

Kathleen Ramsay

From: Kathleen Ramsay
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2018 3:24 PM
To: 'Karen Horn'; Gwynn Zakov
Subject: Legislative Platform - Town of Middlebury Proposed Amendments

Karen and Gwynn,

As a courtesy, I am writing to let you know that the Middlebury Selectboard instructed the Town's voting delegate to propose two amendments to the VLCT Legislative Platform from the floor of the annual meeting. The proposed amendments are as follows:

1. **Municipal Guiding Principles, # 2**, change *“local decision making, including the adoption of fees and taxes; full implementation of charter provisions upon local voters’ adoption, and a home rule amendment to the Vermont Constitution;”* to *“local decision making;”*
2. **1.0 Finance Administration And Intergovernmental Relations (FAIR) , Section 1.01, K-12 Education, #1.**, change *“a simple and transparent education finance system that reduces and reforms the property tax burden over the long term and that more closely links voters’ actions in approving budgets to the taxes they pay to fund their school districts;”* to *“a transparent education finance system that closely links voters’ actions in approving budgets to the taxes they pay to fund their school districts;”*

I look forward to seeing you both at Town Fair and the Annual Meeting.

Thanks!
Kathleen

Kathleen Swingleton Ramsay
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Kathleen Ramsay

From: Kathleen Ramsay
Sent: Thursday, September 13, 2018 2:09 PM
To: 'Karen Horn'; Gwynn Zakov
Cc: 'mcarroll@vlct.org'
Subject: SB Minutes 9-11-18 DRAFT -Excerpt on DRAFT Legislative Platform
Attachments: SB Minutes 9-11-18 DRAFT -Excerpt on DRAFT Legislative Platform.doc

Hi Karen and Gwynn,

Just forwarding along comments on the VLCT Legislative Platform from the Middlebury Selectboard meeting on Tuesday, September 11.

The video of the meeting is available online at: <http://middleburycommunitytv.org/>, with the discussion of the VLCT platform beginning at about 1 hour in.

I'll be getting together amendment forms and forwarding them to you in the next week or so.

Thanks,

Kathleen

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**Selectboard Meeting
Community Meeting Room – Ilsley Library
Tuesday, September 11, 2018
Meeting Minutes**

DRAFT

Subject to approval by the Selectboard

EXCERPT

Members Present: Brian Carpenter, Laura Asermily, Lindsey Fuentes-George, Victor Nuovo, Nick Artim, Heather Seeley and Farhad Khan.

Staff Present: Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay and Director of Public Works Planning Dan Werner.

Others Present: State Representatives Amy Sheldon and Robin Scheu, and Becky Dayton and Karen Duguay (arrived later) of the Economic Health Committee. Senator Chris Bray arrived later in the meeting.

The meeting was televised on MCTV by Jim Corbett.

7. Review and Discussion of the Vermont League of Cities & Towns' Legislative Platform for the Upcoming Legislative Session in preparation for VLCT's Annual Business Meeting on Wednesday, October 3, 2018

Ramsay said the notice was sent out to the Town's list of over 700 e-mail addresses and two replies were received; one from Victoria DeWind regarding the publication of notice for public meetings and from Jack and Chip Mayer about incorporating the 350 Resolution in its entirety into the VLCT Municipal Policy.

John Flowers, speaking on behalf of the Vermont Press Association as past President and interim Board member, they are opposed to the proposed increase from 5 to 10 days for posting of draft minutes; and the provision regarding legal on-line notices bypassing print notices. He said there are people who may not use computers, but faithfully look to that portion of the newspaper for hearing notices. Carpenter asked why the objection to the 10 days for draft minutes, and Flowers said that many papers with limited staff can't cover all the town meetings, so they rely on the town websites and the minutes for basic information. Artim asked why the VLCT was proposing extending it, and Flowers said that some small towns have limited staff and limited hours to produce the minutes in the 5 days, but he said they could post the highlights of motions and items that were approved and then submit a complete set of minutes later. Seeley said when she did minutes for the DRB, they used to produce "mini-minutes" first and then a complete set later on.

Nuovo said he questioned #2 regarding local decision making and the voters being able to adopt Charter changes without sending them to the State. He approves of local independence, but he feels the Charter is the Constitution of the Town and the Town is not sovereignty, it is a government within the State, so feels approval by the Legislature is

recognition of this fact. He said as it is he would not vote for this with that item in there and feels it goes too far in local control.

Senator Bray joined the Board, and said he served 2 years on the Senate Government Operations Committee and they reviewed dozens of charter changes, and in the time he's been there none have ever been declined. He asked if Middlebury had every brought a Charter change to the Legislature and have it declined. Ramsay said this is a VLCT Policy that is being discussed now, and all Middlebury Charter changes submitted have been approved. Bray said it's a major shift in the way Charter changes are made and he wonders what prompted it. Nuovo said he feels it's a system that has been established and Charters should be approved by a higher level of government, and finds the VLCT policy contradicts that.

Representative Amy Sheldon had a concern about the statement in the Transportation Section about not using Transportation Fund money for Agency of Natural Resource (ANR) projects, and thought it wasn't clear. Ramsay said she thought that the VLCT position meant that there were more transportation projects than the Transportation Fund can cover and that water quality projects will need alternative sources of revenue.

Representative Robin Scheu said she was looking under Public Safety and Law Enforcement and said the Legislature has passed some bills in the last few years regarding fair and impartial policing and systemic race issues, and it would be nice if somewhere those issues were addressed in the VLCT Policy.

Senator Bray referred to Section 5.01:3 regarding a statewide authority for collection of per parcel fees for implementation of clean water projects, and said in previous testimony regarding a similar separate collection authority for another agency, it was determined that there was no advantage to establishing a separate authority when you already had a fully staffed agency to handle it.

Ramsay ran through the comments and suggestions made:

- Nuovo wanted to revise item #2 so it ended after the first comma, so it would read simply "local decision-making;"
- Sheldon wanted clarity on what ANR projects means and what the intent of not using Transportation funds for them is.
- Scheu is looking for ways to suggest VLCT to support fair and impartial policing and address systemic race issues.
- Bray says there's no advantage to setting up statewide authority for centralized collection of impervious surface per-parcel fees.
- Flowers was opposed increasing the deadline for posting minutes to 10 business days and bypassing the requirement for a printed form of notice.

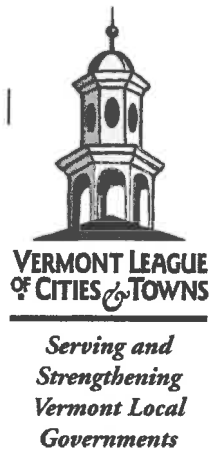
Carpenter said he can't figure out why VLCT can't get the draft policy to towns sooner to allow more time for review and comment to make sure the policy actually mirrors how we feel. He said he'd like to propose that if they can't agree to amend those items we have concerns with or pull them out for this year, we would abstain from voting in hopes we could be more participative in the future with better notice.

Asermily said she supported Carpenters proposal, and that she really did appreciate all that VLCT does for towns and what a wonderful resource they are. She also had some recommended language changes. She suggests in Education, on page 2, 1.01:1 where it says *"a simple and transparent education finance system that reduces and reforms the property tax burden over the long term and that more closely links voters' actions in approving budgets to the taxes they pay to fund their school districts;"* be changed to read *"a transparent education finance system that closely links voters' actions in approving budgets to the taxes they pay to fund their school districts;"*

Asermily also was looking for an addition in Section 3.05 Safe Driving Initiatives, regarding multiple users of the road and support for standards for safe commuting for all road users, such as better shoulders, better road stripping standards, so thought it might be a point to bring up. Bray thought that was already covered in another section.

Artim made the motion to close discussion and to instruct Voting Delegate Kathleen Ramsay to bring these recommended changes to the VLCT Annual Meeting. Khan seconded the motion. The motion carried with 7 in favor. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ramsay said she would send all the recommended changes to VLCT in advance of the October 3rd meeting.



September 14, 2018

Town of Middlebury Selectboard
77 Main Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear Middlebury Selectboard Members:

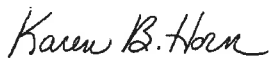
Thank you for taking the time to review the draft Municipal Policy of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT). We appreciate your input to this draft which, when adopted by the membership, will guide the actions of the VLCT Board of Directors and advocacy staff over the course of the next biennium.

I do want to clarify a few potential misunderstandings regarding the draft policy. The VLCT Municipal Policy is a catalogue of municipal priorities for legislation that is written, amended, and approved by the full member cities and towns of VLCT. It is the only comprehensive statement of priorities reflective entirely of local officials' priorities. As the statewide association of cities and towns, we are proud to pursue those priorities in the State House, with agencies of government, and to our Congressional delegation. Development of the policy begins before the legislative session is concluded, and that was particularly true this year as the Special Legislative Session continued until June 29.

In the *Weekly Legislative Report* dated April 6, we first asked for local officials to voice their interest in serving on one of the five VLCT policy committees that develop the draft municipal policy (copy of article attached) and we included a committee nomination form with that request. Middlebury Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay agreed to serve on the Transportation Policy Committee as she has for several years. VLCT Board president Dom Cloud appointed committee chairs and vice chairs at the May 8 Board meeting. Letters confirming committee members' appointment to a policy committee were sent out the last week of May. Initial policy committee meetings -were held on June 29 (Quality of Life and Environment), July 9 (FAIR), July 11 (Water Quality), July 16 (Transportation), and July 18 (Public Safety). Following the incorporation of comments and corrections from committee members, we mailed the complete draft policy to members on August 8. The VLCT Board met and reviewed the policy as well as amendment proposals we had received to date on September 6. The revised policy will be voted on at the annual meeting, October 4, 2018, at approximately 1:30 at the DoubleTree in South Burlington where, each member city and town has a vote.

We look forward to Middlebury's participation in the annual meeting. We hope that in the coming years more Middlebury officials are able to volunteer and serve on our policy committees. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at khorn@vlct.org or 800-649-7915 ext. 1912.

Sincerely,


Karen Horn, Director

Sponsor of:

VLCT Employment
Resource and Benefits
Trust, Inc.

VLCT Municipal
Assistance Center

VLCT Property and
Casualty Intermunicipal
Fund, Inc.

VLCT's Municipal Policy Committees [April 6, 2018]

Even though there is probably nearly a month to go before the 2018 legislative session ends, VLCT is already looking to the coming campaign season as well as the new biennium that begins next January. Over the course of the summer and fall, we work with committees to develop policies for the next legislative biennium – and we need your help!

Vermont is a Dillon's Rule state – that is, municipalities may only do those things that the legislature specifically allows them to do. Thus, until local governments achieve some level of self-governance authority, legislative actions dictate what cities, towns and villages may do – or may not. VLCT's five committees develop policy recommendations that are important to municipal government discharging their responsibilities. The committees – Finance and Intergovernmental Relations, Transportation, Public Safety, Quality of Life and Environment, and Water Quality – are only as good as their members, the dedicated and innovative local officials who serve on them! Please join us to develop action items that the membership of VLCT will consider and adopt for implementation in the 2019 -2020 legislative biennium. Topics include finance, municipal governance, clerks and treasurers; law enforcement, emergency management, ambulance service and fire safety; land use, the environment, health care, quality of life; stormwater, local highways, “complete streets,” capital funding; wastewater, stormwater, combined sewer overflow, and “waters of the state.”