

M E E T I N G N O T I C E
BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD
Monday, August 22, 2022
Bennington Fire Facility
Multi-Purpose Room - 3rd Floor
130 River Street
Bennington, Vermont 05201
A G E N D A
6:00 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Vision Statement
3. Consent Agenda 6:00 PM - 6:05 PM
 - A. Minutes of August 8, 2022
 - B. Warrants
4. Public Comment 6:05 PM - 6:20 PM
5. Fidium Fiber Presentation 6:20 PM - 6:35 PM
6. Opioid Task Force Presentation 6:35 PM - 7:05 PM
7. Implementing the Town Vision 7:05 PM - 7:10 PM
 - A. IDEAL Vermont
 - B. CPARB August 25, 2022
8. Manager's Report 7:10 PM - 7:20 PM
9. Upcoming Agendas 7:20 PM - 7:25 PM
10. Other Business 7:25 PM - 7:35 PM
11. Executive Session
 - A. Real Estate

We endeavor to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals to engage and participate fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact Paul Dansereau, Facilities Director:
pdansereau@benningtonvt.org or call 802-447-9715.

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD MEETING**

2 **130 RIVER STREET**

3 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

4 **AUGUST 8, 2022**

5 **MINUTES**

6 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeannie Jenkins-Chair; Jeanne Conner-Vice Chair; Bruce
7 Lee-Clark; Jim Carroll; Gary Corey; Sarah Perrin; and Tom Haley.

8 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

9 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Dan Monks-Assistant Town Manager; Shannon
10 Barsotti-Community Development Director; Taylor McGuire and Kayla Becker-YMCA; Dare
11 Chammings-ACT; Mark Anders-BCRC; Sam Restino; Tom Seymour; Bob Kobelia; Nancy White;
12 Tordis Isselhardt; 5 citizens; Jim Vires-CAT-TV; and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

13 At 6:03pm, Chair Jeannie Jenkins called the meeting to order and acknowledged the site
14 visit of the beautiful Rail Trail that some Board members and citizens enjoyed prior to the
15 meeting.

16 **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

17 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

18 The Select Board declared August 7th Purple Heart Recognition Day. Recipients of the
19 Purple Heart have either been wounded or killed in combat. In recognition of this day, Ms.
20 Conner read the words of Lt. Col. Mark Lesley explaining the history of the Purple Heart.

21 **2. VISION STATEMENT**

22 Ms. Conner read the Town's Vision Statement that was adopted by the Select Board on
23 August 24, 2020:

24 "Bennington is a welcoming, engaged, inclusive, resilient community where everyone
25 regardless of identity shares in our vitality and benefits from an outstanding quality of life."

26 **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

27 **A. MINUTES OF JULY 25, 2022**

28 **B. WARRANTS**

29 *Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Jim Carroll seconded to approve the Consent Agenda*
30 *amended as follows:*

31 *Line 170, Change "Hatcher" to "Thatcher"*

The motion carried with Sarah Perrin absent.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following Public Comment Practices to make the experience for all involved a productive and informative use of the Public Comment period at Select Board meetings was placed on the podium for those that wish to make Public Comments to reference:

1. Public Comment is to allow residents an opportunity to share information or make announcements that benefit the community at large.
2. The topic should not be related to an agenda item. If a member of the public wants to comment on an agenda item they can do so during the discussion of that item.
3. Comments should be 3 minutes or less.
4. You are required to state your real name and town of residence.
5. Sharing comments, announcements and concerns are encouraged rather than asking questions. Public Comment is not a time for discussion. If you have specific questions it is best to call the Town Manager to get a full explanation and accurate information.
6. If the topic requires much discussion the item will be considered as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Sam Restino: Made the following comments:

- Trailfest - a good first event and felt that the Select Board members that attended should have publicly welcomed the newcomers that were there. *Mr. Lee-Clark did greet hikers on Friday night and Saturday.*
- VFW Fundraiser - raised \$55,000 for a child with cancer. Thanks to Norm LeBlanc.
- Pleasant Street incident - had hoped the Select Board would have made a public comment on it.
- Ladder truck has been delivered.
- Homeless Shelters - now is the time to think of sheltering the homeless and not wait until January.

Nancy White: Made the following comments/questions:

- How do we know those taking a survey are Bennington residents? *There is no way of knowing but the likelihood of non-residents creating a majority is slim.*
- It's time to have an open house at Benn High for the public to see every room. Are there plans for adequate parking at the Benn High? Has the State inspected the Benn High and has any work been done to code? Is there still asbestos in the Benn High building? *There will be a meeting in September dedicated to Benn High where any*

66 *questions may be asked. There was a walkthrough a while ago but perhaps we can*
67 *schedule another one in the future.*

68 Sarah Perrin: The Bennington Food Truck Fest will be on August 13, 2022 from 11:00am-7:00pm
69 at the corner of Main and School Streets with a dozen trucks, band performances at 11:30am,
70 1:00pm, 2:30pm-4:30pm, and 5:00pm-7:00pm. Thank you to all of our sponsors.

71 **5. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND PREVENTION PARTNERS**

72 Ms. Barsotti explained that the Youth Development and Prevention program is an
73 intensive, social approach that engages youth in their community, in schools, peer groups,
74 organizations, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive. Enhances, utilizes,
75 and recognized youth's strengths.

76 Dare Chammings from ACT did the following presentation:

- 77 ➤ ACT offers substance use outreach, suicide prevention, youth empowerment and
78 opportunities, and community support.
- 79 ➤ Mattering is being significant to other people and is a tool to use to face challenges.
- 80 ➤ Caring adults, supporting peers, and community engagement empowers the youth
81 with positive mental health outcomes. There are a significant number of youth - ~35%
82 - where this support is not present.
- 83 ➤ 420 middle school students were surveyed showing cannabis, vaping, and alcohol
84 consumption has increased and 40% have considered harming themselves. However,
85 72% feel safe at home at all times.
- 86 ➤ Most have enough to eat but 31% don't have access to personal care items. Locations
87 in Bennington and North Bennington are available where donations of products may be
88 made.
- 89 ➤ We have a Leadership Group and a partnership with the Middle School that have
90 focused on peer support for prevention and loneliness.
- 91 ➤ Bennington Youth Pride is a platform calendar to see what is going on in the area that
92 is user friendly for anyone to access.

93 *Board questions/comments answered by Ms. Chammings:*

94 Mr. Lee-Clark: Do you address readiness for participation in a school system? *Yes, we do.*

95 Ms. Conner: What kinds of tangible things can community members do? *Come to an ACT*
96 *quarterly meeting and take our community survey.*

97 Ms. Jenkins: How do you utilize your survey results and how do you know when your programs
98 are successful? *We survey kids, analyze the data, and they tell us what is working and what is*
99 *not.*

100 Mr. Corey: How many youth do you have involved in a program? *Youth Leadership Group has*
101 *10-12 7th and 8th graders/year plus drop ins.*

102 Mr. Hurd: The community needs to be better informed about the work you do. A link to the
103 Town's website may be helpful.

104 *Public questions/comments:*

105 Sam Restino: Consider having a block party to reach the youth whose parents may not be able
106 to go to the schools. And, reach out through social media.

107 Nancy White: Does this data include youth from towns other than Bennington because there
108 should be a breakdown by each town? *This is from the SVSU district.*

109 Tordis Isselhardt: What percentage of youth do the 420 surveyed represent? *The 420 surveyed*
110 *are middle schoolers out of 600 and there are an additional 500 high schoolers being surveyed.*

111 Taylor McGuire and Kayla Becker from the YMCA did the following presentation:

- 112 ➤ They had over 1,000 students have the summer camp experience this year which
113 included working with SVSU to have them spend their mornings at the school and their
114 afternoons at camp.
- 115 ➤ Our Leaders in Training has expanded this year to accommodate our growth. At the end
116 of the year, they took a survey and their struggles were remembering all the names and
117 their strengths were playing with the kids and having fun.
- 118 ➤ All schools in the area, including private schools, have students attending their camps.
- 119 ➤ We have community partners participate as well with multiple activities from the library
120 to a trip to Merck Forest.
- 121 ➤ Out of their 48 summer staff, 33 are teens.
- 122 ➤ The CIT Program is very successful for the kids that grow into our Leaders in Training
123 program.
- 124 ➤ We have renewed our contract with SVSU for the After School Program with presence in
125 all SVSU schools plus the Village of North Bennington school.
- 126 ➤ We use the lottery system for the After School Program since there is no cost to the
127 families.
- 128 ➤ We have kindergarten thru 3rd grade kids at the Bennington Sports Center, older kids at
129 the Rec Center, and Recovery (formerly known as Summer School) for Shaftsbury and
130 Arlington students at the Shaftsbury school.

131 *Board questions/comments answered by Ms. McGuire and Ms. Becker:*

132 Mr. Lee-Clark: How many LIT's and CIT's are there? *There are between 8-16 LIT's and 7 CIT's.*

133 Ms. Conner: What can you point to when a program is successful? *Our passion for working with*
134 *youth and the need in the community.*

135 Ms. Conner: If you win the lottery, is it for the entire school year? *We divide the school year into*
136 *two segments and, if one sibling is chosen, they all are.*

137 Ms. Jenkins: Is pleased that trauma training is done in the beginning to help connect the LIT's
138 and counselors with the community in a way they may not be otherwise. *It was a great*
139 *training.*

140 Mr. Monks: How can we eliminate the lottery system and give it to everyone that needs it? *We*
141 *need to see how many applicants we get this year and how many staff we have to do it. SVSU is*
142 *very supportive of the program.*

143 *Public questions/comments answered by Ms. McGuire and Ms. Becker:*

144 Sam Restino: It would be good if adults could also share some of these experiences. *Now that*
145 *summer camp is ending, we are working on our adult programs.*

146 **6. MORGAN SPRING PUBLIC ACCESS UPDATE**

147 Mr. Carroll did the following presentation on behalf of the Morgan Spring Sub-
148 Committee made up of Mr. Lee-Clark, Mr. Haley, and himself:

- 149 ❖ If the Town were to put a public spigot to access Morgan Spring water it would cost
150 between \$50,000-\$125,000 to install.
- 151 ❖ Other concerns were tamper proof shut off and liability.
- 152 ❖ From an MSK Memorandum - "The Public Water System Operating Permit issued by
153 Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC) for the Water System
154 requires disinfection treatment (chlorine or similar treatment) to be continuously
155 operated and a disinfectant residual to be maintained at every service connection
156 served by the system. A public fill station is considered a service connection."
- 157 ❖ From the VTDEC - "Section IV requires that the Permittee operate its chlorine
158 disinfection system on a continuous basis. The Permittee must maintain measurable
159 free chlorine residual concentrations throughout and to the ends of the distribution
160 system."
- 161 ❖ If we spend the money to install a spigot, it will essentially be the same water that
162 comes out of our taps at home.
- 163 ❖ Tap water can be filtered.
- 164 ❖ The Sub-Committee concluded that it doesn't make fiscal sense to install a public spigot
165 to access Morgan Spring water.

166 *Board comments:*

167 Mr. Lee-Clark added that it was important to ask the questions, do our due diligence, and
168 realize that our water is regulated by the State of Vermont. He encouraged people to filter
169 their water instead of buying bottled water.

170 Mr. Haley added that it doesn't make sense to spend that kind of money and notes that the
171 filtration systems are not free.

Ms. Jenkins stated that our water is perfectly safe with the issue being a personal preference of the taste which the filters will improve.

Public comments:

Nancy White: This should have been done 2 years ago.

7. BIKE/PED TRAILS UPDATE

Mr. Monks and Mark Anders from BCRC did the following presentation:

- A shared use path is for non-motorized transportation, i.e., walking, biking, roller blading, running, etc.
- They are both for transportation and for recreation.
 - ✓ Ninja Path - complete from foot bridge by the golf course to the Bennington College entrance and through the college to North Bennington.
 - ✓ Ninja Path - in process to connect Walmart to Hannaford, then to the Rail Trail to Downtown and the Walloomsac Pathway. Building the bridge is the most difficult and expensive part of the project.
 - ✓ Ninja Path - looking for a new name.
 - ✓ Rail Trail - under construction for completion in October 2022 and runs from Bennington Station to Emma Street. Bennington Station to Orchard Road will be paved and from Orchard Road to Emma Street will be hard surface gravel but there will be no additional lighting.
 - ✓ Orchard Village to Willowbrook Pathway - Complete to Molly Stark School over wetlands to encourage students to walk to school and does have lighting.
 - ✓ Kocher Drive Pathway - Complete connecting East Road and across Route 7 to the Rail Trail.
 - ✓ Ben Mont Avenue Project - from the Hunt Street intersection to the Ben Mont Mill. Side of the road will become a path with a vegetation buffer, the Hunt Street intersection will be straightened to a right angle entrance, and the bus depot entrance will be relocated. We also want to connect the Rail Trail and the Ninja Path to the Ben Mont Avenue Project.
- Smaller connecting paths will be constructed as these larger projects conclude, such as a connector from Hunt Street to the Rail Trail and then to Tastee Freeze.
- A larger future vision is to connect Bennington to Williamstown and ultimately North Adams with a shared use path.

Board questions/comments answered by Mr. Monks and Mr. Anders:

Mr. Haley: The Rail Trail is an excellent relaxing opportunity for people to access Northside Drive on foot.

Mr. Carroll: Will the Rail Trail remain as wide as it is now? *That is the plan and it will be mowed a few times a year.*

209 Ms. Conner: Do you know if the Molly Stark attendance improved after the trail was
210 completed? *We don't know because COVID occurred and interfered with that comparison.*

211 Ms. Conner: Will where to park be indicated on the trail map? *We will reach out to Mr. Spivak*
212 *for that as these trails become on line.*

213 Mr. Lee-Clark: Also concerned about parking and encouraging people to walk the rail trail when
214 the existing current bridge doesn't have a safe deck to walk on. There should be a sign warning
215 people that it isn't safe. Also, we should have signage along the way with distances indicated
216 on them. *We will be putting up a warning about the safety of the bridge.*

217 Ms. Jenkins: Are the trail maps available on our website now? *The maps seen tonight are not*
218 *available but we will be getting together with Mr. Spivak on that. There are some maps on the*
219 *Chamber of Commerce site.*

220 Mr. Corey: It's exciting to think that we may have a trail system to Williamstown.

221 *Public questions/comments answered by Mr. Monks and Mr. Anders:*

222 Sam Restino: Is concerned about the additional expense of maintenance and policing of the
223 trails. As a plus, there may be potential economic opportunities.

224 Nancy White: This is great but you can't take away the parking on the streets.

225 **8. SOLAR ARRAY CONTRACT - HOUGHTON LANE**

226 Mr. Monks did the following presentation:

- 227 ▪ MHG Solar from Manchester, Vermont proposed a lease to the Town for a 21-acre solar
228 array on the capped Bennington landfill site on Houghton Lane.
- 229 ▪ The lease includes a 3-year period to perform due diligence on the property to
230 determine feasibility of the project followed by an initial term of 25 years with 3 options
231 to extend the lease in 5-year increments.
- 232 ▪ A modest annual rent of \$1,000 is proposed with the anticipated annual municipal tax
233 revenue of \$30,000.
- 234 ▪ Even without any tax benefit, this is a use for land that is essentially useless otherwise as
235 all infrastructure must be on top of the ground since the cap cannot be pierced.
- 236 ▪ Town Counsel has reviewed and approved the lease.
- 237 ▪ The lease states general boundaries but MHG Solar would need to do a survey to
238 determine the exact location and the Town would need to agree to that before going
239 forward.

240 *Board questions/comments answered by Mr. Monks:*

241 Mr. Corey: Do we know where transmission lines would be going? *We do not, however, it is in*
242 *the lease that there will be one corridor that is determined by Green Mountain Power on the*

243 *Town's property and not negatively impacting any houses. This is a 248 process with the*
244 *Utilities Commission.*

245 Mr. Haley: What due diligence will be done during the 3-year period? *Many discussions with the*
246 *developer, the Town, and the EPA as to how to secure and maintain the array and not pierce the*
247 *cap. This is not a new idea and has been done on other capped landfills. Also, the cost, being*
248 *sure it doesn't interfere with what the Town is doing at the landfill now, etc. will need to be*
249 *known.*

250 Mr. Carroll: Is there a risk in not receiving any tax revenue? *The State has a formula that they*
251 *use to assess the value of the property that we, and the developer, are bound to follow and*
252 *there is no grievance of the tax allowed.*

253 Ms. Conner: MHG Solar has done solar arrays in very difficult locations already and they will be
254 responsible for all maintenance of the array. When does the tax assessment begin? *It starts*
255 *when they begin generating electricity.*

256 Ms. Perrin: When the panels go past their useful life, can they sit on the land or do they have to
257 be removed? *They will continue to upgrade during the term of the lease and must bring those to*
258 *the Utilities Commission. All equipment and panels will be removed within 30 days of the*
259 *upgrades. With their 3 5-year extensions, they are looking at this as a 40-year lease.*

260 Mr. Lee-Clark: Does the Board have any say as to where the boundaries are set? *It will not be*
261 *any larger than the boundaries shown in Exhibit B, and it is in the best interests of MHG Solar, to*
262 *not be responsible for any more property than is necessary for their array. Casella has a portion*
263 *within the boundary shown that will definitely not be available to MHG Solar.*

264 *Public comments/questions answered by Mr. Monks and Mr. Hurd:*

265 Sam Restino: Will the Town receive a net metering benefit from this? *All of the Town's power is*
266 *on renewable resources. The Public Utilities Commission is already frowning on net metering*
267 *and there has been no talk of net metering with this project.*

268 Tom Seymour: A representative of AC Power in Albany, NY asked if the Board would consider a
269 second proposal for solar power on the landfill. They currently have 6 in development over 4
270 states. *Now that we've laid out this lease agreement to the public, the Town has "a bonafide*
271 *agreement" with MHG Solar. "We're beyond" another company coming in now "saying we can*
272 *do better". We've been reaching out to do something with this site for decades.*

273 Nancy White: Nothing has to be signed tonight. We should hear other proposals and public
274 comment.

275 Bob Kobelia: Recommended taking other proposals and talking to other communities that have
276 had a similar situation. He has a solar array on his property and invited the Board to do a site
277 visit on his property. *Ms. Jenkins: "We have been discussing this for a very, very long*

278 time.....and this is a preferred site.” Mr. Carroll: “This was no secret about this property for over
279 a decade. Somebody just stepped up.”

280 **Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Tom Haley seconded to authorize the Town Manager to**
281 **sign the Lease Agreement between MHG Solar and the Town of Bennington for a solar array**
282 **project on the Town’s capped landfill off of Houghton Lane as presented.**

283 Mr. Lee-Clark noted that this site was listed as a preferred site, and made available to
284 the public, at least 8 years ago. This lease will initiate a 3-year process of due diligence and may
285 “foreclose any other development of this property for solar if this project seems feasible”.
286 Although appreciative of others coming forward now, it would be unfair to have asked
287 someone to put together a proposal and not follow through with it.

288 Mr. Haley agrees with Mr. Lee-Clark, and added that it’s been 4-6 months since the
289 Town has started negotiations.

290 Ms. Jenkins stated that the preferred site map has been out for nearly a decade, and
291 others have come to the Town and said ‘it’s a nice spot’ followed by ‘it’s going to cost a
292 fortune’. Mr. Monks added that there have been 6 or 7 companies that have done this.

293 Ms. Conner is in favor of this proposal and asked if there was a downside to waiting to
294 vote on it until the next meeting? Mr. Monks saw no reason to not vote tonight.

295 Ms. Perrin is in favor of the site but, now that a couple of others have come forward, is
296 torn as to voting yes tonight.

297 Mr. Corey stated that it is easy for others to benefit from the information in this lease
298 agreement now that it has been made public.

299 ***The motion carried with Sarah Perrin opposed.***

300 **9. IMPLEMENTING THE TOWN VISION**

301 Ms. Jenkins: Encouraged everyone to be sure to read Paul Dansereau’s Executive Summary -
302 Town of Bennington Facilities ADA Audit & Improvement Plan, if they haven’t already.

303 Ms. Jenkins: CPARB Training is coming up August 24th from 5:00pm-8:00pm at the Bennington
304 Fire Facility. It is open to the public and will be filmed by CAT-TV but will not be aired live.

305 **10. MANAGER’S REPORT**

306 Mr. Hurd did the following report:

- 307 • Raul Cardona, the alleged killer of an individual on Pleasant Street, has
- 308 surrendered and is now in custody.
- 309 • Octoberfest has been changed from October 8th to October 15th.

310 Distribution of COVID Test Kits - The State of Vermont Health Department have received 2,000
311 COVID test kits to the Town for public distribution. Staff volunteers will distribute 2 kits (4
312 tests) per person at two distribution times at the Lincoln Street parking lot until the kits are
313 gone. We will announce the times and dates when we've established them.

314 Community Garden Parking - We are exploring opportunities to create some off-street parking
315 at the Community Garden and looking at a location at the south end of the garden along
316 Coolidge Avenue. Parking on the west side of Bradford Street along the garden is prohibited for
317 the time being as the street appears too narrow for parking on both sides. Signs will be placed
318 posting this and a formal review and recommendation will be made to the Select Board in the
319 future.

320 State Paving Projects - The State will be doing the following paving projects:

- 321 - Route 279 from the NY border east to the intersection of Route 9
- 322 - Route 7 from the Northside/Kocher Drives intersection north approximately 5.74
- 323 miles
- 324 - Route 7 from the Mass border north approximately 10.15 miles

325 **11. UPCOMING AGENDA**

326 August 24, 2022 - Opioid Task Force Update

327 August 24, 2022 - Fidium Fiber Presentation

328 **12. OTHER BUSINESS**

329 Ms. Haley: Shared a story from a woman and her wife on vacation in Bennington and how
330 Bennington was the first town that they did not feel threatened or uncomfortable.

331 Mr. Carroll: Is looking forward to Battle Day Weekend and the new events that the Fire
332 Department has planned.

333 Mr. Lee-Clark: Reminded everyone to vote, and register and vote if needed, on August 9th. And,
334 also to enjoy the kiosk at the Putnam Block.

335 Ms. Perrin: Reminded everyone of the Food Truck Fest on Saturday, get your chicken barbeque
336 tickets, and vote tomorrow.

337 ***At 8:40pm, Jim Carroll moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded the adjournment of the***
338 ***meeting. The motion carried unanimously.***

339 Respectfully submitted,

340 Nancy H. Lively

341 Secretary

**SELECT BOARD
MINUTES ADDENDUM
Bennington Fire Facility – Rail/Trail
Rail/Trail Site Visit**

August 8, 2022

Select Board Members Present: Jeannie Jenkins, Chair, Jeanne Conner, V. Chair, Gary Corey, Tom Haley, and Bruce Lee-Clark.

Staff Present: Daniel Monks

Members of the Public Present: Jim Therrien, Mike Cutler, Dr. Block, Laura Block, Deb Matte, Bill Karis, Janet Buonnerno, Eleanor Matteson.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM. After brief remarks from Dan Monks, those present walked the rail/trail from the firehouse to the railroad bridge at the Walloomsac River. During the walk, those present conversed informally about the rail/trail.

The Board recessed the meeting at 5:50 PM and announced that the meeting would re-open at 6 PM in the Firehouse.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel W. Monks

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Kristin L. Clouser, Secretary

Monday August 08, 2022

SENT VIA E-MAIL AND POST

Jeannie Jenkins
Bennington Selectboard Chair
PO Box 469
Bennington, VT 05201

Dear Jeannie,

As we transition from such an eventful and uncertain last few years, the demand for meaningful, lasting change is stronger than ever. To meet that demand and continue moving Vermont forward, the state is launching a new initiative called **IDEAL Vermont** and we are writing to invite Bennington to consider its readiness to join the inaugural cohort.

IDEAL Vermont stands for something—and so do its members. “IDEAL” stands for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action, and Leadership. This initiative creates a coalition of Vermont municipalities dedicated to advancing racial and other forms of equity across the state through shared learning and tangible actions. It fosters coordination to multiply, amplify, and build synergy across the state. Bennington has been identified for this opportunity because it has demonstrated a willingness to confront and overcome inequity, including racial/ethnic inequity, through actions such as the adoption of the Declaration of Inclusion and the establishment of a Safety & Equity Task Force and a Community Policing Advisory Review Board.

As you know, the movement for justice is sweeping the globe—natural disasters, justice reform, re-envisioning workplaces, student success in schools, placemaking and community-building... Inequity intensifies all these challenges and creates heightened urgency for collaboration and unified action. Clearly there is no time to lose. Local, state, federal, and community leaders across Vermont have worked hard in recent years to increase awareness and enact policy to make Vermont more equitable for all. In some parts of the state, these efforts have been met with resistance and even violence. In others, leaders and residents have stepped up in recognition of the myriad benefits and moral imperatives of pursuing more equity. This is why we are going all-in on IDEAL Vermont—it holds the promise of unique collaboration across municipalities and counties to harness the transformative energy that is already building throughout our state.

Part of this transformative energy comes is driven by our partners, who have committed to embedding equity and inclusion in their internal policies and their external programs. Those key partners include Vermont League of Cities & Towns, Vermont Community Foundation, Abundant Sun, and Vermont Council on Rural Development.

The official launch date for IDEAL Vermont is October 26th. On this day, we will hold a convening to bring the member municipalities together. At this convening, we will review the initiative's objectives, identify resources, and develop concrete action steps for municipalities to take. After that, municipalities will engage in regular in-person convenings throughout the year to share progress, troubleshoot issues, learn more about equity work, and offer mutual support. In addition to the regular convenings, municipalities will have access to a resource library to guide their work and technical assistance from relevant state agencies. Member municipalities will also be eligible to apply for small grants of up to \$10,000 each year.

We are hopeful that Bennington will join in this impactful and necessary work. **Please reply to this invitation no later than Monday September 12th.** I have enclosed a factsheet with more information about the initiative and will make myself available to discuss the program with you or other Bennington leaders as you consider this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "XR Davis". The letters are stylized and cursive.

Xusana R. Davis, Esq.
Executive Director Racial Equity
State of Vermont
Xusana.Davis@vermont.gov



IDEAL
INCLUSION DIVERSITY EQUITY ACTION LEADERSHIP
VERMONT

Stowe // Photo credit Jeffrey Clayton

Advancing equity at the local level

Vermont's communities become more diverse every day. As part of this growth, municipalities around the state and the country are recognizing the need to prioritize equity and social justice. Already, dozens of Vermont's communities have taken steps to be more inclusive.



15

municipalities represented on the Equity Committee of the VT League of Cities & Towns

20

VT school districts known to have an Equity Coordinator role as of school year '21-'22

61

municipalities that have adopted a Declaration of Inclusion as of July '22

IDEAL VERMONT WAS CREATED TO BRIDGE THE EFFORTS OF INDIVIDUAL TOWNS AND COUNTIES ACROSS THE STATE TO BUILD COHESION, MOTIVATION, AND SUCCESS.

LEARNING TOPICS WILL INCLUDE

- foundations of racial equity
- tourism
- MWBEs
- housing
- health equity
- anti-bias policy
- school curriculum
- fair and impartial policing
- data, planning, strategy
- environmental justice

Access to grant funding

Convenings + Workshops

Technical assistance from state agencies

Data sharing + coaching

Online Platform + resource library

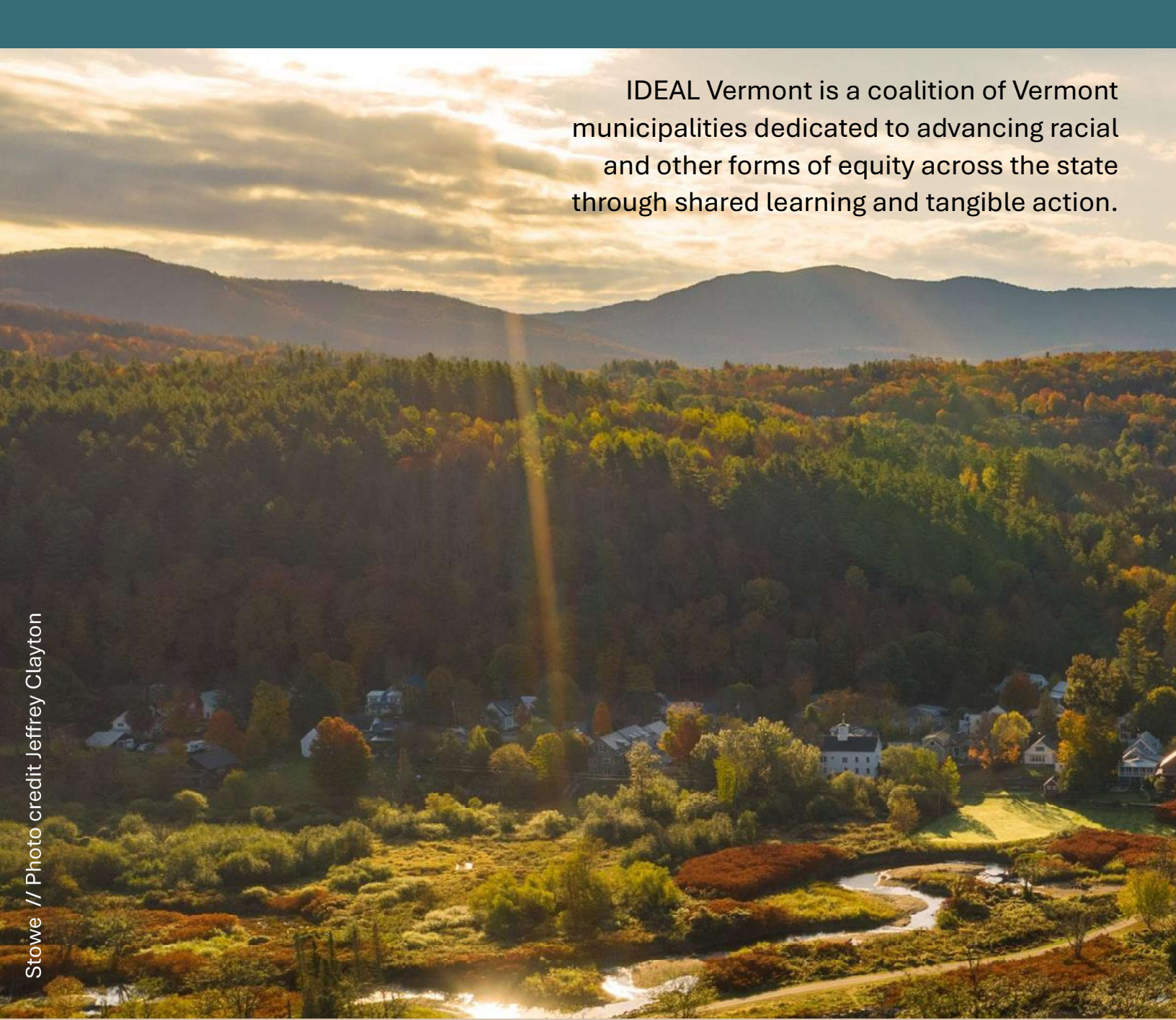
Guided by a multi-disciplinary team of state agencies, IDEAL Vermont helps local leaders advance equity in their communities through workshops, technical assistance, grant opportunities, and facilitated spaces to share with and learn from peers around the state.

Join Us

The initiative unifies, educates, and empowers counties and municipalities that are committed to making Vermont more inclusive and more equitable. Member municipalities hold themselves to a high standard of good governance, and are willing to learn and un-learn the practices that can make or break an equitable society.

Your town may be a candidate if it can deliver

- Commitment from the local executive
- Commitment from the local rulemaking body
- Regular, active engagement in IDEAL activities
- Tangible action steps and investment



IDEAL Vermont is a coalition of Vermont municipalities dedicated to advancing racial and other forms of equity across the state through shared learning and tangible action.

Stowe // Photo credit Jeffrey Clayton

Supporters + Partners

Equity is everyone's job, and each of us plays a role in shaping it. Many community organizations, state agencies, and advocates have inspired and amplified IDEAL Vermont. We are grateful for their contributions, and especially to these key partners who provide core elements of the initiative, including grants and education.

- Vermont Community Foundation
- Vermont Declaration of Inclusion
- Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Abundant Sun

M E E T I N G N O T I C E
Community Policing Advisory Review Board

Thursday, August 25, 2022
Bennington Fire Facility
Multi-Purpose Room - 3rd Floor
130 River Street
Bennington, Vermont 05201
A G E N D A

5:00 PM

1. Open Meeting/Open Records Law Review
Merrill Bent

We endeavor to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals to engage and participate fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact Paul Dansereau, Facilities Director:
pdansereau@benningtonvt.org or call 802-447-9715.

MANAGER'S REPORT
August 22, 2022

ACTION

Nothing at this time

INFORMATIONAL

Flood Insurance Rating Study Completed FEMA has completed its review of the Town's flood protection and planning efforts. The results, although not yet formal, will result in a rating of CRS 9, a rating we have held for a number of years now. This will result in a 5% reduction (discount) in the cost of flood insurance.

Willow Park Playground Work continues on this significant improvement. Staff are projecting an early September finish to the project. A ribbon cutting will be scheduled when we are certain that completion is near. Weather and staffing are the critical factors.

Election Signs This year, we seemed to be flooded with election signs. While we discourage placement on municipal property, it has become evident that the workers on these campaigns are over enthusiastic in the placement of these signs. I now ask that all candidates that are no longer in an election race remove your signs. It would also be great if the current candidates relocated their signs to appropriate private property locations. We're coming into the Fall season and such unsightly clutter downgrades our community's appearance.

Benmont Ave/County Street sewer This project is out to bid.

DPW Fleet Manager position Attached is the completed job description.

FOLLOW UP

The Communication Coordinator's Report is attached.

The Police Department's Report is attached.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title: Public Works Department
Fleet Manager

Position Code: Full-Time / Non-Union

Date of Description: July 2022

JOB SUMMARY

This is a supervisory position directly responsible to the Public Works Director and the Assistant Public Works Director. This person directs the workforce in the care and maintenance of the Town's fleet and is responsible for the maintenance and repair of all vehicles, tools, and equipment in the Town's fleet. This involves diagnosing, scheduling, performing maintenance/repair of equipment at the Public Works garage, planning, and coordinating repairs with outside vendors, and performing Vermont vehicle inspections. This person shall work with the Assistant Public Works Director to develop and maintain a service maintenance plan with records on each vehicle. This position will have the authority to take vehicles out of service when needed to perform timely maintenance and repairs.

DUTIES AND REPONSIBILITIES

The Fleet Manager shall:

1. Help develop a vehicle service plan and maintenance record for every vehicle the Town owns to ensure no service is missed or performed late.
2. Maintain detailed maintenance records for each vehicle in the fleet. Records are to be maintained in a computer spreadsheet program such as Microsoft Excel.
3. Work with Public Works Foremen and other department managers to schedule vehicles to be serviced in a timely manner.
4. Process all paperwork associated with vehicle and equipment maintenance including requisitions, purchase orders and invoices.
5. Direct the workforce to ensure all vehicles and equipment stay on the proper manufacturer recommended maintenance schedule.

6. Maintain the Public Works garage facility in a manner that complies with all common industry standards and rules, among them OSHA/VOSHA, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
7. Perform all work in accordance with federal, state, and Town employment and safety laws, rules, and standards.
8. Be responsible for the purchase of all shop parts, oils, products (at the best possible pricing available) and for the inventory control and record keeping of the correct parts, oils, tires, and products needed to perform mechanical work for the vehicles and equipment.
9. Prioritize repairs, preventative maintenance work and perform all mechanical work in a timely fashion. Prioritize services and repairs outside of the repair facility, and coordinate mechanic duties and responsibilities with the work performed by contracts and vendors.
10. Establish and manage a Vermont inspection station, inspect vehicles, and keep vehicles safe for operation.
11. Read vehicle condition reports and repair what is needed. Maintain proficiency by attending training conferences, meetings, reading related publications.
12. Provide direction, training, and orientation to personnel on department policies and practices relating to the operation and use/care of vehicles and equipment.
13. Maintain work area in a clean, orderly manner and clear of a gathering area.
14. Assist the Public Works Director and Assistant Public Works Director with the preparation and maintenance of an asset management plan.
15. Assist with specification, design and conducts acceptance inspections on new trucks, police vehicles, and equipment.
16. Take individual responsibility for working in a safe manner, and adhere to, and comply with, all Town policies.
17. Perform such other duties and responsibilities as required.

SKILLS & EXPERTISE

The Fleet Manager shall:

1. Have a high school diploma or G.E.D. (professional certifications highly desirable).
2. Possess a valid driver's license in good standing and be able to obtain a Vermont CDL Class A license within 24 months of employment.
3. Have at least ten (10) years of experience as a vehicle technician.
4. Have a minimum of five (5) years of experience in the general repair of vehicles including commercial vehicles, heavy equipment, small engines, and equipment used in public works operations and police cruisers.
5. Have the ability to diagnose mechanical and electrical problems in light and heavy automotive equipment, law enforcement vehicles and non-automotive equipment.
6. Have the ability to operate and maintain equipment used by all town departments to ensure they are in safe working order.
7. Vermont Inspection Mechanic certification preferred or be able to obtain within six (6) months of employment.
8. Forklift Training Certification preferred or be able to obtain within six (6) months of employment.
9. Possess computer skills, the ability to read, write and interpret owner's manuals, vehicle repair manuals, and operations manuals.
10. Must possess own tools.
11. Have specific knowledge and experience (preferably in a municipal setting) in the general repair of vehicles and equipment. A working knowledge of brakes, including air brake systems, electric, hydraulic, differentials, transmissions, clutches, electrical systems, drive trains, suspensions, hydraulic systems, wheel cylinders and master cylinders, equipment tracks and starting systems as they relate to vehicles and heavy equipment. Work needs to be performed in a clean and organized fashion.
12. Have a thorough knowledge of the principles of gas and diesel engines, and the ability to overhaul all major components of the gas engines, vehicle and equipment servicing requirements and methods, and related hazards.

13. Be able to perform on-site maintenance (lubricates, oils, filter changes, fuel, greases, replace parts), and repairs beyond routine maintenance, with the skill and ability to diagnosis and complete repairs in a timely manner.
14. Be able to fabricate and modify new parts for vehicles and equipment, operate a cutting torch, a welder, metal lathe and a hydraulic press.
15. Be self-motivated, and able to communicate effectively with all employees, the general public, excel in a team-oriented customer driven environment, and be able to relate cooperatively.
16. Possess an acceptable past work history.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Work is performed mostly at the Department of Public Works Bowen Road garage. Some outdoor work and off-site work are required on occasion. In addition, office work is required. Hand-eye coordination is required.

The Fleet Manager shall be able to:

1. Stand; walk; use hands to finger, handle, feel or operate objects, tools, or controls; and reach with hands and arms.
2. Sit; climb or balance; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; talk or hear.
3. Occasionally lift and/or move up to 90 pounds.
4. Use close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and can adjust focus.
5. Auditory capacity consistent with NFPA Standard 1001
6. Communicate orally and in writing.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee occasionally works in outside in all weather conditions. The employee works near moving mechanical parts and is exposed to wet and/or humid conditions, fumes, or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, risk of electrical shock, and vibration. The noise level in the work environment varies from moderately quiet to noisy.

SELECTION GUIDELINES

Formal application, rating of education and experience; oral interview and reference check; job related tests may be required.

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.

The job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.

I have received, reviewed, and fully understand the job description for the Fleet Manager. I further understand the duties and responsibilities described therein, under all conditions as described.

Approval: _____ Approval: _____
Supervisor Employee

M:\Manager\Michele\Wp5\jobdescupdate\Highway\fm.jd.docx



Town of Bennington

Communications Coordinator Report — August 22, 2022

Building Community

Since my last report I have been active helping with a number of important events including our National Night Out Community Picnic, the Police Department New Experience Camp, Bennington Trailfest, and of course Battle Day Weekend and parade. All of these events are focused on building community and being able to help with these projects provide some of the most rewarding work that I get to do in my communications role! I will go into more detail on many of these events in this report.

Willow Park Playgrounds:

Work on the playgrounds at Willow Park are well under way. The small upper playground is largely complete and awaiting new surfacing and final touches. The lower playground installation continues with daily additions and we hope to know when we can expect a completion date in the next week or so. Once we have that date nailed down, we will plan a ribbon cutting ceremony for the re-opening of the playgrounds.

For more information about the Willow Park playgrounds renewal project and process please visit the Town website page on Willow Park located at: <https://benningtonvt.org/willow-park/>

Citizen Outreach:

I met with citizens seventeen times over the last month on a variety of issues, ideas, and concerns. There were not any public record requests to my office.

Community Outreach

Most of the community outreach last month consisted of communicating about all the events, with press releases, social media posts, and providing the community with information about all the things happening around town. This included a comprehensive listing of Battle Day Weekend events all in one place that included the Fire Department, Battle Monument, and Bennington Battlefield which proved to be very useful.

A.T. Community and Trailfest

The first Bennington Trailfest was held on July 30 and was a resounding success. Well over 200 people attended including 60+ thru-hikers. Tracy Lind, of the regional Appalachian Trail Conservancy office, said that simply to become an AT Community requires strong local and volunteer support, so that “just getting the designation is huge. And doing that during COVID was a challenge in itself [for Bennington] to overcome.” The Bennington Trailfest “is a great one,” Lind added. “You have a lot of people who are interested, talking not only to thru hikers but folks that just like going out for a day, or just going to an overlook for an hour. A lot of folks are also interested in protecting the greater landscape. This is a fantastic turnout.” We have set the stage for another event next year!

250th Anniversary Planning:

The next meeting of the Bennington 250th Anniversary Planning Steering Committee is planned for September 15. This is the leadership team that reports to the full committee that meets quarterly. A diverse and committed group of people have come together to work on this historic project and we are very grateful for their time and energy. People interested in serving on the 250th committee can contact me.

Website Update:

Coding for the new website has just been completed and the work of transferring content from the old site to the new is now underway. That is expected to take about two weeks. Once complete, I will be reviewing the entire site and updating with new content and images throughout. Once the “beta” site is ready, we will do a rigorous testing of the new navigation system to ensure that it is as user friendly as possible.

Senior Center Outreach:

As planning work continues on the redevelopment of the old BenHi building which would include a reloca-

tion of the Senior Center to that site, I have been working with Shannon Barsotti to continue to keep seniors in our community involved in the process and to hear and learn from their concerns and ideas. Most recently, we held a meeting that featured architect Jeff Goldstone who reviewed the floor plan concepts with 39 seniors in attendance. Concerns about parking remains a big issue and one that we will learn more about as planning progresses. These meetings are open to the public, but the focus is on those who regularly use the senior center. These meetings are in addition to all the regular public meetings that are being held to keep everyone up to date on progress.

Facebook POST OF THE MONTH:

Credit for our post of the month goes to Chief Doucette, Lt. Grande, and the Bennington Police Department with the amazing work they did with this years National Night Out Community Picnic!

Hosted and organized by the Bennington Police Department, the event included the Fire Department, The Highway Department, and town office staff. Sponsorship was provided by the Heritage Family Credit Union.

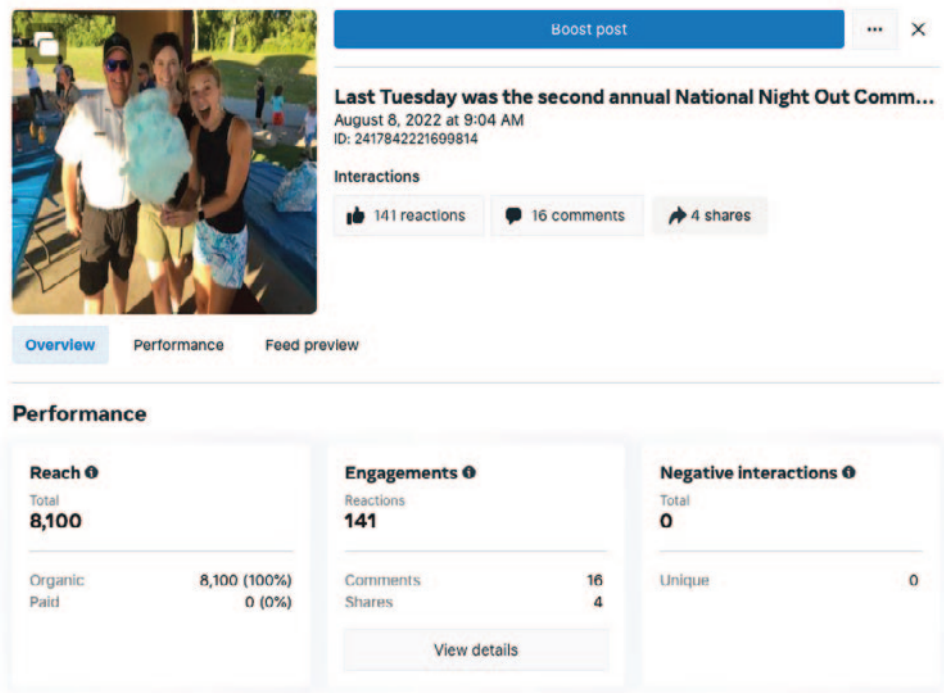
A number of Bennington Select board members including Jeannie Jenkins, Jeanne Conner, and Sarah Perrin were on hand as well interacting with community members.

A tremendous effort by the police department pulled everything together; cooking hundreds of hot dogs, giving away a hundred backpacks filled with school supplies, giving rides for folks on the Humvee and UTVs, and most importantly – building relationships and good will within the community.

This years event was about double the size of last years!

New Experience Camp

It was a great pleasure for me to be able to spend a good amount of time working with the Police Department and the New Experience Camp. This camp is great for kids and does wonders for building relationships between the police and the public it serves. The Department spends a tremendous amount of time planning the camp and the result of that work is clearly seen in the positive experience that campers have during the week.



Bennington Police Department
Public Safety

Report to the Bennington Select Board

August 2022

New Experience Camp 2022 took place August 1-5, 2022, and was a huge success. A total of 32 local youth participated in the camp this summer and they all had a terrific time. Fishing at Lake Hancock, firearms safety and familiarization at Hale Mountain, ziplining at Berkshire East, numerous programs at Southwest Tech, firefighter training with the Bennington Fire Department and learning first aid, CPR and AED use with nurses from Southwest Vermont Health Center are just a few things that took place. We look forward to continued community support and plans are underway for New Experience Camp 2023!

National Night Out was well attended this year and we had plenty of staff, volunteering their time, on hand for the evening events. We handed out 100 backpacks loaded with school supplies, served well over 400 hotdogs, provided Humvee rides, ATV demonstrations and K-9 demonstrations with K-9 Gracie. It was great to see hundreds of people from the community attend the event and provide feedback on local activities. The support for members of the Bennington Police Department was appreciated. The Police Department appreciates the support from the staff at the Town Offices, Fire Department and Public Works Department. A special thanks to our community partners including Walmart and Heritage Family Credit Union.

The Bennington Fire Department took possession of their brand-new ladder truck this month. The truck was presented to the community during the 2022 Bennington Battle Day festivities and has received quite a bit of positive feedback. We want to thank the members of the Bennington Community for supporting the purchase of this much needed equipment. It was a LONG wait but seems well worth it!! Members of the Bennington Fire Department will receive training on this truck and all of its features in the upcoming weeks.

Michael Layton begins training with the 114th Basic Training Course for Police Professionals this month. He comes to us from Charleston, South Carolina where he served as a patrol officer for three years. We welcome Michael to our team and wish him well during the next 19 weeks of training at the Vermont Police Academy.

We continue to struggle with staffing shortages at the Police Department. We are actively recruiting, along with 50 other law enforcement agencies in Vermont. The struggle is real and we ask the community to have patience with response times to non-emergency calls for service.