



# Town of Bennington

Communications Coordinator Report — April 25, 2022

## After seven months on the job...

It's exciting to be doing this work in the springtime! So much is happening that I am on my toes every day as the town ramps up its activities on everything from planning for major new projects to getting all the parks and playgrounds up and running for the summer season.

## Willow Park Playgrounds:

Speaking of playgrounds! Last month we reported that ARPA funds had been allocated and vendor chosen for designing and building new playgrounds at Willow Park. Since then town staff have met with the vendor, developed initial designs, and have been implementing an aggressive outreach plan to the community for their input. The community has been following this closely on social media with a combined reach of over 24,000 on playground posts since outreach began. Interestingly, the public presentation was only very lightly attended with just five citizens (two of whom were select board members). The presentation was recorded and there have been over 220 link clicks on the post to view it so far. Overall input from the community on the designs and color schemes has been very high with over 1,400 votes to date. We are grateful to our collaboration with the SVSU with helping get the word out to teachers, students, parents, and grandparents.

This work is especially important as the date for the removal of the old playgrounds loom... the faster we complete the public outreach and finalize the playground design the sooner we get everything ordered and the new playgrounds can be built!

## Citizen Outreach:

This month there were 13 outreaches to citizens, many of which were follow ups on existing issues, and a few were outreaches regarding recreational opportunities and informational requests. This past month there were two new Public Records Requests from prior requestors.

## A.T. Community and Business Outreach

Planning continues for the July 30 "Bennington Trail-fest" to be held at the Bennington Community Center (Rec Center) from noon to 3 pm. There will be music, local beer, activities, and info tables. Free to the public.

## Lead Lines Outreach:

In coordination with MSK Engineering, additional posts on "contract 4" have been placed on facebook. This is the final contract section for the lead line replacement project.

## 250th Planning:

The Bennington Select Board officially confirmed my role as Bennington's "voice" for 250th planning at the State, Federal, and Regional levels. Work will be starting to ramp up locally to begin planning for the 250th anniversaries of the founding of Vermont and the Battle of Bennington which will culminate in 2027.

## Website Update:

A kickoff meeting was held with Revize, the vendor with whom the town is working with for the website redesign. Revize was selected from 22 firms who responded to the town's request for proposal. A couple of local web developers expressed interest in the work but did not end up submitting proposals. We are currently in the design stage of the new site which will take about another week or two.

## ARPA Projects:

The town maintains a page on the website "ARPA Priorities" that tracks ARPA projects, spending, and remaining balance. As of now, all ARPA funding has been tentatively allocated. Changes to a project's feasibility as staff move forward could still affect remaining ARPA funds.

## Organizational Collaboration:

The town has become an organizational member of CAT TV which allows me to regularly take out their

video equipment to generate content for the town to be played on CAT TV. A new series, "Inside Bennington" is our initial result with episodes airing occasionally. A first episode is out now and another is already in the pipeline.

I will also be working with the Police Department in beginning work on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with various organizations with whom the Police Department has regular interactions. The goal of the MOU is to streamline and improve communications between the police, the various organizations with whom they work, and the community as a whole.

**Outreach to Seniors:**

We regularly do outreach presentations to various groups in the community, but this past month we have had a particular focus on our senior community as we move ahead with planning for the Benn-Hi redevelopment which would include moving the senior center to Benn-Hi once the project is complete. The new space would double the amount of room specific to senior center use, allow greater access to programming already happening in that space, and give opportunities for new programming in the future.

The town will be meeting regularly with seniors to include them in the planning as we move ahead.

**Facebook POST OF THE MONTH:**

I thought our winner would be a post on Willow Park that had 17,800 reach, but at the last minute the post about the Battle Monument being lit in yellow and blue to honor the flag of Ukraine suddenly jumped ahead with over 18,300 reach!

Bennington has a deep historical connection and it shows when anything having to do with our Battle Monument comes up.

The monument was dedicated in 1891 at the 100th anniversary of Vermont Statehood. It is the most visited historic site in the state, and it continues to be the tallest man-made structure in Vermont at 306' tall.

If we could do something like that for a 100th Anniversary... what "big thing" can we do for our 250th anniversary in 2027?

**Post details**

Town of Bennington  
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This just in!!!  
PRESS RELEASE from the ACCD Division of Historic Preservation:  
BENNINGTON MONUMENT TO BE ILLUMINATED IN UKRAINIAN FLAG COLORS...  
[Continue reading](#)

**Performance for your post**

<b>18,365</b> People Reached		
<b>1,564</b> Reactions, Comments & Shares		
932 Like	137 On Post	795 On Shares
280 Love	49 On Post	231 On Shares
5 Haha	2 On Post	3 On Shares
11 Wow	1 On Post	10 On Shares
2 Angry	2 On Post	0 On Shares
155 Comments	18 On Post	137 On Shares
182 Shares	182 On Post	0 On Shares
<b>1,731</b> Post Clicks		
83 Photo views	7 Link clicks	1,641 Other clicks

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

**18,365** People reached    **3,295** Engagements    [Boost post](#)

👍❤️👏 190    18 Comments 182 Shares