

BENNINGTON

2018 Annual Report

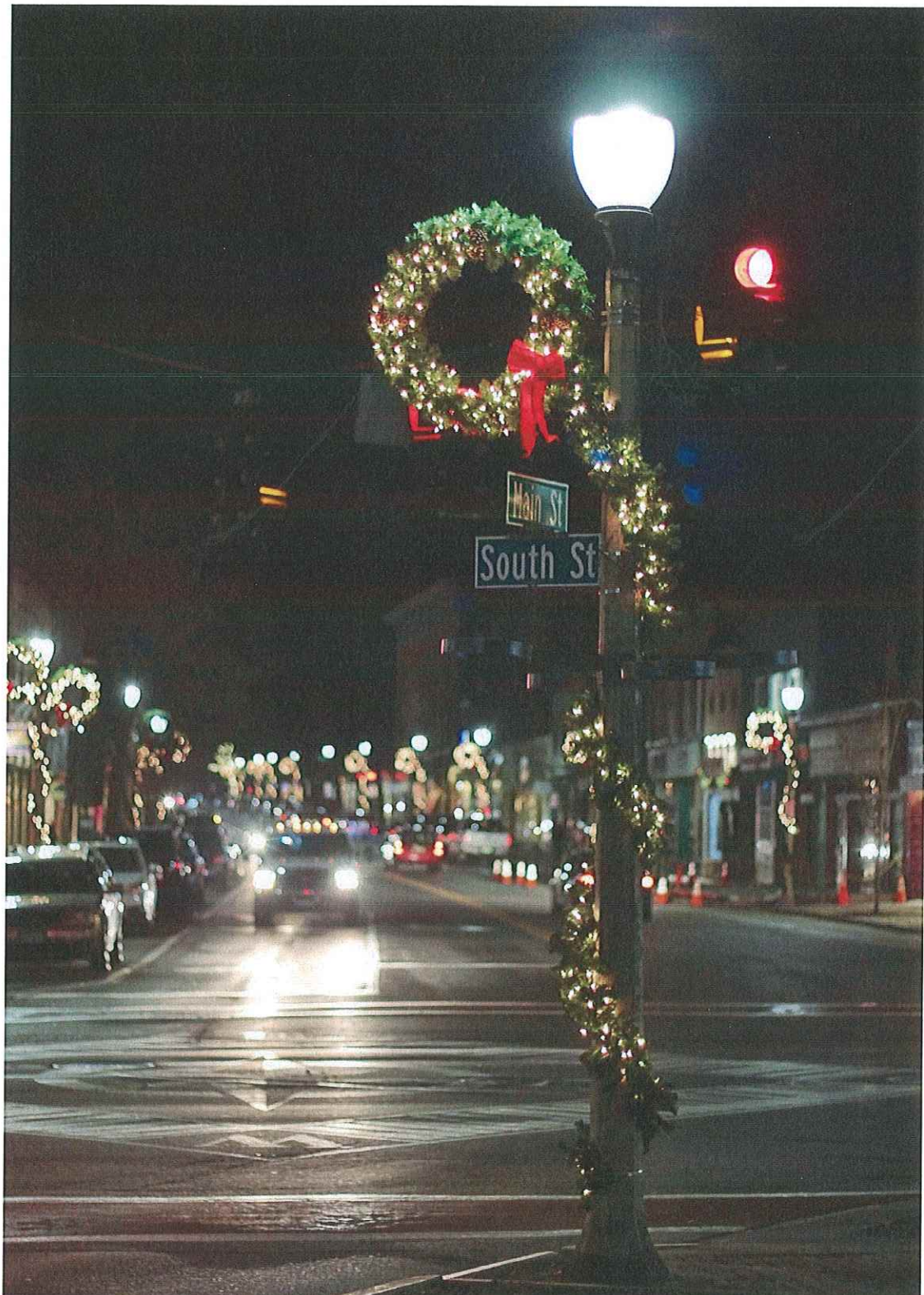


Photo provided by Lynn Green

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EMPLOYEE MISSION STATEMENT PREAMBLE

The role of government is to serve and protect its people; to provide a quality of life which is environmentally safe, community oriented, and visionary. Furthermore, government can help to make its citizens' lives rich in educational, cultural and social opportunities. In the Town of Bennington that role extends to administrative and fiscal services, police, fire, water, sewer and highway maintenance and construction, recreation, health, housing, planning and community development.

Our mission is to provide the necessary municipal services in an atmosphere that is helpful and caring, yet professional and efficient.

We must have a commitment to excellence, take pride in our work, have a desire to succeed, have a sense of community, and a belief that a responsive government is the foundation for success.

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Select Board

Thomas H. Jacobs, Select Board Chair

As my tenure on the Bennington Select Board draws to its conclusion, I would be remiss in not expressing my sincere appreciation to all my fellow Board members for their support and patience with me over the last six years. The Board along with our dedicated management and support staff have made my job responsibilities that much easier.

When I took the Chair position, I offered that “it would not be business as usual.” I believe that we can proudly say we as a board have taken steps and risks to set a new course for the town. The board has seen its way to lead in a number of areas, including the comprehensive review of our town’s governance charter, review and adoption of a strong town plan amendment regarding placement of solar arrays, initiations of citizen and business surveys, acquisition of an up-to-date Department of Public Works facility, provided its support for the a Waste Water Facility upgrade, acquired and invested in the Greenberg Headwater Park among other recreational projects. Some like the Ninja Path and other pedestrian pathways while works in progress will provide enhanced recreation and safer access to parts of our community.

But the area I will be most proud of is the Board’s leadership in its support of the Putnam Block redevelopment project which along with the creation of a tax incremental financing district (TIF) and new parks (336 Main and the splash pad fountain) positions Bennington’s central downtown to return to a vitality not experienced in decades. We have learned that our future is based on public – private partnership investment.

I have seen and sensed a spirit of renewed optimism by our citizens, many of whom are new to our town. I challenge our town folks both those who have lived here for years or are recent arrivals to get involved and join with management and future Boards and offer and support new ideas, so that Bennington will be known not only ‘Where Vermont Starts’ but a place we can all be proud to call our home.

Thank you.

Boards and Commissions

The following list of the Town of Bennington Boards and Commissions includes a brief description of the duties of each office and those positions that will be available in March and May 2019.

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS - An elected position with a salary currently set at \$1,400. per year with terms of three years. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month plus the Annual Town meeting each year, and any special meetings which may be required. Select Board Members are empowered by statute and charter to determine policy, finances, ordinances and general direction of Town business, appoint the Town Manager and members of Boards and Commissions.

(elected 3-year term)

Jeanne Connor	3/2019
Thomas H. Jacobs	3/2019
Jeannette Jenkins	3/2019
Chad Gordon	3/2020
Carson Thurber	3/2020
Donald A. Campbell	3/2021
Jim Carroll	3/2021

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD - The Development Review Board hears and decides upon permit applications regarding development in the Town of Bennington including, Variance Requests, Conditional Use Requests, Site Plans, Design Plans, Planned Unit Developments, Planned Residential Developments, Subdivisions, and Appeals of the Zoning Administrator's decisions. Board members will be expected to attend at least one training session annually to develop and maintain the skills and knowledge necessary to perform their powers and duties on the Board.

(appointed to 3-year term)

Daniel Malmborg	5/2019
Jane Griswold Radocchia	5/2019
Ron Alderman	5/2020
William Barney	5/2020
Charles N. Kokoras	5/2020
Charles W. Copp	5/2021
Barry Horst	5/2021

FOREST FIRE WARDEN - An appointed position by the State of Vermont with Town Approval with a term of 5 years.

(appointed to 5-year term)

VERMONT TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN – Matthew G. Hathaway	06/30/19
VERMONT DEPUTY TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN – Henry Higgins	06/30/19
VERMONT DEPUTY TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN – Position Vacant	06/30/19

HEALTH OFFICER - An appointed position by the State of Vermont with Town Approval with a term of 3 years.

(appointed to 3-year term)

HEALTH OFFICER - Larry D. McLeod 03/31/2019

DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER - Kevin J. Goodhue 07/31/2019

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of three years and requires expertise or qualifications in the fields of architecture, historic preservation, etc. Meetings are held twice per month. The Historic Preservation Commission is empowered by ordinance to act in the preservation and identification of Bennington's historic sites and structures; oversee the survey and review of historic sites eligible for the National Register, educate and advise other boards and commissions as well as the general public with regard to historic preservation matters.

(appointed to 3-year term)

Jeffrey Goldstone 3/2020

Joseph H. Hall 3/2020

Anne G. Bugbee 3/2021

Michael P. McDonough 3/2021

HOUSING AUTHORITY - An autonomous body appointed for terms of five years by the Select Board which acts as the Board of Directors for Housing Authority properties (Willowbrook, Brookside Apartments, Beech Court, and Walloomsac Apartments) and oversees the staff and sets policies for operation.

(appointed to 5-year term)

Nancy V. Messina 3/2019

Paul Walden 3/2020

Sandra Bessette 3/2021

Sharyn L. Brush 3/2022

Kristi L. Pepoon, MSW, AAP 3/2023

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

(elected 2-year term)

Anna Kinney Swierad 1/31/2019

Susan Beal 1/31/2019

Shannon Behan 1/31/2019

Barbara Bluto 1/31/2019

Marlene Driscoll 1/31/2019

Deborah Giroux 1/31/2019

James Gulley, Sr. 1/31/2019

Michele Hogan 1/31/2019

Albert Krawczyk 1/31/2019

Brian Maroney, Jr. 1/31/2019

James Marsden 1/31/2019

Anne Mook 1/31/2019

Mary A. Morrissey 1/31/2019

Marjorie Robinson 1/31/2019

David B. Shaffe 1/31/2019

BOARD OF LISTERS - An appointed position with a term of two years. Meetings are held once or twice per month or as needed. The Listers inspect properties, approve assessments developed by the Assessor's Office and hear and act upon appeals by property owners.

(appointed to 2-year term)

Robert W. Ebert	3/2019
Peter Greene	3/2020
Carol L. Holm	3/2020

TOWN MODERATOR

(elected to 3-year term)

Jason P. Morrissey	3/2019
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PLANNING COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of four years. Meetings will be established when the Commission meets. This is a five-member board. The Planning Commission drafts, revises, updates and upholds the provisions of the Town Plan; makes recommendations to the Select Board regarding amendments to the Zoning Bylaw, sign ordinance, and subdivision regulations; actively participates in the preservation of historic sites and agricultural lands; and is charged with the overall planning of Bennington.

(appointed to 4-year term)

Kenneth Swierad	5/2019
Robert W. Ebert	5/2020
Charles W. Copp	5/2021
Michael P. McDonough	5/2021
Nicholas T. Lasoff	5/2022

REGIONAL COMMISSION - An appointed position with a term of two years. The Regional Commission, part of a county-wide planning commission charged with development of the overall regional planning policies, is empowered to develop budgets, employ staff and assist in development of a regional plan.

(appointed to 2-year term)

Position Open	3/2019
Daniel Monks	3/2020

TOWN SERVICE OFFICER - An appointed position with a term of one year. The Town Service Officer acts as an agent for the Town and operates a voucher system to provide housing and meals to transients in emergency situations.

(appointed to 1-year term)

Position Open	4/14/2019
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Manager's Message

Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager

We, in Bennington's government, work hard to provide the services our residents deem necessary, police and fire protection, highway maintenance, recreation opportunities for people of all ages, and municipal water and sewer services, where feasible. We also work to improve opportunities for jobs, housing, and viable and sustainable economic development through responsible land use planning principles.

This year's Report continues our new, more focused department reports.

As I have done in the past, I would now like to outline the proposed FY2020 fiscal year budget, to be voted on March 5, 2019. The Town budget presented to the voters this year is increasing \$329,470.00 or 2.53 %. These calculations include the Bennington Free Library, \$488,000.00, the John McCullough Library in North Bennington, \$32,000.00, North Bennington Recreation, \$6,000.00, Lake Paran, \$2,700.00, and the Bennington Rescue Squad, at \$187,500.00. All are included as line items in the budget following reviews of their requests and subsequent approval by the Select Board. The Town staff and Select Board worked very hard to present a budget that is as balanced with the projected revenues as possible. Please remember, we are projecting revenues that do not include potential grant funds not yet available. These grants, if awarded, will reduce the amount to be raised by taxes.

Calculating the tax rates based on this budget, level funded ballot agencies, and known revenue we project a \$0.0235 increase in the General Fund tax rate, a \$0.0134 increase in the Highway Fund tax rate, and a \$0.0001 increase in the Fire Fund tax rate. Combined the total projected increase in the Town's tax rate is \$0.0370 or 3.2%. We ask you, the voters, for your support.

The Agencies on the ballot, with the exception of the Bennington Free Clinic and the Turning Point Center, are all requesting the same amounts as last year. The Free Clinic is seeking an additional \$5,000.00 and is on the ballot by petition for \$12,500.00. The Turning Point Center did not file a request or petition this year. The total amount requested by the agencies is \$131,850.00.

I note that the ballot this year, once again, includes a petitioned Charter change proposal. This proposal asks the voters to amend our Charter by creating a first step towards a mayoral form of government. Please read the proposed amendment carefully and consider its impact before voting. It proposes to change Bennington's form of government dramatically.

We also have three open Select Board seats. At this writing, three candidates have filed petitions to run; a fourth candidate is circulating petitions.

I have been very fortunate to work with many talented people, staff and Board members. We all work hard to find solutions that are in the best interest of the residents of Bennington. Thank you all, and a special thank you to the community for your support and patience throughout the year.

Town of Bennington Goals for 2018

Provide a safe Community	Didn't meet goal	Met goal	Reason
1. Increase officer involvement in the local schools		X	4 Officers in schools
2. Create an effective body worn camera program		X	Implemented
3. Continue drug enforcement		X	See statistics
4. Improve recruitment and retention in the Police and Fire Departments		X	Program in place
5. Implement new radio frequency to improve ground communication & firefighter safety		X	Implemented
6. New ladder truck for the Fire Department		X	Bond vote pending

Provide opportunities for recreation

1. Continue to improve programs		X	Berkshire Y Management agreement approved
2. Continue to improve Senior programs	X		New group in place to help
3. Increase participation at the Rec Center		X	See statistics
4. Continue to develop pathways and trail systems		X	Interim Ninja Pathway; White Rocks trail parking; Kocher Dr. pedestrian pathway designed
5. Enhance youth programs		X	New Experience Camp offered by Police Dept.

Encourage new development and growth

1. Assist in Putnam Block redevelopment		X	\$350,000 loan; 1.0 million CDBG
2. Provide an efficient and effective permitting program		X	See statistics
3. Encourage new developments to improve grand list		X	See Permitting report

Enhance the quality of life

1. Continue project catalyst		X	Now merged with ACT
2. Develop downtown parks / green spaces		X	Park at 336 and Merchants Park underway; Stark St. plan completed
3. Complete the Pleasant St. Enhancement Project	X		VTrans & utilities delay

Improve Infrastructure

1. Continue lead service line replacements (10 Min.)	X		3 Completed; Lead Line Reduction Grant Project Completed
2. Continue Wastewater Treatment Facility upgrade		X	Bond passed; construction begun; RBC's completed
3. Continue road paving (10 Miles Min.)		X	8.86 Miles completed including PFOA project area, State completed 12 miles
4. Continue sidewalk replacement (2500 lin. Ft. Min.)		X	3,162 lin. Ft. completed

Statistics

	2016	2017	2018
Police Department			
Criminal arrests	684	721	893
# of offenses	981	1,048	1,298
# of calls	8,833	8,476	10,076

Fire Department			
# of calls	204	205	243
# of structure fires	12	0	4

Highway Department			
Miles paved	15.175	8	8.86
Lineal feet sidewalk	3,702	2,770	3,162
Lineal feet storm drain	1,754	3,500	0

Water/ Sewer Department			
Waterline / Hydrant repairs	35	21	15
Lead line service replaced	5	36	3
Manholes repaired	75	70	81
Sewer mains cleaned televised (lin. Ft)	20,180	1,200	1,800

Recreation			
# of participants at Center	40,469	43,789	46,654
Non-member pool users	18,541	22,492	included above

Permitting			
# of permits issued	120	204	195
Estimated cost	\$11,592,210.00	\$47,580,585.00	\$9,707,745.00

Notes:

Police

Paul J. Doucette, Chief of Police

Members of the Bennington Police Department continue to strive to make the Bennington community safe! Officers made 893 criminal arrests for a total of 1,298 offenses in 2018. Officers responded to 10,076 calls for service, issued 3,874 Vermont Civil Violation Complaints and issued 2,352 warnings for observed violations. Officers from the Bennington Police Department investigated 496 motor vehicle crashes: 436 crashes involved property damage only and 60 crashes involved personal injury.

Lieutenant David L. Dutcher retired in the summer of 2018 after 30 years of service with the Town of Bennington Police Department. Camillo A. Grande was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and now oversees the entire patrol division as well as the Special Response Team. Roscoe Harrington was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Amanda Thomson, Michael Sharshon and Stephen Sleasman were all promoted to the rank of Corporal.

During 2018, three full-time employees joined the Bennington Police Department. Benjamin Cassavaugh joined the Department and attended the 105th Basic Course for Police Professionals graduating in May of 2018. Cory Kingston joined the Department and attended the 106th Basic Course for Police Professionals graduating in November of 2018. Corey Briggs joined the Department in 2018 and was a lateral transfer from the Wilmington Police Department where he served as a Level III Law Enforcement Officer for two years.

The Bennington Police Department continues to work diligently toward reducing drug crimes in Vermont. In addition to investigations and arrests for violations, we collected 496.4 pounds of prescription medications in our drug take back containers located in the lobby of the Bennington Police Department. We continue to collaborate with area law enforcement agencies, medical facilities and the State of Vermont to make our community safe.

All members of the Bennington Police Department continue to receive training in a variety of topics as well as mandated training required by the State of Vermont and the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council. During 2018 members of the Department participated in 3,438 hours of training. Our goal is to train and retain the members of the Bennington Police Department. Training is needed to secure the future of the Bennington Police Department.

Members of the Bennington Police Department and Bennington Police Association conducted several community-based events. We held a bicycle rodeo, provided no cost helmets to area youth, and instructed safe bicycling. We provided a scholarship to a graduating senior at Mount Anthony Union High School. Many members volunteered at local elementary schools reading in classrooms and spending quality time with children. The New Experience Camp was a huge success again this year and will be even better in 2019! We look forward to working with local businesses, schools and stakeholders to make our events successful.

As always, I welcome questions, comments or suggestions, and I always welcome feedback on how members of the Bennington Police Department can improve the quality of life for members of the Bennington community.

Fire

Chief Jeff Vickers

The year, 2018, was a positive year for the Bennington Fire Department. We continued our mission of fire prevention, speaking with many groups, both young and old. We faithfully served the community when called upon. We introduced a new gas meter to check air quality, especially after a fire to protect firefighters from exposure to toxic, cancer-causing gases. One of our members introduced a health and wellness program to help the Department be healthy and more active.

Looking forward to 2019, the Department is seeking the support of the residents of Bennington to approve the purchase of a new ladder truck. Our current ladder truck originally planned to last 20 years has now reached the 22 years old mark. By the time a new truck is built, it will be 23 years old. The National Fire Protection Association recommends apparatus be removed from front-line use and refurbished to the current standard at 15 years and retired after 25 years. A new ladder truck will bring new safety features and be more efficient. Having a ladder truck is critical for the Town of Bennington. We have a number of high-risk occupancies that need the capabilities a ladder truck offers. The ladder truck has been critical in saving lives and property in Bennington. We respectfully ask the residents of Bennington to approve the purchase of a new ladder truck and welcome any questions.

Notes:

Department of Public Works

R.J. Joly, Public Works Director

Larry Gates, Assistant Public Works Director

Highway

The Highway Department is made up of a crew of 14-Laborers, 2-Working Foremen, a Public Works Director and an Assistant Public Works Director. The department manages and maintains 128 miles of roads, 13 bridges, 475 catch basins, 40 miles of sidewalk, and hundreds of miles of ditches, culverts, and swales. The Highway Department is also responsible for transfer station tasks, cemetery upkeep in 4 locations, downtown sweeping, sidewalk cleaning, trash removal, and roadside mowing.

2018 Accomplishments

- Paved 8.86 miles of road, in addition the State paved 4 miles of the Downtown Streets, totaling 12.86 miles
- Concrete curb and sidewalk 3,162 linear Feet
- Finished moving into and landscaping the DPW Facility on Bowen Road
- Paved White Rocks parking lot
- Straightened out Walloomsac Road near Pippin Road
- Changed intersection of Gypsy Lane and Walloomsac Road from a "Y" to a "T", for safety
- Widened and built a turn around on Fuller Road West
- Received a grant to stabilize soil erosion on MT. Anthony Road and Convent Avenue
- Excavated for 2 new downtown parks
- Replaced outer steel I beam ends on bridge on Orchard Road
- Replaced large drainage conduit on South Street
- Helped with the Sewer Treatment Plant upgrade project

2019 Priorities

- Main / Beech Street bridge replacement
- Install 9 miles of new pavement
- Install 2,500 linear feet of new curb and sidewalk
- Replace and install storm drainage in areas to be repaved
- Help other departments when needed
- Log more highway information in the Utility Cloud
- Manage Town forest lands

Water

The Water Department has a four-person crew, plus a Working Foreman. Together they are responsible for supplying clean drinking water to approximately 13,250 users, through 67 miles of water main and 3,700 connections. The crew also runs and maintains the Water Filtration Plant in Woodford, 6 pumping stations and five water tanks throughout town. Additionally, they maintain and flush bi-annually approximately 500 fire hydrants. The water system received additional water main due to the PFOA contaminated areas. An

additional 8 miles of water main, 57 hydrants, over 5 miles of service line, 154 new customers, and 2 new pressure reducing vaults.

2018 Accomplishments include

- Additional water system planning, meetings and adding to the system
- Total line and hydrant repairs 15
- New hydrant install 1 Town / 57 PFOA
- New flow meter @ Willow Park
- Leak Detection Survey
- Line tracing for lead grant
- Lead line replacement 3
- Water system bacteria samples taken 240
- Total water produced 623 million gallons
- Removed tube settlers out of filter # 2, saving \$ 60,000.00
- Average water used per day 1.7 million gallons
- Harwood Drive line extension phase 4
- South Street line extension phase 5
- Utility Cloud System information processed
- Two new operators passed the State test
- Replaced all 20 valves that didn't work in the downtown, before the state paved
- Pressure washed water storage tanks
- Lime silo upgrades and cleaning
- Sliplined Brooklyn Bridge and water crossing on Main Street near Sunny Side Diner

2019 Goals

- Add additional information to the Utility Cloud
- Continue changing lead service lines
- Plan for next PFOA project on North/East part of Town
- Additional maintenance work at water treatment plant

Sewer

The Wastewater Crew is a five-person crew plus a Laboratory Technician and a Chief Operator. Together they are responsible for treating over 14 million gallons of wastewater collecting each year through 67 miles of sanitary sewer mains ranging in size from 4- inches to 36- inches. There are also 1,300 manholes and 5 pump stations to maintain. The Wastewater crew with help from Water and Highway Departments replaced 30 Rotating Biological Contactors in 2018. This work was extremely successful and saved more than a million dollars.

2018 Accomplishments

- Sewer manholes rebuilt 81 Town / 32 State
- Sewer lines cleaned and televised 1,800 feet
- Total wastewater treated 14.56 billion gallons
- Average gallons per day 3.99 MGD
- Average % BOD / Solids removed 93.28% BOD / 96.32% TSS
- Sliplined sewer mains 870 feet

- Replaced 30 RBC units
- Cleaned and maintenance - 2 Primary Clarifier/ 3 Secondary Clarifiers
- Cleaned Effluent Sand Filter
- Started construction on the Sewer Treatment Plant

2019 Goals

- Finish Sewer treatment upgrade
- Shut down and do maintenance on clarifiers
- Fix and upgrade all out dated equipment that upgrade will not cover
- Clean and replace some lab equipment
- Rebuild and repair manholes
- Seal manhole frames before winter
- Clean Primary Digesters, before General Contractor starts their work
- Put all assets on Utility Cloud
- Camera, and slipline troubled areas
- Replace Grit Pumps

Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance

Arlington, Bennington, Dorset, Glastenbury, Manchester, Pownal, Rupert, Sandgate, Searsburg, Shaftsbury, Stamford, Sunderland, and Woodford

The Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance provides programs to reduce the amount of waste disposed in landfills by promoting recycling and reuse as well as resource conservation. The Alliance offers education, outreach and other assistance to businesses, schools, institutions and event organizers in 1) complying with the Universal Recycling Law and other solid waste management requirements, 2) increasing reuse and recycling, and 3) reducing the amount of solid waste disposed in landfills. These programs help residents, businesses, schools and institutions find solutions to recycling, food scrap diversion and the disposal of items such as electronic waste, fluorescent bulbs, paint and others that are banned from landfills.

The Alliance website at www.bcswavt.org and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/solidwastealliance) provide information on:

- how to dispose of fluorescent bulbs,
- battery recycling through the Call2Recycle program
- disposal of used motor oil at retail establishments and transfer stations that accept motor oil
- recycling of paint through the PaintCare program, including lists of retail stores that accept paint
- prescription drug disposal including drop-off locations
- recycling of textiles by the One World Center, Goodwill and others
- events for disposing household hazardous waste
- disposing of fluorescent bulbs, CFLs and other mercury items at transfer stations, some retail establishments and at household hazardous waste collection events.

- disposal of E-Waste at area transfer stations, Goodwill and retail establishments
- diverting food scraps by composting and annual sales of compost bins and kitchen compost containers

This past year the Alliance provided technical assistance to 40 businesses and two schools, as well as several major event organizers, held three household hazardous waste events, supported an E-Waste collection at the Dorset School and sold compost bins to residents. In 2019, we plan to hold two household hazardous waste events for residents and small businesses of all thirteen towns. The spring event will be held at the Bennington Transfer Station on May 18, 2019 from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM and fall event at the Dorset School on September 14, 2019 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Check the website above for updates and details. The Alliance receives most of its funding from the 13 towns, but this past year received grants from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the Agency of Agriculture and Markets and the High Meadows Fund.

Community Development

Zirwat Chowdhury, Director

The Office of Community Development coordinates and directs the municipality's efforts in improving the quality of life in Bennington. It works closely with community partners to create and provide a nourishing environment including better and more affordable housing, food, education, training, and indoor and outdoor recreation for infants, youth, adults, and seniors. Following is a summary of its activities in 2018:

Revolving Loan Program: Administration of the Town's Revolving Loan Program, which provides financing to businesses and individuals with limited access to commercial lines of credit, with the aim of nurturing small businesses and improving the housing stock. The loan program also provides competitive, low-interest funds for downtown businesses.

New Loans in 2018:

Bennington Revolving Loan Program (BRLP): \$25,000

Bennington Economic Development Fund: \$20,000

Community Development Block Grants: Assists community groups in applying for community development block grants administered by the State and provides reporting to the State on grants awarded.

New CDBG in 2018:

Putnam Redevelopment Project (additional funding of \$150,000)

219 Pleasant Street (\$650,000)

Citizen Survey: Conducted the Biennial Citizen Survey during the month of November. Survey taken by 984 respondents who live and/or work in Bennington. The results from the survey will be presented at a Select Board meeting and made available on the Town's website in early 2019.

Bennington County Cultural Plan: The Towns of Bennington and Manchester received a \$35,000 Municipal Planning Grant, and selected Julia Dixon, a Berkshire-based creative economy specialist, to conduct the Bennington County Cultural Plan. Ms. Dixon assembled a

county-wide Steering Committee, convened a series of focus groups, and conducted a county-wide survey, to gather feedback about the strengths and challenges facing the region's creative assets. Additionally, in conjunction with the Bennington Museum's summer exhibition on the New Deal in Vermont, the Town partnered with Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Arts Exchange, the Bennington Museum, and the Southern Vermont Economy Project to host the "Southern Vermont Creative Meeting: Crash to Creativity" in August. The Cultural Plan will be completed in mid-2019.

Town Garages: Administered the Request for Proposals for the former Town Garage properties at Orchard Road and Depot Street. The deadline was extended to January 2019 to invite a wider selection of proposals.

Indoor and Outdoor Recreation:

Stark Street: Hosted, with the support of an AARP grant, and in partnership with SVMC, the Department of Health, BCRC, BATS, and Catamount Connections, a "Pop-Up" park at Stark Street Playground in June. The event included a temporary bike lane, pump-track (which introduces cyclists to mountain biking with a continuous loop of dirt berms and smooth dirt mounds that enable cycling without pedaling), and walking trail, among other activities, and collected community input about how best to revitalize the park. The Town received a grant of \$30,000 from the Vermont Department of Health in November for improvements to the park. It also authorized BATS's request to install a pump track at the park.

Merchants Park: Catamount Connections and the Grow Bennington Initiative fundraised over \$150,000 for the planning, design, and installation of a new splash pad park in downtown Bennington. Splash pad equipment ordered and installed between September and December. Additional improvements will continue to be made to the park in winter/spring 2019, in anticipation of a public opening in Summer 2019.

YMCA Partnership: The Town signed a 12-month management agreement for the Bennington Recreation Center with the Berkshire Family-YMCA in November. As per this agreement, Jessie Rumlow, Associate Director of the Berkshire-Y, will take on the role of Interim Director of the Bennington Recreation Center from January 1, 2019. During the contract period, the Berkshire-Y will conduct a full operational assessment of the Bennington Recreation Center, and report to a Transition Committee. Membership rates will not switch to Y-rates during the contract period. However, the Interim Director will explore and implement, where possible, new and/or additional programming for children, youth, adults, and seniors at the facility. The afterschool program and senior programming are two priority areas for this agreement period.

UCS/Headstart Partnership: Coordinated planning with UCS-Headstart for proposed Headstart facility adjoining the Bennington Recreation Center, and to explore an accompanying expansion to the Recreation Center facility itself.

Bennington County Industrial Corporation

Summary of Contract Activities

The Town of Bennington and the Bennington County Industrial Corporation (BCIC) entered into an agreement for BCIC to provide economic development activities on behalf of the Town commencing July 1, 2017, which was renewed on July 1, 2018. The report below summarizes some of the highlights of that work in 2018.

Business Visitations and Support

BCIC staff visited with 38 business between July 1 and December 31, 2018. The director of the Vermont Training Program accompanied BCIC staff on a number of the visits to discuss VTP grant applications. Two Bennington businesses were awarded Agency of Administration's Building Communities Grants. K&E Plastics was awarded \$20,000 to assist with the installation of a new state-of-the art dust collection system and Dunleavy Brothers Brewing received \$10,000 to help defer some costs of expanded and upgraded brewing systems.

Workforce Development

BCIC's Workforce and Education Committee is leading the region's workforce efforts with a variety of programs that develop and retain talent at all age levels: internship and certification programs for adults; the Reality Fair, Sophomore Summit, and Emerging Leaders program for high schoolers; the Elementary School Business Fair and Seedlings program for elementary and middle school students; and the community-wide Career Week program held in April. In July, the inaugural Workforce Investment Matters was held to discuss possibilities around the creation of apprenticeship programs in the region. As a result, to date, two are businesses have developed apprenticeship programs and at least two others are contemplating doing so.

The SoVermont Sustainable Marketing and Recruitment Program is now underway. Project staff at BCIC and Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation announced the launch of the SMRP and its website, SoVermont.com, in a letter to project partners in September. The SMRP's collaborative approach will leverage the marketing, recruitment, publicity and investment of dozens of regional partners – as well as the state's ThinkVermont and Stay to Stay initiatives – to help Southern Vermont's businesses recruit and retain the talent. The SMRP is underwritten by a Rural Business Development Grant from the USDA, but draws its most vital support from the cash and in-kind contributions of its local businesses. SMRP Partners in Bennington County include: The Bank of Bennington; Bennington College; Dailey Precast/Peckham Industries; Dorset Theatre Festival; MSK Engineering & Design; Southwestern Vermont Health Care; The Town of Bennington; and TPW Real Estate. Along with its Windham County colleagues, SMRP Partners have provided well over \$110,000 of support to this project.

Entrepreneurial Support and Facilitation of Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

BCIC in partnership with the Community College of Vermont, Southern Vermont College, The Lightning Jar, JJ Williams Financial and the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce continued efforts to build a strong local entrepreneurial culture with development and

refinement of the Startup802 program. The second and third cohort of students participated in this program that combines entrepreneurial mindset training with traditional marketing and business development curricula over two separate courses.

Regional Economic Development Capacity and Coalition Building

The Regional Economic Development (RED) Group, convened and supported by BCIC staff since February 2017 continued its work with the SeVEDS group in Windham County and on December held a final public hearing on the draft of the first Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The hope is this document, which will help to drive strategic economic development efforts across southern Vermont, will be accepted by the United States Economic Development Administration in Spring 2019.

Also underway is planning for the 3rd Southern Vermont Economic Development Summit to be held in May 2019. Last year's event drew over 200 people to Mount Snow to discuss issues and opportunities around development in the region. BCIC and BDCC were awarded with the International Economic Development Council's Silver Award for Excellence for areas under 50,000 in population for the 2018 event.

Putnam Block Redevelopment

BCIC continued to play an integral role in the Putnam Block Redevelopment. As a result of BCIC's ownership of the property, over \$575,000 in funding was secured to assist with demolition and environmental remediation at the site in preparation for the transfer of the properties to the Bennington Redevelopment Group for construction of Phase 1 in 2019.

Historic Preservation Commission

Zirwat Chowdhury, Director of Community Development

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) members serve the Development Review Board, Select Board, and Planning Commission in an advisory capacity, and in so doing, help to coordinate activities that are important to Bennington's preservation goals for its historic and archaeological resources. As a participant in Vermont's Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, the HPC has the ability to promote the value of historic resources in local community development efforts. Through partnerships at the local, state, and federal levels, the CLG program can provide grants and technical assistance to the HPC for a range of activities that encourage preservation of our historic and archaeological resources. The Commission works with Bennington's Director of Community Development, Zirwat Chowdhury, who serves as its Secretary.

The Bennington HPC maintains a page on the Town of Bennington website. The Commission's webpage provides home-owners, residents, and developers with information and guidance for Bennington's historic downtown architecture, streetscapes, and historic resources. The resources on the website encourage the preservation of Bennington's architectural history, and enable property owners to understand their historic buildings better and make informed choices in planning design changes to their buildings. The site includes the HPC's preservation manual, *Time and Place in Bennington: A Handbook for the Central Bennington Historic District*. The Bennington HPC website can be viewed at: <http://benningtonvt.org/boards-commissions/hpc/>

Better Bennington Corporation

John Shannahan, Director

More than ever, Bennington Downtown is being re-established as the cultural and commercial heart of our community. With the increasing difficulties of competing with on-line retail, the big-box stores continue to close their doors while independently owned establishments that populate Main Streets across America continue to survive.

To support those businesses our focus to transform downtown into the most enjoyable and interesting place to spend a few hours or a whole day continues. We remain committed to our partnerships with the Grow Bennington Initiative, the Bennington Area Arts Council, the Bennington Mural Project, Sonatina, and more. Those partnerships have allowed us to be part of some transformative activities. 2018 brought us the ground breaking on the Park at 336 and Merchants Park, the installation by Forest Byrd and area artists of two beautiful murals featuring indigenous fauna, the energy and creativity of Polly Van der Linde and her Sonatina students, and the amazing “winter lights” installation, summer up-lighting displays, and colorful lifestyle banners made possible by the Grow Bennington Initiative led by Lynn Green.

Public and Private investment also continued with the state’s repaving of all of downtown’s major roads, the opening of the beautiful new Tri-state Area Federal Credit Union, and the bittersweet, but very exciting demolition of the former Greenberg’s buildings that will make way for the Putnam redevelopment project. New businesses in 2018 included VT Green Grow, Mini and Me, Vacations by Beth, and more. Now, with the road construction behind us and many projects expected to come to fruition in 2019 we can expect this coming year to be a very exciting one for our entire community.

As always, I need to thank those who give their time, expertise, energy, and financial support to help make all of this happen. They include: the Bennington Downtown Alliance staff, board, and committee members, the Downtown Visitor Center volunteers, all the staff members of the Town of Bennington, the volunteers who contribute endless manpower, and most importantly, our local merchants who give it their all to keep our community a vibrant destination for visitors from all over the world.

Parks and Recreation & Senior Center

Christine Barbagallo, Assistant to the Director

The Recreation Center is located on 655 Gage Street. It is the administrative office for the Town of Bennington Parks & Recreation Department. The center is a municipal facility and is supported by the town of Bennington taxpayers. The Bennington Senior Center is located at 124 Pleasant Street. It provides a variety of programs for seniors and is the home of the Meals on Wheels Program.

The membership or daily fee at the Recreation Center entitles the user to the six-lane, 25-yard heated pool, saunas, showers and weight room.

The Recreation Center's Rec Trac computer system recorded 46,654 visits from members and patrons paying a daily fee. The visit count doesn't include the numerous people who come for free swims, school groups, day cares, swim teams or swim meets. Membership and daily fees totaled \$94,346.00.

The swimming pool is also used by members and non-members for many programs, therapeutic and recreational opportunities. Adaptive physical education classes, day cares, school groups, swim teams and special programs are a few examples of groups who pay for private swimming time. The pool is maintained at a comfortable temperature to suit the needs of the variety of ages who use it.

The weight room is equipped with an 8 station Universal machine, Hack/Leg Press machine, Peck Deck machine, Olympic benches, free weights, dumbbells, steppers, rower, treadmills, stationary bikes, elliptical machines and a Hip Flexor machine. Ages 12 years and older are welcome to use the weight room during building hours.

Water Exercise Class, swim lessons, Lifeguard Training Courses and birthday parties are a few examples of programs offered by the Recreation Department for a minimal fee. A total of \$10,945.00 was brought in from the programs and other miscellaneous sales.

The Recreation Center offers the pool and a multi-purpose room for children's birthday parties. The fee of \$50.00 includes the reserved pool time on Saturday's from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., certified lifeguard and the room which can be used for cake, ice cream, pizza, games, etc. If the pool is booked for a party and the room is available, it can be rented for \$20.00 per hour. There were 40 pool parties booked for 2018 totaling \$2,000.00.

Various youth and adult leagues held practices, games and tournaments at Willow Park, Beech Street and Memorial Park fields. Special events include the Egg Hunt, sports camps, memorial softball tournaments, benefit tournaments, national qualifiers, horseshoe tournaments, 4th of July Celebration, Bennington Battle Day, Cycle Cross, Cross Country Running, Storm Football, and Youth Appreciation Day. The Pavilion at Willow Park, located on East Road, and the Jim Ross Pavilion, located in the lower area of Willow Park, are rented out for reunions, weddings, picnics, etc. The pavilions can be rented from April through October. Rental fees are based on the number of people using the facility. The total of rental fees was \$5,160.00.

The Recreation Department continues to work with a variety of non-profit organizations and athletic leagues, helping coordinate, run or participate in local events.

Thank you for your continued support of the Parks & Recreation Department.

Sollwan and Mary Alexander Sleeman Memorial Fund

This Fund was created in September 1998, in concert with the Richard A. Sleeman family from funds historically collected to complete the Recreation Center (formerly owned by the YMCA). As custodian of the funds, Richard A. Sleeman preserved them and helped established this Fund to assist the Town with accessibility issues at the Recreation Center. The Fund guidelines follow below.

- 1. This memorial fund is for the exclusive use of the Bennington Community Recreation Center located on Gage Street in Bennington, Vermont.*
- 2. Special consideration will be given to benefit the handicapped through capital improvements, equipment, or tuition for those in need as it relates to the Recreation Center.*
- 3. The Fund will be expended on a ten (10) year annuitized basis for the uses noted above.*
- 4. Dr. Richard Alexander Sleeman, Professor, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams, Massachusetts, represents the Sleeman Family.*

The original Fund contained \$52,156.27. During this year, \$0.00 was expended at the Recreation Center. Interest earned was added to the Fund leaving a reserve fund balance of \$6,675.97.

Notes:

Permitting, Planning & Code Enforcement

Larry McLeod, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal
Kevin Goodhue, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal

Permit Type	2017 Permits	Dollar Volume	2018 Permits	Dollar Volume
Single Family Dwelling	6	\$960,000.00	6	\$508,000.00
Duplex	2	\$260,000.00	2	\$320,000.00
Mobile Homes	9	\$267,000.00	6	\$159,000.00
Apartments	1	\$4,750,000.00	0	\$0.00
Apartment Renovations	8	\$176,000.00	8	\$244,800.00
Condominiums	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Residential Renovations	26	\$933,200.00	21	\$310,000.00
Residential Additions	9	\$475,750.00	13	\$739,500.00
Commercial Construction	6	\$8,139,500.00	6	\$3,172,000.00
Commercial Renovations	12	\$25,204,000.00	13	\$871,700.00
Industrial Construction	1	\$450,000.00	0	\$0.00
Industrial Renovations	4	\$670,000.00	2	\$332,000.00
Garages	8	\$249,500.00	5	\$115,500.00
Sheds	24	\$70,850.00	28	\$104,525.00
Decks	18	\$78,050.00	21	\$121,300.00
Institutions	9	\$4,553,500.00	9	\$2,195,220.00
Signs	31	\$42,935.00	24	\$81,950.00
Use and Zoning	9	\$0.00	14	\$77,000.00
Subdivisions	7	\$0.00	4	\$0.00
Home Occupation	1	\$0.00	3	\$0.00
Propane Tank/Storage Tank	4	\$56,000.00	0	\$0.00
Boilers/Furnaces, A/C, RTU's	0	\$0.00	1	\$10,000.00
Tents	3	\$7,900.00	0	\$0.00
Handicap Access/Ramps	4	\$8,700.00	7	\$11,050.00
Concreate Slabs	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Cell Towers	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Solar Installations	1	\$227,700.00	2	\$334,200.00
Camps	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Demolition	1	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Totals	204	\$47,580,585.00	195	\$9,707,745.00

Health Officer

Larry McLeod, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal
Kevin Goodhue, Building Inspector/Health Officer/Fire Marshal

The Health Officer is the Town Official who is responsible for Public Health Problems in Town. Health Officers have the power of the Vermont Commissioner of Health and are agents of the State Health Department. Health Officers have the authority to enforce any of the Vermont Health regulations in their town. The Select Board is the local Board of Health with the Health Officer serving as the secretary and Executive Officer for Bennington, North Bennington and Old Bennington. The responsibilities of the Health Officer can be wide ranging, however, most of the time is spent in the following categories:

Rabies Management

We received and investigated 39 reported animal bites to humans in 2018, 25 from dogs, 12 from cats, and 2 bats. This compares to 47 in 2017, 52 in 2016, 46 in 2015, 38 in 2014, 33 in 2013, 46 in 2012, 41 in 2011, 36 in 2010. We want to remind medical providers that all bites must be reported within 24 hours.

Rental Housing

We investigated numerous complaints pertaining to Rental Housing Health Code issues. The Vermont Rental Housing Health Code is a State-wide uniform code that specifies the minimum standards for all rental housing. As the Building Inspectors and Fire Marshals for the town, we can now include the Health Code Requirements in all of those type inspections.

Other Public Health Issues

The balance of time was spent investigating such matters as garbage complaints, inadequate water supplies, rodent/roach/bed bug complaints, lead, mold and asbestos concerns from tenants in rental housing.

Another persistent health concern is dry scraping and power washing of exterior paint containing lead. We remind all residents that this practice is illegal in the State of Vermont. We were successful in obtaining voluntary compliance with almost all public health problems this year and appreciate the cooperation from all involved. Please feel free to contact us regarding any questions or concerns you may have.

Planning

Daniel W. Monks, Permitting Director

The Planning Commission, along with the Planning Department, performs municipal planning functions for Bennington, including the development of the Town Plan and Land Use and Development Regulations.

In 2018, Planning Department prepared and submitted to the Vermont Downtown Board a report outlining the status of Bennington's Growth Center 10 years after it was established. The report is required by statute 5, 10 and 15 years after the establishment of a Growth Center. The Downtown Board reviewed and approved the report in October of 2018. The

Planning Department continued to work with consultants to design five bike/ped projects that will serve as the backbone for a bike/ped network in Bennington. Two of the projects will go out to bid early in 2019 with construction to follow in Summer of 2019. The North Street Area Bicycle/Pedestrian Infrastructure Study was completed early in 2018. It identifies transportation infrastructure problems and projects to address them on the north side of Town.

In 2018, the Planning Commission sought and received funds through a State of Vermont Municipal Planning Grant to update the Town of Bennington's Land Use and Development Regulations. The update will focus on aligning the regulations with Bennington's Town Plan, implementing additional form-based standards, establishing a Neighborhood Development Area (a State designation), and streamlining the regulations. The Planning Commission continued to meet with local governmental, educational, health care, business, and non-profit institutions and organizations to gain insight into their perspectives, needs, plans, etc.; reviewed solar energy projects; and continued its support of numerous ongoing efforts to construct trails, bike paths and sidewalks.

In 2019, the Planning Commission intends to begin work on the Land Use and Development Regulations update project, which will involve numerous work sessions with the consultant, and numerous stakeholder meetings and public meetings. The Planning Commission will also continue to work with the Select Board regularly to better coordinate Commission and Select Board efforts; and continue meeting with local governmental, educational, health care, business, and non-profit institutions and organizations

The Development Review Board is responsible for reviewing and issuing land use permits for all significant development within the Town. Among the projects reviewed in 2018 by the Development review Board were: upgrades to the Town of Bennington's Wastewater Treatment Facility on Harrington Road, a new Chiropractic and Rehabilitation Clinic at 345 Elm Street, a new industrial building at the corner of Shields Drive and East Road, and a new bulk water filling station at 747 Main Street.

Board of Listers

John M. Antognioni, Assessor

With no reassessment activity in 2018, this office sent 139 Change of Appraised Value notices to property owners on May 23, 2018. These notices were sent to owners of property in which a material change had occurred from April 1, 2017 to April 1, 2018. The Board of Listers had 63 property grievances, 1 which was forwarded to the Bennington Board of Civil Authority.

The Town of Bennington's grand list for 2018 of all properties was \$1,007,251,961. The State's Equalization Study for 2018 (effective January 1, 2019) shows Bennington's common level of appraisal at 94.48 percent and our coefficient of dispersion at 15.52 percent. The common level of appraisal is essentially a measure of how close local assessments are to sale prices. The coefficient of dispersion measures uniformity of assessments for all grand list property and is the average deviation of a group of ratios from the town-wide median expressed as a percentage of the median. The 2018 Equalization Study used sales data from April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2018.

Peter Green was appointed, and Carol Holm reappointed to the Board of Listers by the Select Board in 2018, joining Robert Ebert.

Town Clerk

Cassandra Barbeau, Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's Office had a relatively quiet year. Real estate transactions and elections went along about as expected. Many voters in the mid-term elections took advantage of the new same-day voter registration. Remember, you can access your personalized voter information as well as sample ballots through the online portal My Voter Page at <https://mvp.sec.state.vt.us/>. If you have been registered to vote here in Bennington for a long time, we may need to add additional information to your page for access. Please call the office and we can assist you with access.

As I had mentioned in last year's report, we await the State implemented changes to vital records accessibility. What was supposed to be launched July 1, 2018 was delayed by the State as their systems were not prepared in time. The current timeline is for implementation July 1, 2019, although I continue to receive updates from the Department of Health regarding their process. These changes will require an application and identification to receive such records as birth certificates, death certificates and marriage licenses. I also await information regarding who can have access to these records.

Also looking into 2019, we will be navigating our way through the State mandated creation of our new multi-town Elementary Union School District. As of this writing, I am preparing for our first Floor Meeting coming soon and I expect the next few months to be busy with meetings of the transitional board and an election for the initial board. It has been a years-long process that should show some clarity this year.

As always, please feel free to contact the office with any questions.

Notes:

TOWN OF BENNINGTON
OFFICE OF THE TREASURER
205 South Street
Bennington, VT 05201
7/13/18

Joan Pinsonneault, Treasurer

Cash Flow and Account Balances as of June 30, 2018

	<u>06/01/18 -</u> <u>06/30/18</u>	<u>07/01/17 -</u> <u>06/30/18</u>
CASH FLOW:		
Beginning Balance	\$4,430,926.32	\$2,812,179.56
ADD:		
Interest	\$1,741.54	\$31,858.21
Various Town receipts	\$832,009.26	\$31,555,509.74
DPW Bond Vote	\$15,260.95	\$3,146,226.79
Capital Equipment Note advances	\$0.00	\$502,252.00
Total available cash	\$5,279,938.07	\$38,048,026.30
 SUBTRACT:		
Disbursements:		
Payroll Warrants	\$575,989.62	\$7,216,189.56
Vendor Warrants	\$2,357,100.18	\$24,290,239.11
Vendor Warrants – DPW	\$15,260.95	\$1,429,866.23
DPW Bond Anticipation Note pay off	\$0.00	\$2,206,346.39
DPW Facility closing costs (Bowen Road)	\$0.00	\$10,711.34
Prepaid checks	\$880.70	\$312,614.17
Vendor payments – Choice Strategies	\$29,493.27	\$279,628.57
Check order charge	\$0.00	\$165.47
Bank Analysis Fees – Fraud Protection & Positive Pay	\$19.00	\$1,071.11
Total Disbursements	\$2,978,743.72	\$35,746,831.95
 Cash Balance on June 30, 2018	<u><u>\$2,301,194.35</u></u>	<u><u>\$2,301,194.35</u></u>

Operating Accounts

	<u>06/01/18-</u> <u>06/30/18</u>	<u>INTERST</u> <u>07/01/17-</u> <u>06/30/18</u>	<u>BALANCE</u> <u>6/30/18</u>
<u>Peoples United Bank:</u>			
MBA Affiliate Dep *9633	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$190,000.00
MBA Depository *7505	\$1,741.54	\$31,858.21	\$2,066,194.35
General Fund Checking			
Acct *0543	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Payroll Checking Acct	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$35,000.00
*0551			
Flexible Spending Acct	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
*8912			
DPW Facility Acct *9452	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	<u>\$1,741.54</u>	<u>\$31,858.21</u>	<u>\$2,301,194.35</u>

Notes:

Agencies

The Select Board approved the following agency appropriations totaling \$666,210.00 to be included within the Town of Bennington's General Fund in FY 2019:

- Bennington Free Library - \$470,000.00
- Bennington Rescue Squad - \$150,000.00
- John G. McCullough Free Library - \$22,000.00
- Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) - \$15,510.00
- North Bennington Recreation - \$6,000.00
- Paran Recreations, Inc - \$2,700.00

The Bennington voters approved the following agency appropriations totaling \$130,100.00 to be included within the Town of Bennington's General Fund in FY 2019:

- Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless - \$25,000.00
- Bennington Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice - \$21,600.00
- Sunrise Family Resource Center - \$15,000.00
- Bennington Project Independence - \$11,000.00
- The Tutorial Center - \$10,000.00
- Bennington Free Clinic - \$7,500.00
- BROC - Community Action in Southwestern Vermont - \$7,500.00
- Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, Inc. - \$7,500.00
- Vermont Center For Independent Living - \$7,000.00
- Green Mountain Retired and Senior Volunteer Program - \$5,500.00
- Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse - \$5,000.00
- Project Against Violent Encounters - \$5,000.00
- Turning Point Center of Bennington - \$2,500.00

Notes:

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2018 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
BENNINGTON FIRE FACILITY
130 RIVER STREET
BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

MARCH 5, 2018

MINUTES

MODERATOR: Jason Morrissey

ALSO PRESENT: Bennington Select Board Members - Thomas Jacobs-Chair; Donald Campbell-Vice Chair; Jim Carroll; Carson Thurber; Jeannie Jenkins; Chad Gordon and Jeanne Conner; Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Joan Pinsonneault-Treasurer; Cassandra Barbeau-Town Clerk; Zirwat Chowdhury-Community Development Director; Representative Mary Morrissey; Charles Koslosky; Abby Shapiro; John Connell; Jeff Grimshaw; Bill Twain; Mary Garisch; David Durfee; Richard Dundas; Ken Swierad; Joe Hall; Charlie Gingo; Charlie Murphy; Joy Kitchell; Suzanne Fitzpatrick; Mary Ann St. John; Jennifer Boudain; Shelley Duboff; Ken Sitzburg; Linda Putney; Ann Mook; Chris Oldham; Forest Weyen; 150 citizens; CAT-TV and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

At 7:30 p.m., Moderator Jason Morrissey called the meeting to order and reminded everyone that the first Town Meeting was held in 1762.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Mr. Morrissey read the following Warning:

**WARNING
TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2018 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The residents of the Town of Bennington qualified by law to vote in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) in said Town on Monday, March 5, 2018 at 7:00 p.m., or immediately following the Bennington School District's Annual meeting should that run over, to transact the business specified to be done from the floor.

If you are a resident of the Town of Bennington, intend to be present at the meeting and are hearing impaired, arrangements will be made for a sign interpreter to be present at this meeting. For necessary arrangements, please contact Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager at the Bennington Town Offices, 205 South Street, P.O. Box 469, Bennington, VT - (802) 442-1037 no later than Friday, February 16, 2018.

Following the completion of such business, the Meeting will stand adjourned to Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at The Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance). The polls are open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. for the election of officers and voting on all ballot articles specified. However, those on the checklist to vote in the Village of North Bennington shall vote for the election of officers and on all ballot articles at the North Bennington Village Office on Main Street in North Bennington. The Bennington Fire Facility above mentioned, is hereby established as the central polling place for those on the checklist to vote in said Bennington.

Residents of Bennington and North Bennington may register to vote at the Town Clerk's Office, 205 South Street, Bennington, Vermont. Eligible residents registering on Election Day must do so at the polling place where they will cast their Town Meeting ballot.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED FROM THE FLOOR

Monday, March 5, 2018

7:00 P.M.

ARTICLE 1. TOWN REPORT: To hear the report of Town officers and to take appropriate action thereon.

Tom Jacobs stated that there were copies of the Annual Report available in the back of the room, as well as, at the Town Office, and that this was the best one that he had seen in the past 5 years both in content and aesthetically. The Town Report is within the Annual Report and there were no questions on it.

It was moved and seconded to accept ARTICLE 1. TOWN REPORT as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 2. SELECT BOARD MEMBERS COMPENSATION: To determine what compensation shall be paid to the Town Select Board Members.

Joe Hall moved and it was seconded to accept ARTICLE 2. SELECT BOARD MEMBERS COMPENSATION with the compensation to remain at \$1,400/year/member. The motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 3. OTHER BUSINESS. To transact such other proper business when met.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED BY BALLOT

TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2018

THE POLLS TO BE OPEN FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M.

AT THE POLLING PLACES SPECIFIED ABOVE

SELECT BOARD ELECTION. Two Select Board Members residing in the Town shall be elected for terms of three (3) years.

TOWN CLERK ELECTION. A Town Clerk residing in the Town shall be elected for a term of three (3) years.

ARTICLE 1. Shall the Town appropriate for the next fiscal year, July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, the total sum of \$12,893,030.00 consisting of the following: \$4,087,120.00 for the laying out, maintaining, and repairing of the highways and bridges of the Town; and \$8,805,910.00 for the payment of the following: Any indebtedness not otherwise specifically provided for, interest on indebtedness, legally authorized State and County taxes, the prosecution and defense of the common rights and interests of the inhabitants of the Town, and for other necessary incidental expenses?

The proposed budget includes \$60,000.00 for fire equipment, \$20,000.00 for parking improvements, \$7,500.00 for regional economic development, and \$451,600.00 for healthcare reserve and workers compensation insurance, any unexpended portion of which will be reserved to subsequent years for that purpose.

ARTICLE 2. *Shall the Town of Bennington amend the Town Charter to add Section 407 as follows:*

§103-407. Mayoral form of government

(a) In lieu of a town manager, the voters may adopt a mayoral form of government, by vote at a duly-warned annual meeting, warned pursuant to a petition signed by five percent of the voters or on the Selectboard's own motion. Once a vote in favor of this form of government is successful, the voters shall elect a mayor at the next annual meeting. Once the mayor takes office, the Town Manager system of governance shall end for Bennington.

(b) The mayor shall be responsible for the management of the administrative affairs of the Town, in the same manner and with the same powers and responsibilities as the Town Manager, as stated in statute and this charter.

(c) The mayor shall have the power to make or break a tie, and shall have the power to veto any action of the Selectboard.

(d) The mayor shall serve as the voice of the Town of Bennington, taking responsibility for implementing the policies of the Selectboard, leading the Town toward greater prosperity and a healthy economy, and a better life for all its residents.

Charles Koslosky spoke against Article 2 reiterating his experiences in large and small communities that had a mayor noting that a mayor is, first and foremost, a politician. We are being asked to replace a Town Manager who is "an experienced, trained, well-education professional hired by, and controlled by, the duly elected Select Board". Article 2 is a binding article of "boss politics" where the mayor has absolute veto power over the Select Board. We also don't know the term limit of the mayor, salary, staffing, budget, or tax policies. Vote NO on Article 2. (Applause)

Abby Shapiro concurred with Mr. Koslosky's comments, and despite prior disagreement with the Town Manager, feels that this Article is "a half-baked vision that has been crafted by one person to be legally binding". We have no details to support that this would improve Bennington or that it won't raise taxes. If you truly want a mayor, vote NO for Article 2, "do your homework", and present a well thought out product. (Applause)

John Connell spoke in support of a mayor because of the recent salt shed issue where he feels the Town "lost out on a \$340,000 grant". Mr. Connell also stated that we're paying \$500,000 for a salt shed that we are not even using and does not know "what the rush was". In addition, we still don't know how much not having a Wetland Permit in place will cost us. "I don't know if this particular version of the mayor is the best version, and it's my understanding that this is Phase I, and all the details can be worked out by the people here at the table."

ARTICLE 3. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$2,500.00 for Turning Point Center of Bennington?*

Ken Sitzburg, a long term recovering opiate addict, thanked the Town for their support and stated that the \$2,500 requested would be to set up a program specific to opiate addiction. All other Turning Point funding comes from grants.

ARTICLE 4. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$5,000.00 for Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse?*

Joy Kitchell spoke to the work that the CAC's - as she called the organization -do and that they have been in operation for 29 years. They provide counseling, family assistance, and court appearances to 135-140 children per year who have been sexually abused, with 75% of

those coming from Bennington. Education is also provided to all of the teachers in the SVSU. This is the third year Town funding has been requested and continued support will be appreciated.

ARTICLE 5. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$5,000.00 for Project Against Violent Encounters?*

Suzanne Fitzpatrick thanked the Town for their past support and noted that PAVE provides a 24-hour hotline, legal services, financial support, emergency housing, parenting support, supervised visitation, and school based education. A second housing facility was opened and there were 3,139 nights of lodging this past year. Domestic violence is the 3rd leading reason for homelessness.

ARTICLE 6. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$5,500.00 for Green Mountain Retired and Senior Volunteer Program?*

A representative from the Green Mountain RSVP Program cited all of the beneficial work that the volunteers do for the community, such as, Meals on Wheels, food drives, tax assistance, companionship, etc., and noted that staff salaries are paid for from a federal grant. Continued Town support would be appreciated.

ARTICLE 7. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,000.00 for Vermont Center for Independent Living?*

Charlie Murphy noted that the Vermont Center for Independent Living has offices throughout the State and helps people to live with their disabilities that includes counseling, finding resources, equipment, financing, Meals on Wheels, American signing classes, etc.. Please continue to support the Center.

ARTICLE 8. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for Bennington Free Clinic?*

Charlie Gingo stated that the Bennington Free Clinic serves people on Depot Street that are 18 and older who cannot afford health insurance. The Clinic has been in business since January 2009 and have seen over 3,000 patients. In 2017, there were 12 doctors, 1 nurse practitioner, 13 nurses, and 20 lay people - all volunteers. We use the money from the Town for medical supplies and equipment.

ARTICLE 9. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for BROCC - Community Action in Southwestern Vermont?*

Mary Ann St. John thanked the Town for their support in the past, and potentially, in the future. BROCC has served over 1,300 individuals over the past year by helping with 3 Squares a Day, lodging, heat, electric, job training, starting a business, tax preparation, etc.

ARTICLE 10. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, Inc.?*

Jennifer Boudain stated the various services provided by the Council on Aging, such as, case management, Meals on Wheels, counseling, etc., and requested the continued support from the Town.

ARTICLE 11. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$10,000.00 for The Tutorial Center?*

There was no representative to speak on behalf of The Tutorial Center.

ARTICLE 12. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$11,000.00 Bennington Project Independence?*

Linda Putney thanked the Town for their past support and noted that they have been providing adult day services for almost 40 years. We serve 50 people/day and 78% of those are from Bennington. We are requesting the same amount from the Town that we have been requesting for years.

ARTICLE 13. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$15,000.00 for Sunrise Family Resource Center?*

Ann Mook spoke to the work of Sunrise Family Resource Center and the many challenges that they face daily. They have 27 employees and 98% of their funding comes from State and Federal sources. They have a school where teenage parents can earn their diplomas along with parenting skills, job coaching, case management, etc. There were 1,000 individuals and 500 families with 30% of those with an opiate addiction. Ms. Mook thanked the Town for their support.

ARTICLE 14. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$21,600.00 for Bennington Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice?*

Christine, a representative from the Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice, stated that they serve patients of all ages to help keep them home in a familiar environment during their final days. 25% of patients served have no insurance and 85% of those that do have insurance have it through Medicaid and Medicare. Continued Town support would be appreciated.

ARTICLE 15. *Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2019 General Fund by the sum of \$25,000.00 for Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless?*

Chris Oldham, Executive Director of the Coalition for the Homeless, stated that the requested \$25,000 is 5% of their budget to be used to support their family and single shelters, as well as, the new unlocked community program. February 1st was the 1st anniversary of the Main Street facility that replaced a 6-bed facility with a 16-bed fully accessible facility. The "hands up" approach instead of a "hand out" approach requires that occupants participate in case management, counseling, and budgeting assistance. Many thanks to the community for their support.

Forest Weyen, Executive Director of the Bennington Rescue Squad, thanked the Select Board and Town Administration for their work in getting the Rescue Squad on as a line item in the budget this year, as well as, all of the residents in Bennington, Shaftsbury, and Woodford for their support. The Rescue Squad has EMT and CPR classes available and is a 24/7 service to the community.

Shelley Duboff, from the Second Chance Humane Society, shared the history of Second Chance throughout the years noting that they can now house 16 dogs and over 100 cats. Funding is 100% from the community and the capital campaign is in progress. (Applause)

Bill Twain asked the voters for their support of the following non-binding Resolution:

"RESOLUTION URGING LEGISLATIVE ADOPTION OF A SET GOAL FOR MITIGATING CLIMATE
CHANGE

SUBMITTED BY CLIMATE ADVOCATES, BENNINGTON 350

WHEREAS extreme weather events, more uncertain ski, maple sugaring, and hunting conditions, and changes which have had to be made in FDA planting zone maps, all of which impact Vermont's economy and ways of life, clearly demonstrate that climate change is one of the most urgent problems facing our state, and

WHEREAS the Vermont Department of Public Service has, in its Comprehensive Energy Plan, set a goal of meeting 90% of the state's energy needs from renewable sources by 2050, and

WHEREAS the state is not, as yet, making sufficient progress toward achieving that goal,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Bennington urges the Legislature and Governor of the State of Vermont to:

a. commit by act of legislation to the goal of meeting 90% of all energy needs within the state from renewable sources by 2050.

b. ensure that the transition to renewable energy is fair and equitable for all residents."

Mary Garisch, David Durfee, and Richard Dundas spoke in support of the Resolution.

(Applause)

It was moved and seconded to close the debate on the non-binding Resolution Urging Legislative Adoption of a Set Goal for Mitigating Climate Change as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded to support the non-binding Resolution Urging Legislative Adoption of a Set Goal for Mitigating Climate Change as presented. The motion carried with one opposed.

Representative Mary Morrissey read the State of Vermont Multiple Myeloma Month Resolution that brought awareness to Multiple Myeloma by describing the disease, the number of people affected by it in 2017, the treatment research for it, and the hopefulness of those with it. The Resolution named March 2018 as Multiple Myeloma Month.

Ken Swierad thanked the Cancer Center and the hospital for their work. (Applause)

Jeff Grimshaw solicited the audience for donations for the purpose of purchasing the "Big Chair" in front of the former LaFlamme's store on Main Street. When it became evident the funds being solicited were for a private group, Mr. Morrissey ruled Grimshaw out of order, commenting the Town Meeting is not the venue for soliciting funds for a private entity of endeavor and also because the matter of the sell off of the LaFlamme's inventory is a matter now proceeding in the Bankruptcy Courts.

Zirwat Chowdhury, Community Development Director, shared a slide show presentation on some of the achievements in the Town during 2017 that have affected the following areas and departments:

- The Illustration by Matthew Perry that appears on the cover of the Annual Report
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Putnam Block
- Several other construction in Town
- Department of Public Work
- Water Department

- Sewer Department
- Building and Grounds
- Ninja Bike Path
- Office of Community Development
- Berkshire Family YMCA
- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Charter Review Committee
- Piano Keys on Main Street

At 8:52 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting until tomorrow, March 6, 2018, at 7:00 a.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy H. Lively
Secretary

BENNINGTON TOWN MEETING ELECTION -- MARCH 6, 2018 TALLY SHEET

Pursuant to the foregoing warning, the voters of the Town of Bennington met at 7 o'clock AM and after the votes were counted, the following named candidates and articles received the number of votes set opposite the names and articles designated.

	Benn	N. Benn	Total
Select Board (vote for TWO)			
Donald Campbell	1373	120	1493
Jim Carroll	1384	110	1494
William H. Stewart	699	35	734
Total Write-ins	50	7	57

And the said CAMPBELL and CARROLL were declared elected.

Town Clerk

Cassandra Barbeau	1931	152	2083
Total Write-ins	15	0	15

And the said BARBEAU was declared elected.

Article 1: Budget

Yes	1609	152	1761
No	554	28	582

And it was so voted.

	Benn	N. Benn	Total
Article 2: Mayoral Form of Gov.			
Yes	913	41	954
No	1338	145	1483

And it was not voted.

Article 3: Turning Point Center			
Yes	1399	132	1531
No	745	42	787

And it was so voted.

Article 4: Project Against Child Abuse			
Yes	1761	157	1918
No	445	23	468

And it was so voted.

Article 5: PAVE			
Yes	1541	148	1689
No	653	34	687

And it was so voted.

Article 6: RSVP			
Yes	1654	146	1800
No	540	31	571

And it was so voted.

Article 7: Center for Independent Living			
Yes	1592	143	1735
No	589	33	622

And it was so voted.

Article 8: Bennington Free Clinic			
Yes	1658	157	1815
No	558	27	585

And it was so voted.

	Benn	N. Benn	Total
Article 9: BROC			
Yes	1354	137	1491
No	827	39	866

And it was so voted.

Article 10: Council on Aging			
Yes	1584	140	1724
No	594	36	630

And it was so voted.

Article 11: Tutorial Center			
Yes	1324	125	1449
No	832	50	882

And it was so voted.

Article 12: BPI			
Yes	1502	138	1640
No	664	38	702

And it was so voted.

Article 13: Sunrise Family Resource Center			
Yes	1270	129	1399
No	884	50	934

And it was so voted.

Article 14: Visiting Nurse Assoc & Hospice			
Yes	1655	148	1803
No	513	31	544

And it was so voted.

Article 15: Coalition for the Homeless			
Yes	1426	138	1564
No	746	40	786

And it was so voted.

Recorded March 7, 2018 at 8:30 AM by *Camundia Barlow*

Town Clerk

June 5, 2018 Special Town Meeting

Pursuant to the foregoing warning, the voters of the Town of Bennington met at 7 o'clock and when the votes were counted, the following named article received the number of votes set opposite the article designated.

Article:	Benn	N. Benn.	Total
Shall the voters amend the Town Charter as proposed?			
Yes	401	39	440
No	140	8	148

And it was so voted.

Recorded June 6, 2018 at 9:45 AM by



Bennington Town Clerk

Notes:

Official Tally Sheet

November 6, 2018 General Election

Total turnout: 5127

	Dist. 2-1 Total	Dist. 2-2 Total	Total
U.S. SENATOR			
Folasade Adeluola(I)	14	13	27
Russell Beste (I)	8	25	33
Bruce Busa (I)	15	15	30
Edward S. Gilbert Jr. (I)	25	12	37
Reid Kane (LU)	12	9	21
Brad J. Peacock (I)	258	285	543
Bernie Sanders (I)	1613	1515	3128
Jon Svitavsky (I)	4	10	14
Lawrence Zupan (R)	585	587	1172

REP TO CONGRESS

Cris Ericson (I)	122	151	273
Laura S. Potter (LU)	48	59	107
Anya Tynio (R)	607	593	1200
Peter Welch (D)	1753	1622	3375

GOVERNOR

Trevor Barlow (I)	56	60	116
Cris Ericson (I)	63	67	130
Christine Hallquist (D)	1210	1049	2259
Charles Laramie (I)	45	46	91
Stephen Marx (ER)	25	24	49
Emily "Em" Peyton (LU)	30	37	67
Phil Scott (R)	1096	1147	2243

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	Dist. 2-1 Total	Dist. 2-2 Total	Total
Murray Ngoima (LU)	67	59	126
Don Turner Jr. (R)	862	858	1720
David Zuckerman (P/D)	1551	1465	3016

STATE TREASURER

Richard Morton (R)	806	816	1622
Beth Pearce (D)	1661	1543	3204

SECRETARY OF STATE

Jim Condos (D)	1631	1505	3136
Mary Alice Hebert (LU)	141	141	282
H. Brooke Paige (R)	667	715	1382

AUDITOR OF ACCOUNTS

Marina Brown (LU)	131	122	253
Doug Hoffer (D/P)	1454	1307	2761
Richard Kenyon (R)	817	863	1680

ATTORNEY GENERAL

TJ Donovan (D)	1539	1388	2927
Rosemarie Jackowski (LU)	296	345	641
Janssen Willhoit (R)	629	641	1270

STATE SENATOR (2 to be elected)

Brian Campion (D)	1811	1641	3452
Jeff Kaufer (L)	404	439	843
Dick Sears (D)	1833	1708	3541

STATE REP. DIST. BENN 2-1 (2 to be elected)

Chris Bates (D)	1328	0	1328
Timothy R. Corcoran II (D)	1733	0	1733
Kevin Hoyt (R)	703	0	703
Michael Stern (I)	400	0	400

And the said BATES and CORCORAN were declared elected.

	Dist. 2-1 Total	Dist. 2-2 Total	Total
STATE REP. DIST. BENN 2-2 (2 to be elected)			
Jim Carroll (D)		1559	1559
Mary Morrissey (R)		1810	1810

And the said CARROLL and MORRISSEY were declared elected.

PROBATE JUDGE

D. Justine Scanlon (D/R)	2092	2064	4156
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ASSISTANT JUDGE (2 to be elected)

James Colvin (D/R)	1868	1812	3680
Wesley Mook (D/R)	1782	1748	3530

STATES ATTORNEY

Arnie Gottlieb (I)	573	469	1042
Erica Albin Marthage (D/R)	1261	1210	2471
Christina Rainville (I)	515	642	1157

SHERIFF

Beau Alexander Sr. (I)	136	132	268
James A. Gulley Jr. (I)	908	948	1856
Chad D. Schmidt (D/R)	1394	1313	2707

HIGH BAILIFF

Frederick Gilbar (D/R)	2077	2099	4176
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	Dist. 2-1 Total	Dist. 2-2 Total	Total
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE (15 to be elected)			
Gerald "Jerry" M. Albert (L)	1167	788	1955
Barbara Bluto (D)	1469	1391	2860
Tom Haley (D)	1211	1121	2332
Michele Hogan (D)	1502	1393	2895
Jackie Kelly (D)	1201	1062	2263
Charles N. Kokoras (R)	604	610	1214
Albert C. Krawczyk (R)	976	1061	2037
Bruce P. Lonergan (R)	651	698	1349
Brian "BJ" Maroney (I)	1121	1227	2348
James Marsden (D)	1424	1402	2826
Anne Mook (D)	1506	1520	3026
Mary A. Morrissey (R)	1399	1515	2914
Warren Roaf (R)	844	881	1725
Marjorie Robinson (D)	1255	1191	2446
Aaron Sawyer (D)	1063	973	2036
David Shaffe (D)	1378	1335	2713
Anna Kinney Swierad (R)	829	919	1748
Jim Vires (D)	861	744	1605

And the said ALBERT, BLUTO, HALEY, HOGAN, KELLY, KRAWCZYK, MARONEY, MARSDEN, MOOK, MORRISSEY, ROAF, ROBINSON, SAWYER, SHAFFE, AND SWIERAD were declared elected.

Notes:

-WARNING-

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON
2019 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The residents of the Town of Bennington qualified by law to vote in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance) in said Town on Monday, March 4, 2019, at 7:00 p.m., or immediately following the Bennington School District's Annual meeting should that run over, to transact the business specified to be done from the floor.

If you are a resident of the Town of Bennington, intend to be present at the meeting and are hearing impaired, arrangements will be made for a sign interpreter to be present at this meeting. For necessary arrangements, please contact Stuart A. Hurd, Town Manager at the Bennington Town Offices, 205 South Street, P.O. Box 469, Bennington, VT - (802) 442-1037 no later than Friday, February 15, 2019.

Following the completion of such business, the Meeting will stand adjourned to Tuesday, March 5, 2019, at The Bennington Fire Facility on River Street (Lincoln Street entrance). The Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. for the election of officers and voting on all ballot articles specified. However, those on the checklist to vote in the Village of North Bennington shall vote for the election of officers and on all ballot articles at the North Bennington Village Office on Main Street in North Bennington. The Bennington Fire Facility above mentioned, is hereby established as the central polling place for those on the checklist to vote in said Bennington. Residents of Bennington and North Bennington may register to vote at the Town Clerk's Office, 205 South Street, Bennington, Vermont. Eligible residents registering on Election Day must do so at the polling place where they will cast their Town Meeting ballot.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED FROM THE FLOOR

Monday, March 4, 2019

7:00 P.M.

ARTICLE 1. TOWN REPORT: To hear the report of Town Officers and to take appropriate action thereon.

ARTICLE 2. SELECT BOARD MEMBERS COMPENSATION: To determine what compensation shall be paid to the Town Select Board Members.

ARTICLE 3. OTHER BUSINESS: To transact such other proper business when met.

**BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED BY BALLOT
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2019
THE POLLS TO BE OPEN FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M.
AT THE POLLING PLACES SPECIFIED ABOVE**

SELECT BOARD ELECTION. Three Select Board Members residing in the Town shall be elected for terms of three (3) years.

TOWN MODERATOR ELECTION. Town Moderator, an individual residing in the Town shall be elected for term of three (3) years.

TOWN TREASURER ELECTION. Town Treasurer, an individual residing in the Town shall be elected for term of three (3) years.

ARTICLE 1. Shall the Town appropriate for the next fiscal year, July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020, the total sum of \$13,222,500.00 consisting of the following: \$4,135,250.00 for the laying out, maintaining, and repairing of the highways and bridges of the Town; and \$9,087,250.00 for the payment of the following: Any indebtedness not otherwise specifically provided for, interest on indebtedness, legally authorized State and County taxes, the prosecution and defense of the common rights and interests of the inhabitants of the Town, and for other necessary incidental expenses?

The proposed budget includes \$60,000.00 for fire equipment, \$20,000.00 for parking improvements, and \$463,610.00 for healthcare reserve and workers compensation insurance, any unexpended portion of which will be reserved to subsequent years for that purpose.

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 2. Shall the bonds of the Town of Bennington in an amount not to exceed \$1.2 million be issued for the purpose of purchasing a ladder truck for the Bennington Fire Department to replace the current 1997 Smeal ladder truck?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 3. §103-407. Mayoral form of government

(a) In lieu of a town manager, the voters may adopt a mayoral form of government, by vote at a duly-warned annual meeting, warned pursuant to a petition signed by five percent of the voters or on the Select board's own motion. Once a vote in favor of this form of government is successful, the voters shall elect a mayor at the next annual meeting for a three-year term. Once the mayor takes office, the Town Manager system of governance shall end for Bennington.

(b) The mayor shall be responsible for the management of the administrative affairs of the Town, in the same manner and with the same powers and responsibilities as the Town Manager, as stated in statute and this charter.

(c) The mayor shall have the power to veto any action of the Select board.

(d) The Select board shall have the authority to override the mayor's veto by a vote of five members of the board taken at a regular meeting. Within 30 days of the vote to override, voters may petition for a binding referendum on the issue by a petition signed by five percent of the voters. At a special meeting held within 60 days of the receipt of the petition, the voters shall decide whether to uphold the mayor's veto.

(e) The compensation for the mayor shall be set by the Select board based on comparable salaries and benefits for a town manager.

(f) The mayor shall serve as the voice of the Town of Bennington, taking responsibility for implementing the policies of the Select board, leading the Town toward greater prosperity and a healthy economy, and a better life for all its residents.

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 4. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$5,000.00 for Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 5. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$5,000.00 for Project Against Violent Encounters?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 6. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$5,500.00 for Green Mountain Retired and Senior Volunteer Program?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 7. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$6,750.00 for BROCC - Community Action In Southwestern Vermont?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 8. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$7,000.00 for Vermont Center for Independent Living?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 9. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$7,500.00 for Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, Inc.?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 10. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$10,000.00 for The Tutorial Center?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 11. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$11,000.00 for Bennington Project Independence?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 12. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$12,500.00 for Bennington Free Clinic?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 13. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$15,000.00 for Sunrise Family Resource Center?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 14. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$21,600.00 for VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region?

YES ☐
NO ☐

ARTICLE 15. Shall the voters increase the F.Y. 2020 General Fund by the sum of \$25,000.00 for Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless?

YES ☐
NO ☐

BY THE SELECT BOARD


Thomas H. Jacobs, Chair


Donald A. Campbell, Vice Chair


Jim Carroll


Jeanne Conner


Chad Gordon


Jeannette Jenkins


Carson Thurber

Dated at Bennington, Vermont this 28th day of January, 2019.

Recorded January 29, 2019 at 9:15 AM , Town Clerk

APPENDIX

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Financial Statements and Schedules

June 30, 2018

(With Independent Auditor's Report Thereon)

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

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SECTION I

FINANCIAL SECTION



Independent Auditor's Report

The Select Board
Town of Bennington, Vermont

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Town of Bennington, Vermont as of and for the year ended June 30, 2018, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Town's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes 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 opinions 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 and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. 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 opinions.

Opinions

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Bennington, Vermont, as of June 30, 2018, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Other Matters

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis on pages 3 - 10, the budgetary comparison information on pages 38 - 42, and the schedule of pension liabilities and contributions on page 43 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 about 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 or provide any assurance.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated January 23, 2019, on our consideration of the Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

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

January 23, 2019

Vt. Reg. #357

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018**

The management's discussion and analysis of the Town of Bennington, Vermont's financial performance provides an overview of the Town's financial activities for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017. It focuses on the year-end results and provides an objective analysis of the various funds the Town operates in the conduct of its business from a management perspective. It discusses both the government-wide and fund-based financial statements. Please read it in conjunction with the Town's financial statements, which immediately follow this section.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Town's combined net position was \$25,769,645 at June 30, 2018, an increase of \$887,634 from last year.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial section of this report consists of three parts: Managements' Discussion and Analysis (this section), the basic financial statements, and additional required supplementary information. The basic financial statements include two kinds of statements that present different views of the Town. The Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities provide information about the activities of the Town as a whole and present a longer-term view of the Town's finances. Fund financial statements for governmental activities tell how these services were financed in the short term as well as what remains for future spending. Fund financial statements also report the Town's operations in more detail than the government-wide statements by providing information about the Town's most significant funds. The remaining statements provide financial information about activities for which the Town acts solely as a trustee or agent for the benefit of those outside of the government.

Government-wide Financial Statements

The Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities are also referred to as the Government-wide financial statements. These statements report information about the Town and its activities as a whole. These statements include all assets and liabilities using the accrual basis of accounting, which is similar to the accounting used by most private-sector companies. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are taken into account regardless of when cash is received or paid.

These two statements report the Town's net position and changes in net position. You can think of the Town's net position - the difference between assets and liabilities - as one way to measure the Town's financial health, or financial position. Over time, increases or decreases in the Town's net position are one indicator of whether its financial health is improving or deteriorating. You will need to consider other non-financial factors, however, such as changes in the Town's property tax base and the condition of the Town's roads, to assess the overall health of the Town.

The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities, report two kinds of activities:

- **Governmental activities** - Most of the Town's basic services are reported here, including the police, fire, public works, community development, and recreation departments, and general administration. Property taxes and state and federal grants finance most of these activities.
- **Business-type activities** - The Town charges a fee to customers to help it cover all or most of the cost of certain services it provides. The Town's water and sewer system and parking facilities are reported here.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018**

Fund Financial Statements

The remaining statements are fund financial statements that focus on individual parts of the Town, reporting the Town's operations in more detail than the Town-wide statements.

- The Governmental Funds - Most of the Town's basic services are reported in governmental funds, which focus on how money flows into and out of those funds and the balances left at year-end that are available for spending. These funds are reported using an accounting method called modified accrual accounting, which measures cash and all other financial assets that can readily be converted to cash. The governmental fund statements provide a detailed short-term view of the Town's general government operations and the basic services it provides. Governmental fund information helps you determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance the Town's programs. The differences between governmental activities (reported in the Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities) and governmental funds are reconciled in the schedules following each of the governmental fund financial statements.
- The Proprietary Funds - When the Town charges customers for the services it provides - whether to outside customers or to other units of the Town - these services are generally reported in Proprietary funds. Proprietary funds are reported in the same way that all activities are reported in the Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities.

The financial statements also include notes that explain some of the information in the statements and provide more detailed data. The statements are followed by a section of required supplementary information that further explains and supports the financial statements with a comparison of the Town's General Fund budget to reported results for the year.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018**

The following table summarizes the major features of the Town's financial statements, including the portion of the Town's activities they cover and the types of information they contain.

Major Features of the Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements

	Government-Wide Statements	Fund Financial Statements	
		Governmental Funds	Proprietary Funds
Scope	Entire Town (except fiduciary funds)	The activities of the Town that are not proprietary or fiduciary. Includes general fund and special revenue funds.	The activities of the Town for which a fee is charged to external users (such as water and wastewater treatment activities).
Required financial statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statement of net position - Statement of activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balance sheet - Statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statement of net position or balance sheet - Statement of revenues, expenses and changes in fund net position - Statement of cash flows
Accounting basis and measurement focus	Accrual basis of accounting and economic resources measurement focus	Modified accrual basis of accounting and current financial resources measurement focus	Accrual basis of accounting and economic resources measurement focus
Type of asset/liability information	All assets and liabilities, both financial and capital, short-term and long-term	Generally, assets expected to be used up and liabilities that come due during the year or soon thereafter; no capital assets or long-term liabilities included	All assets and liabilities, both short-term and long-term; including capital assets
Type of inflow/outflow information	All revenues and expenses during year, regardless of when cash is received or paid	Revenues for which cash is received during or soon after the end of the year; expenditures when goods or services have been received and the related liability is due and payable	All additions and deductions during the year, regardless of when cash is received or paid

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018**

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN AS A WHOLE

This section summarizes information and data as related to the Statements of Net Position as of June 30, 2018 and 2017 and the Statements of Activities for the years then ended.

Government-Wide Statements

The Town's combined net position increased by \$887,634 to \$25,769,645 at June 30, 2018. Our analysis below focuses on the net position (Table 1) and changes in net position (Table 2) of the Town's governmental and business-type activities.

**Table 1
Net Assets
(in Thousands)**

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
Current and other assets	\$ 4,944	5,072	5,413	4,179	10,357	9,251
Capital assets	18,354	17,230	16,552	14,990	34,906	32,220
Total assets	23,298	22,302	21,965	19,169	45,263	41,471
Deferred outflows of resources	1,059	1,607	150	-	1,209	1,607
Total assets and deferred outflows	24,357	23,909	22,115	19,169	46,472	43,078
Current liabilities	2,602	2,089	636	644	3,238	2,733
Long-term liabilities	8,104	8,010	9,221	7,415	17,325	15,425
Total liabilities	10,706	10,099	9,857	8,059	20,563	18,158
Deferred inflows of resources	122	38	17	-	139	38
Total liabilities and deferred inflows	10,828	10,137	9,874	8,059	20,702	18,196
Net position:						
Invested in capital						
assets, net of debt	11,682	11,802	7,107	7,115	18,789	18,917
Restricted	3,684	4,289	-	-	3,684	4,289
Unrestricted	(1,837)	(2,319)	5,134	3,995	3,297	1,676
Total net position	\$ 13,529	13,772	12,241	11,110	25,770	24,882

The Town's liquidity - the ability to pay for its immediate obligations - is measured by comparing current assets to current liabilities. The Town has current assets approximately 3.2 times greater than its current liabilities.

The Town's solvency - the ability to fulfill its total obligations - is measured by comparing debt-to-assets ratio and debt-to-net assets ratio. Debt-to-assets ratio, which equals approximately 44.3%, computes the percent of assets financed with debt. Debt-to-net assets ratio, which equals approximately 79.8%, computes the amount owed for debt on every dollar that the Town has available for use providing programs.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018

Based on liabilities of \$20.6 million and total assessed property value of \$1,030 million, the Town's total obligations represent approximately \$2.00 per \$100 of 2017-18 assessed property value. Per capita obligations - the amount of total liabilities per person - is approximately \$1,285 for the Town, based on total population of approximately 16,000 as reported in the 2010 Federal Census Report.

The Town's capital assets (Table 1), such as infrastructure, buildings and equipment, less outstanding debt used to acquire them, amounted to \$18.8 and \$18.9 million at June 30, 2018 and 2017, respectively. These assets represent the largest portion of the Town's net assets. Although the \$18.8 million of the Town's net capital assets are reported net of related debt, it should be noted that the resources needed to repay this debt must be provided from other sources, since the capital assets themselves cannot be used to liquidate these liabilities.

At June 30, 2018, net assets of \$3.7 million (Table 1) have been restricted by the voters or sources external to the Town to be used for specific purposes.

Table 2
Changes in Net Position
(in Thousands)

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
Revenues:						
Program revenues:						
Charges for services	\$ 611	557	5,149	4,741	5,760	5,298
Grants and contributions	1,729	920	-	-	1,729	920
General revenues:						
Property taxes	11,096	10,576	-	-	11,096	10,576
Other general revenues	993	1,071	42	29	1,035	1,100
Total revenues	14,429	13,124	5,191	4,770	19,620	17,894
Program expenses:						
General government	3,697	3,267	-	-	3,697	3,267
Public safety	3,900	3,888	-	-	3,900	3,888
Public works	143	141	-	-	143	141
Community development	1,145	101	-	-	1,145	101
Health and welfare	8	8	-	-	8	8
Recreation	783	1,054	-	-	783	1,054
Highways and roads	4,580	4,253	-	-	4,580	4,253
Library	476	455	-	-	476	455
Interest on long-term debt	70	56	-	-	70	56
Water	-	-	2,137	2,006	2,137	2,006
Wastewater treatment	-	-	1,773	1,630	1,773	1,630
Parking	-	-	20	25	20	25
Total expenses	14,802	13,223	3,930	3,661	18,732	16,884
Excess (deficiency) before transfers and adjustments	(373)	(99)	1,261	1,109	888	1,010
Transfers	130	130	(130)	(130)	-	-
Increase (decrease) in net position	\$ (243)	31	1,131	979	888	1,010

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018**

Net position of the Town's governmental activities (Table 2) decreased by approximately 1.8% or \$243 thousand as reported in Table 2 for the year ended June 30, 2018, including net operating transfers from business-type activities of \$130 thousand. The unrestricted net position deficit comprises approximately 13.6% of the total net position of governmental activities at June 30, 2018.

The net position related to business-type activities increased by approximately \$1.13 million for the year ended June 30, 2018.

**Table 3
Governmental Activities
(in Thousands)**

	2018		2017	
	Total Cost of Services	Net Cost of Services	Total Cost of Services	Net Cost of Services
General government	\$ 3,697	3,161	3,267	2,504
Police department	3,564	3,310	3,581	3,313
Fire department	336	331	307	302
Public works	143	109	141	127
Community development	1,145	143	101	101
Health and welfare	8	8	8	8
Recreation	783	675	1,054	935
Highways and roads	4,580	4,178	4,253	3,947
Library	476	476	455	455
Interest on long-term debt	70	70	56	56
	<u>\$ 14,802</u>	<u>12,461</u>	<u>13,223</u>	<u>11,748</u>

The costs of providing governmental services (Table 3) amounted to approximately \$14.8 and \$13.2 million for the years ended June 30, 2018 and 2017, respectively. The cost of providing services is offset by charges for services and program-specific operating and capital grants, resulting in a net cost of services amounting to approximately \$12.5 and \$11.7 million for the years ended June 30, 2018 and 2017. The net cost of services is funded by property taxes, investment earnings and grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018**

**Table 4
Capital Assets at Year-end
(Net of Depreciation, in Thousands)**

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total Primary Government	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
Land and land improvements	\$ 1,134	745	199	215	1,333	960
Construction in progress	343	1,972	2,173	266	2,516	2,238
Distribution and collection systems	-	-	6,544	6,459	6,544	6,459
Buildings and improvements	4,615	2,383	6,089	6,454	10,704	8,837
Equipment and vehicles	3,282	2,617	1,547	1,596	4,829	4,213
Infrastructure	8,980	9,513	-	-	8,980	9,513
Totals	\$ 18,354	17,230	16,552	14,990	34,906	32,220

This year, the Town successfully bonded for \$9.85 million to upgrade the waste water treatment plant and system. By prioritizing the projects we needed to do, we were able to reduce the bond amount from the originally anticipated \$11 million. Work is anticipated to be completed by December 2019.

**Table 5
Outstanding Debt, at Year-end
(in Thousands)**

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total Primary Government	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
Bonds and notes payable	\$ 5,617	4,453	9,445	7,875	15,062	12,328
Capital lease obligations	1,055	975	-	-	1,055	975
Totals	\$ 6,672	5,428	9,445	7,875	16,117	13,303

The Town uses capital lease obligations to finance the acquisition of certain vehicles and equipment.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN'S FUNDS

Although both revenue and expenditures were relatively stable, it is important to note that the \$2.7 million unfavorable variance in Highway budget to actual expenditures is due to the \$3.2 million bonding for the new Public Works Facility. The offsetting \$3.7 million is shown as a favorable variance under other financing sources and includes this bond as well as financing of highway equipment utilizing the State's Highway Equipment Fund.

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
Year Ended June 30, 2018**

CONTACTING THE TOWN'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This financial report is designed to provide citizens, taxpayers, customers, and creditors with a general overview of the finances of the Town and to demonstrate the Town's accountability with the funds it receives. If you have any questions about this report or need any additional financial information, please contact:

Mr. Stuart Hurd, Town Manager
205 South Street
Bennington, VT 05201

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Net Position
June 30, 2018

	Primary Government		
	Governmental Activities	Business-type Activities	Total
Assets:			
Cash	\$ 2,915,827	-	2,915,827
Accounts receivable, net	149,476	1,102,095	1,251,571
Bond proceeds receivable	-	2,037,295	2,037,295
Property taxes receivable, net	1,344,812	-	1,344,812
Interest receivable	4,362	-	4,362
Prepaid expenses	193,434	44,344	237,778
Notes receivable, current	111,626	-	111,626
Internal balances	(2,229,276)	2,229,276	-
Notes receivable, non-current	2,454,010	-	2,454,010
Capital assets:			
Land and construction in progress	1,478,173	458,480	1,936,653
Other capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation	16,875,985	16,093,469	32,969,454
Total assets	23,298,429	21,964,959	45,263,388
Deferred Outflows of Financial Resources:			
VMERS pension plan	1,058,448	149,976	1,208,424
Total assets and deferred outflows of financial resources	\$ 24,356,877	22,114,935	46,471,812
Liabilities:			
Accounts payable	\$ 432,244	32,618	464,862
Line of credit	82,113	-	82,113
Accrued liabilities	1,010,395	95,925	1,106,320
Deferred revenue	13,815	-	13,815
Accrued landfill post-closure costs:			
Due within one year	35,081	-	35,081
Due in more than one year	463,304	-	463,304
Bonds payable:			
Due within one year	530,752	507,001	1,037,753
Due in more than one year	5,085,827	8,938,363	14,024,190
Lease payable:			
Due within one year	159,060	-	159,060
Due in more than one year	896,096	-	896,096
Net pension liability - VMERS	1,996,784	282,931	2,279,715
Total liabilities	10,705,471	9,856,838	20,562,309
Deferred Inflows of Financial Resources:			
VMERS pension plan	122,500	17,358	139,858
Net position:			
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	11,682,423	7,106,585	18,789,008
Net restricted for:			
Capital projects	531,376	-	531,376
Community development projects	2,565,636	-	2,565,636
Other purposes	586,682	-	586,682
Unrestricted (deficit)	(1,837,211)	5,134,154	3,296,943
Total net position	\$ 13,528,906	12,240,739	25,769,645

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Activities
June 30, 2018

Functions/Programs	Expenses	Program Revenues			Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Assets		
		Charges for Services	Operating Grants and Contributions	Capital Grants and Contributions	Primary Government		
					Governmental Activities	Business-type Activities	Total
Primary government:							
Governmental activities:							
General government	\$ 3,696,976	252,700	283,265	-	(3,161,011)	-	(3,161,011)
Public safety:							
Police	3,564,144	212,608	41,297	-	(3,310,239)	-	(3,310,239)
Fire	335,706	4,745	-	-	(330,961)	-	(330,961)
Public works	143,256	33,994	-	-	(109,262)	-	(109,262)
Community development	1,145,610	-	1,002,388	-	(143,222)	-	(143,222)
Health and welfare	7,751	-	-	-	(7,751)	-	(7,751)
Recreation	782,877	107,645	-	-	(675,232)	-	(675,232)
Highways and roads	4,580,317	-	-	402,058	(4,178,259)	-	(4,178,259)
Library	475,750	-	-	-	(475,750)	-	(475,750)
Interest on long-term debt	69,735	-	-	-	(69,735)	-	(69,735)
Total governmental activities	14,802,122	611,692	1,326,950	402,058	(12,461,422)	-	(12,461,422)
Business-type activities:							
Water	2,137,257	3,024,676	-	-	-	887,419	887,419
Sewer	1,772,749	2,112,910	-	-	-	340,161	340,161
Parking	20,043	11,157	-	-	-	(8,886)	(8,886)
Total business-type activities	3,930,049	5,148,743	-	-	-	1,218,694	1,218,694
Total primary government	\$ 18,732,171	5,760,435	1,326,950	402,058	(12,461,422)	1,218,694	(11,242,728)
General revenues:							
Property taxes					11,095,736	-	11,095,736
Grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs					395,348	-	395,348
Investment earnings					59,744	41,694	101,438
Miscellaneous					537,840	-	537,840
Transfers					130,000	(130,000)	-
Total general revenues and transfers					12,218,668	(88,306)	12,130,362
Change in net position					(242,754)	1,130,388	887,634
Net position - beginning					13,771,660	11,110,351	24,882,011
Net position - ending					\$ 13,528,906	12,240,739	25,769,645

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Balance Sheet
Governmental Funds
June 30, 2018

	General Governmental Activities Fund	Special Revenue Funds Community Development Fund	Downtown Improvement Commission	Total Governmental Funds
Assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,213,553	702,274	-	2,915,827
Delinquent taxes receivable, net of allowance uncollectible accounts of \$295,517	1,344,812	-	-	1,344,812
Accounts receivable	149,476	-	-	149,476
Interest receivable	-	4,362	-	4,362
Prepaid expenses	193,434	-	-	193,434
Notes receivable, net of allowance for uncollectible accounts of \$28,000	-	2,565,636	-	2,565,636
Due from other funds	-	-	21,190	21,190
Total assets	\$ 3,901,275	3,272,272	21,190	7,194,737
Liabilities:				
Accounts payable	\$ 395,214	-	-	395,214
Line of credit	82,113	-	-	82,113
Accrued liabilities	355,304	-	-	355,304
Due to other funds	1,101,710	1,148,756	-	2,250,466
Unearned revenue	13,815	-	-	13,815
Total liabilities	1,948,156	1,148,756	-	3,096,912
Deferred Inflows of Resources:				
Unavailable revenue - delinquent property taxes	283,561	-	-	283,561
Fund Balances:				
Nonspendable	-	2,565,636	-	2,565,636
Restricted	2,172,360	-	21,190	2,193,550
Committed	282,995	-	-	282,995
Assigned	5,306	-	-	5,306
Unassigned	(791,103)	(442,120)	-	(1,233,223)
Total fund balances	1,669,558	2,123,516	21,190	3,814,264
Total liabilities, deferred inflows of resources and fund balances	\$ 3,901,275	3,272,272	21,190	7,194,737

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Reconciliation of the Governmental Funds Balance Sheet
to the Statement of Net Position
June 30, 2018

Total fund balances - governmental funds (from page 13)	\$ 3,814,264
Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the funds.	18,354,158
Deferred outflows of financial resources related to pension activities are not recognized in the funds.	1,058,448
Other long-term assets are not available to pay for current-period expenditures and are deferred in the funds.	283,561
Long-term liabilities, including bonds payable, are not due and payable in the current period and therefore are not reported in the funds.	(9,859,025)
Deferred inflows of financial resources related to pension activities are not recognized in the funds.	(122,500)
Net position of governmental activities (page 11)	<u><u>\$ 13,528,906</u></u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances
Governmental Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	General Governmental Activities Fund	Special Revenue Funds Community Development Fund	Downtown Improvement Commission	Total Governmental Funds
Revenues:				
Property taxes	\$ 11,020,130	-	76,000	11,096,130
Permits and licenses	102,592	-	-	102,592
Intergovernmental revenues	1,121,968	1,002,388	-	2,124,356
Fees and charges	419,067	-	-	419,067
Fines and forfeitures	30,930	-	-	30,930
Interest	19,094	40,650	-	59,744
Rental revenue	59,103	-	-	59,103
Hurricane Irene grants and assistance	-	-	-	-
Other	407,163	1,672	-	408,835
Total revenues	13,180,047	1,044,710	76,000	14,300,757
Expenditures:				
General government	2,776,648	-	-	2,776,648
Public safety	3,746,786	-	-	3,746,786
Public works	143,256	-	-	143,256
Health and welfare	7,751	-	-	7,751
Recreation	742,797	-	-	742,797
Debt management	378,674	-	-	378,674
Highways and roads	6,449,779	-	-	6,449,779
Project expenditures	-	1,067,893	-	1,067,893
Other	2,736,309	1,717	76,000	2,814,026
Total expenditures	16,982,000	1,069,610	76,000	18,127,610
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(3,801,953)	(24,900)	-	(3,826,853)
Other financing sources (uses):				
Proceeds from issuance of debt	3,702,252	-	-	3,702,252
Operating transfers in (out)	178,000	(48,000)	-	130,000
	3,880,252	(48,000)	-	3,832,252
Excess of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures and other financing uses	78,299	(72,900)	-	5,399
Fund balance, July 1, 2017	1,591,259	2,196,416	21,190	3,808,865
Fund balance, June 30, 2018	\$ 1,669,558	2,123,516	21,190	3,814,264

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures,
and Changes in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds
to the Statement of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2018

Net change in fund balances - total governmental funds (from page 15)	\$ 5,399
Revenues in the statement of activities that do not provide current financial resources (property taxes not collected within 60 days of fiscal year end) are not reported as revenues in the funds. This amount represents a decrease in deferred property taxes.	393
Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures. However in the statement of activities, the cost of those assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation expense. This is the amount by which depreciation exceeded capital outlays in the current period.	890,552
Issuance of long-term obligations is recorded as an other financing source in the governmental funds, but increases long-term liabilities in the statement of net assets.	(3,830,798)
Repayment of principal on long-term obligations is an expenditure in the governmental funds, but the repayment reduces long-term liabilities in the statement of net assets.	2,691,700
Change in net position of governmental activities (page 12)	\$ <u>(242,754)</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Net Position
Proprietary Funds
June 30, 2018

	Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds			
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Parking Meter Fund	Totals
Assets:				
Current assets:				
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$24,000	\$ 675,070	427,025	-	1,102,095
Prepaid expenses	19,815	24,529	-	44,344
Bond proceeds receivable	-	2,037,295	-	2,037,295
Due from other funds	2,664,537	-	210,896	2,875,433
Total current assets	3,359,422	2,488,849	210,896	6,059,167
Capital assets:				
Land and land improvements	18,000	-	465,599	483,599
Distribution and collection systems	9,116,673	1,412,670	-	10,529,343
Buildings and equipment	9,136,551	19,045,674	3,014	28,185,239
Construction in progress	121,134	2,051,850	-	2,172,984
Less accumulated depreciation	(7,596,220)	(16,935,353)	(287,643)	(24,819,216)
Total non-current assets	10,796,138	5,574,841	180,970	16,551,949
Total assets	14,155,560	8,063,690	391,866	22,611,116
Deferred outflows of financial resources:				
VMERS pension plan	72,277	77,699	-	149,976
Total assets and deferred outflows of financial resources	\$ 14,227,837	8,141,389	391,866	22,761,092
Liabilities:				
Current liabilities:				
Accounts payable	\$ 27,212	5,406	-	32,618
Accrued liabilities	322	18,228	-	18,550
Due to other funds	-	646,157	-	646,157
Notes and bonds payable, current portion	507,001	-	-	507,001
Total current liabilities	534,535	669,791	-	1,204,326
Notes and bonds payable, less current portion	6,873,345	2,065,018	-	8,938,363
Obligation for other post employment benefits	46,675	30,700	-	77,375
Net pension liability - VMERS	136,351	146,580	-	282,931
Total liabilities	7,590,906	2,912,089	-	10,502,995
Deferred inflows of financial resources:				
VMERS pension plan	8,365	8,993	-	17,358
Total liabilities and deferred inflows of financial resources	7,599,271	2,921,082	-	10,520,353
Net Position:				
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	3,415,792	3,509,823	180,970	7,106,585
Unrestricted - designated	428,481	428,056	57,011	913,548
Unrestricted - undesignated	2,784,293	1,282,428	153,885	4,220,606
Total net position	6,628,566	5,220,307	391,866	12,240,739
Total liabilities, deferred inflows of financial resources and net position	\$ 14,227,837	8,141,389	391,866	22,761,092

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position
Proprietary Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds			Totals
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Parking Meter Fund	
Operating revenues:				
Fees and charges for services	\$ 2,943,228	2,003,255	11,157	4,957,640
Grants	20,000	-	-	20,000
Other	61,448	109,655	-	171,103
	3,024,676	2,112,910	11,157	5,148,743
Operating expenses:				
Administration	785,761	887,921	-	1,673,682
Buildings	72,060	-	-	72,060
Equipment	59,197	22,785	-	81,982
Water systems	147,873	-	-	147,873
Filtration plant	239,302	-	-	239,302
Sewer system	-	44,319	-	44,319
Sewer treatment plant	-	527,265	-	527,265
Parking	-	-	4,256	4,256
Depreciation	629,406	317,258	15,787	962,451
Total operating expenses	1,933,599	1,799,548	20,043	3,753,190
Operating income (loss)	1,091,077	313,362	(8,886)	1,395,553
Nonoperating revenues (expenses):				
Interest income	36,750	3,822	1,122	41,694
Interest expense	(227,047)	-	-	(227,047)
	(190,297)	3,822	1,122	(185,353)
Income (loss) before operating transfers	900,780	317,184	(7,764)	1,210,200
Operating transfers in (out)	(72,000)	(78,000)	20,000	(130,000)
	(72,000)	(78,000)	20,000	(130,000)
Change in net position	828,780	239,184	12,236	1,080,200
Net position - beginning	5,799,786	4,981,123	379,630	11,160,539
Net position - ending	\$ 6,628,566	5,220,307	391,866	12,240,739

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Statement of Cash Flows
Proprietary Funds
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	Business-type Activities - Enterprise Funds			
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Parking Meter Fund	Totals
<i>Cash flows from operating activities:</i>				
Cash receipts from customers	\$ 2,861,644	1,960,924	11,157	4,833,725
Cash receipts from grants	20,000	-	-	20,000
Other operating cash receipts	61,448	109,655	-	171,103
Cash payments to suppliers of goods or services	(563,759)	(513,793)	(4,539)	(1,082,091)
Cash payments to employees for services	(675,877)	(787,235)	(10)	(1,463,122)
<i>Net cash provided by operating activities</i>	1,703,456	769,551	6,608	2,479,615
<i>Cash flows from non-capital financing activities:</i>				
Operating transfers from (to) other funds	(72,000)	(78,000)	20,000	(130,000)
Advances from (to) other funds	(638,044)	1,492,857	(27,730)	827,083
Interest expense (refunding) on short-term borrowings	(227,047)	-	-	(227,047)
<i>Net cash provided by (used in) non-capital financing activities</i>	(937,091)	1,414,857	(7,730)	470,036
<i>Cash flows from capital and related financing activities:</i>				
Principal payments on bonds	(495,140)	-	-	(495,140)
Proceeds from issuance of bonds	-	27,723	-	27,723
Repayment on line of credit	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from sale of capital assets	-	-	-	-
Purchase of capital assets	(307,975)	(2,215,953)	-	(2,523,928)
<i>Net cash used in capital and related financing activities</i>	(803,115)	(2,188,230)	-	(2,991,345)
<i>Cash flows from investing activities:</i>				
Interest on cash investments	36,750	3,822	1,122	41,694
<i>Net cash provided by investing activities</i>	36,750	3,822	1,122	41,694
<i>Net increase in cash</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Cash, beginning</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Cash, ending</i>	\$ -	-	-	-
<i>Reconciliation of operating income to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:</i>				
Operating income (loss)	\$ 1,091,077	313,362	(8,886)	1,395,553
Adjustments to reconcile operating income (loss) to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:				
Depreciation	629,406	317,258	15,787	962,451
Change in operating assets and liabilities:				
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable and other current assets	(81,584)	(42,331)	-	(123,915)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	64,557	181,262	(293)	245,526
<i>Net cash provided by operating activities</i>	\$ 1,703,456	769,551	6,608	2,479,615

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Financial Reporting Entity

The Town of Bennington, Vermont (the "Town") is a unit of local government chartered by the State of Vermont. The Town operates under a Select Board - Manager form of government and provides services as outlined in its charter.

The accompanying financial statements of the Town of Bennington, Vermont include all of the financial activity of the general government, special revenue funds, water department, sewer department and parking meter fund. All these components are included because they are under the direct control of the Select Board and the Town Manager. The Town exercises significant oversight and financial interdependence exists. The Town is not a component unit of another reporting entity.

The Town applies all relevant Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncements.

(b) Basis of Presentation

The basic financial statements include both government-wide (based on the Town as a whole) and fund financial statements.

Government-wide Statements

The government-wide financial statements (i.e., the statement of net assets and the statement of activities) report information on all non-fiduciary activities of the Town. Eliminations have been made to minimize the effect of internal transactions between funds. Governmental activities generally are financed through taxes, State aid, intergovernmental revenues, and other exchange and non-exchange transactions. Operating grants include operating-specific and discretionary (either operating or capital) grants, while the capital grants column reflects capital-specific grants.

The Statement of Activities presents a comparison between direct expenses and program revenues for each function of the Town's governmental and business-type activities. Direct expenses are those that are specifically associated with and are clearly identifiable to a particular function. Program revenues include charges paid by the recipients of goods or services offered by the programs, and grants and contributions that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular program. Revenues that are not classified as program revenues, including all taxes, are presented as general revenues.

Fund Financial Statements

The fund statements provide information about the Town's funds. Separate statements for each fund category (governmental and proprietary) are presented. The emphasis of fund financial statements is on major funds, each displayed in a separate column. All remaining funds are aggregated and reported as non-major funds, however because the Town has only one non-major fund in each fund type, they are reported in individual columns.

The financial activities of the Town that are reported in the accompanying financial statements have been classified in the major funds described in the following paragraphs.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

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

(b) *Basis of Presentation (continued)*

Fund Financial Statements (continued)

Governmental Funds

General Governmental Activities Fund - The General Governmental Activities Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures applicable to the general operations of the governmental agencies of the Town. All general operating revenues which are not restricted as to use by sources external to the Town are recorded in the General Governmental Activities Fund.

Special Revenue Funds - The Special Revenue Funds are operating funds, for which the use of revenues is restricted, generally by Federal and state governments. The Town uses two Special Revenue Funds: the Community Development Fund and the Downtown Improvement Commission.

Proprietary Funds

Enterprise Funds - Enterprise Funds are used to account for operations 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. The Town uses three Enterprise Funds: the Water Fund, Sewer Fund, and Parking Meter Fund.

(c) *Measurement Focus and Basis of Accounting*

The Government-wide and proprietary fund financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded at the time liabilities are incurred, regardless of when the related cash transaction takes place. Non-exchange transactions, in which the Town gives or receives value without directly receiving or giving equal value in exchange, include property taxes, grants and donations. On an accrual basis, revenue from property taxes is recognized in the fiscal year for which the taxes are levied. Revenue from grants and donations is recognized in the fiscal year in which all eligibility requirements have been satisfied.

The governmental fund statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under this method, revenues are recognized when measurable and available. The Town considers all revenues other than property taxes reported in the governmental funds to be available if the revenues are collected within one year after the end of the fiscal year. Property taxes are recognized to the extent collected within sixty days of fiscal year end.

Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred, except for principal and interest on general long-term debt, claims and judgments, and compensated absences, which are recognized as expenditures to the extent they have matured. General capital asset acquisitions are reported as expenditures in governmental funds. Proceeds of general long-term debt and acquisitions under capital leases are reported as other financing sources.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(d) Budgets and Budgetary Accounting

The Town uses the following procedures in establishing the budgetary data for the General Governmental Activities Fund reflected in the financial statements:

1. The Town Manager prepares the annual operating budget for the General Governmental Activities Fund for the Town's fiscal year ended June 30th prior to March of the preceding fiscal year. The Town Manager prepares the budget through consultation with the Town's department supervisors. The operating budget includes proposed expenditures and the means of financing them. The Town Manager submits the budget to the Select Board for approval.
2. After the budget is approved, the Select Board publishes a warning in the Town newspaper for a special Town meeting to discuss the budget.
3. Prior to July 1 of the new fiscal year, the annual Town meeting is held and the budget is legally enacted by a general Town vote.
4. Budget revisions must be approved by the Select Board. Appropriations lapse at the end of the Town's fiscal year if not encumbered.
5. Formal budgetary integration is employed as a management control device during the year for the General Governmental Activities Fund.
6. The budget for the General Governmental Activities Fund is adopted on the modified accrual basis. The budgeted amounts are as originally adopted.

(e) Internal Balances and Transfers

Internal balances arise primarily as a result of the Town's pooling of cash deposits. Internal transfers represent administrative charges paid by the enterprise funds and community development fund to the general governmental activities fund.

(f) Capital Assets

Property and equipment is stated at known or estimated historical cost. Net interest costs are capitalized on projects during the construction period. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of assets as follows: office furniture and equipment – 5 to 10 years, motor vehicles and heavy equipment – 5 to 15 years, buildings and building improvements – 10 to 40 years, and infrastructure – 10 to 40 years. 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 expense as incurred; significant renewals and betterments are capitalized. Deduction is made for retirements resulting from renewals or betterments. GASB No. 34 requires the Town to report and depreciate new infrastructure assets effective with the statement's implementation.

(g) Cash and Cash Equivalents

For purposes of the statement of cash flows presented for the proprietary funds, cash equivalents include all short-term highly liquid investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and have original maturities of three months or less.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(h) Long-term Debt and Deferred Charges

In the government-wide financial statements long-term debt and other long-term obligations are reported as liabilities in the applicable statement of net assets. Bond premiums and discounts, as well as issuance costs, are deferred and amortized over the life of the bonds using the straight-line method which approximates the effective interest method. Bonds payable are reported net of the applicable bond premium or discount. Bond issuance costs are reported as deferred charges and amortized over the term of the related debt.

In the fund financial statements, governmental fund types recognize bond premiums and discounts, as well as bond issuance costs, during the current period. The face amount of debt issued is reported as other financing sources. Premiums received on debt issuances are reported as other financing sources while discounts on debt issuances are reported as other financing uses. Issuance costs, whether or not withheld from the actual debt proceeds received, are reported as debt service expenditures. Accumulated unpaid vacation pay is accrued in proprietary funds (using the accrual basis of accounting). The current portion of accumulated unpaid vacation pay is accrued in governmental funds (using the modified accrual basis of accounting). Accumulated unpaid sick pay is paid to Town employees only while employed and is not recorded as the ultimate liability is not subject to reasonable estimation.

(i) Governmental Fund Balance/Net Assets

Beginning with fiscal year 2011, the Town implemented GASB Statement No. 54, "Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions." This Statement provides more clearly defined fund balance categories to make the nature and extent of the constraints placed on a government's fund balances more transparent. The following classifications describe the relative strength of the spending constraints:

Non-spendable fund balance is either not in spendable form (such as inventory), or is required to be maintained intact legally or contractually.

Restricted fund balance—amounts constrained to specific purposes by their providers (such as grantors, bondholders, and higher levels of government), through constitutional provisions, or by enabling legislation.

Committed fund balance—amounts constrained to specific purposes by the Town itself, using its highest level of decision-making authority (i.e., Selectboard). To be reported as committed, amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the Selectboard takes the same highest level action to remove or change the constraint.

Assigned fund balance—amounts the Town intends to use for a specific purpose. Intent can be expressed by the Selectboard or by an official or body to which the Selectboard Council delegates the authority.

Unassigned fund balance—amounts that are available for any purpose. Positive amounts are reported only in the general fund.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(i) Governmental Fund Balance/Net Assets (continued)

The Selectboard establishes (and modifies or rescinds) fund balance commitments by passage of an ordinance or resolution. This is typically done through adoption and amendment of the budget. A fund balance commitment is further indicated in the budget document as a designation or commitment of the fund (such as for special incentives). Assigned fund balance is established by Selectboard through adoption or amendment of the budget as intended for specific purpose (such as the purchase of fixed assets, construction, debt service, or for other purposes).

In the general fund, the Town strives to maintain an unassigned fund balance to be used for unanticipated emergencies of approximately 20% of the actual GAAP basis expenditures and other financing sources and uses.

In the government-wide financial statements, net assets are classified in the following categories:

Invested in Capital Assets, Net of Related Debt – This category groups all capital assets into one component of net assets. Accumulated depreciation and the outstanding balances of debt that are attributable to the acquisition, construction or improvement of these assets reduce this category.

Restricted – This category presents external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors or laws or regulations of other governments and restrictions imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation. Restricted resources are used first to fund appropriations when there are both restricted and unrestricted resources available.

Unrestricted – This category includes both designated and undesignated net assets of the Town. Designated net assets include reserves that were established by the Board, which are considered internally designated. Undesignated net assets are not restricted for any project or other purpose.

In the fund financial statements, reserves and designations segregate portions of fund balance that are either not available or have been earmarked for specific purposes. While a separate bank account is not necessary for each reserve fund, a separate identity for each reserve fund is maintained.

(j) Encumbrance Accounting

Encumbrances outstanding at year-end are recorded as a reservation of fund balance in the Town's governmental funds, since they do not constitute expenditures or liabilities

(k) Use of Accounting Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles 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 expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(2) Explanation of Certain Differences Between Governmental Fund Statements and the Government-wide Statements

Due to the differences in the measurement focus and basis of accounting used in the governmental fund statements and the government-wide statements, certain financial transactions are treated differently. The basic financial statements contain a full reconciliation of these items. The differences result primarily from the economic focus of the Statement of Activities, compared with the current financial resources focus of the governmental funds.

Total Fund Balances of Governmental Funds vs. Net Assets of Governmental Activities

Total fund balances of the Town's governmental funds differ from "net assets" of governmental activities reported in the Statement of Net Assets. This difference primarily results from the additional long-term economic focus of the Statement of Net Assets versus the solely current financial resources focus of the governmental fund Balance Sheets.

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance vs. Statement of Activities

Differences between the governmental funds Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance and the Statement of Activities fall into one of the categories listed below.

1. Long-Term Revenue and Expense Differences - Long-term revenue differences arise because governmental funds report revenues only when they are considered "available", whereas the Statement of Activities reports revenues when earned. Differences in long-term expenses arise because governmental funds report on a modified accrual basis, whereas the accrual basis of accounting is used on the Statement of Activities.
2. Long-Term Debt Transaction Differences - Long-term debt transaction differences occur because both interest and principal payments are recorded as expenditures in the governmental fund statements, whereas interest payments are recorded in the Statement of Activities as incurred, and principal payments are recorded as a reduction of liabilities in the Statement of Net Assets.
3. Capital Assets - Capital related differences include the difference between proceeds for the sale of capital assets reported on governmental fund statements and the gain or loss on the sale of assets as reported on the Statement of Activities, and the difference between recording an expenditure for the purchase of capital items in the governmental fund statements and depreciation expense on those items as recorded in the Statement of Activities.

(3) Cash

At June 30, 2018 the carrying amount of the Town's cash was \$2,915,827 and the bank balance was \$3,353,533. Of the bank balance, \$565,219 was covered by federal depository insurance and the remaining \$2,788,314 was fully collateralized.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(3) *Cash (continued)*

Custodial Credit Risk of Bank Deposits

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the Town's deposits may not be returned to it. At year-end, none of the Town's investments were subject to custodial credit risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that changes in interest rates will adversely affect the fair value of an investment. The Town's investment policy reduces this risk by structuring the investment portfolio so that the operating funds are maintained in demand accounts to meet cash needs for ongoing operations, thus avoiding the need to redeem certificates of deposit prior to maturity, and investing excess, designated, or restricted funds in certificates of deposits when a favorable interest rate is available.

(4) *Investments*

The Town is not restricted by state statute as to the type of investments that it is authorized to hold. The Town invested primarily in collateralized and insured certificates of deposit during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018.

(5) *Notes Receivable – Special Revenue Funds*

Notes receivable - Special Revenue Funds consist of loans to individuals and businesses under the Community Development Program of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Such notes are interest bearing at various interest rates between 3.625% and 6.000%; generally require monthly payments over terms ranging from five to fifteen years. The terms of the notes receivable include security interests in personal property or real estate mortgages.

The Community Development Fund's non-spendable fund balance of \$2,565,636 denotes the non-current portion of notes receivable that it is not available to finance the general operations of the fund.

(6) *Internal Balances*

Internal balances at June 30, 2018 consisted of the following:

Due To	Due From			
	General Fund	Community Development	Sewer	Total
General Fund	\$ -	1,148,756	646,157	1,794,913
Downtown Improvement Commission	21,190	-		21,190
Water	2,664,537	-		2,664,537
Sewer	-	-		-
Parking	210,896	-		210,896
Total	\$ 2,896,623	1,148,756	646,157	4,691,536

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(6) Internal Balances (continued)

Internal transfers for the year ended June 30, 2018 were as follows:

Transfer From	Transfer To	Amount	Purpose
General Fund	Parking	\$ (20,000)	Fund capital outlay
Community Development	General Fund	48,000	Administrative charges
Water	General Fund	72,000	Administrative charges
Sewer	General Fund	78,000	Administrative charges
		\$ 178,000	

(7) Capital Assets

Capital asset activity for the year was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Retirements and Transfers	Ending Balance
Governmental activities:				
Land and land improvements	\$ 824,790	401,511	-	1,226,301
Buildings and improvements	7,566,476	2,437,153	-	10,003,629
Equipment and vehicles	7,979,992	1,264,158	(556,633)	8,687,517
Infrastructure	37,376,414	712,429	-	38,088,843
Construction in progress	1,971,810	87,765	(1,716,149)	343,426
Totals at historical cost	55,719,482	4,903,017	(2,272,782)	58,349,716
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Land and land improvements	(79,375)	(12,180)	-	(91,555)
Buildings and improvements	(5,183,613)	(205,784)	-	(5,389,397)
Equipment and vehicles	(5,363,005)	(599,690)	556,633	(5,406,062)
Infrastructure	(27,862,991)	(1,245,553)	-	(29,108,544)
Total accumulated depreciation	(38,488,984)	(2,063,207)	556,633	(39,995,558)
Governmental activities capital assets, net	\$ 17,230,498	2,839,810	(1,716,149)	18,354,158

Depreciation expense was charged to governmental functions as follows:

General government	\$ 55,562
Public safety:	
Police	136,106
Fire	122,216
Recreation	61,267
Highway and roads	1,688,056
	<u>\$ 2,063,207</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(7) Capital Assets (continued)

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Retirements and Transfers	Ending Balance
Business-type activities:				
Land and land improvements	\$ 483,599	-	-	483,599
Buildings and improvements	24,092,841	8,164	-	24,101,005
Equipment and vehicles	4,037,659	154,670	(108,095)	4,084,234
Distribution and collection systems	10,075,068	454,275	-	10,529,343
Construction in progress	266,165	2,048,352	(141,533)	2,172,984
Totals at historical cost	38,955,332	2,665,461	(249,628)	41,371,165
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Land and land improvements	(268,842)	(15,787)	-	(284,629)
Buildings and improvements	(17,638,260)	(373,972)	-	(18,012,232)
Equipment and vehicles	(2,441,300)	(204,306)	108,095	(2,537,511)
Distribution and collection systems	(3,616,458)	(368,387)	-	(3,984,845)
Total accumulated depreciation	(23,964,860)	(962,452)	108,095	(24,819,216)
Business-type activities capital assets, net	\$ 14,990,472	1,703,009	(141,533)	16,551,949

(8) Long-term Liabilities

Long-term liability activity for the year ended June 30, 2018 was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Amounts Due within One Year
Governmental Activities					
Bonds and notes payable \$	4,452,854	3,702,252	(2,538,527)	5,616,579	530,752
Capital lease obligations	975,220	228,680	(148,744)	1,055,156	159,060
Governmental activities long-term liabilities	\$ 5,428,074	3,930,932	(2,687,271)	6,671,735	689,812
Business-type Activities					
Bonds payable \$	7,875,486	2,065,018	(495,140)	9,445,364	507,001
Business-type activities long-term liabilities	\$ 7,875,486	2,065,018	(495,140)	9,445,364	507,001

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(8) Long-term Liabilities (continued)

Bonds and notes payable mature annually in varying amounts through fiscal year 2039, and interest is generally payable semiannually at rates ranging from 3 percent to 6 percent.

Maturities of bonds payable are as follows:

	Governmental Activities			Business-Type Activities		
	Principal	Interest	Total	Principal	Interest	Total
2019	\$ 530,752	153,330	684,082	507,001	223,273	730,274
2020	530,750	140,336	671,086	606,919	249,069	855,988
2021	438,440	127,663	566,103	603,215	230,435	833,650
2022	373,818	117,206	491,024	582,180	212,805	794,985
2023	340,390	108,117	448,507	598,761	196,224	794,985
2024-2028	1,430,429	416,132	1,846,561	3,259,814	715,111	3,974,925
2029-2033	1,172,000	231,360	1,403,360	1,840,336	306,264	2,146,600
2034-2038	800,000	73,352	873,352	1,319,715	103,884	1,423,599
2039-2043	-	-	-	127,423	2,476	129,899
	\$ 5,616,579	1,367,496	6,984,075	9,445,364	2,239,541	11,684,905

All bonds payable are secured by the general revenue raising powers of the Town. Notes payable are generally secured by the related capital asset acquired.

(9) Leases

The Town leases certain equipment under agreements, which are classified as capital leases. At June 30, 2018 equipment recorded under capital lease in the Government-wide financial statements amounted to \$2,432,267. Accumulated amortization amounted to \$1,262,408.

Future minimum payments required under capital leases are as follows:

Year ending June 30,	
2019	\$ 195,912
2020	189,346
2021	189,346
2022	137,402
2023	114,966
Thereafter	417,974
Total minimum lease payments	1,244,946
Less amount representing interest	(189,790)
Present value of minimum lease payments	\$ 1,055,156

(10) Line of Credit

The Town has outstanding borrowings of \$82,113 under a line of credit agreement for Recreation Center improvements. The line, which bears interest at 2.85%, matures in July 2019.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(11) Property Taxes

Property taxes attach as an enforceable lien on property as of April 1st. Property taxes for fiscal year 2018 were levied August 9, 2017 and were payable November 10, 2017.

(12) Governmental Fund Balance

The Town's fund balance classifications at year-end are as follows:

	General Fund	Special Revenue Funds		Total
		Community Development	Downtown Improvement Commission	
Non-spendable:				
Notes receivable	\$ -	2,795,589	-	2,795,589
Restricted for:				
Capital facilities	348,530	-	-	348,530
Downtown improvement	-	-	21,190	21,190
DPW facility	72,846	-	-	72,846
Employee benefits and insurance	172,426	-	-	172,426
Fire equipment	358,377	-	-	358,377
Health and welfare	1,060	-	-	1,060
Bridges	150,568	-	-	150,568
Ninja pathway	29,310	-	-	29,310
Other purposes	29,085	-	-	29,085
Parks and recreation	145,290	-	-	145,290
Pathway project	110,000	-	-	110,000
Planning and zoning	2,216	-	-	2,216
Police - K-9 Fund	13,274	-	-	13,274
Public safety	4,083	-	-	4,083
Reappraisal	735,295	-	-	735,295
Committed for:				
Highway Improvements	217,995	-	-	217,995
Irene	65,000	-	-	-
Assigned for:				
Employee benefits and insurance	4,368	-	-	4,368
Parks and recreation	938	-	-	938
Unassigned	(791,103)	(599,173)	-	(1,390,276)
Total fund balances	\$ 1,669,558	2,196,416	21,190	3,822,164

(13) Deferred Compensation Plan and Pensions

Defined Benefit Plan

The Town participates in the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System (VMERS), a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the State of Vermont. Participants are grouped by department. "Group B" participants consist of all departments except the Police department, which comprises "Group C."

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(13) *Deferred Compensation Plan and Pensions (continued)*

Defined Benefit Plan (continued)

VMERS provides retirement and disability benefits, annual cost-of-living adjustments, and death benefits to plan members and beneficiaries. The Retirement System Division of the Vermont State Treasurer's Office issues a publicly available financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for VMERS. That report may be obtained by writing to Retirement System Division, Vermont State Treasurer's Office, 133 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602.

Plan members in "Group B" are required to contribute 4.875% of their annual covered compensation and the Town is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The current rate is 5.50% of annual covered payroll. Plan members in "Group C" are required to contribute 10.0% of their annual covered compensation and the Town is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The current rate is 7.25% of annual covered payroll. The contribution requirements of plan members and the Town of Bennington are established and may be amended by the Retirement Board, Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System.

Contributions made to VMERS by the Town for the year ended June 30, 2018 amounted to \$323,002. The Town also contributed \$579,136 for unfunded pension liability during 2018. Total covered payroll amounted to \$5,265,571.

Deferred Compensation Plan

The Town offers its employees a deferred compensation plan created in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 457. The plan permits employees to defer a portion of their salary until future years. Under provisions of the plan deferred compensation is not available to employees until termination, retirement, death, or unforeseeable emergency.

(14) *Risk Management*

The Town is exposed to various risks of loss related to general liability, property and casualty, workers' compensation, employee health and accident and environmental liability. The Town purchases commercial insurance coverage for the risks of losses to which it is exposed, exclusive of environmental liabilities which are not covered due to the excessive cost of coverage.

(15) *Commitments*

Solid Waste Disposal

The Bennington Transfer Station is operated under a contract with a waste management company. The Town agreed, as a condition of the contract to indemnify such company from all liability, loss, cost or expense incurred in connection with the operation of the transfer station or other handling of Bennington waste. The contract also indemnifies the Town in the event that liabilities are incurred for which the company is responsible.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(16) Contingencies

(a) Litigation-General

The Town is party to various legal actions which normally occur in governmental operations. The amounts of any settlements under these actions are expected to be within the limits of the Town's insurance coverage and are not likely to have a material adverse effect on the affected funds of the Town.

(b) Landfill Post-Closure Costs

In accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 18, the Town has recorded a liability for the present value of estimated post-closure repair, maintenance and monitoring costs in the statement of net assets amounting to \$498,385. The Town's post-closure costs for the year ended June 30, 2018 amounted to \$6,001.

(c) Federal and State Grants

In the normal course of operations, the Town receives grant funds from various Federal and State agencies. The grant programs are subject to audit by agents of the granting authorities, the purpose of which is to ensure compliance with conditions precedent to the granting of funds. Any liability for reimbursement which may arise as the result of such audits is not believed to be material.

(d) Operating Leases

The Town leases certain equipment under agreements which are classified as operating leases. Future minimum payments required under leases having non-cancelable lease terms in excess of one year are as follows:

Year ending June 30:		
2019	\$	13,714
2020		11,109
2021		4,392
2022		182
	\$	<u>29,397</u>

Rent expense under these agreements for the year ended June 30, 2018 was \$14,014.

(e) Contingency – Health Care Benefits

On January 1, 2012, the Town changed the employee health insurance program to a High Deductible Health Plan with a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA). All eligible employees who chose to participate were enrolled in BCBS-VT Plan with a \$500 maximum out-of-pocket expense. The Town is responsible for the next \$2,000 toward the maximum out-of-pocket health expenses for the single person plan. The Town is responsible for the next \$4,500 toward the maximum out-of-pocket health expenses for the two person, parent with child (children) and family plans.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(17) Post Employment Benefits Other Than Pensions

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018 the Town has implemented the provisions of GASB Statement No. 75 - *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions*, which replaces the guidance previously set forth in GASB Statement No. 45. Statement 75 changes the method of measuring the OPEB liability and also changes the required disclosures and required supplementary information (RSI) with respect to OPEB plans. Statement 75 provides for the presentation of the new required supplementary information prospectively, and RSI previously reported in accordance with Statement 45 is no longer reported.

Plan Description

The Town of Bennington's defined benefit OPEB plan provides post-retirement health care benefits under the "Agreement By and Between The Town of Bennington and The New England Police Benevolent Association Local 419" through June 30, 2019; and the "Agreement By and Between The Town of Bennington AFSCME Council 93, Local #490 Public Works" through June 30, 2020. Post-retirement health care benefits are provided to police union employees who retire from Town employment after attaining age 55 and have at minimum 20 years of service. Benefits are provided to public works employees who retire from Town employment after attaining age 55 and have at minimum 30 years of service. No assets are accumulated in a trust that meets the criteria in paragraph 4 of Statement 75.

Benefits Provided

The Town will pay 50 percent of a single premium in effect until the employee reaches age 65 provided that the employee does not have access to an equivalent health plan.

Employees Covered by Benefit Terms

At June 30, 2018, the following employees were covered by the benefit terms:

Inactive Inactive employees or beneficiaries currently receiving benefit payments	2
Inactive employees entitled to but not yet receiving benefit payments	0
Active employees	57
	<u>59</u>

Total OPEB Liability

The Town's total OPEB liability of \$655,089 was measured as of June 30, 2018, and was determined by the alternative measurement method permitted by GASB Statement 75 for employers with plans having fewer than one hundred total plan members.

Actuarial Assumptions and Other Inputs

The total OPEB liability in the June 30, 2018 valuation was determined using the following assumptions and other inputs, applied to all periods included in the measurement, unless otherwise specified:

Inflation	2.4 percent
Discount rate	3.62 percent
Healthcare cost trend rates	5.7 percent
Retirees' share of benefit-related costs	50 percent of projected health insurance

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(17) Post Employment Benefits Other Than Pensions (continued)

The discount rate was based on the yield for 20-year AA rated municipal bonds.

Healthcare cost trend rates were based on National Health Expenditure Projections 2017-2016.

Mortality rates were based on *Life expectancy per Appendix B, IRS Publication 590-B (2017)*.

Sensitivity of the Total OPEB Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate

The following presents the total OPEB liability of the Town, as well as what the Town's total OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1-percentage-point lower (2.62 percent) or 1-percentage-point higher (4.62 percent) than the current discount rate:

1% Decrease (2.62%)	Discount Rate (3.62%)	1% Increase (4.62%)
\$ 797,955	\$ 655,089	\$ 543,806

Sensitivity of the Total OPEB Liability to Changes in the Healthcare Cost Trend Rates

The following presents the total OPEB liability of the Town, as well as what the Town's total OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using healthcare cost trend rates that are 1-percentage-point lower (4.7 percent) or 1-percentage-point higher (6.7 percent) than the current healthcare cost trend rates:

Healthcare Cost Trend Rates		
1% Decrease (4.7%)	Current Rate (5.7%)	1% Increase (6.7%)
\$ 550,026	\$ 655,089	\$ 785,864

Funding Policy and OPEB Expense

The Town's portion of the benefits is funded on a pay-as-you-go basis and included in health care expenditures. Currently two employees are receiving benefits under the plan. For the year ended June 30, 2018 the Town recognized OPEB expense of \$6,300.

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources

Pension Plan Description and Benefits Provided

A detailed description of the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System (VMERS) is included in Note 13 to the financial statements.

Pension Liabilities, Pension Expense, and Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions

At June 30, 2018, the Town reported a liability of \$2,279,716 for its proportionate share of the net pension liability for VMERS. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2017. The total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation dated June 30, 2017. The Town's proportion of the net liability was based on a projection of the Town's long-term share of contributions to VMERS relative to the projected contributions of all participating members, actuarially determined. This information was provided by VMERS reports provided to the Town.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources (continued)

For the year ended June 30, 2018, the Town recognized pension expense of \$535,287. At June 30, 2018 the Town reported deferred outflows/inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources
Net difference between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments	\$ 379,700	-
Changes in proportion and differences between Town contributions and proportionate share of contributions	1,412	83,423
Difference between expected and actual experience	33,164	56,435
Changes in assumptions	477,255	
Town contributions subsequent to the measurement date	316,892	-
	<u>\$ 1,208,423</u>	<u>139,858</u>

The Town's contributions subsequent to the measurement date will be recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability in the year ending June 30, 2018. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized in pension expense as follows:

June 30, 2019	\$ 274,931
June 30, 2020	405,906
June 30, 2021	103,157
June 30, 2022	(32,321)
	<u>\$ 751,673</u>

Significant Actuarial Assumptions and Methods

Investment Rate of Return: 7.50%, net of pension plan investment expenses, including inflation.

Salary Increases: 5% per year

Mortality:

Death in Active Service:

Groups A, B, C - 98% of RP-2014 blended 60% Blue Collar Employee, 40% Healthy Employee with generational projection using Scale SSA-2017.

Group D - RP-2014 Blue Collar Annuitant Table with generation projection using Scale SSA-2017.

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources (continued)

Mortality (continued):

Healthy Post-retirement:

Groups A, B, C - 98% of RP-2014 blended 60% Blue Collar Annuitant, 40% Healthy Annuitant with generational projection using Scale SSA-2017.

Group D - 100% of RP-2014 Healthy Annuitant with generational projection using Scale SSA-2017.

Disabled Post-retirement:

All Groups - RP-2014 Disabled Mortality Table with generational projection using Scale SSA-2017.

Spouse's Age: Females three years younger than males.

Cost-of-Living Adjustments: Assumed to occur on January 1 following one year of retirement at the rate of 1.15% per annum for Group A members and 1.30% per annum for Groups B, C and D members (beginning at Normal Retirement eligibility age for members who elect reduced early retirement, at age 62 for members of Groups A, B, and D who receive a disability retirement benefit, and at age 55 for members of Group C who receive a disability retirement benefit). The January 1, 2018 COLA is assumed to be 0.75% for all groups.

Actuarial Cost Method: Entry Age Actuarial Cost Method. Entry Age is the age at date of employment or, if date is unknown, current age minus years of service. Normal Cost and Actuarial Accrued Liability are calculated on an individual basis and are allocated by salary, with Normal Cost determined using the plan of benefits applicable to each participant.

Actuarial Value of Assets: A smoothing method is used, under which the value of assets for actuarial purposes equals market value less a five-year phase-in of the differences between actual and assumed investment return. The value of assets for actuarial purposes may not differ from the market value of assets by more than 20%.

Inflation: 2.5%.

Long-Term Expected Rate of Return:

The long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net of pension plan investment expense and inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. Best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class included in the pension plan's target asset allocation as of June 30, 2017, is summarized in the following table:

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Notes to Financial Statements

(18) Pension Reporting for Assets/Liabilities and Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Financial Resources (continued) Significant Actuarial Assumptions and Methods (continued)

Asset Class	Target Asset Allocation	Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return
US Equity	16.00%	6.07%
Non-US Equity	16.00%	7.42%
Global Equity	9.00%	6.85%
Fixed Income	24.00%	2.41%
Real Estate	8.00%	4.62%
Private Markets	15.00%	7.80%
Hedge Funds	8.00%	3.95%
Risk Parity	4.00%	4.84%

Discount Rate

The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.50%. In accordance with paragraph 29 of GASB 68, professional judgement was applied to determine that the System's projected fiduciary net position exceeds projected benefit payments for current active and inactive members for all years. The analysis was based on the expectation that employers will continue to contribute at the rates set by the Board, which exceed the actuarially determined contribution, which is comprised on an employer normal cost payment and a payment to reduce the unfunded liability to zero by June 30, 2038. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

The following table presents the Town's proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 7.5 percent, as well as what the proportionate share would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percent lower (6.5%) or one percent higher (8.5%):

1% Decrease (6.5%)	Discount Rate (7.5%)	1% Increase (8.5%)
\$ 4,070,284	\$ 2,279,716	\$ 794,730

(19) Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through January 23, 2018, the date that the financial statements were available to be issued.

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Revenues:			
Property taxes:			
General	\$ 6,899,330	6,885,004	(14,326)
Highway	3,552,990	3,534,210	(18,780)
Fire	349,510	353,434	3,924
Penalties and interest	265,000	247,482	(17,518)
	<u>11,066,830</u>	<u>11,020,130</u>	<u>(46,700)</u>
Permits and licenses:			
Alcoholic beverages	6,450	6,890	440
Dog licenses	8,000	8,858	858
Marriage license	3,000	5,250	2,250
Building and zoning permits	30,000	48,065	18,065
Fire permits	4,000	4,745	745
Landfill	10,000	28,784	18,784
	<u>61,450</u>	<u>102,592</u>	<u>41,142</u>
Intergovernmental revenues:			
State shared interests:			
Federal and State Grant	223,000	221,362	(1,638)
Highway	317,000	402,058	85,058
In lieu of taxes	333,000	395,348	62,348
Other	48,000	103,200	55,200
	<u>921,000</u>	<u>1,121,968</u>	<u>200,968</u>
Fees and charges:			
Police sales and services	129,700	150,830	21,130
Police dispatch fees	20,400	20,400	-
Police false alarm fees	8,000	10,448	2,448
Vital records fees	44,000	36,733	(7,267)
Recording fees	90,000	87,801	(2,199)
Sale of cemetery lots	3,000	5,210	2,210
Recreational center charges	25,000	16,081	(8,919)
Pool membership fees	75,000	81,193	6,193
Senior citizens	20,000	10,371	(9,629)
	<u>415,100</u>	<u>419,067</u>	<u>3,967</u>
Fines and forfeitures:			
Fines, seizures and forfeitures	<u>26,000</u>	<u>30,930</u>	<u>4,930</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Revenues (continued):			
Interest	\$ 6,000	19,094	13,094
Rental revenue	21,000	59,103	38,103
Gain on sale of assets	2,000	1,325	(675)
Other	69,980	405,838	335,858
Total revenues	<u>12,589,360</u>	<u>13,180,047</u>	<u>590,687</u>
Expenditures:			
General Government:			
Select Board	16,550	24,612	(8,062)
Town Manager	225,620	226,604	(984)
Treasurer	16,520	16,240	280
Accounting	237,620	229,607	8,013
Listing	129,020	124,603	4,417
Tax collecting	121,510	161,876	(40,366)
Town Clerk	182,290	172,733	9,557
Planning and zoning	255,370	245,687	9,683
Economic and community development	192,010	181,061	10,949
Plant and equipment:			
Administration	776,670	836,168	(59,498)
Buildings and grounds	566,810	557,457	9,353
	<u>1,343,480</u>	<u>1,393,625</u>	<u>(50,145)</u>
	<u>2,719,990</u>	<u>2,776,648</u>	<u>(56,658)</u>
Public safety:			
Police:			
Administration	3,249,800	3,061,100	188,700
Investigation	19,940	10,771	9,169
Training	24,430	22,752	1,678
Communications	26,740	24,090	2,650
Police building	112,200	96,584	15,616
Equipment	142,300	140,466	1,834
Special services	33,370	124,173	(90,803)
	<u>3,608,780</u>	<u>3,479,936</u>	<u>128,844</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures (continued):			
Fire:			
Administration	\$ 62,160	58,368	3,792
Fire fighting	20,850	24,252	(3,402)
Communications	10,910	6,812	4,098
Machinery and equipment	177,840	107,187	70,653
Buildings	78,750	70,231	8,519
	<u>350,510</u>	<u>266,850</u>	<u>83,660</u>
	<u>3,959,290</u>	<u>3,746,786</u>	<u>212,504</u>
Public works:			
Solid waste management	138,800	115,999	22,801
Cemetery and mini-park	32,440	27,257	5,183
	<u>171,240</u>	<u>143,256</u>	<u>27,984</u>
Health and welfare:			
Health officer	8,070	7,751	319
	<u>8,070</u>	<u>7,751</u>	<u>319</u>
Recreation:			
Supervision	308,700	282,454	26,246
Recreation Center	8,400	6,076	2,324
Indoor pool	15,150	14,978	172
Parks	67,600	70,532	(2,932)
Pathway	3,000	111,044	(108,044)
Buildings	108,400	112,953	(4,553)
Vehicles and equipment	12,870	9,815	3,055
Senior Citizens' Center	102,110	95,637	6,473
Senior Citizens' - building	41,300	39,308	1,992
	<u>667,530</u>	<u>742,797</u>	<u>(75,267)</u>
Debt management:			
Principal	407,500	322,487	85,013
Interest - bonds	63,260	53,877	9,383
Interest - Recreation Center improvements	1,830	2,310	(480)
Interest - tax anticipation note	5,000	-	5,000
	<u>477,590</u>	<u>378,674</u>	<u>98,916</u>

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures (continued):			
Highways and roads:			
Administration and buildings	\$ 1,556,120	3,895,446	(2,339,326)
Construction and maintenance - town highways	480,630	494,193	(13,563)
Highway projects	717,610	631,563	86,047
Installing and maintaining traffic control devices	96,520	90,127	6,393
Buildings	33,050	77,350	(44,300)
Sidewalks	163,790	95,633	68,157
Bridges	56,400	53,682	2,718
Streetlights	115,750	112,870	2,880
Downtown	75,750	44,634	31,116
Vehicles and equipment	445,450	954,281	(508,831)
	<u>3,741,070</u>	<u>6,449,779</u>	<u>(2,708,709)</u>
Other:			
BCA Against Child Abuse	2,500	2,500	-
Bennington Battle Day	15,000	15,000	-
Bennington County Regional Commission	15,210	15,210	-
Bennington Free Clinic	7,500	7,500	-
Bennington Home Health	21,600	21,600	-
Bennington Homeless Shelter	25,000	25,000	-
Bennington Project Independence	11,000	11,000	-
Bennington Tutorial Center	10,000	10,000	-
Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council	7,500	7,500	-
Bennington In Bloom	22,000	26,677	(4,677)
Bennington In Bloom - Northside Drive	10,000	2,850	7,150
Bennington Rescue Squad	207,460	207,460	-
Capital Facilities	-	1,740	(1,740)
CERCLA	4,400	6,001	(1,601)
Community Garden	-	1,405	(1,405)
Conservation of natural resources - tree program	8,250	-	8,250
County taxes	80,000	82,009	(2,009)
DPW Garage Project	-	1,410,213	(1,410,213)
Fireworks	6,000	13,425	(7,425)
Flood control program	11,410	10,552	858
Health management fees	-	279,629	(279,629)
Holiday celebrations	9,100	8,476	624
Hunt Street bridge	-	83	(83)
Library administration	475,750	475,750	-
Miscellaneous contingencies	20,000	1,000	19,000

(continued)

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance -
Budget and Actual - General Governmental Activities Fund (Continued)
Year Ended June 30, 2018

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Expenditures (continued):			
Other (continued):			
Ninja Trail	-	11,034	(11,034)
North Bennington - recreation	8,700	8,700	-
Planning grant	-	18,210	(18,210)
Police K-9 Expenses	-	5,612	(5,612)
Project Against Violent Encounters	5,000	5,000	-
Project Catalyst	-	495	(495)
Retired Seniors Volunteer Program	7,200	7,200	-
Safety and recognition	-	113	(113)
Seizures and forfeitures	-	2,822	(2,822)
Sunrise Family Resource Center	15,000	15,000	
Tennis courts	-	1,780	(1,780)
Turning Point Center	2,500	2,500	-
Vermont Council on Aging	7,500	7,500	-
Vermont CTR - Independent Living	7,000	7,000	-
Wellness	-	763	(763)
	<u>1,022,580</u>	<u>2,736,309</u>	<u>(1,713,729)</u>
Total expenditures	<u>12,767,360</u>	<u>16,982,000</u>	<u>(4,214,640)</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	<u>(178,000)</u>	<u>(3,801,953)</u>	<u>(3,623,953)</u>
Other financing sources (uses):			
Operating transfers in (out):			
Proceeds from issuance of long-term debt	-	3,702,252	3,702,252
Administrative charges:			
Community Development Fund	48,000	48,000	-
Water Fund	72,000	72,000	-
Sewer Fund	78,000	78,000	-
Transfer to Parking Fund	(20,000)	(20,000)	-
	<u>178,000</u>	<u>3,880,252</u>	<u>3,702,252</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues and other financing sources over expenditures	<u>-</u>	<u>78,299</u>	<u>78,299</u>
Fund balance, July 1, 2017	<u>1,591,259</u>	<u>1,591,259</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund balance, June 30, 2018	<u>\$ 1,591,259</u>	<u>1,669,558</u>	<u>78,299</u>

TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT
Schedule of the Town's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability
and Town Contributions
Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement Plan

	2018	2017	2016	2015
Proportion of the net pension liability	1.8816%	1.9951%	2.0826%	2.1243%
Proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 2,279,716	2,567,622	1,605,609	193,875
Covered-employee payroll	\$ 5,265,571	5,016,689	4,958,552	4,911,775
Proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of its covered employee payroll	43.29%	51.18%	32.38%	3.95%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	82.60%	80.95%	87.42%	98.32%
Contractually required contribution	\$ 323,002	307,289	304,349	291,118
Contributions in relation to the contractually required contribution	(323,002)	(307,289)	(304,349)	(291,118)
Contribution deficiency (excess)	\$ -	-	-	-
Contributions as a percentage of covered-employee payroll	6.13%	6.13%	6.14%	5.93%

SECTION II

COMPLIANCE AND INTERNAL CONTROL



**Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and
on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements
Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards***

The Select Board
Town of Bennington, Vermont

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Town of Bennington, Vermont, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2018, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Town of Bennington, Vermont's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated January 23, 2019.

Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Town of Bennington, Vermont's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or, significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Town of Bennington, Vermont's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

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

January 23, 2019

Vt. Reg. #357

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs

Municipal Budget

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal

DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FY2018	ACTUAL FY2018	BUDGET FY2019	ACTUAL FY19 PRD6	PROPOSED FY2020	FY19 vs FY20 % INC/(DEC)
SELECT BOARD	16,550	24,612	16,550	9,663	16,550	0.00%
TOWN MANAGER	225,620	226,604	230,990	117,600	238,050	3.06%
TREASURER	16,520	16,240	16,720	8,244	17,030	1.85%
ACCOUNTING	237,620	229,607	239,990	125,567	248,870	3.70%
LISTING	129,020	124,603	132,790	64,163	142,690	7.46%
COLLECTIONS	121,510	161,876	143,900	74,513	150,350	4.48%
TOWN CLERK	182,290	172,733	187,600	96,722	186,380	-0.65%
PERMIT-PLAN-CODE ENFORCE	255,370	245,687	248,040	125,754	262,220	5.72%
COMM DEVELOPMENT	192,010	181,061	202,220	100,913	184,310	-8.86%
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	776,670	836,168	786,790	566,354	812,820	3.31%
BUILDINGS & GROUNDS	566,810	557,457	601,320	306,147	697,800	16.04%
FLOOD CONTROL	11,410	10,552	6,800	713	6,450	-5.15%
POLICE	3,608,780	3,479,936	3,702,780	1,866,410	3,785,650	2.24%
DEBT-POLICE	48,370	48,369	23,170	22,572	22,070	-4.75%
SOLID WASTE MGMT	138,800	115,999	139,630	68,628	146,680	5.05%
CERCLA	4,400	6,001	4,400	775	0	-100.00%
CEMETARY	32,440	27,257	32,650	21,438	29,650	-9.19%
HEALTH OFFICER	8,070	7,751	8,070	3,875	8,070	0.00%
PARKS & RECREATION	521,990	607,852	539,400	263,358	510,300	-5.39%
DEBT-RECREATION	43,960	2,310	41,830	2,026	41,830	0.00%
SENIOR CITIZENS	143,410	134,945	143,850	69,316	141,540	-1.61%
GRANTS & SUBSIDIES	836,420	836,420	796,310	796,310	749,880	-5.83%
HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS	30,100	29,768	30,100	30,584	30,100	0.00%
OTHER IMPROVEMENTS	40,250	29,527	40,500	9,111	41,000	1.23%
MISC CONTINGENCIES	40,000	21,000	40,000	6,510	40,000	0.00%
DEBT-IRENE BOND	126,470	126,441	124,220	109,672	121,960	-1.82%
DEBT-TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE	5,000	0	5,000	0	0	-100.00%
COUNTY TAX PAYMENTS	80,000	82,009	82,000	84,400	84,500	3.05%
RESERVE FUND EXPENDITURES	0	330,735	0	278,336	0	0.00%
HIGHWAY FUND	3,741,070	7,860,076	3,531,210	2,487,986	3,552,800	0.61%
DEBT-HIGHWAY FUND	255,920	201,555	555,910	460,543	582,450	4.77%
FIRE FUND	350,510	266,850	368,390	124,967	370,500	0.57%
Expenditures Subtotal	12,307,640	16,623,326	12,273,000	7,708,356	12,454,190	1.48%
Debt Management Subtotal	479,720	378,674	750,130	594,813	768,310	2.42%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	12,787,360	17,002,000	13,023,130	8,303,168	13,222,500	1.53%
Less Transfer To Parking Fund	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	0.00%
NET OF TRANSFERS OUT	12,767,360	16,982,004	13,003,130	8,283,168	13,202,500	1.53%