,121	\$ (8,121)	\$ 21,000	\$ 11,492	\$ 9,508	\$ 24,500

HIGHWAY	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023		Remaining Budget	BUDGET 2023-2024
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	6 Month Actual		
HIGHWAY WAGES	\$ 109,350	\$ 96,658	\$ 12,692	\$ 112,795	\$ 51,240	\$ 61,555	\$ 119,051
HIGHWAY PAYROLL TAXES	8,400	7,385	1,015	9,024	3,701	5,323	9,500
HEALTH INSURANCE	10,000	12,376	(2,376)	12,500	6,287	6,213	13,750
HIGHWAY-NEW EQUIPMENT	20,000	49,216	(29,216)	20,000	12,809	7,191	20,000
SIDEWALK TRACTOR	10,000	4,979	5,021	10,000		10,000	10,000
BACKHOE/DUMP TRUCK	36,000	16,236	19,764	36,000		36,000	36,000
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	3,800	7,789	(3,989)	5,000	8,010	(3,010)	6,000
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE	8,000	15,648	(7,648)	10,000	8,724	1,276	12,000
OIL & GAS	8,000	14,491	(6,491)	8,000	6,958	1,042	12,400
GARAGE ALL EXPENSES	26,200	17,546	8,654	25,000	7,524	17,476	25,000
HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE	84,500	76,027	8,473	84,500	12,578	71,922	90,000
SALT & SAND	24,000	33,062	(9,062)	24,000	19,251	4,749	36,000
EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT FUND	6,350	5,496	854	6,200	0	6,200	6,700
SIDEWALK RESERVE FUND	8,000	8,000	0	8,000	0	8,000	8,000
BACKHOE RESERVE FUND	4,500	4,500	0	4,500	0	4,500	4,500
TRACTOR RESERVE FUND	3,500	3,500	0	3,500	0	3,500	3,500

TRUCK RESERVE FUND	26,000	26,000	0	26,000	0	26,000	26,000	26,000
TREE REMOVAL RESERVE FUND	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	2,000
GARAGE IMPROVEMENT FUND	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	6,000
SALE OF EQUIPMENT	0	(81,100)	81,100	0	(10,105)	10,105	0	0
HIGHWAY REVENUE	(31,000)	(35,265)	4,265	(31,000)	(8,152)	(22,848)	(31,000)	(31,000)
ROAD REPAIR CARRY FWD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mower Reserve								2,000
Tree Removal								5,000
TOTAL HIGHWAY	\$ 372,600	\$ 289,541	\$ 83,059	\$ 381,019	\$ 118,826	\$ 262,193	\$ 422,401	

HIGHWAY GRANT PROJECTS	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023		Remaining Budget	BUDGET 2023-2024
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	6 Month Actual		
Depot Roof TA14(9)		(8,927)	8,927			0	
Structures Grant - Culvert		1,276	(1,276)		8,344	(8,344)	2,500
TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURES	\$ -	\$ (7,651)	\$ 7,651	\$ -	\$ 8,344	\$ (8,344)	\$ 2,500

Payments to Other Organizations	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023		Remaining Budget	BUDGET 2023-2024
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	6 Month Actual		
MCCULLOUGH LIBRARY	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 27,500	\$ 27,500	\$ -	\$ 27,500
PARK MCCULLOUGH HOUSE	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	0	1,500
SAGE CITY SYMPHONY	500	500	0	500	500	0	500
VAE ALLOCATION	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	0	5,000
BENN COUNTY REG. COMM.	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	0	5,000
PARAN RECREATION	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	0	5,000
GRANDVIEW	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000
SUNRISE FAMILY RESOURCE	500	500	0	500	500	0	500
TREE COMMITTEE	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	0	1,500
OUTDOOR SCULPTURE SHOW	500	500	0	500	0	500	500
NB ROUNDTABLE	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	500	500	1,000
BENN COUNTY CHORAL	500	500	0	500	0	500	500
TOTAL OTHER ORGS	\$ 48,000	\$ 48,000	\$ -	\$ 50,500	\$ 49,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 50,500

OTHER EXPENDITURES	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023		BUDGET 2023-2024
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	12 Month Actual	
INSURANCE	\$ 28,000	\$ 27,403	\$ 597	\$ 28,000	\$ 21,673	\$ 31,500
ARPA - Tree Removal & Records Project						(13,000)
TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURES	\$ 28,000	\$ 27,403	\$ 597	\$ 28,000	\$ 21,673	\$ 18,500

Operating Transfers Out (In)	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023		BUDGET 2023-2024
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	6 Month Actual	
CONTINGENCY FUND	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
TOTAL OPERATING TRANSFERS	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023		BUDGET 2023-2024
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	6 Month Actual	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	644,100	667,941	(23,841)	651,869	445,887	747,031
TOTAL REVENUE	(39,300)	(135,984)	96,684	(40,000)	(29,551)	(53,000)
NET EXPENDITURES	604,800	531,958	72,842	611,869	416,336	694,031

To: Village of North Bennington
 From: Doug Buggee, Treasurer
 Date: July 10, 2022
 Re: Account Balances 6/30/2022

<u>Account</u>	<u>6/30/2022</u>
General Fund - Unrestricted SWEEP	13,435.91
Highway Dept PR	1,275.81
Delinquent Tax Account	10,023.75
Tax Account	<u>199,736.72</u>
CASH ACCOUNT BALANCE	224,472.19
RESTRICTED FUNDS	
Firehouse Reserve Fund	39,469.61
Fire Equipment Reserve-New	14,005.23
Fire Truck Reserve Fund	137,418.50
Salt Shed Reserve Fund	8,681.19
Highway Reserves Sweep:	168,242.80
Sidewalk Reserve Fund	38,331.64
Backhoe Reserve Fund	22,526.16
Tractor Reserve Fund	33,298.74
Truck Reserve Fund	67,086.26
Tree Removal	2,000.00
Garage Fund	5,000.00
General Reserves Sweep:	64,356.88
Audit Reserve Fund	16,947.69
Village Contingency Fund	23,740.22
Depot Renovation Fund	23,668.97
Parks Reserve Fund	30,035.41
ARPA Reserve	254,214.05
Total Restricted	716,423.67
TOTAL FUNDS	940,895.86

VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON
PROPERTY TAXES
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Taxes Billed & Due 11/10/21

NB Highway	340,131.50	
NB General	162,421.03	
NB Fire	75,948.21	
Local Share for school	4,906.84	
Late Homestead Penalty	0.00	
Total Billed	583,407.58	\$ 583,407.58

Collections by Treasurer	Total Received	555,729.74	
Delinquent Taxes to Delinquent tax Collector	Total Delinquent	21,260.73	
	Credits - to be refunded	6,417.11	
	Total Collections & Delinquent		\$ 583,407.58

Disbursements	Village	550,822.90	
	Refunds/Overpayments	6,417.11	
	School - Local Share	4,906.84	
	Total Disbursed	\$ 562,146.85	

Delinquent Balance 7/1/21		\$ 3,162.46
	2021-22 Delinquencies	21,260.73
	Payments Received	(22,306.19)
	Abatements	0.00
	Adjustments	0.00

Delinquent Balance 7/1/22 \$ 2,117.00

Interest Collected	\$ 915.94
Penalty Collected	\$ 1,711.69

Respectfully submitted
Doug Buggee
Treasurer/Delinquent Tax Collector

The Village Trustees submit the following report on the activities of 2022.

The last Annual Village Meeting held Tuesday March 15, 2022 and hosted by the Park McCullough House in the Carriage Barn was the occasion to bid farewell to two Trustees and approve three new Trustees and a new Village Treasurer/Tax Collector. After several years as Trustee Chair, John Lamson regretfully stepped down in September 2021. Mark Boudreau ably took up the mantle until this annual meeting but also regretfully gave up the final year of his term. Fortunately for the Village, Mark continues overseeing Parks and Recreation needs and activities. Erin McKenny completed her three-year term after shepherding plans for an official Village website. Village residents owe sincere thanks to all previously serving Trustees. Their efforts often went without notice or fanfare but were crucial in navigating Covid-19 challenges, obtaining grants, and ensuring the consistent workings of the Village.

Former Treasurer Mary Rogers and Mr. Scott Creedy were voted to fill the open two-year Trustee terms. Mr. Ray Mullineaux was voted for a three-year term. Mr. Doug Buggee was voted in as Treasurer and Collector of Taxes. The newly formed Board, including current Trustees Matthew Patterson and Tara Lowary, and Clerk Lorine Elwell elected Ms. Rogers Chair and Mr. Patterson Vice-Chair at a subsequent meeting.

As part of the national American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Grant funds were funneled through the State and allocated to municipalities. North Bennington received a total of \$508,350. The intent of the grant was to support public health and negative economic harms caused by the pandemic involving detailed reporting and recordkeeping. A later rule allowed municipalities to claim smaller awards as a standard allowance to be used for a broader heading of government services and eased burdensome reporting. Trustees felt the funds should benefit the community and set up a public input meeting immediately prior to the Village Annual Meeting. The following groups presented their projects for grant funding. All proposals received overwhelming public support.

- Village School of North Bennington – requested a total of \$120,000 for three positions to assist students requiring Covid related academic intervention. To date, no funds have been expended. After the special meeting, Trustees approved \$6,194 to reimburse mail-in balloting expenses for the Graded School District.
- John G McCullough Free Library – requested and received \$151,000 for clean drinking water and HVAC systems needed to reopen the library.
- Paran Recreations – a total of \$68,200 was awarded and disbursed for a Community Outreach salary, sewer and pump repair, picnic tables, and signage.
- Vermont Arts Exchange – request was made to reserve up to \$50,000 for handicap access to the VAE building. A plan has not been submitted nor funds approved at this date.
- Park McCullough – \$20,000 was approved and disbursed for exterior repair and painting of the Carriage Barn.
- North Bennington Parks - \$85,000 has been approved for Welling Field overhaul pending engineering study and comprehensive plan and budget.

Following some months of investigation, review and revision led by Tara Lowary, Trustees followed processes outlined in 24 V.S.A s 1972 to adopt eleven ordinances in February 2022. Attested Ordinances were provided to the Bennington Police Department for enforcement.

The Village launched an informational website, www.villagenorthbennington.org. The public can find meeting calendars, agendas, minutes, and contact information for Trustees, Treasurer, Clerk, Zoning

Administrator, Development Review Board, Planning Commission, and Water Department. Village governance documents are also listed. Required notices and documents remain posted at the Depot and Post Office.

It was another busy year for Norm Leblanc and Kyle Harris taking care of our roads, sidewalks, parks, and buildings. The Trustees thank them and Jack Beaudoin for their consistent and timely work keeping roads and sidewalks safe during the winter season. The crew continues to look at different technologies to reduce salt use that may leach into the environment.

The west side of the Bank Street sidewalk was extended this year and plans, which require State coordination, are underway to continue the work up to Homestead Mews. Current plans will hopefully see completion of road paving work on Pleasant Street and Prospect Street this Spring through Summer. Planning for the next year or two includes paving and culvert work on Hall Street and sidewalk work on Church Street and West Street. We are also working with the Bennington County Regional Commission to develop traffic calming measures around the Village. We thank the Bennington Police Department for their increased presence in the Village.

With support from two grants, culverts were replaced and improved on River Road and College Road this past Fall. Another grant involves replacing the Overlea Road culvert on the North Bennington side of the railroad tracks. Supply chain issues somewhat delayed this project, but the pipe has been ordered and required permits are in place. This is a significant project which will require road closure for 2 weeks or more when digging commences later in the summer. A 2023 grant will enable culvert work to be done on Welling Road.

Painting and repair work began on the eaves at the Depot and continued with lower canopy roof repairs. Additional preservation and painting continued through late Fall. The Village is developing a long-term preservation plan for continuing exterior repair and maintenance on an annual basis.

The fence below the sledding hill at Lions Park on Houghton Steet needed significant repair this year. A guardrail was also installed to promote safety and assist with parking. Mark Boudreau presented plans to use some ARPA monies for repairing and extending ball fields at Wellings Park. The plan was enthusiastically supported by Trustees and the public. By late winter, two engineering firms are submitting quotes for engineering studies as required for the first steps in this restoration. If the studies result in feasible plans, earthworks should commence in late August.

The Planning Commission was rejuvenated this year and is meeting on a regular basis to review and revise as needed all Zoning Bylaws. A review of the Village Plan and bylaws is periodically required, and the current work will allow the stipulated timelines to be met. The Development Review Board also has new members volunteering for service. Meetings are open to the public and information can be found on the website at www.villagenorthbennington.org.

The Trustees thank Billy Rogers for his service as Zoning Administrator. We welcome Ron Hachey who accepted the Zoning Administrator position in mid-December. Ron had a professional career in land planning and currently has several volunteer roles including serving on the Bennington Development Review Board.

The Village of North Bennington proudly has a long list of residents participating in our community governance. Our Village thrives due to the dedication and commitment of those volunteering their

service, whether in government or the various social and cultural groups and events. We encourage those who are able to run for an elected position or volunteer for an appointment.

We thank volunteers and organizers for the events that make our community special: Halloween Parade, Art in the Park, McWaters Permaculture Gardens, Park McCullough and McCullough Library activities, the Mile Around the Woods, Hiland Garden, Paran Recreations, WinterFest, the North Bennington Roundtable, and the North Bennington Volunteer Fire Department.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Rogers, Chair
Trustees of the Village of North Bennington

Board of Water Commissioners Report 2022

For the year 2022, 100,845,000 gallons of water were treated at the filtration plant. This was a 5.5 million gallon decrease over the previous year. The decrease can be attributed to the repair of leaks in the water system and a reduction of consumption from customers.

All required water testing for 2022 was completed on time, with results to be reported in our Consumer Confidence Report, delivered before July 1, 2023.

Testing included:

1. Coliform Bacteria, finished water. State requires testing to be completed twice monthly.
2. Stage #2 Disinfection Byproducts, to be completed in the months of February, May, August, and November (two sites).
3. Nitrate, to be completed once per year.
4. Gross Alpha, once every six years.



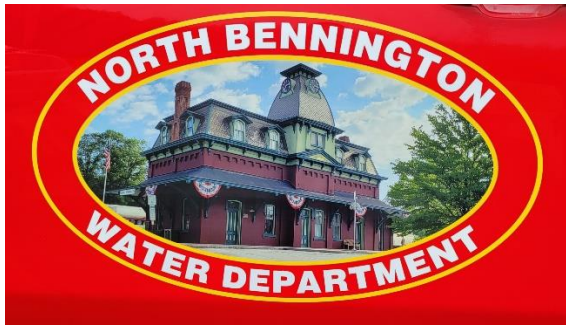
North Bennington Water Storage Tank.

Using remaining grant funds from the Water System Distribution Project, two insertion valves were installed on Main Street and one was installed on a cross country main near Matteson Road. Insertion valves are installed without having to interrupt service to our customers and allow Water Department personnel additional flexibility when isolating water mains during emergencies or for flushing purposes. Additional grant funds were used to purchase a new pipe locator to replace the existing one which had become outdated and was beyond its useful lifespan.

The Board of Water Commissioners has taken the first step in two potential projects, a water main extension on Overlea Road to add customers to the water system that currently have private wells with PFAS contamination. The second is for the development of an Asset Management Plan to help determine usable lifespans and replacement costs of capital assets. A completed Asset Management Plan will aid the Water Department in more readily obtaining future financial assistance and make us eligible for favorable

interest rates. Loan applications have been submitted to the state and it is anticipated both loans will be 100% reimbursable, with no out of pocket cost to the Water Department or its customers.

The filtration plant experienced an unexpected expense in late winter. The original dehumidifier began to malfunction and as a result needed to be replaced. The dehumidifier is a crucial piece of equipment as it regulates the relative humidity in the filtration plant, mitigating the effects of moisture and corrosion on mechanical and electrical equipment. A new Desert Aire unit was recently delivered to the filtration plant and will be installed mid-January 2023.



Updated Truck Badging.



New Dehumidifier.

Water quality standards continue to become stricter and the North Bennington Board of Water Commissioners are committed to supplying the highest quality drinking water to their customers. The North Bennington Water System and its operators have been commended for managing and operating the water system to the highest standards.

The Water Department financial and billing records are computerized and audited yearly by Love, Cody, and Company, of Bennington, Vermont. Copies of the audit are available upon request.

Water Board Meetings are held monthly, the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm in the Rail Road Depot. Meeting dates are posted on the Depot Bill Board, in the Post Office, and in the Laundromat at 2 Bank Street.

Board of Water Commissioners
David Shaughnessy, Chairman
Steve Goodrich, Vice Chairman
Arla Sampsell
Joseph Herrmann
Gerald Elwell

NORTH BENNINGTON WATER BOARD
2023 WATER BUDGET

Advertising	\$ 300.00
Bank Charge	\$ 150.00
Health Insurance	\$ 49,021.44
Property & Liability Insurance	\$ 17,700.00
Purifying Chemicals	\$ 23,000.00
Co FICA	\$ 14,000.00
Company paid Pension	\$ 10,272.00
Dues and/or Fees	\$ 2,500.00
Electricity	\$ 15,400.00
Fuel Oil	\$ 7,500.00
Gasoline	\$ 6,700.00
Legal and professional	\$ 15,000.00
Audit Fees	\$ 7,500.00
New Equipment	\$ 8,500.00
Office Expenses	\$ 7,000.00
Office Equipment	\$ 1,000.00
Payroll-Gross	\$ 147,130.00
Repairs-Building and Equipment	\$ 13,500.00
Filtration Plant B&E Repairs	\$ 15,000.00
Repairs-Equipment	\$ 1,000.00
System Maintenance	\$ 20,000.00
Telephone	\$ 1,500.00
Outside contracts	\$ 18,000.00
PO Box & Bank Safety Dep	\$ 140.00
Treasurer's Fee	\$ 7,788.00
Bookkeeping	\$ 7,488.00
Board Compensation	\$ 1,750.00
Secretary	\$ 5,920.00
Water Testing	\$ 3,000.00
State Operating Permit Fee	\$ 6,700.00
Transfer – Special Reserve	\$ 18,000.00
Property Taxes- Shaftsbury	\$ 9,500.00
<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>\$ 461,959.44</u>

North Bennington Development Review Board members met 4 times in 2022

2-15-22 Zoning Permit Application at 29 Sage Street for a new pellet boiler system inclusive of a 31' silo. Reference Section 7.1 as it pertains to accessory buildings within the Industrial District. Permit application was granted Approval to applicant.

Interested Persons Appeal of Zoning Administrators action to require that the business operated at 201 Honeysuckle Lane submit a Zoning Permit Application for subsequent review by the DRB as a customary "Home Occupation". The Development Review Board upholds the uncontested opinion expressed in the Zoning Administrator's letter of December 28, 2021, that a permit is required for the type of activity that had been taking place on the Kolar property at 201 Honeysuckle Lane.

5-17-22 Property Owner's Appeal of Zoning Administrators action to issue a "Notice of Zoning Violation" for continuing to use the residence located at 201 Honeysuckle Lane as a Home Occupation for a "carrier" business. Reference previously issued DRB "Findings of Fact and Decision" dated February 28, 2022. **After deliberating, DRB members unanimously agreed to uphold the decision of the Administrative Officer.

7-19-22 Extension of existing Zoning Permit #21VC40-10 as issued on 07/22/2021 for an "Accessory Building-Barn" located at 201 Honeysuckle Lane. **After a deliberative session was held, the DRB decided to authorize the one-year extension of the subject permit, consistent with the provisions of the zoning bylaw regarding such extensions. Permit extension is APPROVED

11/15/22 - 11 Bank Street Application. Seeks Variance. 13.8 Variance-allowable accessory building-rear setback. Executive Session Findings. After a discussion, a motion was made to approve a variance under Bylaw Section 13.8 by the applicant for a building permit submitted by David Post to construct a garage with a reduced setback of 8 feet to the rear property line at 11 Bank Street. The vote was 3 to 1.

12 Main Street Application Seeks Change in Use After a discussion, a motion was made to approve an allowable change in use at 12 Main Street by the applicant for a building permit submitted by James and Kathy Williams from residential to mixed use with conditions pertaining to obtaining the proper state and fire marshal permits and following the electrical and plumbing codes. The vote was 4 to 0

2023 Meetings for the Development Review Board - Held in the Village Depot Offices, will be scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday of the month when business has been brought before the DRB.

2022 Report of the Village Zoning Administrator

The Administrative Officer, commonly referred to as the Zoning Administrator (ZA) is responsible for the administration and enforcement of zoning and other bylaws working with the Development Review Board and the Planning Commission as well as maintaining accurate and complete files of land use in the village.

An important function of the ZA is to provide property owners and other members of the public with the necessary forms to obtain any village permit or authorization required under local bylaws or ordinances regulating land development supporting the North Bennington Village Plan.

The Village Zoning Administrator issued **15** permits and **7** Administrative Opinion of Zoning Compliance In 2022.

The Village issued permits for - 4 Deck/Porch's, 1 Pool, 1 Silo, 2 Garage, 1 Renovation, 2 Signs, 1 Porch Roof, 1 Generator, 1 Change in use and 1 House. 1

The estimated cost of all the permits issued is **\$679,320**. The final amount added to the Grand List will be determined by the Board of Lister's following their inspection.

As always, the zoning office has been busy researching and responding to many requests for information and interpretation of the Village Zoning Bylaws.

Yes! To be in compliance with the bylaws you need a permit or to have had a conversation with the ZA about your project.

SECTION 3: GENERAL REGULATIONS 3.1 Compliance with Bylaws

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, any use not specifically permitted shall be deemed to be prohibited.
2. No land, building, or premises or part thereof shall be used, and no building, structure or part thereof shall be constructed, reconstructed, extended, enlarged, moved, or altered except in conformity with the Village Zoning Bylaws.
3. No lot shall have an area, width, or a front, side, or rear yard less than that set forth in the applicable section of the Village Zoning Bylaws.

Submitted by Scott Creedy, Acting Zoning Administrator
PO Box 323, North Bennington, Vermont 05257-0423

Village Zoning Map, Sign Ordinance, documents and forms can be downloaded at, www.northbennington.org



North Bennington Fire Department.

Chief . Edward S. Harrington
1st Asst. Chief Andy Myers
2nd Asst. Chief Michael Pierce
3rd Asst. Chief Andrew Cencini
Est. 1834

EMERGENCY DIAL 911

“ORGANIZED AND INCORPATED IN 1834”

(802)-447-1305 or msg. 802-380-5353

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The North Bennington Fire Department’s report for the year 2022 is as follows: 2022 has been a vibrant year for the Fire Department with many changes. We are happy to welcome the new Fire Chief Ed Harrington, Ed has been with the Fire Department 38 years and has held many positions over the years of his career with the Department . Upon beginning his position he with the Village and trustees has purchased a 2021 Freightliner enhanced fire truck , along with new gear . We also provided our annual Fire Safety at the Village of North Bennington School for the children. It’s always our pleasure in teaching the children awareness that one day may help save a life.

Remember that outside burning is NOT permitted unless you have a permit, which you may get by contacting Cindi Myers @ 379-6767.

2022 is the 188th Birthday of The North Bennington Fire Department, proudly serving our Village of North Bennington.

Structure fire	03	Mutual Aid	13
Chimney Fires	01	Alarm Activations	16
Brush Fires	05	Special Calls	06
Power Lines	04	M.V.A	07
Assist Rescue & Police	05		

Total calls for 2022 = 60

Respectfully Submitted,

Chief Edward S Harrington

John G. McCullough Free Library
2021 Report to Village of North Bennington
December 7th, 2022

Contact Information:

Jennie Rozycki, Library Director
Mailing Address: 88 Mechanic Street, North Bennington, VT 05257
Email Address: mclibrary@comcast.net
Phone number: 802.447.7121 (office) 401.536.8012 (cell)

Jennifer Fels, Trustees Chair
Mailing Address: PO Box 816, North Bennington, VT 05257
Email Address: jafels01@comcast.net
Phone number: 802.447.3126

Mary Rogers, Treasurer
Mailing Address: 163 Matt Drive, North Bennington, VT 05257
Email Address: mary.r.rogers@gmail.com
Phone number: 802.447.7687

FY 2023 Community Appropriations Requested:

Town of Bennington: \$45,000.00	Received in 2022: \$45,000.00
Village of North Bennington: \$27,400.00	Received in 2022: \$27,400.00
Town of Shaftsbury: \$25,200.00	Received in 2022: \$25,200.00

Mission: The John G. McCullough Library is an essential community center: a comfortable and welcoming place where people of all ages can satisfy their curiosity, stimulate their imaginations, become informed citizens, and connect to the online world. Our library cultivates a stable, vital, and dynamic community by facilitating lifelong learning and literacy at all levels.

How will these funds be used? Funds will be used to meet the library's operating expenses. All North Bennington residents are encouraged to activate their McCullough Library memberships to take advantage of a host of resources.

2022 Successes:

Building Renovation Project Complete, Building Open to the Public: Essential updates to the McCullough Library building were completed in late 2022. This once-in-a-generation renovation included the construction of accessible restrooms on both floors, a water fountain, the installation of a complete HVAC system including a heat pump for increased air quality and fuel efficiency, electrical rewiring, fire safety improvements, and repairs to the library's iconic portico. The Laura Nowak Memorial Meeting Room, a laptop bar and small meeting room was created out of a large storage closet on the library's second floor. New chairs to replace the century-old chairs on the library's first floor were also purchased. A new back door will be installed in early 2023. These vital improvements were entirely funded through grants, generous donations, and ARPA funds through the Village of North Bennington. The library building has reopened to the public, and residents are encouraged to stop by to check out these exciting changes. This work constitutes the first phase in a two-phase building accessibility project.

Increased Hours of Operation, Change in Schedule: A generous donor has made it possible for the library to increase the number of hours the building is open to the public. The new schedule is: Tuesdays 10:00 AM- 8:00 PM, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 10:00 AM- 6:00 PM and Saturdays 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. More information about this funding opportunity and related fundraising challenge can be found in the "Plans and Expectations" section of this report.

New Staff Members: The library brought on two new staff members this year: Gizelle Guyette is the new Youth Services Librarian, and Cassidy Kokasko is serving as Assistant Director.

Online Library Catalog Upgrade: Through ARPA funds distributed by the Institute of Library and Museum Studies and the Vermont Department of Libraries, the library's online catalog has been improved. In addition to the interlibrary loan and personal account management features included in the old catalog, the updated catalog now streamlines access to the library's digital collections: ebooks and digital audiobooks through Libby, video streaming services through Kanopy, and historical documents through the Digital Public Library of America. The new catalog can be found here: <https://mccullough.aspendiscovery.org>

Summer Reading, DINOvember, and More!: Our Summer Reading Program for young people, which incentivizes and rewards young people for reading and provides free events for young people and families, was a rousing success. Participants tracked 66,612 minutes reading this year, and, through our partnership with Lake Paran's summer camp, 366 people attended summer reading events. 196 craft kits were distributed to young people over the summer. A similar series is planned for summer 2023, and will help support young people, families, and educators recover from the lasting effects of the coronavirus pandemic. DINOvember, our annual celebration of dinosaurs was a huge success, with over 100 people attending DinoMan's visit at the Village School of North Bennington.

Friends of the Library Book Sale: After a two-year hiatus, the Friends of the Library group's Book & Bake Sale was held in July, to coordinate with Town-Wide Tag Sale Day in Bennington and North Bennington. Although the sale itself was a success, but increased overhead expenses resulted in a lower-than-average profit.

Shortcomings:

Construction Delays: Local and global shortages in both labor and supplies delayed the start of planned renovations to the library building, and kept the building closed to the public for far longer than anticipated. Use of the library's book pickup service remained in place throughout construction, and was widely used by library members.

Plans and expectations for 2023:

Fundraising for Library Equity and Sustainability Fund: The increase in library hours described above is directly related to an extraordinary funding and fundraising opportunity. The McCullough Library's Equity and Sustainability Fund will create supplemental income for the library to guarantee benefits and competitive wages for staff, and provides the public with more opportunity to take advantage of library materials, services, and events. Bridge funding enabled the library to put these changes in place immediately. A fundraising effort to make these opportunities permanent is currently in its silent phase, with more details available in early 2023. The library secured a Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant from the Vermont Community Foundation to hire a development consultant to build the library's fundraising ability to meet this and future challenges.

2023- 2028 Strategic Plan: A community survey was released in August 2022 to help inform the library's plans for 2023- 2028. Focus groups will be conducted in early 2023, and the final plan will be released by March 2023.

Website Improvements: The library will make its website more accessible to all in the year ahead.

Partnership with Village School of North Bennington: The library is piloting a unique partnership with the Village School of North Bennington. The library's new Assistant Director will split her time between the Village School and the library. Expenses will be split between the school and the library. The aim of this partnership is to bring library resources and public library-centered instruction even closer to students and instructors.

Planning for Youth Services Area Updates: In 2023, library staff will work with the community to determine needs and preferences for new furnishings and updates to the Youth Services Area, located on the library's second floor. Grant funding to supplement a generous donation will be sought for these updates in the year ahead. Work will include sanding and re-sealing the floors and new, uniform, moveable shelving. This project is planned for 2024.

Pursuit of Grant Funding for Phase II of Building Accessibility Project: The library is actively pursuing state and federal- level grant funding for the second phase of its building accessibility project, which will include a new ramp and rear entry and an elevator to the second floor. If approved, this grant-funded project would be complete by the end of 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,

-Jennie Rozycki, Library Director

Lake Paran



Jump In

Summer 2022

Paran Recreations strives to be an asset for everyone in our community. With protected land surrounding it, **Lake Paran** is one of the resources that makes southern Bennington County a great place to live. In addition, **Paran Recreations** focuses resources on being a steward of the Paran Watershed/natural resources. With over 5700 guests this past summer, **Paran Recreations** has provided children, their families, adults and visitors with an array of healthy, fun outdoor activities. Some of our achievements are:

Improvements: We applied for and received a matching grant from the VT Recreational Facilities Grant program to make some improvements in particular regarding accessibility and in our plumbing

Free Swim Lessons: Our goal is for every child in our community to learn how to swim! We offered all children in our summer programs access to free swim lessons

Summer Camps: Paran Recreations ran a very successful eight-week summer camp that focused on outdoor learning and experiences. We hire local residents to staff it and served over 80 kids.



Special Events: We were able to hold our wonderful July 3rd Fireworks Event this summer and it was a great success with almost 1000 people in attendance. We are holding monthly environmentally themed workshops for adults and kids. We hosted our 3rd annual Ice fishing Derby and our 9th annual Stone Skipping Festival in October with over 425 people in attendance. We plan to host Winterfest and the Paran Plunge on February 4th this year

Free Memberships: There are many families in our region who cannot afford to pay for memberships at the lake. We raise funds to support free and lower cost memberships for families and older adults

Attendance: Between daily users and members, the breakdown amongst our towns is: Bennington 52%, North Bennington 32% and Shaftsbury 16%. Most of our guests and kids who attend camp reside in Bennington.

Save Lake Paran: In collaboration with the Bennington County Conservation District, we have launched a campaign to save the lake. This includes outreach and education throughout our community, informational presentations to local organizations, engagement with the three communities that surround the lake (Shaftsbury, Bennington and North Bennington) We have an online petition that has almost 800 signatures on Change.org. We are developing a multi year strategy and seeking funds to remediate the weeds and silting in the lake to make it more accessible and safe for recreational use.

NBOSS:

Paran Recreations is the fiscal sponsor for the North Bennington Outdoor Sculpture Show. They received \$500 from the Village for a sculpture prize for the Annual show. We decided to split the prize in half this year.

It was given to two artists:

Gary Humphreys –Salem N.Y. “Birdbath” \$250

James Payne- Perkinsville Vt. “Opposition” \$250

Bennington County Regional Commission

FY 2022 Annual Report

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) was created by the seventeen towns and villages it serves and works with on behalf of those municipalities to build strong, resilient, and sustainable communities, to foster economic prosperity, and to promote a high quality of life for residents of the region. This mission is accomplished through direct planning and community development assistance to town and village governments, through preparation and implementation of regional plans and studies, and through synergistic working relationships with local and regional organizations. The BCRC works cooperatively with local governments to establish and advance regional cohesiveness, actively advocates for adherence to adopted regional policies, and facilitates effective communication between local, state, and federal levels of government.

The BCRC maintains an office in an historic building in the center of Bennington's downtown. The Commission is overseen by municipally appointed commissioners representing each of the member towns and villages as well as eight commissioners representing specific interests such as economic development, housing, transportation, and public health. The BCRC employs ten full-time and one part-time staff and supervises a full-time Americorps VISTA. Principal program areas with assigned staff responsibilities include municipal and regional planning, transportation, environmental/water quality planning, community and economic development, emergency management planning, energy planning, public health planning, and solid waste planning and management.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

Regional Planning Commissions provide cost-effective professional planning services for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving municipal plans and local permitting through education and regular consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, assisting with implementation of local development review boards, support for development in downtowns and village centers, and meeting new requirements for economic development, forest fragmentation prevention, and flood resiliency planning. Municipal plans and regulations that are clear and up to date are essential to smooth state and local permitting. The BCRC's work in municipal planning is supported through municipal and regional planning funds, payments from member towns and villages, and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map (attached); highlights include:

- The BCRC worked with Glastenbury, Sandgate, and the Village of Manchester to develop updates to their municipal plans. The same plans were amended to be consistent with "Act 174" energy planning standards and "Act 171" forest connectivity requirements. All plans are reviewed for conformance with statutory requirements, and implementation projects are clearly delineated. The BCRC received special funding to draft amendments to the municipal plans of Glastenbury and Sandgate to comply with "Act 171" requirements for forest block connectivity.
- In August 2021, BCRC staff finalized work with Pownal on comprehensive revisions to its land use regulations, including provisions to encourage mixed uses and higher density housing in designated areas and to promote economic development where applicable. Completed in July 2021, the BCRC assisted with a targeted revision of the Glastenbury zoning bylaw to improve

compliance with statutory requirements and other special issues. The BCRC launched a rewrite of the Arlington zoning bylaw to improve overall organization and readability of the document and to promote denser, mixed-use development in village centers where plans are underway to serve these areas with new or expanded public wastewater treatment in coming years.

- In July 2021, the BCRC completed a regional housing bylaw study of all town and village land use regulations to identify potential ways to support more housing and mixed-use development in village centers and surrounding neighborhoods. The recommendations are being informed by the recently published ACCD/CNU Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods. In addition, in August 2021 the BCRC completed a project, in collaboration with a UVM internship program, that used GIS data to assess and map bylaw non-conformance in nine village areas in the region. The analyses revealed consistently high rates of nonconformance between existing development and current dimensional standards in village areas. In the spring of 2022, the BCRC began a two-year “bylaw modernization” work program with nine high-priority municipalities to implement bylaw improvements for housing that had been identified in the regional housing bylaw survey. Municipalities served in the first year include Rupert, Landgrove, Manchester Village, North Bennington, and Stamford.
- The BCRC continued to support downtown, village center, and neighborhood development area designations, including preparatory work for three new village centers in Stamford, Sandgate, and Sunderland. These designations have been particularly helpful in supporting alignment of planning goals and local regulations and in securing critical historic preservation and downtown/village center tax credits and grants in Bennington (Putnam Block redevelopment), Manchester Village (restoration of former public library to be repurposed as a restaurant), and Rupert (preservation and reuse of the historic Sheldon Store and new sidewalk).
- The BCRC participated in discussions - with Arlington, Sunderland, and Sandgate - about village wastewater options as part of the community-led “Arlington Area Renewal Project”. A presentation from the BCRC explored the potential for form-based zoning standards to improve infill opportunities in Arlington’s village centers in light of bylaw nonconformance analysis findings. BCRC partnered with local legislators and state agencies to co-host the well-attended Vermont Housing Summit in October 2021 in Arlington.
- Following completion of a planning study that examined a key block of underutilized and vacant properties in the center of downtown Bennington, the BCRC has continued to work with the town and with a private redevelopment group to complete plans for redevelopment. Construction of Phase I of that “Putnam Block” project was finalized in 2021 with commercial and residential occupancy on its way to completion. The BCRC is supporting development of the next two phases of this project, consisting of new commercial and residential buildings along Main Street and Washington Street.
- The BCRC was retained by Southwestern Vermont Health Care Realty to develop a reuse study for the former Southern Vermont College campus in Bennington. The final reuse report was completed in July 2021. A report on the extensive trail network on the property was completed by the BCRC in October 2021, and substantial public outreach efforts continue.
- The BCRC managed a reuse study for the recently closed Energizer industrial facility in the Town of Bennington. The project, which began in the spring of 2021, focused on redevelopment scenarios for mixed uses and affordable housing in those buildings. The final report was issued in September 2021. In early 2022 the BCRC began working with the Town of Bennington on a reuse study of the former Armory facility, located near the center of the downtown, that has

come into municipal ownership and presents opportunities for a variety of community and municipal uses.

- With the support of MPG funding, the BCRC completed a “Land Use and Connectivity” study for Manchester Village to assess the impact of re-introducing two existing but dormant sites in the village center that are slated for reuse and redevelopment. The study integrated land use discussions with analysis of multi-modal traffic concerns and possible solutions in the village.
- BCRC staff responded to requests for assistance with various planning and zoning issues in all 17 of its member municipalities and conducted training for municipal officials on a variety of topics including: procedures for land use administrators, boards, and commissions; planning for housing and introduction to housing programs and organizations; diversity, equity, and inclusion issues; outdoor recreation development; regional public transit service; the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act; child care challenges and legislative proposals; refugee resettlement efforts in the region; updated ARPA funds guidance; state action and funding opportunities to address the housing crisis; and regional economic development initiatives and the “CEDS” vital projects identification process. Representatives from each municipality attended at least one of the training sessions.
- BCRC has updated its website format and content to better serve its municipalities. An interactive events calendar, up-to-date meeting agendas and minutes, and centralized source for municipal and regional documents are maintained to keep commissioners engaged in the BCRC’s work. In addition, the BCRC has continued to update a new regional COVID-19 Response resource section on the website with background data and information as well as links related to municipal resources, food security, economic and business support programs and grants, school and childcare issues, community and individual needs, and volunteer opportunities.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPC’s coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

The Bennington County Regional Plan, most recently updated in 2017, is a significant resource document for local officials, organizations, and residents of the region. The Regional Plan includes extensive information about the region and its communities, specific policies to guide growth and development, and direct links to numerous sources of information on a wide variety of topics.

An important aspect of this plan update was inclusion of closer ties between the plan and various topic-specific plans developed by the BCRC. The plan includes implementation guidance supported by specific recommendations for projects and improvements that will benefit the region. Implementation tasks are identified in each of several key areas: comprehensive municipal planning (specific schedules for assistance with plan and bylaw updates and training), regulatory review (guidelines for participation in Act 250 and Section 248 reviews – BCRC participated actively in one major Act 250 and six Section 248 hearings during the year), transportation (a list of priority projects and initiatives and links to action-oriented plans), environmental planning (identification of water quality improvement projects, partner organizations and key areas of focus), community and economic development (including the Southern Vermont Economic Development Strategy), emergency management (grant funding obtained to support specific municipal hazard mitigation planning and implementation work), energy planning

(a comprehensive regional energy plan with policies and targeted actions for conservation and efficiency as well as renewable energy resource maps and data for each town in the region), and solid waste (a variety of education, outreach, and regulatory actions designed to help meet waste reduction and recycling targets).

Improved regional planning for community and economic development has been a key component of the BCRC's work over the past several years. The BCRC now carries out the work of the Regional Development Corporation (RDC). Implementation of local and regional development plans has been greatly facilitated by this integrated approach that links local land use planning and business development activities while facilitating engagement with other economic development interests across Southern Vermont. The BCRC worked with municipalities and economic development organizations in the Northshire and Southshire, as well as with the RPC and RDC in Windham County, to move toward a consistent regional approach to planning for economic development. The BCRC and its partner organizations across southern Vermont have initiated several projects directed specifically toward providing technical and grant support for businesses and local governments impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments and Corrective Action Plans allow properties to be remediated, sold, developed, or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs, and increase housing opportunities.

The BCRC was awarded a US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant that was extended through fiscal year 2022. In 2021, the BCRC was awarded state ARPA funds to support additional brownfields work. Through direct contact with municipalities and individual property owners, the Commission has identified sites that would benefit from assessments, provided information on brownfield redevelopment, and monitored redevelopment of sites that have been assessed in the past. BCRC staff advises owners of several potential brownfield sites in anticipation of future Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments (ESAs). The BCRC maintains a Brownfields committee that prioritizes sites for assessment and clean-up planning.

Brownfield sites participating in Phase I or II assessments, corrective action plans, or other follow-up work during the past year include:

- Putnam Block in Bennington Downtown: Corrective Action Plan being implemented to pursue mixed use redevelopment of historic downtown block. A project-specific \$500,000 Brownfield redevelopment grant was awarded for Phase II of this project. The CAPA/CAFI and is complete and two public hearings have been held. An RFP for the remediation work will be produced and a contractor selected for clean-up work in Spring 2023.
- Lauzon Machine and Engineering in Downtown Bennington: completed Phase I ESA.; A Phase 2 ESA. scope of work and cost proposal is currently being developed. Redevelopment plan includes housing and potential commercial and retail services.
- Bradford Commons in Downtown Bennington: completed Phase I ESA; A Phase 2 ESA. scope of work and cost proposal is being developed. Redevelopment plan includes mixed use commercial and retail services.

- 301 Depot Street in Downtown Manchester: completed Phase I and II ESA.; Corrective Action Plan is currently being developed. Redevelopment plan includes mixed use commercial and retail services as well as workforce housing.
- Manchester Power House located in the Taconic Business Park in Manchester: completed Phase I and II ESA; Corrective Action Plan is currently being developed. Redevelopment plan includes mixed use commercial and retail services as well as several workforce housing units.
- Sweeney Saw Mill located on Town Shed Road in Manchester: completed Phase I ESA.; A Phase 2 ESA scope of work and cost proposal is currently being developed. Redevelopment plan includes an expansion of the adjacent Manchester Highway Facility.
- Energizer Factory Complex – This recently closed manufacturing facility has become available for redevelopment. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation secured a Brownfields area-wide planning grant that the Town and the BCRC combined with other grant funds for a study and assessment of reuse potential (completed in September 2021).
- Ideal Fuels property, the Benmont Mill lot, a service station at Dewey and Main St, the former Bennington High School, the Titan Propane Company, and the Johnson Controls lot - all in Bennington’s Growth Center have been identified as potential future assessment sites.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with effective planning functions. RPCs work with towns and Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in numerous ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

The BCRC has maintained a staffed program in community and economic development for several years. Successful economic development planning, in both the Southshire (Bennington area) and Northshire (Manchester area), have made integration of the region’s RDC with the BCRC the most efficient and compelling strategy. The BCRC now implements the RDC’s annual work plan. This partnership, together with BCRC’s active role in redevelopment projects, has allowed for the hiring of additional staff, supporting economic development initiatives throughout the region and, in cooperation with the Windham Region, throughout the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone. Highlights from the past year include:

- Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone: The BCRC built capacity for regional economic development work by establishing and strengthening relationships with key businesses, institutions, and individuals. The BCRC Regional Initiatives/CEDS Committee integrates regional needs and opportunities into the Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (SoVT CEDS), completed in cooperation with the Windham Region. The BCRC assist in the identification of regional priority projects based on the CEDS and continues to support implementation of the SoVermont Sustainable Marketing and Recruitment program. The CEDS was updated in the last year to incorporate the impacts that COVID has had on the regional economy and strategies for recovery. The legal work to support of the creation of a formal Economic Development District (EDD) is now complete and the two counties will be finalizing that work and submitting to the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the designation in FY23.

- The BCRC has continued to work with the Bennington Redevelopment Group, Putnam Community Health LLC, the Town of Bennington, BCIC, and local partners to undertake a major development project involving historic buildings and vacant land in the center of Bennington's downtown. An innovative funding strategy has leveraged private investment, tax credits, a Community Development Block Grant, and other funding sources to underpin the project. Construction of the \$32,500,000 Phase I (restoration and redevelopment of the historic buildings) was completed in 2021 and planning continued for new mixed use and residential structures (Phases II and III). As noted above, the BCRC has facilitated similar efforts involving planning for redevelopment at two additional sites in Bennington; the BCRC completed a reuse study for the recently closed Southern Vermont College campus near downtown Bennington and another for the recently closed Energizer manufacturing facility.
- The BCRC is continuing its efforts to support workforce development through regular consultation with businesses and educational institutions, and by conducting outreach and educational programs through its regional Workforce & Education Committee. The Workforce & Education Committee intends to bring back April Career month with in-person events following the disruption of these activities during the pandemic. The BCRC's Workforce & Education Committee and the programming it has created, including Career month, Sophomore Summit, and the Financial Reality Fair, has become a model for similar efforts around the state.
- The strong emphasis on state designation programs described above has been used to support economic development planning and initiatives in several communities including Arlington, where a key focus has been the need for additional housing for the community's growing workforce. The need for new/improved infrastructure, especially wastewater, has been the focus of attention in Arlington and several other village centers. Recent BCRC-supported designations have enabled acquisition of over \$300,000 in grant and tax credit funding for redevelopment projects in Bennington, Rupert, and Manchester Village.
- Additional economic development grant support resulted in substantial funding to local communities for development of affordable housing and downtown redevelopment projects. To support ongoing grant writing and other technical assistance activities, the BCRC acquired Emsi/Lightcast software to access customized labor market, economic, and demographic data for the region.
- BCRC staff have met with existing businesses to understand and support job retention and growth, and have facilitated communication between prospective new businesses (relocation and new start-ups) and local and state officials.
- The BCRC has supported the formation and work of the Southern Vermont Communication Union District, providing fiscal management and staff support for efforts to expand access to broadband in rural areas throughout the region. In September 2022 the Vermont Community Broadband Board approved the CUD's \$9.01 million application under Act 71 to fund a two-year buildout of a fiber optic network to unserved and underserved premises throughout Bennington County. This funding will support a public-private partnership between the SoVT CUD and Consolidated Communications that will leverage another \$14.1 million in fiber optic network construction guaranteed by Consolidated to occur in 2022 and 2023. By the end of next year, 99.3 percent of currently unserved passings within the district will have been connected to fiber optic broadband through this partnership.
- COVID-19 response work has included outreach and support for more than 400 businesses; to date, over \$5.4 million in state economic recovery grants have been received by area businesses

and nonprofits. The BCRC disseminated information on recovery programs through local media and board meetings. The BCRC hosted a roundtable discussion with Congressman Welch and co-organized a regional recovery forum with the Vermont Council on Rural Development.

- To support relocation of prospective Vermonters, BCRC staff expanded the reach and infrastructure of the Vermont Welcome Wagon Project and Stay-2-Stay program in southern Vermont. The BCRC also was contracted by the Ethiopian Community Development Council to provide employment assistance to resettled Afghan families.
- The BCRC is working with the Bennington County Department of Health to establish the Southern Vermont Economic Dignity Project to improve regional well-being through exploration of economic programs and reforms that promote equity. The project will pursue this work by distributing grant funding and promoting awareness and regional partnerships. Work is supported by the Vermont Public Health Institute.
- The BCRC continues to prioritize professional development opportunities for staff in the economic development field. In March of 2022 a BCRC staff member received the Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) designation from the International Economic Development Council upon completion of a multi-year program of coursework and examination. Since 2017 the BCRC has maintained an organizational membership in IEDC, with staff taking an active role in the IEDC's committees, research, and publications.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through a contract with VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state, and federal transportation network advancement. The past year's accomplishments as they relate to the BCRC's TPI work program include:

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

- The BCRC's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met regularly during the past year. The TAC consists of 17 members. Principal functions of the TAC are to provide input on specific projects and to prioritize projects in several program areas. BCRC staff and the TAC participated in and provided critical input on the second year of the new VTrans statewide project prioritization system, VSPS2.
- Provided direct outreach to each town and village regarding codes and standards, hazard mitigation planning, erosion control and stormwater management, and related funding and financial considerations.
- Participated in development of projects involving bicycle and pedestrian system connectivity and streetscape improvements in Bennington, Arlington, Manchester, Pownal, Manchester Village, Rupert, and Dorset. Led an effort to identify impediments to timely development of bike-ped projects and to identify solutions.
- BCRC staff has participated in planning for intersection safety improvements, with a special focus on the VT 67A corridor near Bennington College and the Kocher Drive/Route 7

intersection in Bennington, the Route 313 and Warm Brook Road intersection in Arlington, the Route 30 and East Manchester Rd in Manchester, and VT 7A in Manchester Village.

- The BCRC conducted outreach to encourage participation in the annual Way to Go commuter challenge.
- The BCRC is participating in implementation of the Transportation Resilience Planning Tool by applying those techniques to the Batten Kill watershed.

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

- The BCRC continued to work with VTrans, local officials, regional economic development organizations, and local businesses to support the “Shires Connector” bus link to the Amtrak station in Rensselaer from Manchester and Bennington, and has initiated conversations with Green Mountain Community Network and several Northshire towns regarding service needs and opportunities in rural communities.
- The BCRC participated in the review of a major Act 250 project that would introduce improved transportation infrastructure and increased traffic in a rural area of Manchester.
- The BCRC has worked to integrate energy plans with TPI program objectives and is coordinating a statewide effort to support implementation of local and regional energy plans. In addition, the BCRC has organized events focusing on electric vehicles (cars and bikes).
- The BCRC participated in discussions of the Transportation Climate Initiative and helped coordinate with state agencies and other regional planning commissions.
- The BCRC participated in a VTrans study committee that evaluated options for replacing gas tax revenue with mileage-based user fees, especially considering the anticipated growth in the number of electric and other high-efficiency vehicles.

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- Provided support for municipal road stormwater management and flood resilience planning and implementation in most municipalities.
- Bennington: Ongoing planning and project management for the Willowbrook-Applegate Path in Bennington, the “Ninja Trail” design-build project, and the Benmont Streetscape improvements project in Bennington. Convened regular meetings of a local Bennington Bike Committee to promote biking culture, education, policy, and infrastructure. Supported establishment of a new non-profit “Bike Hub” modeled on the successful bike shop, advocacy organization, and community center, “Old Spokes Home” in Burlington.
- Manchester Village: Assessment of the VT 7A/West Road/Seminary Avenue intersection, while also outlining a process to complete a walkable village center plan.
- Dorset: BCRC staff helped integrate elements of a planning study into a Route 30 paving project and a new town-funded walkway extending south from Dorset Village. BCRC staff is managing a scoping study to evaluate alternatives for a new shared-use path to connect Dorset’s village center to the recently completed Manchester Rail Trail. Combined, the two paths would create a continuous 6.5 mile shared-use path linking Dorset’s village center to downtown Manchester along the VT30 Corridor.
- Arlington: Managing the construction phase of a safe walking route to link the Arlington Recreation Park to the Village Center and the Arlington Public Schools.
- Shaftsbury: The BCRC is helping the town with a sidewalk extension project in a village area.

- Manchester: The BCRC is working with the Green Mountain Community Network on a micro-transit pilot program they are launching.
- BCRC staff completed a scoping report on a potential a multi-use path along a historic trolley line from Bennington to Williamstown, MA. Commission staff worked cooperatively with the towns and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Historic alignments, ownership, and environmental issues have been documented.
- The BCRC completed a number of traffic studies to aid local planning in Bennington, Dorset, Rupert, Shaftsbury, and Stamford.

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022		
Performance		BCRC
Objective 1		
Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities		
A	# of TAC meetings held	6
B	# of non-municipal TAC members actively engaged in transportation planning	14
C	# of municipalities actively engaged in transportation planning	17
D	# of RPC coordination activities with municipalities and VTrans	10
Objective 2		
Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning		
E	# of regional transportation plans that are current (within 8 years)	1
F	# of Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation	1
G	# of Section 248 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation	2
H	# of coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers	1
	# of VTrans committees that involves RPC staff participation	2
I		
J	# of regions participating in Project Prioritization	1
Objective 3		
Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities		
K	# of municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually	0
L	# of municipalities assisted with transportation related grants	7
M	% of budget spent on municipal technical assistance	50%
N	# of municipal transportation inventories conducted	1
O	# of municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies completed	6
P	# of municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan	3
Q	# of road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars	1
Objective 4		
Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long Range Transportation Plans		
R	# of data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans	12
Objective 5		
Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education		
To highlight this benefit, each RPC will report annually unique examples of situations that occurred during the prior year that required their assistance. Please list them here:		
1	Coordinated with VTrans and the Town of Rupert to resolve parking problems at the Delaware & Hudson Rail Trail.	
2	Assisted a group to found the Bike Hub, a non-profit organization that promotes cycling for transportation in Bennington County.	
3	Conducted a transportation survey of Manchester Village residents and created a report with recommendations to address residents' concerns and ideas.	

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff support to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to Regional Emergency Management Committees, and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal

emergency plans, and assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

- The BCRC continued to support municipalities in developing and updating Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMPs). BCRC staff worked one-on-one with municipalities that requested extra assistance and sent out individual ERAF reports to each municipality. The ERAF Reports highlighted the need for LEMP updates, as well as other ERAF requirements needed to receive more state funding for public infrastructure damage after a declared disaster.
- The BCRC provides support for development and updates to local hazard mitigation plans. The BCRC assisted with preliminary reviews or updates to two local hazard mitigation plans. Flood resiliency and stormwater actions, assessments of threats from forest insect pests, and economic development planning relevant to hazard mitigation are considered as part of the planning process.
- The BCRC provided assistance with revisions and updates to flood hazard area planning documents and regulations through plan and bylaw updates; municipalities supported included Glastenbury, Rupert, Sandgate, Arlington, and Manchester Village.
- The BCRC assisted in the transition from the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to the Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC). We held informational meetings about the transition with the Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) Regional Coordinator, Emergency Management Directors (EMDs), and those previously part of the LEPC. BCRC staff also attended state meetings discussing the transition from LEPC to REMC. Ongoing support for the REMC will continue to be provided by BCRC staff.
- BCRC staff is on the local MRC Committee and attends meetings regularly.
- The BCRC has been activated as local liaisons several times during the year and has assisted towns with severe damage with the process of applying for FEMA funding - with Sandgate requiring a particularly high level of assistance following a major storm.
- BCRC staff provided coordination for regional COVID-19 response. Developed and publicized a COVID-19 section to the BCRC website, provided assistance to municipalities, nonprofits, and other critical service providers in the areas of state pandemic guidelines, training opportunities, and grant funding. The BCRC maintained up-to-date information on COVID-19 happenings and relayed important information to EMDs.
- Other focus areas during the past year included: distributing emergency management training information, scheduling emergency management related trainings, coordinating and supporting Emergency Management Directors and municipal officials with assistance and guidance, and COVID-19 support and information sharing.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

The BCRC uses its geographic information systems capability to produce maps and conduct analyses in support of virtually all of its programs. RPCs also provide municipalities, state agencies, and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

Particularly valuable GIS projects completed during the past year have included:

- Project-specific mapping requests to aid in the administration of municipal zoning regulations and the application of regional land use policies to development proposals.

- Renewable energy resource maps showing locations with high potential for renewable energy development as well as areas with significant constraints to development for the municipalities of Glastenbury, Sandgate, and the Village of Manchester.
- River corridor mapping to support resiliency planning including depiction of new flood hazard areas, and maps to support watershed planning and development of river corridor regulations.
- New maps to support municipal plan updates in Glastenbury, Sandgate, and Manchester Village. These included new maps of ANR-designated forest blocks to meet the requirements of “Act 171” for forest connectivity.
- Various maps and geographic analyses were completed in support of the Bennington downtown redevelopment project, and to support assessment of community use and reuse of the former Southern Vermont College campus and downtown Bennington Energizer complex.
- Maps to support recreation park improvements in Bennington, development and improvement of bike-ped facilities/systems in Bennington, Pownal, Rupert, Dorset, Manchester Village, and Arlington, and maps of regional outdoor recreation facilities including the Bennington Area Trail System (BATS) trail network.
- Mapping of municipal bridges, culverts, and road segments related to stormwater management and municipal road general permits.
- Village center, downtown, and growth center maps to support designations and renewals in Stamford, Sunderland, and Sandgate.
- Assessments of demographic and business trends to support Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone programs. Economic and community development staff now use ArcGIS Business Analyst, ArcGIS Insights, and GeoPlanner software to analyze commerce and commuter trends.
- UVM interns were supported to develop GIS assessments of zoning bylaw compliance in village centers and to document existing sidewalk infrastructure throughout the region.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunities and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation, and natural resources efforts, and we work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- The BCRC received an allocation of funds to support implementation of local and regional energy plans. Initial efforts focused on support for local energy committees, assisting with weatherization events, including “Button-Up” and “Window Dressers” programs, coordination with Drive Electric Vermont, and providing staff support to NeighborWorks of Western Vermont in their Bennington County office to expand the reach of their Heat Squad thermal efficiency programs. The BCRC hosted a Williams College intern who completed an energy equity research project.
- The BCRC has helped a majority of the municipalities in the region adopt enhanced energy plans, including Glastenbury, Sandgate, and the Village of Manchester in the past year. These plans are used to guide local energy efficiency efforts and to represent municipalities’ positions on applications for new generation projects before the Public Utility Commission. The BCRC

issued affirmative Determinations of Energy Compliance to municipalities when the plans were found to be consistent with Act 174 planning standards. The BCRC also continues to provide new energy-related information to towns and villages as it is developed. For example, data on local energy usage and efficiency activities were provided to each community as annual updates were received from Efficiency Vermont and other organizations.

- The BCRC organized regular meetings of RPC energy/climate coordinators and planning staff. In the fall of 2021 DPS released a draft of the updated Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, and the BCRC reviewed the draft and coordinated RPC comments. BCRC staff also participated in meetings and workshops held by the state Climate Council.
- The BCRC reviewed and commented on proposals for new renewable energy development in the region and participated in Section 248 proceedings. The regional energy committee reviewed several solar projects with a combined capacity of approximately 3 MW. The BCRC's energy and development review committees met with developers and invited local officials to participate in discussions of possible new projects.
- Support has been provided to towns and villages seeking to establish and maintain designated village centers, downtowns, and neighborhood development areas, to develop or expand needed infrastructure to enable energy-efficient walkable communities, and to revise land use regulations in keeping with new statewide initiatives for regulatory reform that encourages more diverse and higher density housing.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required Tactical Basin Plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- Assisted VT ANR by integrating recommendations from the Basin 1 Tactical Plan into local hazard mitigation plans, projects, and land use plans and regulations.
- Identified actions related to river protection outlined in adopted Hazard Mitigation Plans and integrated that information into ANR's projects database for future funding allocation.
- Prepared tables characterizing flood and fluvial erosion hazard mitigation projects and drafted language for use of the tables in resiliency elements of municipal plans.
- Created and updated town river corridor maps for the Batten Kill, Walloomsac, Hoosic, and Mettawee watersheds; assisted with the development and adoption of municipal river corridor regulations.
- BCRC staff attended monthly meetings of the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance and the Bennington County Conservation District and assisted with their municipal education, public outreach, and water quality improvement projects. Supported work on a project to assess and remediate obstacles to passages for aquatic organisms in Arlington, North Bennington, and Sandgate.
- The BCRC worked with the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance, Bennington County Conservation District, and Trout Unlimited to identify and treat invasive species in selected areas of the Batten kill watershed and to identify areas in need of revegetation. Plantings of native trees and shrubs were completed along key river segments on the Metawee, Batten Kill, Green River, Walloomsac, and Hoosic Rivers, with additional sites identified and approved for future plantings.

- The BCRC worked directly with most towns and villages in the region to identify, implement, and verify completion of “Grants-in-Aid” water quality improvements to hydrologically connected segments of local highways.
- The BCRC coordinated stormwater master planning projects in Manchester, Manchester Village, Bennington, North Bennington and Pownal, and completed several municipal road erosion inventories.
- The BCRC completed a road erosion inventory in Manchester Village.
- Coordinated the removal of several downed trees in the Batten Kill which posed a serious threat to public safety. Coordinated meetings of watershed partners, state agencies, municipalities and private property owners to establish a protocol for future woody debris issues, addressing public safety while preserving and enhancing wildlife habitat and bank stabilization.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The BCRC has developed programs in solid waste management and planning and healthy community design that have led to numerous special projects and ongoing actions. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a change in priorities and practices in many BCRC programs, and a number of special activities have been implemented specifically to address individual, municipal, and business impacts related to the crisis.

The BCRC provides staffing for the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance, and developed an updated Solid Waste Management Implementation Plan for that thirteen-town organization. BCRC staff manages the implementation of the plan and assures compliance with state rules related to solid waste. Some of the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance’s ongoing activities include:

- **Hazardous Waste:** Holding three household hazardous waste collection events in the Alliance service area for residents and businesses of the 13 towns.
- **Education:** Providing education and outreach to schools, municipalities, solid waste service providers, and the general public to increase recycling and organics management/composting and reduce levels of trash sent to landfills. The BCRC hosted an information booth at 5 public events.
- **Businesses:** Performing outreach to 80 businesses and technical assistance to 32 businesses, including housing management companies, restaurants, retail businesses and others.
- **Schools:** Performed outreach to 26 schools, performed 5 assessments of current solid waste management, and provided recommendations for improving recycling and food waste management. Leading 4 educational programs for students related to solid waste.
- **Managing the development of a permanent household hazardous waste facility at the Bennington Transfer Station.** The facility will be operational by August 1, 2023.
- **Organizing residential composting workshops and providing composting related items at wholesale prices to help residents comply with state food scrap diversion legislation.**
- **Producing and distributing a regular newsletter on solid waste issues and maintaining a social media presence to educate the public on waste reduction, food scrap diversion, and household hazardous waste events.**

- Supporting legislation to create extended producer responsibility programs to require manufacturers to pay for the costs of recycling packaging and for the collection and disposal of household hazardous waste.
- Overseeing a cost sharing program for 5 towns who collectively share 2 waste transfer stations.

COVID-19 Response activities have included:

- Updates of a comprehensive COVID-19 information section of the BCRC website.
- Providing information on current state guidelines and opportunities that are available to local governments, nonprofits, businesses, and residents.
- Distribution of information to municipal officials on changes to the open meeting law and other topics that affect the operation of local government.
- Outreach and technical support related to public assistance and grant opportunities. The BCRC's community and economic development division consulted with over 400 businesses since the start of the state of emergency. To date, \$5.4 million in state economic recovery grants have been received by area businesses and nonprofits

Other special projects pursued in cooperation with local community coalitions, nonprofit organizations, state agencies, and local governments in the past year have included:

- Participation in the Launch Team of the Bennington County Regional Prevention Partnerships For Success (PFS) to reduce substance misuse in youth and young adults. Contributions of BCRC staff have focused on interpretation of emergent commercial cannabis policies and implications for municipalities, production of a municipal health equity guide, and regular updates to the regional Health Planning Primer.
- The BCRC is managing an "Unaccompanied Youth/Public Sanitation Facility Study" project to support development of new resources for homeless youth in downtown Bennington.
- BCRC staff started work on the VAPDA Public Health Equity Toolkit, collaborating with the other ten RPCs to develop a toolkit to help municipal leaders increase their awareness, understanding, and capacity for including health equity language in their municipal plans and to help them develop partnerships and resources to advance health equity locally. This project complements the Southern Vermont Economic Dignity Project, discussed above, that is funded by the Vermont Public Health Institute and their Community Health Equity Partnership "Backbone" program.
- Worked to improve regional food systems. Specific activities have included work with Bennington College's food security initiative, support for establishing a regional regenerative food network, and participation in an effort to create a regional food hub and distribution center supported by renewable energy. Provided targeted VISTA/staff support to Bennington College to advance and support a sustainable and equitable food system in the Bennington region.
- Worked with municipalities and community organizations to support trail development and grant writing for outdoor recreation activities, in particular to advance the proposal for a viewing platform on Mount Anthony in Bennington.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

Each program manager at the BCRC is responsible for work plan and budget development. The executive director, planning programs director, financial director, and assistant director/economic

development coordinator cooperate to ensure that all required tasks and reporting are completed and advance the Commission's mission. The BCRC reported total expenditures of approximately \$1.305 million in FY 2022. The majority of revenues are derived from grants that support specific work programs and special projects. Municipal appropriations and a portion of funds allocated to the BCRC from the municipal and regional planning fund provide critical support and matching funds to all of the diverse program areas operated through the Commission.

The FY22 financial audit will be completed in September 2022 to confirm the accuracy of the BCRC's financial records.

Regular meetings of the BCRC are held bimonthly with special meetings held during the intervening months. Most meetings include presentations and information on specific topics that support commissioners' understanding and involvement in regional planning projects. The BCRC also is responsible for organizing regular meetings of the regional RDC (Bennington County Industrial Corporation), the Regional Initiatives/CEDS Committee, the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance, the Bennington County Transportation Advisory Committee, the Southern Vermont Communications Union District, the Regional Emergency Management Committee, and a consortium of local energy committees. Meetings of the BCRC's Energy Committee and Development Review Committee are called as needed to inform reviews of Section 248 and Act 250 applications. Several board members attend special trainings each year (e.g., financial management, regional economic development, housing, land use practices, energy planning, natural resource planning and environmental protection) to assist in the carrying out of their responsibilities to the organization. Staff regularly attend trainings and participate in online webinars on a variety of topics specific to their program areas. Of course, many regular meetings, workshops, and conferences have moved to online platforms since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the BCRC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

Bennington County Regional Planning Commission



Home ACRPC BCRC CCRPC CVRPC LCPC MARC NRPC NVDA RRPC TRORC WRC

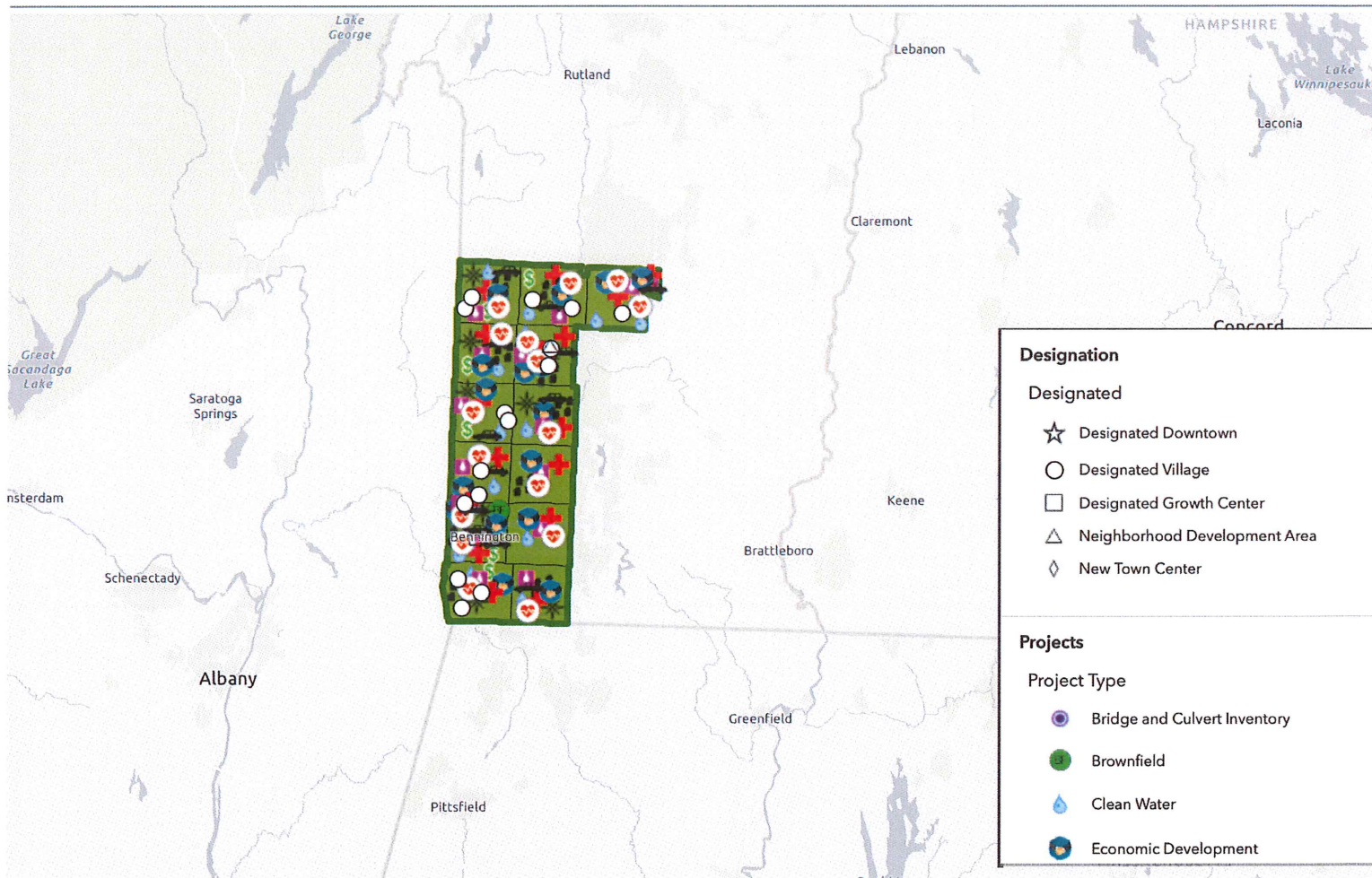


FY22 Annual Report

View this report to find out more about what BCRC has accomplished Fiscal Year 2022.

[View the Report »](#)

BCRC At Work Map for FY22



VCGI, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

Power

Vermont's 11 Regional Planning Commissions

View the annual reports and At Work maps for all RPCs in Vermont:

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Contact BCRC

210 South Street, Suite 6, Bennington VT 05201

(802) 442-0713 | bcrcvt.org

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2023 MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS

	Village of North Bennington Board of Trustees – Village Depot Offices & Zoom 7:00 PM	Village of North Bennington Board of Water Commissioners – Village Depot Offices 6:00 PM	NBGSD Prudential Committee - SVSU Central Office and Zoom 6:30 PM
January	10	4	11
February	7	1	8
March	7	1	8
April	11	5	12
May	9	3	10
June	13	7	14
July	11	5	12
August	8	2	9
September	12	6	13
October	10	4	11
November	7	1	8
December	12	6	13

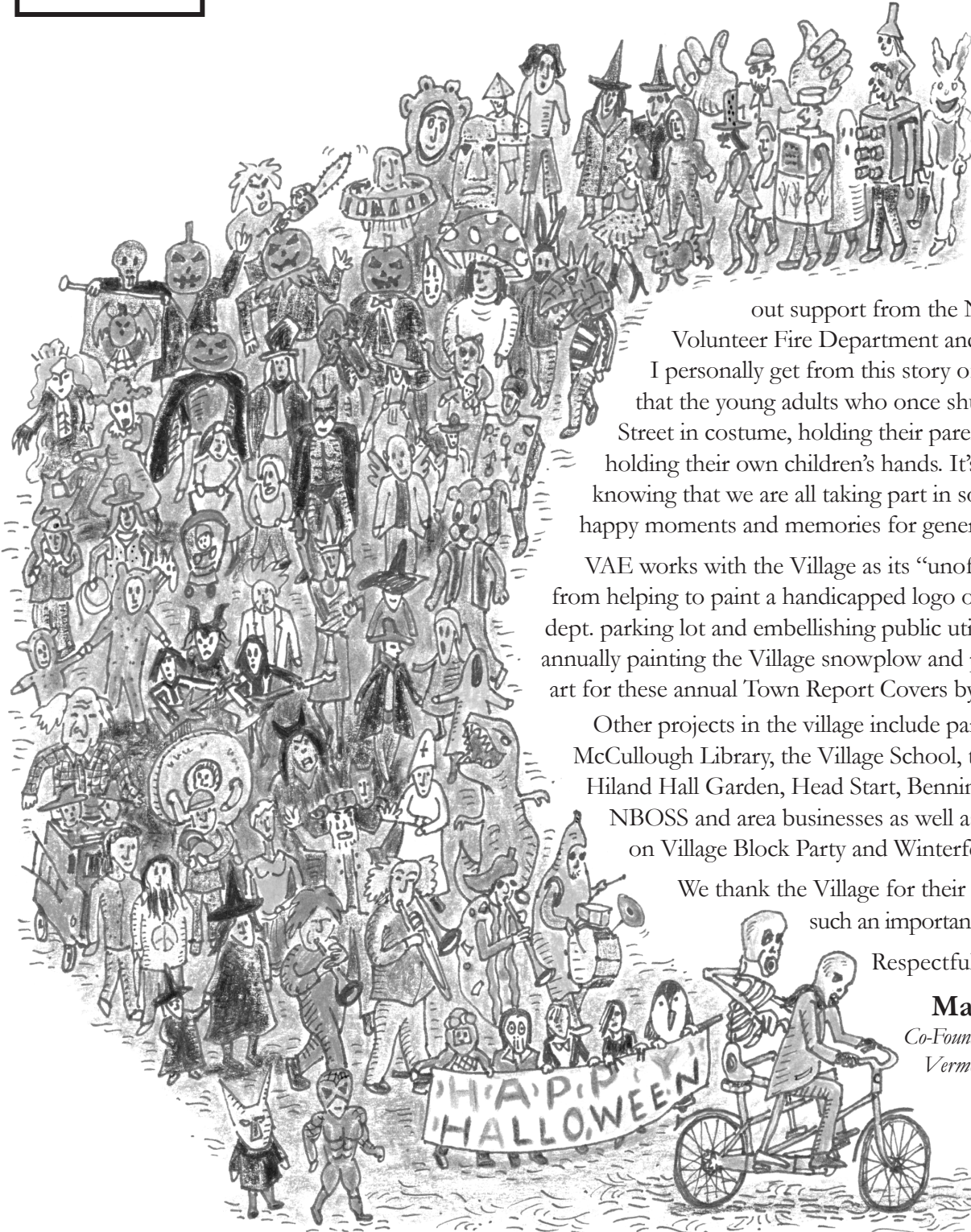
PLEASE NOTE: This is a correction to Page 29 of the 2022 Annual Report. Please view the website for DRB and Planning Commission meetings.

Greetings!

January 2023

Our recent 30th Annual North Bennington Halloween Parade tells a story. It encompasses a lot about what we do here at the Vermont Arts Exchange (VAE). Like most stories it has a setting and ours is the Village of North Bennington.

For the past 29 years, the Village has played a vital role in VAE's growth and development, utilizing spaces, places and collaborating with Village officers and departments.



This year, about 500 people marched in the 30th Annual North Bennington Halloween Parade. It could not happen with-

out support from the North Bennington Volunteer Fire Department and the Village. What I personally get from this story of the parade is that the young adults who once shuffled down Main Street in costume, holding their parents hand, are now holding their own children's hands. It's a good feeling knowing that we are all taking part in some way to create happy moments and memories for generations to come.

VAE works with the Village as its "unofficial Art Dept.", from helping to paint a handicapped logo on the new fire dept. parking lot and embellishing public utility stations, to annually painting the Village snowplow and producing color art for these annual Town Report Covers by local artists.

Other projects in the village include partnerships with McCullough Library, the Village School, the Lion's Club, Hiland Hall Garden, Head Start, Bennington College, NBOSS and area businesses as well as collaborations on Village Block Party and Winterfest.

We thank the Village for their support and being such an important part of our story.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Perry
*Co-Founder, Executive Director
Vermont Arts Exchange*

Park-McCullough

Historic Governor's Mansion

“We shape our buildings; thereafter,
our buildings shape us.”

~ *Winston Churchill*

As our **55th Season** of maintaining and sharing **Park-McCullough Historic Governor's Mansion** draws to a close, we want to express our gratitude to the members and donors who support us. Your help allows us to maintain our remarkable landmark and present a full range of programs, activities, and events for the public's education and enjoyment. **You make our growth and future success possible.**

This year independent historian and museum consultant Erica Donnis completed an **assessment of our substantial collection of historical artifacts**, furniture, documents, books, and textiles, much of which cannot be displayed due to space and safety considerations. In addition, Centerline Architects and Planners began an extensive exterior and interior **investigation of the mansion's condition**. The assessment and building review offer a strategic vision for preserving the extensive collection and ensuring that our plan for growth and improvement of the Park-McCullough aligns with our **commitment to preserving and presenting our history** for future generations. **We need your help** to protect the collection from the risk of continued deterioration.

Our first endeavor for 2023 is a year-long exterior **preservation project on the carriage barn and garage**. This project addresses issues caused by years of deterioration of the barn's exterior, repairs the slate roof and the entryways, replaces rotted wood, and refreshes the exterior paint. **The goal is to transform the garage into a new exhibition space for more than a dozen historic carriages** that are currently stored but not on display. They are original to the Park and McCullough families and an essential part of the collection and the family's heritage. **They should be proudly and appropriately displayed.**

Preservation planning is crucial to our 2023 goals.

Our work over the next year will ultimately allow us to be more effective custodians of Park-McCullough and better serve our community through improved educational programming, resource accessibility, and new exhibitions presented through



STAFF



Christopher Oldham
Executive Director

Jeanne Mitrone
Events & Group Tour Manager

Laura Hain
Museum Maintenance Technician

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Co-Founder, Living Room Theatre*

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North Bennington Tree Committee 2022 Report

The North Bennington Tree Committee resumed the tradition of celebrating Arbor Day with the Village School by planting nine Beauty of Moscow Lilac bushes on Depot Street in front of the train depot on June 2, 2022.

We planted eight trees this year as part of our Tree Initiative in which property owners share the cost with the committee. These included a *Freemanii Maple*, a *Nyssa Sylvatica Tupelo Tower*, a *Crab Apple*, two *Swamp White Oaks* and two *Sugar Maples*.

The Tree Committee also continues to use available funds to keep up to date on our pruning and maintenance schedule of Village trees and hazardous tree evaluation.

The Committee would like to acknowledge and express our gratitude for the continued support of the Village Trustees, The Fund for North Bennington, several generous donors this year that have made our new plantings and the Village Tree Initiative possible. We always welcome contributions to help us plant and maintain more trees. (Checks should be made out to North Bennington Tree Committee and mailed to PO Box 336, North Bennington VT 05257.)

The North Bennington Tree Committee works in conjunction with the Village Tree Wardens, Jeff Gray, Emily Hunter, and Matthew Patterson. Any concerns about the trees in the right-of-way or Village open spaces should be directed to the Tree Committee. If you have any suggestions for new plantings, please contact us. If you are thinking about planting a tree on your property in the village, we would be happy to offer advice and help if we can.

If you have any questions about or comments for the Tree Committee, please feel free to contact any of our members or emailing northbenningtontreecommitte@gmail.com.

Tree Committee Members:

Jeff Gray, Chair and Tree Warden

Emily Hunter, Tree Warden

Ron Pembroke, Certified Arborist

Susan Lambert, Secretary/Treasurer

Stu Aldrich, Member

Anna Crabtree, Member

**WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF
NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT**

Financial Statements – Modified Cash Basis

December 31, 2021 and 2020

(With Independent Auditor's Report Thereon)

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

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Independent Auditor's Report

Board of Water Commissioners
Village of North Bennington
North Bennington, Vermont

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Water Fund of Village of North Bennington, Vermont, which comprise the statements of net position – modified cash basis as of December 31, 2021 and 2020, and the related statement of revenues, expenses and changes in net position – modified cash basis and cash flows – modified cash basis for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting described in Note 1; this includes determining that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position – modified cash basis of the Water Fund of Village of North Bennington, Vermont at December 31, 2021 and 2020, and the changes in financial position – modified cash basis and cash flows – modified cash basis, thereof for the years then ended in conformity with the basis of accounting described in Note 1.

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

As also described in Note 1, the financial statements present only the Water Fund and do not purport to, and do not, present fairly the financial position and results of operations of the Village of North Bennington, Vermont in conformity with the modified cash basis of accounting.

Other Matter

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis on pages 3–5 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs, P.C.

February 18, 2022

Vt. Reg. #357

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
December 31, 2021

The management's discussion and analysis of the Water Fund's financial performance is required by Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 34 (GASB 34) and it provides an overview of the Water Fund's financial activities for the year ended December 31, 2021. This information is presented in conjunction with the audited basic financial statements, which follow this section.

Financial Highlights for 2021

1. The Water Fund had cash balances totaling \$459,325 at December 31, 2021. Capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, amounted to \$5,186,485.
2. Long-term debt, consisting of general obligation bonds, amounted to \$2,154,695 at December 31, 2021.
3. Operating revenues amounted to \$519,591 in 2021. Operating expenses were \$704,200.
4. The increase in the Water Fund's budgeted expenses from 2020 to 2021 was 5.5%.

Overview of the Financial Statements

This annual report consists of two parts: Management's Discussion and Analysis and the Basic Financial Statements. These statements reflect only the activity and balances of the Water Fund of the Village of North Bennington. They do not present the finances of the Village as a whole.

Required Financial Statements

The Financial Statements of the Water Fund report information using the modified cash basis of accounting. The Statement of Net Position – Modified Cash Basis provides information on the Water Fund's assets and net position. The Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position – Modified Cash Basis identifies the Water Fund's revenues and expenses for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020. The third basic financial statement is the Statement of Cash Flows – Modified Cash Basis. This statement provides information on the Water Fund's cash receipts, cash payments and changes in cash resulting from operations, investments and financing activities.

Financial Analysis of the Water Fund

This section summarizes information and data as related to the financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020.

The Statement of Net Position – Modified Cash Basis and the Statement of Revenues and Expenses – Modified Cash Basis provide an indication of the Water Fund's financial condition and changes in its financial condition. Table 1 presents a condensed Statement of Net Position – Modified Cash Basis. Capital assets were the largest component of the Water Fund's assets at approximately \$5.2 million at December 31, 2021.

**WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
December 31, 2021**

Table 1		
Condensed Statement of Net Position - Modified Cash Basis		
	2021	2020
Assets:		
Current assets	\$ 459,325	458,822
Capital assets, net	<u>5,186,485</u>	<u>5,458,124</u>
Total assets	<u>5,645,810</u>	<u>5,916,946</u>
Liabilities:		
Current liabilities	66,954	80,083
Long-term liabilities	<u>2,113,781</u>	<u>2,154,695</u>
Total liabilities	<u>2,180,735</u>	<u>2,234,778</u>
Net position:		
Net position invested in capital assets, net of debt	3,031,790	3,240,686
Unrestricted net position	<u>433,285</u>	<u>441,482</u>
Total net position	<u>\$ 3,465,075</u>	<u>3,682,168</u>

The following table presents condensed information from the Water Fund's operating statement. Operating expenses exceeded operating revenues by \$184,609 in 2021. In 2020, operating expenses exceeded operating revenues by \$193,224. Depreciation expense included in operating expenses amounted to \$300,641 and \$234,214 in 2021 and 2020, respectively. Non-operating revenues consisting of interest income and capital grants, amounted to \$393 in 2021 and \$359,782 in 2020. In total, net position decreased by \$217,093 in 2021 and increased by \$166,558 in 2020.

Table 2		
Condensed Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position - Modified Cash Basis		
	2021	2020
Operating revenues:		
Charges for services	\$ 441,271	340,914
Other operating revenue	<u>78,320</u>	<u>81,738</u>
Total operating revenues	<u>519,591</u>	<u>422,652</u>
Operating expenses:		
Personnel costs	207,783	203,824
Other operating costs	195,776	177,838
Depreciation	<u>300,641</u>	<u>234,214</u>
Total operating expenses	<u>704,200</u>	<u>615,876</u>
Nonoperating revenue (expense)	(32,484)	359,782
Change in net position	(217,093)	166,558
Net position - beginning	3,682,168	3,515,610
Net position - ending	\$ <u>3,465,075</u>	<u>3,682,168</u>

**WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
December 31, 2021**

Capital Assets

The following table presents capital assets as of December 31, 2021 and 2020, net of related accumulated depreciation. Additional information regarding capital assets is provided in footnote 3 of the accompanying financial statements.

Table 3 Capital Assets at Year-end (Net of Depreciation)		
	2021	2020
Land	\$ 187,985	187,985
Buildings and improvements	16,131	13,082
Equipment	32,484	16,276
Water lines	4,949,885	5,240,781
	\$ 5,186,485	5,458,124

Long-Term Debt

The Water Fund had long-term debt outstanding of \$2,154,695 at December 31, 2021, consisting of General obligation bonds.

Economic Factors and Next Year's Budget and Rates

The 2021 budget for Water Fund expenditures shows an increase of 5.5%.

Additional Financial Information

This financial report is designed to provide the Water Fund's customers and other interested parties with an overview of the Water Fund's financial operations and financial condition. Should the reader have questions regarding the information included in this report or wish to request additional financial information, please contact the North Bennington Water Department at 802-442-3883.

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statements of Net Position - Modified Cash Basis

	<i>December 31,</i>	
	2021	2020
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 459,325	458,822
Total current assets	459,325	458,822
Noncurrent assets:		
Capital assets:		
Land	187,985	187,985
Other capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation	4,998,500	5,270,139
Total noncurrent assets	5,186,485	5,458,124
Total assets	\$ 5,645,810	5,916,946
Liabilities		
Current liabilities:		
Payroll withholdings	\$ 26,040	17,340
General obligation bonds payable	40,914	62,743
Total current liabilities	66,954	80,083
Noncurrent liabilities:		
General obligation bonds payable	2,113,781	2,154,695
Total noncurrent liabilities	2,113,781	2,154,695
Total liabilities	2,180,735	2,234,778
Net Position		
Invested in capital assets, net of debt	3,031,790	3,240,686
Unrestricted	433,285	441,482
Total net position	3,465,075	3,682,168
Total liabilities and net position	\$ 5,645,810	5,916,946

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statements of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position - Modified Cash Basis

	<i>Year Ended December 31,</i>	
	2021	2020
<i>Operating revenues:</i>		
Fees and charges for services	\$ 441,271	340,914
System improvement assessment	78,320	81,738
<i>Total operating revenues</i>	519,591	422,652
<i>Operating expenses:</i>		
Salaries and wages	133,675	130,397
Payroll taxes and employee benefits	20,131	21,280
Bookkeeping services	19,872	19,308
Depreciation expense	300,641	234,214
General insurance	12,573	10,605
Health insurance	53,977	52,147
Heat, fuel and light	21,207	24,886
Office expenses	11,581	10,870
Operating supplies	20,022	19,357
Other operating expenses	45,748	29,554
Professional fees	23,211	10,190
Repairs and maintenance	41,562	53,068
<i>Total operating expenses</i>	704,200	615,876
<i>Operating loss</i>	(184,609)	(193,224)
<i>Nonoperating revenues (expenses):</i>		
Interest income	393	1,098
Capital grants	-	358,684
Interest expense	(32,877)	-
<i>Total nonoperating revenues (expenses)</i>	(32,484)	359,782
<i>Increase (decrease) in net position</i>	(217,093)	166,558
<i>Net position, beginning of year</i>	3,682,168	3,515,610
<i>Net position, end of year</i>	\$ 3,465,075	3,682,168

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statements of Cash Flows - Modified Cash Basis

	<i>Year Ended December 31,</i>	
	2021	2020
<i>Cash flows from operating activities:</i>		
Cash received from customers	\$ 519,591	422,652
Cash paid to employees	(124,975)	(121,156)
Cash paid to suppliers	(269,884)	(251,265)
<i>Net cash provided by operating activities</i>	124,732	50,231
<i>Cash flows from capital and related financing activities:</i>		
Principal payments on notes and bonds payable	(62,743)	(2,221,533)
Advances on bond anticipation note	-	615,514
Proceeds from issuance of bonds	-	2,195,000
Capital grants	-	358,684
Purchase of property and equipment	(29,002)	(794,054)
Interest paid on bonds	(32,877)	-
<i>Net cash provided by (used) in capital and related financing activities</i>	(124,622)	153,611
<i>Cash flows from investing activities:</i>		
Interest on cash investments	393	1,098
<i>Net cash provided by investing activities</i>	393	1,098
<i>Net increase in cash</i>	503	204,940
<i>Cash balance, beginning of year</i>	458,822	253,882
<i>Cash balance, end of year</i>	\$ 459,325	458,822
<i>Reconciliation of operating income (loss) to net cash provided by operating activities:</i>		
Operating income (loss)	\$ (184,609)	(193,224)
Adjustments to reconcile operating income to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	300,641	234,214
Increase (decrease) in payroll withholdings	8,700	9,241
<i>Net cash provided by operating activities</i>	\$ 124,732	50,231

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

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

(a) **Definition of Entity**

The Water Fund is a fund of the Village of North Bennington, Vermont, which is a unit of local government created by charter in 1904. The Village operates under a Board of Trustees form of government and provides services as outlined in its charter. The Water Fund is governed by the Board of Water Commissioners, whose members are appointed by the Village of North Bennington Trustees.

The accompanying financial statements include only the activity of the Water Fund and, accordingly, they are not intended to present fairly the financial position and results of operations of the Village of North Bennington, Vermont.

(b) **Basis of Presentation - Fund Accounting Proprietary Funds**

Enterprise Funds - enterprise funds are used to account for operations (a) that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises - where the intent of the governing body is that the costs (expenses, including depreciation) of providing goods and services to the general public on a continuing basis be financed or recovered primarily through user charges; or (b) where the governing body has decided that periodic determination of revenues earned, expenses incurred, and net income is appropriate for capital maintenance, public policy, management control, accountability, or other purposes. The Water Fund is an enterprise fund. The Water Fund applies all relevant Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncements.

(c) **Basis of Accounting**

Basis of accounting refers to when revenues and expenditures are recognized in the accounts and reported in the financial statements. Basis of accounting relates to the timing of the measurements made, regardless of the measurement focus applied.

The Water Fund is maintained on the modified cash basis; with no recognition being given to assets and liabilities or revenues and expenditures or expenses until cash has been received or disbursed. Under generally accepted accounting principles the Water Fund would follow the accrual basis of accounting. Such basis would require recognition of assets and liabilities which are not recognized in the accompanying financial statements. It is not practicable to determine the amounts of such assets and liabilities.

(d) **Capital Assets**

Property and equipment is stated at cost. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over estimated useful lives. When assets are retired or otherwise disposed of, the cost and related accumulated depreciation are removed from the accounts, and any resulting gain or loss is reflected in income for the period. The cost of maintenance and repairs is charged to income as incurred; significant renewals and betterments are capitalized. Deduction is made for retirements resulting from renewals or betterments. Interest costs incurred on borrowings used to finance the construction of facilities are capitalized during the period of construction.

(continued)

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

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

(d) *Capital Assets (continued)*

The amount capitalized is reduced by any interest earned on related temporary investments. Certain assets acquired prior to 1970, including the chlorinator building, metering station and pumping station are not recorded in the financial statements due to the lack of historical cost information.

(e) *Compensated Absences*

The Water Fund does not record liabilities for accumulated unpaid vacation pay and compensatory leave because its records are maintained on the modified cash basis.

(f) *Risk Management*

The Water Fund is exposed to various risks of loss related to general liability, property and casualty, workers' compensation, employee health and accident and environmental liability. The Water Fund purchases commercial insurance coverage for the risks of losses to which it is exposed, with the exception for environmental liabilities for which coverage is not available.

(g) *Use of Accounting Estimates*

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures or expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

(2) *Cash*

Deposits are maintained in more than one financial institution and are carried at cost. There are no legal or contractual restrictions with respect to the types of investments the Water Fund may make.

The carrying amount of the Water Fund's cash balances was \$459,325 at December 31, 2021 with a corresponding bank balance of \$462,987.

Custodial Credit Risk of Bank Deposits

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the Water Fund of the Village of North Bennington, Vermont deposits may not be returned to it. At December 31, 2021, \$363,312 of the bank balance was insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and \$99,675 was uninsured.

Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that changes in interest rates will adversely affect the fair value of an investment. The Water Fund of the Village of North Bennington Board of Commissioners reduces this risk by structuring the certificates of deposit so that the certificates mature to meet cash needs for ongoing operations, thus avoiding the need to cash in the certificates prior to maturity.

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(3) Capital Assets

Capital assets consisted of the following:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Transfers/ Retirements	Ending Balance
Land	\$ 187,985	-	-	187,985
Buildings and improvements	26,112	4,610	-	30,722
Equipment	148,054	24,392	(18,179)	154,267
Water meter system	61,490	-	-	61,490
Water lines and hydrants	5,852,471	-	-	5,852,471
Water filtration plant	2,046,261	-	-	2,046,261
Totals at historical cost	8,322,373	29,002	(18,179)	8,333,196
Accumulated depreciation	(2,864,249)	(300,641)	18,179	(3,146,711)
	\$ 5,458,124	(271,639)	-	5,186,485

(4) Notes and Bonds Payable

Long-term debt consisted of the following:

Description	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Amounts Due within One Year
General obligation bonds	\$ 2,217,438	-	62,743	2,154,695	40,914

On March 14, 2019 the Water Department issued a bond anticipation note which provided for advances of up to \$2,195,000. Advances under the bond anticipation note amounted to \$615,514 and \$1,579,486 in 2020 and 2019, respectively. The note was retired in August 2020 when it was replaced with long-term bonds bearing interest at 1.5 percent per annum and maturing August 20, 2060. Bonds payable are secured by the general revenue raising powers of the Village.

Debt service requirements are as follows:

	Principal	Interest	Total
2022	\$ 40,914	32,268	73,182
2023	41,531	31,651	73,182
2024	42,159	31,023	73,182
2025	42,796	30,386	73,182
2026	43,442	29,740	73,182
2027-2031	227,253	138,657	365,910
2032-2036	244,941	120,969	365,910
2037-2041	264,005	101,905	365,910
2042-2046	284,554	81,356	365,910
2047-2051	306,702	59,208	365,910
2052-2056	330,573	35,337	365,910
2057-2061	285,825	9,838	295,663
	\$ 2,154,695	702,338	2,857,033

WATER FUND OF VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(5) Retirement Plan

The Water Fund makes discretionary contributions to individual retirement accounts on behalf of all full-time employees. Contributions for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020 amounted to \$8,481 and \$9,923, respectively.

(6) Contingency

The Village of North Bennington, acting through the Board of Water Commissioners, has filed suit in Vermont Superior Court seeking to recover certain disputed and unpaid water charges from the Town of Shaftsbury. The Town has entered a motion seeking to compel arbitration in this matter and the Court has yet to grant or deny that motion. It is not possible to determine the ultimate outcome of this litigation, however the Water Fund's exposure is limited to potential forgone revenues.

(7) Subsequent Events

The Water Fund has evaluated subsequent events through February 18, 2022, the date on which the financial statements were available to be issued. There were no reportable subsequent events.

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WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

The legal voters of the Village of North Bennington, in the Town of Bennington and the State of Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Carriage Barn on the Park McCullough House grounds in said village on Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at Seven-Thirty in the afternoon to transact the following business, VIZ:

- 1) To hear and dispose of the reports of the Village Officers for the year.
- 2) To see what sum the Village will vote to cover appropriations made at this meeting and for the current and incidental expenses or authorize the trustees to borrow the necessary funds for that purpose; authorize the trustees to spend unanticipated revenue; and also authorize the trustees to set the tax rate upon completion of the Grand List.
- 3) To elect a Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Collector of Taxes, and three Auditors for the ensuing year; and two trustees for three years.
- 4) Shall the Village of North Bennington allocate a one-time additional \$1,760.00 to Paran Recreations for the purpose of managing nuisance weeds in Lake Paran?
- 5) Shall the Village of North Bennington allocate additional annual funding of \$2,000.00 to the North Bennington Outdoor Sculpture Show? This will bring the total annual allocation to \$2,500.00.
- 6) To discuss any other business found proper when met.

Lorine Elwell
Village of North Bennington
January 2023

