CITY OF MONTPELIER MONTPELIER, VERMONT

Agenda for City Council Meeting
Wednesday, October 24, 2012
06:00 P.M.

1) Call to Order by the Mayor

2) 12-261. Roundtable Budget Discussion

   a) This portion of the meeting will take approximately one hour.

3) BUSINESS PORTION OF THE MEETING BEGINS ?

4) 12-262. General Business and Appearances

5) 12-263. Consideration of the Consent Agenda:

   a) Consideration of the minutes from the September 26th and October 10th, 2012 City Council Meetings.

   b) Approve request from the Montpelier Business Association for the lifting of parking fees for the holidays in downtown Montpelier from December 10th through December 24th; as in the past, vehicles parked for more than two hours may be ticketed. (The span of time is technically one day more than usually requested, but because Christmas falls on a Tuesday this year, it is anticipated there will be lots of last-minute shoppers.)

   c) Approve request from Matt Williams, Event Director for Onion River Sports, for the closure of Langdon Street from 6:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon on Sunday, October 28th, for their "Autumn Onion 5k Costume Race". The request also includes their use of 3 feet of roadway edge on Elm Street, State Steet, and Bailey Avenue. The Police Department is holding the Parade Permit Application pending Council's decision on the street closure.

d) Approve increasing the City's Capitalization Threshold for fixed assets from $5,000 to $10,000 effective July 1, 2011. Our Capitalization Threshold for equipment and furnishings has been $5,000 since 1994 (City Ordinances, Chapter 2 Administration, Article III, Section IV). This means that equipment and furniture purchases over $5,000 are recorded as capital assets and depreciated over the life of the asset. By updating this policy to the more usual $10,000 level, we will avoid fixed asset accounting on small purchases. The Finance Director and the city auditors recommend making this change for the 2012 fiscal year.

e) Approve the quote from WASCO of Wells, Maine, in the amount of $17,674 for the skylight replacement project at the Fire Station. This quote is approximately $3,000 over budget but as noted in the attached bid tab from the City's Assessor and Fire Chief, WASCO is the only manufacturer/vendor in this area.

f) Payroll and Bills

6) <u>12-264. Additional appointments to the City's newly-formed "Charter Revision" Committee.</u>

a) Staff initially advertised to seek citizens interested in serving on a seven-member committee to analyze the contents of the City's Charter regarding anachronisms and items to be deleted, amended or added. It's the Council's intent that membership would represent the three voting districts.

b) At their September 12th meeting, the following three members were appointed: Michael Doyle, District 3; Jonathan Williams, Jr., District 1; and Earl Fechter, District 3.

c) Staff re-advertised as Council wanted to allow additional time to seek up to four more members. As a result, the following three individuals have now applied: Elizabeth Dodge, District 3; Nancy Sherman, District 2; and Page Guertin, District 2.

d) Recommendation: Opportunity to meet applicants; appointment of the additional three applicants.

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a) Bill Finnegan resigned last summer; he and his wife moved to the UK. His 4-year term was set to expire in June, 2016.

b) Staff advertised, but no one has applied until this week. Chair Roy Schiff notified staff that Jeannette Williams has been attending some of their meetings and was interested in serving. Ms. William's e-mail, requesting appointment, is attached.

c) Recommendation: Opportunity to meet Jeanette Williams; appoint her to fill the unexpired 4-year term until June of 2016.

8) 12-266. Planning and Development Department Report

a) Planning and Development Director Gwen Hallsmith will review the Department's activities, programs and priorities and their relation to the City Council's established goals.

b) Ms. Hallsmith will also discuss relevant sections of the Citizen's Budget Committee Report.

c) Recommendation: Receive report; discussion; direction to staff, if needed.

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b) The steps to achieve this particular goal were listed as follows:

1) Create a hospitable environment for residential growth

2) Follow-through with recommendations of Barriers to Housing

Committee

3) Consider public investment in infrastructure to generate housing

4) Review impact of sprinkler ordinance on housing

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1) Change narrative and present Montpelier as business friendly through brochures, communications and marketing

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a) Recommendation: Opportunity to ask questions of staff and discuss;

staff is seeking approval to move forward with the Grant Application.

12) 12-270. Receive report regarding the Recreation Department. * On February 22nd, the City Council asked the City Manager and Superintendent of Schools to prepare a report regarding the operations and future organizational structure of the Recreation Department. * The Manager and Superintendant have prepared the report. * Recommendation: Review report with Manager; schedule meeting with School Board and Recreation Board to discus;. other direction to staff as necessary.

13) 12-271. Council Reports

14) 12-272. Mayor's Report

15) 12-273. Report by the City Clerk

16) 12-274. Status Reports by the City Manager

17) 12-275. Agenda Reports by the City Manager

18) Adjournment

Sandy Pitonyak

From: ORS Events [events@onionriver.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2012 4:21 PM
To: Sandy Pitonyak
Subject: Autumn Onion 5k Information

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Sandy,

Thanks so much for your help. Here's the info for the race.

Autumn Onion 5k Costume Race
Starts and finishes at Onion River Sports
All proceeds to benefit the Dirt Divas Program of Vermont Works for Women

Registration opens at 8:30 am
Start is at 10:00 am
Everything will be wrapped up by 12:00 pm

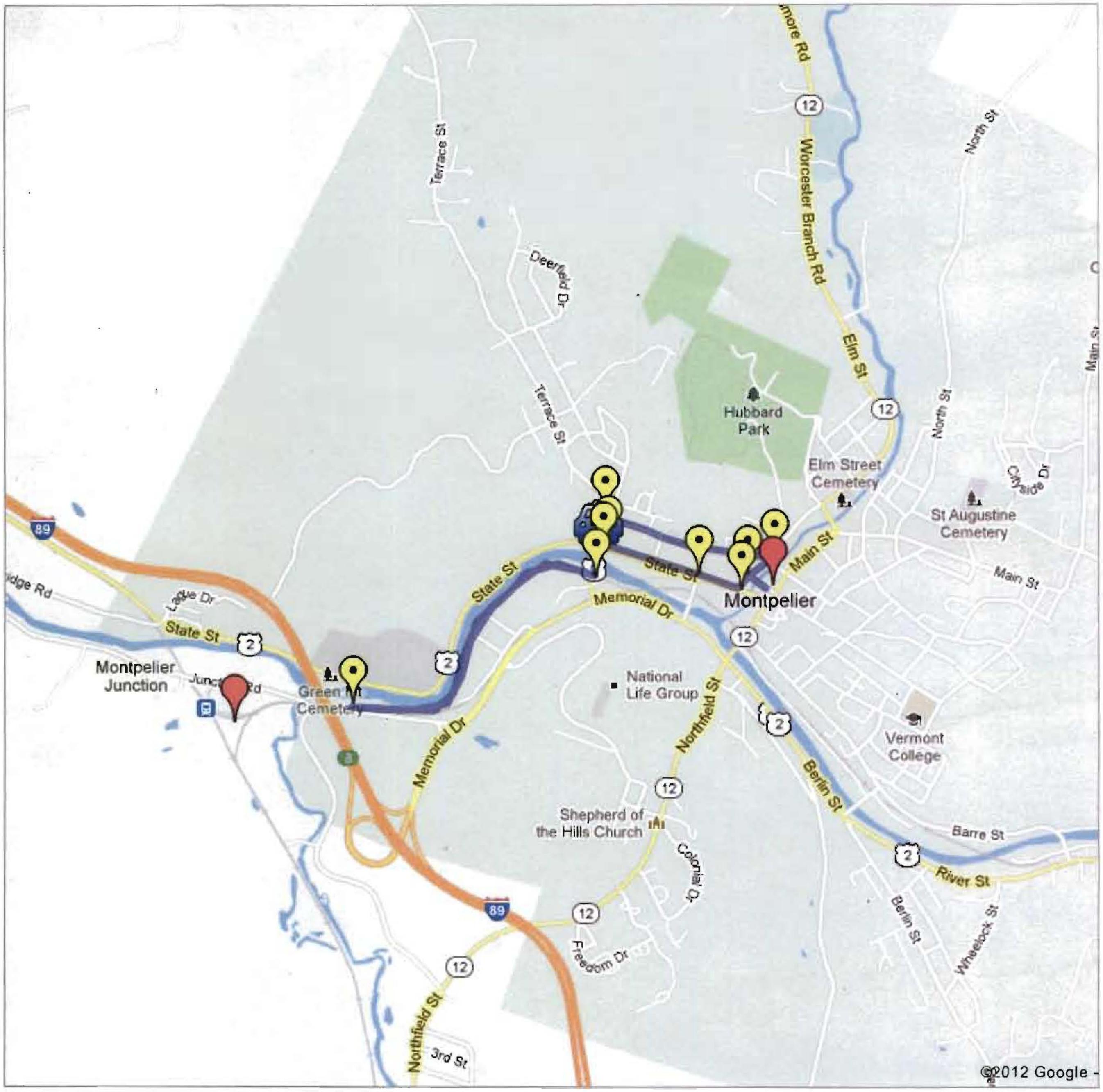
Parade Times: 7:00 am to 11:00 am

The race starts at Onion River Sports on Langdon Street, takes Elm Street to State to Baily, does an out and back on the Bike Path, and returns to Onion River Sports the same way.

Course Map:
https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?vps=2&hl=en&ie=UTF8&oe=UTF8&msa=0&msid=201486812496275113955.000490da683c0b891f37c

Matt Williams
Event Director
Onion River Sports
20 Langdon Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
802-229-9409
www.onionriver.com

Google



Autumn Onion 5k Halloween Race Map

Public · 2 Collaborators · 2,379 views
Created on Sep 22, 2010 · By Carrie · Updated Oct 4
0

Placemark 1

Start/Registration
at Onion River Sports

Race Route 3.1

Office of the City Manager
City Hall - 39 Main Street, Montpelier, VT 05602
Telephone: (802) 223-9502
Fax: (802) 223-9519
E-Mail: wfraser@montpelier-vt.org

Please include the following ad with City of Montpelier notices on Monday, September 17th, and Thursday, October 4th. Thank you!

CITY OF MONTPELIER
"Montpelier Charter Revision" Committee

The Montpelier City Council continues to seek citizens interested in serving on a seven-member committee to analyze the contents of the City's Charter regarding anachronisms and items to be deleted, amended or added. Membership shall represent the three voting districts. Council expects to receive a report of this committee's findings in August of 2013. Three members were appointed on September 12th, but Council would like to allow additional time to see if up to four more members could be appointed, especially representation from District 2. Please submit a letter of interest by noon on Thursday, October 18th, to the City Manager's Office, 39 Main Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602, or via e-mail to spitonyak@montpelier-vt.org. City Council will make these appointments at their October 24th, 2012 meeting; applicants will be notified and encouraged to attend. All municipal meetings are accessible to people with disabilities and are held in accordance with the public meeting and public records laws.

Office of the City Manager

Sandy Pitonyak

From: Page Guertin [pguertin@myfairpoint.net]
Sent: Monday, October 15, 2012 7:28 PM
To: Sandy Pitonyak
Subject: charter review committee

Hi Sandy - I recently heard that the charter review committee is still short of people and I'm willing to volunteer for that job - hopefully it's not too late. I am a "recovering" computer systems analyst, which means I designed and wrote computer systems to help people do their jobs, so I would bring a pretty analytical way of looking at things to the process. As a newcomer to Montpelier (we're here totally by choice - both retired) I'm really interested in what makes this town tick, and hoping to help keep it on its path, so the process of charter review seems like a good place to start.

Page Guertin
459 North St.
229-7707

Sandy Pitonyak

From: Nancy Sherman [nsherman44@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2012 3:54 PM
To: William Fraser; Sandy Pitonyak
Subject: Review of the City Charter

Hello Bill
I am interested in being appointed to the committee that will review the City Charter. I believe my experience as a City Council member for 5 terms qualifies me for this position.

Thank you,
Nancy Sherman
20 College Street
Montpelier VT 05602
nsherman44@gmail.com

Sandy Pitonyak

From: Elizabeth Dodge [vtdodge@aol.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 22, 2012 1:56 PM
To: Sandy Pitonyak
Subject: Charter Committee

-----Original Message-----
From: Elizabeth Dodge <vtdodge@aol.com>
To: spitonyak <spitonyak@montpelier-vt.org>
Sent: Fri, Sep 21, 2012 8:33 pm
Subject: Charter Change Committee

Sandy:

I would like to be considered for appointment to the Charter Change Committee. Community involvement is part of my life, and now that I am no longer chair of the MSAC Advisory Board I have the time to devote to working on this project. I served on the Berlin charter committee some years ago, so I have some background. Other boards I have been on include the original Washington County Community Action, Washington Youth Service Bureau (chair), Berlin Board of Civil Authority (chair), New Motor Vehicle Arbitration Board, and the Woodbury Associates Board of Trustees (while I was a student there).
These activities plus my many year as a legal secretary/paralegal I believe qualify me for the committee.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Dodge
28 Freedom Drive
Montpelier VT 05602
223-6444
vtdodge@aol.com

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DATE: October 17, 2012

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Sandra Gallup, Finance Director

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR FY 14 BUDGET WORK

INTRODUCTION

Montpelier citizens have supported our budgets strongly at the ballot box in the past. The five year average is 75%.

YEAR	VOTER APPROVAL
★ FY 13	70%
★ FY 12	75%
★ FY 11	73%
★ FY 10	74%
★ FY 09	77%

	FY13	FY12	FY11	FY10	FY 09	AVERAGE
Tax Rate Increases (Municipal)	3.2%	1.4%	0.8%	6.3%	2.9%	2.9 %
Median Residential Tax Bill Increase (Municipal)	3.0%	1.2%	9.5%	6.9%	3.3%	4.8%
Consumer Price Index (Sept. 2011-Sept. 2012)	2.0%	3.8%	.3%	1.5%	5.4%	2.5%
Montpelier Median Adjusted Gross Income (% change) – Vt Tax Dept.			2.2%	-.6%	2.4%	
VT Median Household Income (% change)			3.6%	-5.8%	-.6%	
City Employee Cost of Living Adjustments	0-2.5%	0-3.5%	1.5-3.5%	3 %	2.75%	2.25%
Unemployment Rate	5.3%	4.1%	5.3%	6.0%	3.4%	4.8%
All Budgeted Expenditures (% Incr) including grant/revenue supported activities	2.3%	4.7%	4.3%	6.5%	5.6%	4.7%
Property Tax Dollars Raised (% Incr). Voter approved net tax dollars.	3.9%	1.9%	3.0%	5.3%	6.6%	4.1%

Note: Every 1% increase in the tax rate adds almost 1 cent to the current tax rate and raises an additional $83,150

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT-CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In FY13 the Council increased the Capital Improvement Program budget from $1,150,000 to $1,677,915. $662,500 in bond proceeds provided funding for this increase. The City Council has two goals specific to Capital Improvements:

Goal: *Maintain all city streets, bridges, sidewalks and other infrastructure (tennis courts, parks, rec paths, etc.) in (at minimum) fair or good condition as per appropriate rating indices.*

Goal: Make significant progress on three major outstanding capital projects: District Heat, Transit Center and Montpelier/Berlin Bike Path.

The City Manager is preparing a draft of a multi-year capital improvement plan which reflects recent information concerning the cost of repairing city streets.

EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT SUPPORT

In FY13, the amount budgeted for equipment replacement support from $357,962 in FY12 to $808,500. This includes a $350,000 fire truck replacement which will be paid for by grant and bond proceeds. The City Manager has recommended that funding levels for equipment need to be restored in future years to maintain realistic replacement schedules.

TRENDS AFFECTING FY 14 OPERATING BUDGET –

REVENUE TRENDS – LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH WITH THE PRESENT TAX AND FEE SCHEDULES

Property Taxes: The Assessor believes the City's Grand List will not see any significant growth in the next year so there is not a large, built-in opportunity to bring in more tax dollars without increasing rates.

The FY12 Budget had $25,000 to fund a reappraisal for the City's business property tax. This reappraisal was not conducted due to very high bid responses to our request for proposal for these services. This reappraisal was expected to increase business property tax revenue.

For FY 12, Montpelier has the 7th^{h} (6th highest in the previous year) municipal tax rate in the state (Barre City, Springfield, Rutland City, Windsor, Brattleboro, and Newport City are higher).

When the education tax rates are included in the total, Montpelier has the 9th highest residential tax rate in the state as compared to the 5th highest the previous year. Our FY13 actual tax rate remains lower (by 2.4 cents) than the FY11 tax rate.

A comparison of 12 somewhat similar communities shows that the combination of tax rates and residential values results in Montpelier having the highest average residential tax bills within the comparison group.

In that same comparison group, Montpelier has the second highest percentage of both number of residential parcels and also residential homestead values. Within that same group, Montpelier has the highest ratio of jobs per capita. When broadening the comparisons to the state's largest 20 communities, Montpelier has the second highest ration of jobs to residents. Only Williston has a higher ratio. This means that more of Montpelier's tax burden is based on residential properties than all but one of the comparison communities while Montpelier has the highest amount of non-resident employment activity among the comparison communities.

The amount of delinquent property taxes has not changed substantially during the last few years. On June 30, 2012, $128,000 (about .7%) of taxes were past due. This compares to $141,146 in the previous year. Delinquent water and sewer fees the end of FY12 totaled $170,000 which is $3000 higher than the level of unpaid water and sewer bills in FY11.

State PILOT: The FY 12 PILOT funds increased to $964,912 (a $47,000 increase). At this time we do not have information on FY 13 (and therefore, FY14 projections) State PILOT funds. PILOT is 8.7% of the total General Fund Revenues.

Fees Charged for Services: Fee revenue currently totals $620,000 and is 5.6% of General Fund Revenue. Much of this revenue is based on demand for services which can be difficult predict. Ambulance Call Charges brought in $353,000 in FY 12 and make up 58% of the budgeted fees charged for services. The Building Permits/State Contracts Plans Review Revenue brought in $90,000 in FY12 which is higher than $24,500 in FY 11. We budget $70,000 for Building Permits fees.

Grant Revenue

Montpelier has increased its grant revenue in recent years.

Fund Received:	FY10	FY11	FY12
Federal COPS & Police Grants	78,800	36,583	59,780
Federal Fire/EMS Grants	23,800	71,930	2,869
State Town Highway/Bridges Grant	25,400	297,524	-
Planning Grant			4,500
State Community Justice Grants	108,800	187,305	196,407
Storm Damage/Flood events			948,000
Flood Mitigation			464,000
Carr Lot			65,000
District Heat		13,770	1,321,000

REACH	173,908	331,558	260,000

Note: In FY12 Federal/ARRA grants funded Capital Improvement Projects of $138,500 in the Sewer Fund.

Alternative Revenue Sources/City Services Policy

"City agencies and non-profit entities that provide services to residents of Montpelier and surrounding towns shall, as a condition of receiving funds from the City of Montpelier, ensure that per capita costs of services are reasonably apportioned between the City of Montpelier and Montpelier participants, and other communities and non-resident participants." The City Council approved a new policy in July guiding city services. A report on current practices was provided to the City Council on September 28th.

EXPENSE TRENDS/CONCERNS

Consumer Price Index – The Consumer Price Index: Sept 2012 was 2% higher than Sept 2011.

Salaries & Wages & Benefits: All union contracts are settled for FY13 & FY14. The Police Union cost of living adjustment is 2% but there are adjustments to the step schedule which increase employees' pay who are in the middle of the step schedule (6 to 10 year range). The DPW Union contract has a 2.0-3.5 % cost of living adjustment that will be determined by the CPI. Personnel Plan cost of living adjustment is not yet been proposed.

A 1% increase in salaries is $45,500 (includes OT) for the General Fund which, with other related costs, is .66 cents on the tax rate. Note: FY13 Cost of Living Adjustments were: 2% Personnel Plan, 2.5% DPW Union, 1% Police Union, 0% Fire Union

Health Insurance: · In January 2012, the City changed to a BCBS high(er) out-of- pocket deductible with a funding level of$4000/$8000. The City provides a $3500/$7000 HRA to help with the high deductible. The City continues to pay approx 95% of single and 80% of 2-person and family plan costs (includes HRA funding). Health Insurance program costs are difficult to predict with HRA funding dependent on employee medical needs. We projected only a 1% increase in costs over 2011 when we made decisions to move to this plan and we locked in a second year premium increase maximum of 15%. We have been told that based on our first year's claims history we may be close to that maximum. I am projecting a $129,000 increase (approximately 12%) in Health Insurance at this time.

There are many proposed changes to health insurance programs in Vermont, but, because of our number of employees exceed 100, we will not be joining the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange. Based on the current schedule, our insurance options will not be affected until the single-payer system is introduced in 2018.

Salaries & Wages Projections: All Union contracts are settled for FY14:
Assume increases for DPW 4%, Police 3%, Fire/EMS 3.25% and Admin/Others 2.75% for cost of living adjustments plus steps.

Total Projected Salary increases		$196,500
Add:	FICA/MEDI	15,000
	Workers Comp	6,600
	Pension	12,100
Total Projected increase in Salary and related costs		$230,200

Other Employee-related increases

Health Insurance – 12% Increase	$129,300
Dental Insurance -5% Increase	2,500
Workers Comp 15% Increase	31,950
Total Projected Other Employee-related Increases	$163,750

Total Projected Employee Wages and Benefit Increase $394,000

The General Fund has $74% of Employee Salaries.
Therefore, **$291,500** of the increase will be in the General Fund for salary and benefits.

Other Operating Cost Increases – General Fund
Purchased Services increases 5% **$16,500**
Scheduled Debt Payment Increase **$72,000**

Total General Fund Projected Increases in Costs: $380,000
This is a 3.4% increase in the expenditure budget.

Also, the FY13 Budget includes use of $74,500 Fund Balance. To reduce/eliminate this source of funding would increase the additional property tax funds by $74,500.

Unless additional savings and/or revenue could be found, the additional $454,500 ($380,000 additional costs + $74,500 reduction in fund balance use) requires a 5.4% (5.4 cents) increase in the municipal tax rate.

Energy Costs: The City is always looking for opportunities to make energy conservation improvements and lock into fixed fuel prices when the market is favorable. The District Heat project will help control our costs for heating our downtown facilities. Energy conservation improvements will be made in City Hall and the DPW Garage in Fy13.

Todd Law, Director of Public Works will provide projection for energy costs for FY14.

The Street Light Committee has proposed a plan for new energy-efficient street lighting and a reduction in the number of street lights. The timeline for the completion of this project has not been determined.

The City installed solar panels at the Wastewater Treatment Plant in the spring of 2010. It appears that approximately $12,000 of electricity will be produced each year and will be applied to the Treatment Plant's electrical use.

Flood Damages and Flood Mitigation: We continue to work with State and Federal agencies to obtain the maximum level of grant funding for city infrastructure damaged in the 2011 flood events. $948,000 in grant reimbursement has been received and there are additional projects that will be completed in FY14. These projects will receive 80% federal reimbursement.

$464,000 in Federal/State funds have been received to help pay for the piping warm water from the wastewater treatment to the Winooski River to reduce the threat of ice jams.

The City is pursuing other solutions to reduce the threat of flooding in its downtown areas. Even with substantial financial support from federal and state agencies, the local share of the cost of flood mitigation projects could be in the six figure range.

FUND BALANCE

The City's Fund Balance Policy states that the City Council "develop a multi-year plan to achieve a minimum unassigned fund balance equal to 15% of the budgeted General Fund expenditures." As of June 30, 2011 the unassigned fund balance was 10.7% ($1,116,401/$10,376,887) of the budgeted expenditures. This $1,116,401 fund balance will be reduced by $124,275 (FY12) and $74,500 (FY13) due to decisions made to use prior year fund balances to offset property tax revenue in the FY12 and FY13 budgets. In addition, it appears that there will be a projected $50,000 reduction in the unassigned fund balance due to expenditures exceeding revenues for the 2012 fiscal year. The FY12 audit report will be completed in December and will have final fund balance information.

DEBT

The Council approved a Debt Management Policy in September 2011 which helps guide the decisions regarding borrowing in FY14 and beyond. There appears to be ability to borrow up to $1.2 million in FY14 within the City's Debt Management Policy.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND EQUIPMENT PLAN

The CIP Committee is working on a plan to set funding levels for the next 10+ years.

CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FY14 BUDGET

With limited opportunities to increase revenue and continued uncertainties in health insurance and energy costs, the FY14 budget process will provide challenges similar to the ones experienced in recent years. Despite these challenges, it is important to build a budget that supports the goals and priorities established by the Council.

To help us begin the FY 14 Budget process, please complete the following questionnaire and return to the City Manager by Monday, October 22nd

1). LEVEL OF SERVICES:

a). NEW OR EXPANDED SERVICES

Given our current fiscal constraints, are there any services that we should be doing that we are not doing or any services that may need to be expanded?
____ Yes ____ No
If yes, please identify the new or expanded services below:

b.) CUTS IN SERVICE: CITY SERVICE, PROGRAM OR PROJECT REDUCTIONS, ELIMINATIONS OR TRANSFERRED-If cuts in City services are required, what City services, programs or projects, if any, do you feel could be eliminated, reduced or provided by another organization?

2). PROPERTY TAX/BUDGET TARGET: Do you have a property tax or budget target for this year's budget?

3).GENERAL COMMENTS
Please make any other comments or suggestions that you have about the upcoming FY 14 Budget. Are there areas in the budget that you would like to see maintained at the current level to support City Council goals and/or the interests in the community?

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
City Hall - 39 Main Street, Montpelier, VT 05602
Telephone: (802) 223-9502
Fax: (802) 223-9519
E-Mail: wfraser@montpelier-vt.org

May 24, 2012

The Times-Argus
Att: Classifieds

Please insert the following with City of Montpelier notices on Monday, May 28th, and Monday, June 4th, 2012.

CITY OF MONTPELIER
Conservation Commission Vacancy

The City of Montpelier is looking for citizens interested in filling a 4-year term set to expire on June 25th. Letters of interest and/or resumes should be submitted to the Office of the City Manager, City Hall - 39 Main Street, Montpelier (or by e-mailing spitonyak@montpelier-vt.org) by noon on Thursday, June 7th. The City Council will make this appointment their meeting on Wednesday, June 13th, 2012. Applicants are encouraged to attend; all meeting rooms and facilities in City Hall are handicapped accessible. Further information may also be obtained by contacting Commission Chair Roy Schiff: 223-7214.

William J. Fraser
City Manager

Sandy Pitonyak

From: Jeanie Williams [jraewilliams@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 10:56 PM
To: roy.schiff@aya.yale.edu; Sandy Pitonyak
Subject: Re: Conservation Commission

Hello Sandy,
I was away from my computer this afternoon, so I may not have made it in time to get on the next agenda. Regardless, I am interested in joining the Conservation Commission, even if official appointment must be delayed by several weeks.

My background is in ecology and education, and I have been teaching biology and environmental science courses at the Community College of Vermont for seven years. I served on the Conservation Commission when I lived in Richmond, Vermont, and found it to be a rewarding experience.

Montpelier has been my home for about five years so have familiarity with the town and its resources. I am very interested in civic engagement and welcome the opportunity to serve Montpelier.

Sincerely,
Jeanette Williams

From: royschiff12@gmail.com [mailto:royschiff12@gmail.com] **On Behalf Of** Roy Schiff
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 12:23 PM
To: Sandy Pitonyak
Subject: Conservation Commission

Sandy,

Jeanie Williams has attended some of our meetings and is interested in joining the group. I belive this will fill our last vacancy. She will be emailing you a letter of interest shortly.

Roy

FEMA 2012 Community Resilience

Innovation Challenge

Application Form:

Please provide typed responses to all questions below. Completed applications should be submitted to the Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation per the instructions on the last page.

General Information:

1. **Name and Primary Mission of the Agency, Association, Organization, or Group (Public or Private Sector) applying for Challenge funding**:

   a. Official Name:

      City of Montpelier Department of Planning and Community Development

   b. Mission or Function (*maximum 100 words/600 characters*):

   Mission: *To serve the community by facilitating the creation and preservation of a healthy, safe, sustainable, and high quality living environment through the management of an effective, on-going planning and implementation process.*

2. **Program/Project Point of Contact** (by submitting this application, the point of contact confirms that they represent the implementing organization and will comply with the terms of the 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge):

   a. Name: Gwendolyn Hallsmith

   b. Title: Planning and Community Development Director

   c. Organization: City of Montpelier

   d. Mailing Address

      Address line 1: 39 Main Street

Address line 2: City Hall

City, State, Zip: Montpelier, VT 05602

e. Phone number(s): (802) 223 9506

f. Email address: ghallsmith@montpelier-vt.org

g. Web site: **http://www.montpelier-vt.org/**

Program/Project Information:

1. **Program/Project Name** (*please do not use acronyms*):

   Montpelier Capitol Area Neighborhood Crisis and Disaster Training Program

2. **Please provide a two sentence summary of your 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge program/project**. This description should accurately and succinctly convey the essence of the project. Should your project be selected to receive 2012 Challenge funds, this description will be used for recognition and press purposes. (*maximum 75 words/450 characters*)

   The City of Montpelier Capitol Area Neighborhoods (CAN) was established in 2008 in response to the Economic Crisis. The City of Montpelier in Association with the CAN neighborhood groups will be conducting a series of workshops which will prepare neighborhoods for short and long tern disruptions in food systems, emergency preparedness and response with a focus on training community leaders how to mobilize volunteers before, during, and after a disaster.

3. **Is the proposed program/project**: (*please check one*)

   ☒ an Expansion of an Existing Initiative **or** ☐ a New Collaboration

4. **Program Coverage Area**

a. Please indicate the estimated local population (amount of people) that may benefit from the project: 8,000

b. Identify specific segments of the community that will be targeted, *if applicable* (e.g., youth, those with access and functional needs, non-English speaking):

The focus will be on cross generational training connecting the most vulnerable in the community (the elderly and the disabled) with the most capable (the youth and community leader) in order to ensure a cohesive community response in the face of disaster or crisis.

5. **Please summarize your 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge program/project touching on each of the points below.**

a. Describe the scope of your proposal, including how it may impact or contribute to community resiliency.

This award will allow the City of Montpelier to assist the CAN (Capitol Area Neighborhoods) Network with a series of workshops for the purpose of empowering neighborhoods and our neighbors with the skills needed to prepare for and respond to crisis.

The award will allow the Neighborhood to bring in the technical expertise for the workshops to ensure that the most effective and current techniques are demonstrated. Workshops will focus on community building and communication, physical preparedness for potential disasters, and teaching the next generation fortify a sense of community.

Describe what is innovative about your proposal.

This proposal is innovative because it maximizes an existing base of social networks, social capital, and community involvement that is a cornerstone of Vermont culture. It embraces CAN's innovative founding and mission in conjunction with the City's dedicated, proactive, and progressive citizenry. Workshops will not only help prepare for floods and other challenges Montpelier has faced in the past, but also target long term disruptions in the delivery of food, transportation, heat and electricity.

b. Who will you collaborate with to achieve the goals of the project?

The critical collaboration of this program will be between the CAN group and the City of Montpelier Municipal government. The City already is invested in helping CAN operate effectively by allowing neighborhoods, through their designated Leaders, to have their concerns addressed by municipal employees. The city will administer this grant and help the CAN Leaders ensure its effective use. Beyond the CAN-Municipal partnership, many organizations will be tapped to provide the workshops; for example, FoodWorks is a local nonprofit that can be used to educate participants about food security.

c. How will you sustain this project and how could it be replicated in other communities?

We expect the skills and information acquired through this grant to be easily transferable person to person throughout the community, ensuring that they are preserved. A major advantage of this initiative is that in CAN, it has an effective mechanism to be brought to the public. The model of modular workshops could be easily replicated in any community with even a modest neighborhood association. The key will be building effective workshops and delivering them well.

d. Describe how these limited funds will help achieve the goals of your project.

By building targeted sessions, with specific goals and skills we want to bring to the community we will get a targeted, and hopefully substantial, return on investment. These funds will be used to craft high quality educational workshops and allow for their effective implementation.

e. How will you measure the impact of the project?

Measuring the impact on the community will happen assuredly in the face of disaster, but absent that, members who participated in the workshops could be fairly easily surveyed to find out if they had implemented what they had learned and if they had passed that knowledge on to others.

(*Do not exceed <u>500 words/3000 characters collectively for items a-f</u>*)

6. **Please provide a budget for how 2012 Challenge funds will be used.**

   a. What is the estimated project budget breakdown? *If a category is not applicable, please write $0 (zero) in the Amount column.*

Category	*Amount*
Personnel	$ 20,000
Supplies and Project Materials	$ 7,500
Outreach and Marketing	$ 5,000
Travel	$ 2,500
Other (*please specify*):	$ 0
Total:	$ 35,000

   b. Will additional funds be needed to achieve sustainability?

      ☒ No

      ☐ Yes. *Please provide estimated amount and potential source* (*maximum 75 words/450 characters*):

   c. Will in-kind resources be used to implement your program/project?

      ☒ No

      ☐ Yes. *Please provide estimated amount and source:* (*maximum 75 words/450 characters*):

Reference Letter(s) – Optional

Please submit up to 2 reference letters

Letters should reference the Agency, Institution, Business Entity, Association, Organization or Group that will be performing the proposed community resilience program/project.

Submit Application

Your completed application will include:

1. Completed Application Form- DRAFT
2. Letters of Reference (*optional*) *Waiting for Repsonses

Submit completed application:

- By Email:

Application@ResilienceChallenge.org

OR

- By postal mail:

2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge

Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation

350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 437

Los Angeles, CA 90071

Questions:

Please contact the Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation if you have any questions concerning the FEMA 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge or this application:

- Email questions to: **Questions@ResilienceChallenge.org**

- Or please call us at: 213-325-3035
- Brent Woodworth – 2012 Challenge Program Executive

Thank you for your support and commitment to Community Resilience.

FEMA 2012 *Community Resilience Innovation Challenge*

FEMA

FEMA 2012 *Community Resilience Innovation Challenge*

2012 Challenge Program
funded by:

Rockefeller Foundation

Innovation for the Next 100 Years

2012 Challenge Program
managed by:

Los Angeles

Emergency Preparedness Foundation

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20472

FEMA

Foreword

I am pleased to announce, in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation, FEMA's 2012 *Community Resilience Innovation Challenge*. This program, managed through the Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation, aims to identify and support best practices to strengthen community resilience. We view community resilience as the ability to adapt to changing conditions and be prepared to withstand, and recovery from, disruptions due to emergencies. In recognizing and supporting resilience initiatives, the key assessment areas will be the applicants' demonstration that their approach to community resilience is innovative, collaboration based with community stakeholders, sustainable, repeatable in that it enables other communities to replicate their successful approaches, and beneficial to the community in measurable ways.

FEMA recognizes that a government-centric approach to disaster management is insufficient to meet the challenges posed by a catastrophic incident. To meet our preparedness goals, the Whole Community must be actively involved in all phases of the preparedness, response, and recovery cycle. As a concept, Whole Community is a means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests. By doing so, a more effective path to societal security and resilience is built. As we work towards building a whole community approach to resilience, these 2012 Challenge program funds will serve as an anchor in that effort. I am hopeful that we will have a wide array of applicants including, but not limited to, state, local, tribal, and not for profit organizations. The number of selected recipients and funding amounts will depend on the number and types of proposals received. The Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation will begin vetting submitted applications this October with a target for the first distribution of funds in November.

Much can be learned and leveraged by tapping the expertise, experience, and thought leadership of emergency preparedness and response officials nationwide. We hope this widely cast net will yield many innovative proposals that will better prepare communities for meeting the needs of its citizenry in an emergency. We look forward to selecting the 2012 Challenge program recipients and to fostering a whole community approach to emergency management resulting from this effort. Thank you for your interest in the 2012 *Community Resilience Innovation Challenge*.

W. Craig Fugate

Administrator

FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20472

FEMA 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge

FEMA

2012 Challenge Overview:

Fostering community resilience by identifying needs; mobilizing partners; and creating innovative, motivational, and effective solutions that can be grown, sustained, and replicated.

Continuing threats from terrorist attacks and natural disasters challenge local communities to develop a collective, local ability to withstand the potential initial impacts of these events, respond quickly, and recover and rebuild the community to an enhanced level of resiliency. How communities achieve this collective ability calls for innovative approaches to strengthen existing practices, institutions, and organizations that help make local communities successful during normal times, and leverage those social and economic strengths to prepare for a lead role if an incident occurs.

The 2012 Challenge program will support a broad range of creative activities and may include organizing resources, partnerships, and leadership activities among small neighborhood groups, civic or faith based organizations, private sector entities, or educational institutions. Particular focus will be placed on reaching across social sectors, while a specific goal will be increased local dialogue that includes the sharing of information about local risks and the vulnerabilities of and consequences for local residents and their well-being. Activities can range from establishing a way to train neighborhoods to prepare and take care of themselves and others in an emergency situation to co-hosting initiatives with the private sector to actively involve businesses and organizations to improve preparedness programs, from involving children and youth through educational programs and activities to sponsoring drills for local hazards.

The 2012 Challenge program will support both existing and new initiatives:

- Existing Initiatives

  Support for innovations that have already established a level of competence and performance in bringing local residents together to confront local problems or to expand opportunities. The 2012 Challenge program will draw attention to and publically recognize local success stories and promising practices, and provide financial support to further advance resilience capacities into these community activities.

- New Collaborations

  Assistance with catalyzing newly formed networks, groups or institutions that come together specifically to design and test innovative approaches to community resilience. The 2012 Challenge will, in particular, focus on initiatives that bring relatively small, local neighborhood organizations together with established institutions and organizations to further community resilience.

FEMA has selected and awarded a grant to the Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation (a 501c3 nonprofit foundation) to manage the 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge program, and will be the point of contact for all Challenge program applicants and selected program funding recipients.

Funding for this initiative has been provided by the Rockefeller Foundation.

2012 Challenge Funding:

- Selected projects will be funded up to a maximum of $35,000.
- No financial match is required.
- Funds will be paid directly to the selected project agency, institution, business entity, association, organization, or group.
- Funds will be paid via check or electronic funds transfer.

- Total program funding, requirements, and timing may be adjusted at the discretion of FEMA.

Eligible Applicants:

- Agencies, institutions, business entities, associations, organizations or groups (Public or Private Sector) operating within the local jurisdiction where the project will be conducted are eligible. Awards to individuals will not be considered.
- Only projects within the United States of America and United States of America territories will be considered.
- Applications must be complete to be considered for funding, including all questions and program/project budget information.

Program Requirements:

- All projects must start (documented initiation or kickoff) within 30 days of receiving funds.
- Challenge funds must be fully utilized within 1 year of receipt.
- All selected applicants will be required to submit a brief program summary report (one year from the date of funding) detailing major project activities, impact, and lessons for scalability to other communities.

Application Deadline:

- Postmarked **October 26, 2012** or emailed by 11:59 pm PDT.

Notification:

- Selected recipients will be notified by **November 23, 2012.**

How to apply:

- Complete the FEMA 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge Application and email to: **Application@ResilienceChallenge.org**
- Or mail a printed copy to:

2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge

Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation

350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 437

Los Angeles, CA 90071

Questions:

Please contact the Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation if you have any questions concerning the FEMA 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge or this application: Email questions to: **Questions@ResilienceChallenge.org**

You can also reach us by phone at: 213-325-3035.

2012 Challenge Evaluation Criteria:

Evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to, the following factors:

A) **Innovation:** The creativity and effectiveness of the proposed strategy and methods to increase community resilience.

B) **Collaboration:** The process where people or organizations work together to realize common goals by sharing knowledge, learning and building consensus.

C) **Project Sustainability:** The ability of a project to successfully function, gather support, adapt, obtain funding, and deliver benefits from initial start-up to long-term operation.

D) **Replication:** The transferability of the project to other communities.

E) **Benefits:** The benefits to be received and milestones accomplished if the project is to be considered successful.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

Q: *If our program/project is selected to receive 2012 Challenge funds, how long will it take from the time we are notified to the time we receive our payment?*

A: The payment process will take approximately 30 to 45 days and funds will be sent by check or electronic funds transfer. All programs/projects must start within 30 days of receiving funds.

Q: *Are any matching or supplemental source of funds required to qualify for the 2012 Challenge?*

A: No additional source of funding is required to apply for the 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge or to participate in the program.

Q: *Can we apply more than once for the 2012 Challenge?*

A: The 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge is limited to a maximum of one Challenge payment per selected applicant.

Q: *Will 2012 Innovation Challenge winners be highlighted by FEMA as part of the program?*

A: 2012 Community Resilience Innovation Challenge programs that are selected for funding and successfully implemented will become reference communities and will receive recognition for their success and efforts in building community resilience.

Q. *What are the reporting requirements once we receive our Challenge funds?*

A. Quarterly status reports will be required during the life of the project, including budget spend down, and a final report is required upon completion.

October 19, 2012

MONTPELIER FIRE STATION
Skylight Replacement

8x10' dual-glazed skylight unit	$ 9574
Installation (incl. crane)	5800
Reflash curb	2000
Dumpster	300
TOTAL	$17,674

The only manufacturer/vendor in this area is Wasco from Wells, Maine. Installer is a Wasco certified installer from Gray, Maine and offers a 10 year warranty.

Montpelier Alive
● ENRICHING A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN ●

39 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
director@montpelieralive.org
(802) 223-9604
www.MontpelierAlive.org

Our Vision: Montpelier is a vibrant community center with a thriving downtown and unique sense of place.

Friday, October 19, 2012

To: Montpelier City Council

Dear Council Members,

The Montpelier Business Association is working hard to plan our upcoming holiday season, implementing some of the traditional activities like tree lighting, hay wagon rides, and a window decorating contest.

We'd like to request lifting parking fees for the holidays in Downtown Montpelier between December 10th through December 24th, as has been offered in years past, with the understanding that vehicles parked for more than two hours may be ticketed.

Thank you for your consideration and support of our Downtown. We're looking forward to an upbeat end of year.

Best,

Phayvanh Luekhamhan
Executive Director

Montpelier Alive is a 501(c)(3) non-profit downtown revitalization organization that strives to maintain a vibrant downtown and unique sense of place.

DRAFT PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT - 2012

Mission: *To serve the community by facilitating the creation and preservation of a healthy, safe, sustainable, and high quality living environment through the management of an effective, on-going planning and implementation process.*

This broad mission is carried out through several areas of responsibility:

- To protect and enhance Montpelier's natural and built environment;
- To strengthen the local economy and tax base;
- To meet housing needs of low and moderate income residents;
- To engage the whole community in planning for growth and change;
- To provide information and service to the public; and
- To be accountable to our citizens.

These goals are addressed by Montpelier's Planning, Zoning, Building Inspection, and Community Development programs. The planning functions, which include land use regulation, historic preservation, and floodplain management, are managed by the Director, the Planning and Zoning Administrator, Planning Assistant, and GIS specialist. The building inspection is done in large part by the assistant building inspector. The Director of the department is the official zoning administrator and building inspector, to allow for at least one internal level of appeal before going to the DRB, the City Council, or court would be required.

The housing, loan, and economic development activities are carried out through our role as the Community Development Agency (CDA) for the City of Montpelier. Staff in the department who are dedicated to this role includes the Community Development Specialist and at least half of the Director of Planning and Community Development's time and effort. The VISTA volunteers we have in the office are invaluable in terms of community engagement and providing information and service to the public.

This department could not do all that it does without the thoughtful and hard work by its staff and the individuals who volunteer on commissions and committees, the support from local officials, and the participation of citizens and other people and departments within and outside of City Hall. Montpelier is especially fortunate to have so many highly motivated, skilled, and interested citizens willing to give of themselves, their time, and their energies to make so many things happen.

PLANNING

Planning Commission: We welcomed a new member to the Planning Commission in 2011; the youth position is now filled by Thomas Nowlan, a student at Montpelier High School. Eileen Simpson, Alan Goldman, Jesse Moorman, and Kim Cheney were all reappointed through 2014. Tina Ruth serves as the representative of the Central Vermont Planning Commission. Kim

Cheney is an alternate to the CVRPC. Eileen Simpson serves as the representative to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) at CVRPC.

The full Planning Commission is as follows:

Members	Effective	Expires
Jesse Moorman, Chair	9/26/11	9/26/14
Jon Anderson, Vice Chair	10/12/11	10/12/13
Alan Goldman	9/26/12	9/26/14
Eileen Simpson	9/26/12	9/26/14
Kim Cheney	9/26/12	9/26/14
John Bloch	04/13/11	3/25/13
Tina Ruth	10/12/11	10/12/13
Thomas Nowlan, Youth Member	10/2012	10/2013

Zoning Revision: Since the Master Plan was adopted in 2010, our next major task has been to revise the zoning so that it conforms to the new plan. This is required by state law, and makes the land use controls we have in place enforceable in court. The city has received two municipal planning grants from the State of Vermont that allow us to contract with staff from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to assist with the revision. In 2012, we held meetings to get citizen input into the zoning for their neighborhood, and have now moved into the final drafting phase of the initiative. We have prepared revised zoning maps in anticipation of the new ordinance. The maps are built on the neighborhoods in the city, to prepare zoning that reflects a sense of place for areas with similar functions, uses, and built form. The maps and all of the draft ordinance work can be found on the city web site at:
http://www.montpelier-vt.org/page/462/Work-in-Progress-Draft-and-Sample-Zoning.html

Floodplain Management – Community Rating System (CRS): The Planning & Zoning Administrator serves as the Floodplain Manager and CRS Coordinator.

The City of Montpelier participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and as a participating community, the City is committed to the following minimum NFIP activities:

- Issuing or denying floodplain development permits.
- Inspecting all development to assure compliance with the local floodplain ordinance.
- Maintaining records of floodplain development.
- Assisting in the preparation and revision of floodplain maps.
- Helping and assisting residents obtain information on flood hazards, floodplain map data, and flood insurance and proper construction measures.

Additionally, the NFIP's Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. As a result, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community actions meeting the three goals of the CRS: (1) reduce flood losses; (2) facilitate accurate insurance rating; and (3) promote the awareness of flood insurance.

For CRS participating communities, flood insurance premium rates are discounted in increments of 5% - i.e., a Class 1 community would receive a 45% discount, while a Class 9 community would receive a 5% discount. The City of Montpelier is one of three communities in Vermont – including Bennington and Brattleboro – that participate in the CRS program. The City of Montpelier is currently a Class 9 community and we receive an insurance premium discount of 5%. The CRS classes for local communities are based on 18 creditable activities, organized under four categories:

1. Public information,
2. Mapping and Regulations,
3. Flood Damage Reduction, and
4. Flood Preparedness.

In September 2012, Clancy DeSmet, CFM, Planning & Zoning Administrator and Jimmy K. Chin, CFM, ISO/CRS Specialist of Insurance Service Office, Inc. (ISO), met and conducted a field visit regarding the five (5) year cycle application to the NFIP Community Rating System (NFIP/CRS). The last cycle verification as conducted in the fall, 2007. During the meeting, we discussed CRS activities, including all major changes on activities – including map information, education and outreach, open space protection, and higher regulatory standards – since our last application, and documentation requirements. Our continued participation in the Community Rating System reflects our commitment to a sound floodplain management program for the benefit of the City of Montpelier and its citizens. Higher regulatory standards, open space protection and green infrastructure are examples of CRS activities that could qualify the City of Montpelier as a Class 8 community (with a 10% reduction on flood insurance policies).

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) embarked on an effort to digitize the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) called the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM). Flooding events in 2007 stalled efforts for the adoption of these DFIRMs.

In October 2009, the City of Montpelier was notified of proposed modified flood elevation determination affecting the FIRM and FIS report for Montpelier and Washington County. FEMA received an appeal from the City of Montpelier during the 90-day appeal period, and the appeal was resolved favorably for the City of Montpelier. Therefore, the determination of FEMA as to the Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) for Montpelier is considered final. The final BFEs will be published in the Federal Register as soon as possible. The modified BFEs and revised map panels are *effective as of 3/19/13* – and revise the FIRM which was in effect prior to that date. The FIRM panels have been computer-generated. Once the FIRM and FIS report are printed and distributed, the digital files containing flood hazard data for the entire county will be provided to the City of Montpelier for floodplain management purposes.

Previously, the digital FIRM (DFIRM) was anticipated to be effective in 2008. The City of

Montpelier – along with the rest of Washington County – have anticipated the resolution of the effective maps for almost 5 years. The revised DFIRM is more accurate and reflects the existing ground information more clearly. For example, 58 Barre Street – MSAC – will no longer be considered to reside within the 100 year (or more accurately 1% chance) floodplain.

Floodplain information is available online: http://www.montpelier-vt.org/community/344/Flood-Information.html

Certified Local Government (CLG) – Montpelier Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC): The Planning & Zoning Administrator serves as the CLG Coordinator and provides staff support to the MHPC. The City of Montpelier recently finished Phase II of the Montpelier Historic District Amendment. The Montpelier Historic District is the largest in the state of Vermont – 563 properties. It is worth noting that in 1978 approximately 87% of the buildings and structures were contributing (i.e. historic) to the National Register of Historic Places in the Montpelier Historic District, and approximately 89% are contributing according to the most recent amendment.

The MHPC received grant funding for website and brochure materials in relation to the Phase II National Register Update. The MHPC continues to refine these materials in order to provide education and outreach to the citizens of Montpelier. Since CLG certification the City has received $22,931 in grant funding for historic preservation.

The Montpelier Historic Amendment must first be reviewed by the VT Division of Historic Preservation (DHP) and the National Park Service (NPS) before it is accepted and adopted as final. Staff shortage and changes at DHP have delayed the adoption of the Montpelier Historic District Amendment. Additionally, there will be a public process to present the amendments to the citizens of Montpelier in 2013. Also, there will be several public meetings and members of the Montpelier Historic District (MHD) will be notified by mail of the disposition of their property.

All of the information regarding the MHD is available online: http://www.montpelier-vt.org/department/68.html

The MHPC is comprised of 5 community members:

- Anthony Otis, Chair – term expires 9/14/14.
- James Duggan – term expires 9/22/14.
- Eric Gilbertson – term expires 9/22/14.
- Helen Husher – expires 9/22/13.
- Tim Senter – term expires 9/22/13.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW – LAND USE REGULATION

The Planning & Zoning Administrator provides staff support to the Development Review Board and Design Review Committee. During 2012, to date approximately 150 zoning permits were issued. Specifically, DRB approval was required for __ of the 150 permits, __ of these permits also required DRC approval, __ permits were for signs, and __ permits were administratively approved. Approximately __ variances were granted by the DRB. Finally, __ dwelling units were added in 2012.

Development Review Board (DRB):

- Phil Zalinger, Chair – reappointed, term expires 7/18/15.
- Kevin O'Connell, Vice Chair – term expires 7/23/14.
- James LaMonda was appointed to fill Elizabeth Koenig's unexpired term – term expires 8/10/14.
- Roger Cranse – reappointed, term expires 7/18/15.
- John Lindley – term expires 7/23/14.
- Dan Richardson – term expires 8/8/13.
- Harvey Golubock was appointed to fill Brian Lane-Karnas's unexpired term – term expires 7/14/13.
- Alternates – Ali Sarafzadeh – term expires 12/9/12 – and Josh S. O'Hara, Esq. was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Member LaMonda – term expires 7/18/13.

Design Review Committee (DRC):

- Steve Everett, Chair – term expires 9/14/14.
- James Duggan, Vice Chair – reappointed, term expires 10/28/15.
- Jay White – reappointed, term expires 4/11/15.
- Kate Coffey – term expires 9/14/14.
- Eric Gilbertson – term expires 9/14/14.
- Alternates –Zachary Brock resigned – and Tim Senter was reappointed – term expires 10/28/15. City Council created an additional alternate position in September 2012. Seth Mitchell and Liz Pritchett will also serve as alternates to the DRC – their terms expire, collectively, 9/26/15.

Development Review Board and Design Review Committee information is available online:
http://www.montpelier-vt.org/group/64/Development-Review-Board.html
http://www.montpelier-vt.org/group/63/Design-Review-Committee.html

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Development office has hired a permanent CD Specialist to replace Garth Genge, who died in 2011. Kevin Casey joined the department in April of this year, bringing with him over ten years of experience in downtown business recruitment and property management. Ken Russell served as Interim Community Development Specialist in Garth's absence. Moving forward the office hopes to continue to work on the development of economic opportunities and improved housing for the city.

Economic Development

Shifting our energy use to renewable, low emissions alternatives and increasing energy efficiency will help the city stay economically viable for years to come. Adding alternative means of exchange and building community resilience are also vital parts of local economic health. Energy, food, water, and money are critical economic flows that need to be understood and re-localized in this new era of federal cutbacks, currency instability, and depleted resources.

The major community development projects underway currently are the district energy project, the Carr Lot multi-modal transit center project, and this year saw the completion of the senior center and senior housing project on Barre Street.

Community Development staff has worked closely with members of the Montpelier Alive Economic Development Subcommittees on Infrastructure, Business Development, and Recruitment and Promotion to develop a unified and effective strategy for economic development in the city. Finding a way to move beyond historic obstacles and to shift the narrative within the city on economic development were key values.

Looking forward, we see great hope for significant achievements in a strong business development strategy for the town including maximizing the utility of the built structure in town, effective understanding and marketing of local resources, and implementation of an effective economic development strategy that reflects both the values and goal expressed in the City of Montpelier Master Plan and the significant momentum achieved in the committee processes.

Areas of growth and potential are the development of incubator spaces for new businesses downtown, the development of business support mechanisms and intellectual and social capital, and an ongoing strategy for maximizing the existing physical structure in the city. The need for a strategic marketing plan that builds on these development strategies was also emphasized. To that end, the department built a new Economic Development section on the city website and is in the process of examining further our marketing presence through collaboration with natural allies. We see the upcoming Town Meeting on Economic Development as an important opportunity to build on this momentum and all of these good efforts.

Business Development
Community Development has actively sought to connect property owners and tenants in order to facilitate energy and growth in the Downtown in conjunction with Montpelier Alive, individual landlords, and the business community. CD specialist made a concerted participation in the Vermont Business Expo as well as maintain relationships within the local and regional business community. A primary goal of the Community Development Specialist is to increase the role that this department plays in economic development and promotion.

As of this report, the draft text for "Starting a Business in Montpelier" is complete. This guide will act as an informational resource for young entrepreneurs or businesses looking to locate in Montpelier. Graphic Design for web and print will be the final stages to complete the brochure, with a goal of completing it by the end of 2012.

District Heat: Community Development has worked with the City Manager, City Planner, and the Consulting engineers to secure district heat contract agreements. As of this report the bidding process is complete and community development is in contact with interested property owners.

46 Barre Street: Community Development worked with Three not-for-profit organizations collectively known as CALM (Community Arts Learning and Music) to apply for a Community Development Block Grant Funds Planning Grant from the Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development.

CALM pooled resources to form an umbrella non-profit corporation to purchase and renovate property at 46 Barre Street, Montpelier. The participants are River Rock School for elementary school classrooms, administrative offices and accessory uses; Wood Art Gallery for displays, programs and administrative offices; and Monteverdi Music School for rooms for instruction and practice of various musical instruments and administrative offices. The Summit School for Traditional Music and Culture will also rent space from the consortium for instruction and practice of music and dance. The Planning Grant will support pre-development activities necessary for the purchase and renovation of the property. Notification of Awards will not be released until November 1, 2012.

58 Barre Street Senior Center and Senior Housing: The Senior Center project at 58 Barre Street was completed on schedule in June 2012. The 58 Barre St. project has been a shining example of a successful community supported project. Following the fire at the building in December 2009 that displaced the Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC), the City Council and the Montpelier Housing Authority (MHA) came together on an agreement to work in partnership to redevelop the property into 14 apartments for seniors and people with disabilities and a reconditioned home for the MSAC. Six months later through the contributions of significant time by community members and with federal, state, and municipal funding participation through VCDP, USDA RD, VHCB, US ARRA Energy Grant Program, City Revolving Loan Funds, an ongoing Capital Campaign being run by the MSAC, and the City commitment to donate the building, the project was fully funded and began the redevelopment process one year after the fire.

The Cities lead and contribution of the fire damaged, extremely energy inefficient building has leveraged a project of over $5m having a significant impact on two large community needs - senior housing and the MSAC. Designed with the highest standards of energy efficiency this building answers the question the City had been struggling with; where to house the MSAC. The facility in its former condition was prohibitively expensive to run and did not fit the needs of the MSAC for accessibility and space. Now with an elevator expanding access to the entire Center to everybody and a reconfigured space that will use the most efficient planning for the use of the space the MSAC will have a home that works with extremely reduced operating costs for their space.

Dickey Block: City Council reiterated its commitment to maintaining an active role in the Dickey Block redevelopment at its June 27, 2012 Meeting. Community Development is working to address development issues which have been difficult to overcome in the past. Community Development will continue to assist potential developers realize the potential of this crucial piece of downtown.

Housing Task Force: The Housing Task Force worked diligently in 2012 to implement the recommendations which were outlined in the Barriers to Housing Report presented to City Council in the fall of 2011. The report outlined the Barriers to new housing in Montpelier and the loss of young families to the surrounding communities. The report recommended a series of actions that the Housing Task Force could investigate and propose policy recommendations to City Council. The following is an account of the actions taken by the Task Force and Community Development in order to address these barriers and seek creative solutions.

The Housing Task Force is pursuing the potential of Individual Development Accounts (IDA), which would provide first time homebuyers a down payment match as an incentive. The Task Force has sought insight from the Central Vermont Community Action Council as well as the Central Vermont Community Land Trust to investigate the efficacy of creating an IDA program in Montpelier.

The Housing Replacement Ordinance which will force developers to pay a fee if a new development creates a net loss to housing has been discussed by the Housing Task Force and it will make a recommendation to The Planning Commission as well as City Council when work is completed in the fall of 2012.

In response to the Barriers Report, the Housing Task Force focused attention on Barre Street, As the City's densest and most transitional community, Barre Street is beginning to see a resurgence. The completion of the Montpelier Senior Activities Center (MSAC), 14 units of Senior Housing, The Riverstaion Apartments and Condominiums and the Bianchi-Hebert project have all been successful efforts to stabilize the neighborhood. The Barre Street CAN group seeks to further stabilize the neighborhood through community building. The Department of Planning and Community Development has played an integral role in assisting such as engaging landlords to help facilitate Tree Planting, neighborhood visioning, and community building.

Housing Trust Fund: The Housing Trust Fund is one of the most successful Housing Programs that the City has ever undertaken. The completion of 14 Housing Units at 58 Barre Street was due in large part to the City's ability to see that the $105,000 committed to that project were effectively leveraged along with other local, state, and Federal Dollars.

The Housing Task Force met in October 2012 and released the 2012-2013 Request for Proposals (RFP) on Friday October 19th, 2012. Eligible projects must create or preserve affordable housing opportunities in the City of Montpelier. Generally, projects must be affordable to households with incomes less than or equal to area median income and must guarantee that affordability for a minimum of 15 years. However, for this RFP, at least half of the HTF funds must be used for housing that is affordable to households with incomes less than or equal to 80% of area median income. Priority will be given to projects that: create new homeownership opportunities, result in a net gain in affordable housing units; are able to repay Housing Trust Funds to the City; assure the long-term affordability of the units (15 year minimum); provide homeownership opportunities for persons living or working in Montpelier; and develop or preserve units that are suitable for family housing.

Proposals must be submitted to the Department of Planning and Community Development no later than November 16, 2012. Proposals must contain a detailed project description, a project budget, and outline how the project will meet the goals and objectives of the Guidelines. Review of the submissions will be conducted by the Housing Trust Fund Committee in late November 2012 and awarded in Early December 2012.

Housing Preservation Grant Program: The HPG loan program provides renovation loans to low and moderate income homeowners to help address: code, health and safety issues; accessibility needs; weatherization needs; and overcrowding. Loans are typically without interest with repayment deferred until the property is sold.

To date the program has assisted 116 homeowners and loaned over $1,069,000.00. In 2012 Two HPG loans were granted, one was secured in order to respond to an emergency water main break in January 2012 and the second, in process as this report is being prepared, was used to correct structural deficiencies which threatened the safety of the homes occupants,
There are still funds available for qualified homeowners. For more information, see http://www.montpeliervt.org/cda/hpg.cfm or contact Community Development Specialist Kevin Casey at 802.223.9507.

FEMA Grant Application: Application to FEMA completed in October 2012. Upon City Council approval of the application This award will allow the City of Montpelier to assist the CAN (Capitol Area Neighborhoods) Network with a series of workshops for the purpose of empowering neighborhoods and our neighbors with the skills needed to prepare for and respond to crisis.

Bicycle Rack Grant: Montpelier successfully completed and received a grant from the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation for Bicycle Racks. The City of Montpelier received partial funding and new bike racks will be installed at the Library, The Municipal Pool, the Schools and a few other scattered sites in downtown. Further details will be available as the State makes final arrangements for the acquisition of the racks.

Revolving Loan Funds: Community Development completed two loans totaling $174, 500 were in the summer of 2012 to the Montpelier Senior Activities Center for the completion of the Senior Center portion of the 58 Barre Street Project. The repayment terms of these funds are as follows: $114,850 at 3.25% for 20 years payable to the CDF Loan Fund, and $60,000 at 4% for 15 years payable to the Community Development ADA loan fund. These loans will help to insure long term sustainability of the fund. Community Development is looking to increase the use and availability of these funds as well as repackaging and remarketing the Montpelier Business Loan Fund (MBLF) to be more attractive to small scale tech entrepreneurs. CD specialist goal for 2013 is

AmeriCorps/VISTA Support

In 2012, the VISTA volunteers on the enVision Montpelier project changed, as Scott Humphrey went off to graduate school in Illinois, and Hannah Snyder returned to Michigan. We are now fortunate to have Luke Rafferty and Drew DeVitis as VISTA staff helping us with the outreach for the zoning revision, supporting the CAN neighborhood associations, the energy committee, and assisting Central Vermont Food Systems Council.

Website/GIS/E911

Geographic Information System: The City's GIS system is an important databank for information, and the GIS Specialist updates and maintains our GIS library, managing a central repository of all of the City's most current and relevant GIS data on the City's common drive, coordinates with VT Agency of Transportation, FEMA, Vermont Center for Geospatial Information (VCGI), and other agencies to obtain the most current GIS data layers and orthophotos for the City's data library, provides landowners with data they need to pursue their projects, including geographic information on floodplain analysis, zoning boundary determinations, and road frontage, provides local schools and colleges with city shape file data to conduct classes using the City of Montpelier as a planning model, and local land trusts and non-profits with data for conservation purposes.

Planning Department projects are supported by our GIS capability, and in 2012, the GIS Specialist was responsible for creating and updating shape files and maps representing CAN neighborhoods and proposed zoning district boundaries for the Citywide rezoning initiative. Eric also worked with the City Parks Department to refine trails data in the City Parks, and completed a full revision of all of the City Parks maps. These are now available on the website at http://www.montpelier-vt.org/page/459. Maps will be updated again late Fall of 2012. Eric worked with the City Assessor on updates of the parcel maps, boundary determinations, and maintenance and formatting of parcel data for the City's interactive online parcel maps. 2012 has seen many updates of parcel maps as surveys become available.

These are located at http://www.ivsgis.com/muniweb/montpelier/mainpage.asp. He also performed ongoing software updates, as well as troubleshooting of GIS software and data issues, trained various City staff members in the use of ESRI Arcmap software, and continues to be available on an as-needed basis to help with technical issues and questions. He provided help as needed to the Public Works Department, with whom he has begun to create GIS shape files of City easements and has continued to do so in 2012. 2012 has also seen a review and update of all zoning GIS layers, including existing zoning, Designated Downtown, Design Control, National Historic District, and Growth Center, so as to agree with updated parcel boundary information (all edits were reviewed by zoning administrator). In addition, the citywide building footprint GIS data is under revision, and now includes a link to the grand list, as well as "number of living units" information to help determine housing distribution patterns.

E911: The E911 coordinator worked with landowners, the E911 board, and the US Postal Service, and relevant City departments to determine correct E911 numbering for new building sites, as well as existing sites. He worked with the E911 board to check existing E-site information and rectify numbering errors so that the state's E911 database is up-to-date, and responded to calls/emails from telecom/internet services to verify addresses for phone/cable/internet services. 2012 has seen a citywide review of esite information, as of October 2012, more than 85 changes/updates have been made, with more updates pending.

Website: The webmaster works with various City departments and partners to develop, contribute content, and manage and their sections of the website. He works with the site programmer, the site hosting service and the IT department to make sure it runs smoothly and troubleshoot potential issues with its functionality. In 2011, an important focus of work on the website involved making city documents available to the public in an online format. Eric continued to add archival meeting minutes and agendas from the City's boards and commissions to the "Document Archive" section of the website. He also worked with the Planning Assistant to format and upload all recent Zoning documents (from 2007 to current) to the Document Archive. The document Archive can be found at this link: http://www.montpelier-vt.org/browse_historic_documents.html.

In 2011 the City's website became integrated with Facebook and Twitter. When an update is posted to News, Notices or Events, it sends an update to Montpelier's Facebook and Twitter accounts. In 2012, Eric worked with the Mayor to develop an email newsletter to enable the Mayor to send out regular updates to those who do not use Facebook or Twitter. The newsletter has a signup form which is linked on the main page of the City's website. Two newsletter emails have been sent out since its creation. The website is moving towards meeting ADA standards for accessibility, but we still have some work to do. In Fall 2012 we are integrating new dropdown menus that are ADA compliant, and which will enable all users (as well as those with disabilities) to access all portions of the website in a much more efficient manner.

E-Mail Memo

TO: Jean Olsen, Jane Kast
FROM: Gwendolyn Hallsmith
RE: Budget Committee analysis
DATE: September 13, 2012

Bill shared the spreadsheet you had prepared on the Department of Planning and Community Development. You all have done a lot of work. I know how hard it must be to try and compare towns where all the positions and functions are somewhat different. Here in Montpelier, there seems to be an ongoing misconception about the department that I'm afraid was exacerbated by the Matrix report, and so I'd like to address it. I've attached a spreadsheet that reflects my perspective on how the department is structured, and also how it compares to the other towns.

While Matrix was here, unfortunately, our former CD Specialist, Garth Genge, was very sick with cancer, and so they never had a chance to talk with him about his work. I spoke with them, and outlined the ***two*** core functions of the department, which is that we are the planning department, and we are also the official Community Development Agency (CDA) for the city. This structure is not all that common, a lot of times there is an external organization - often supported with funding from city government - that serves as the CDA. In Barre, it's Barre Area Development. In Randolph, it's the Randolph Area Community Development Corporation. In Middlebury, it's the Addison County Economic Development Corporation.

Unfortunately, Matrix didn't seem to understand this, and I believe their experience might have been limited to more conventional planning departments, so they characterized all the projects we do as the CDA as "Special Projects," with the implication that they were not part of our "core" functions. I see your spreadsheet also reflects this error, and so I'm trying to help everyone understand what we do better. The capacity to carry out development projects is one of the critical functions of a CDA, and so I've also identified what these projects are in Montpelier and the other towns.

What I've done is to divide the staffing and projects in the department by the different functions we serve, and compare our staffing and work with that in mind. I've also separated out the Code Enforcement and IT functions, since these positions are not necessarily located in planning or community development departments elsewhere. Here in Montpelier, the web site and GIS work was combined into one half time position, since both involve a similar skill set. But I don't know of another planning department that is responsible for the city's web site. Some of the work we do was also not reflected on your sheet, so I've added that as well.

Another aspect of the dual role we play is that the budgets you have compiled do not include the external agencies, people from other departments (in Middlebury the Assistant City Manager plays a key role in economic and community development), and consultants - Hartford and Barre both told me that they depend heavily on consultants for a lot of the work, including the work Barre has done recently preparing a Tax Increment Financing package for the city. So the budget numbers, and per capita figures you came up with for the roles and functions we serve are not accurate. I haven't had time to find the budgets for the external agencies in the other towns, but it goes without saying that carrying a minimum of two professional staff and consultants would probably be at least an additional $200,000 per year.

Anyway, I know that it takes a lot of commitment to carry out volunteer work like this, so please don't misunderstand me. I think it's important that people be presented with information that reflects a fair comparison, so I'm just trying to help you accomplish that unenviable task.

Thanks, Gwen.

Legal and Policy Context for Planning and Community Development

Planning and Land Use Regulation

State Law: Acts 200 & 250, Title 24, Chapter 117

Regional Plans: CVRPC, CVEDC, Agencies

Local Master Plan: Enabled by Title 24

Natural Environment

Social Development

Economics and Livelihoods

Built Environment and Infrastructure

Good Governance

Annual Council Goal: Promote and encourage a mix of single and multi-family residential growth.
1. Create a Hospitable environment for residential growth
2. Follow-through with recommendations of Barriers to Housing Committee
3. Consider public investment in infrastructure to generate housing.
4. Review impact of sprinkler ordinance on housing

Annual Council Goal: Become a nationally known bike and pedestrian friendly city.
1. Convene a bike/pedestrian summit in conjunction with Parks Commission.

Annual Council Goal: Make significant progress on three major outstanding capital projects: District Heat, Transit Center and Montpelier/Berlin Bike Path.

Community and Economic Development

Federal Housing and Community Development (HCD) Act of 1974

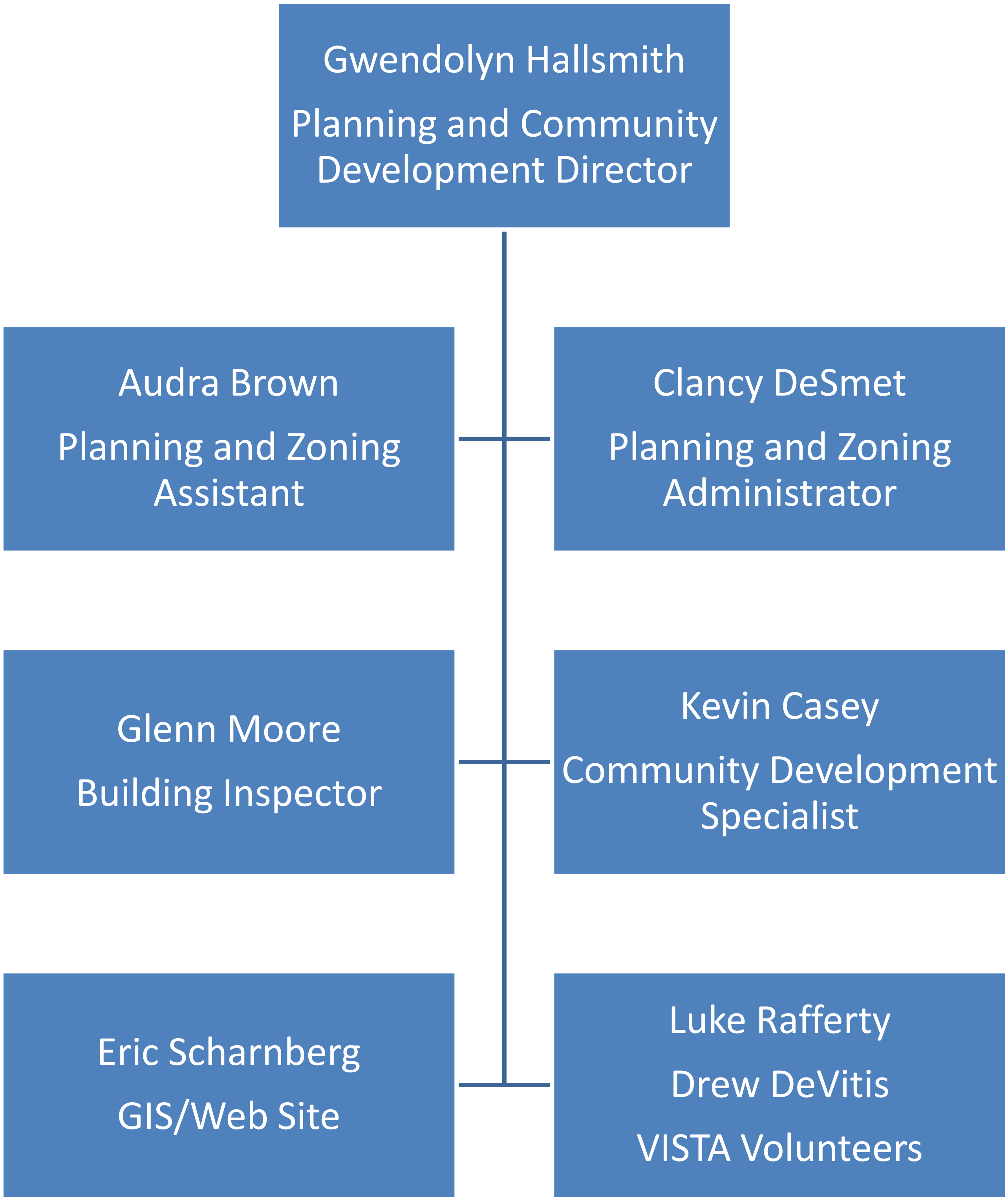
Vermont Community Development Block Grant Program

USDA Rural Development Housing Preservation Grant Program

Annual Council Goal: Create an environment where businesses thrive throughout Montpelier.
1. Change narrative and present Montpelier as business friendly through brochures, communications and marketing.
2. Maintain active role in Dickey Block redevelopment
3. Establish Economic Development and Business Recruitment/retention a municipal priorities
4. Maintain a viable and vibrant downtown
5. Consider financial incentives

Annual Council Goal: Provide comprehensive, accessible and useful information to constituent groups about the City government and the community.
1. Re-vamp city website to make it more user-friendly; provide clear and easy-to-find information for residents AND for potential residents and potential businesses
2. Expand use of social media to communicate city's message while continuing traditional communications methods.
3. Provide adequate staff and volunteer support to maintain communications efforts once they have started.
4. Target appropriate information messages to specific audiences

Department of Planning and Community Development: Organizational Chart



Department of Planning and Community Development: Responsibilities and Current Projects

Mission: To serve the community by facilitating the creation and preservation of a healthy, safe, sustainable, and high quality living environment through the management of an effective, on-going planning and implementation process.

Snapshot of 2012 Achievements:

City Council Goal:
Promote and encourage a mix of single and multi-family residential growth.

Zoning Revision & Growth Center Designation

- Continued with zoning revision to bring zoning into compliance with Growth Center designation and Master Plan.
- Prepared annual report on Growth Center activity for State of Vermont.
- Convened team in cooperation with CVRPC for zoning revision.

21st Century Design Competition

- Recommendation of the Barriers to Housing Task Force
- Drafted Design Competition Guidelines
- Advertised and accepted submissions
- Organizing award ceremony November 20th

Permits and Development Review

- ___ zoning permits issued, __ required DRB approval, __ required DRC review. __ were issued administratively. __ sign permits.
- ___ zoning violations issued, ___ warnings.
- ___ new units created, ___ units lost
- Development Assistance: Senior Center, CCV, Fred Connor

Housing Initiatives

- Applied for Housing Preservation Grant from USDA
- Worked on policy for Individual Development Accounts
- Ongoing support of the Housing Task Force
- Drafted Housing Replacement Ordinance
- Drafted Zoning increasing density in Growth Center

GIS Services

- Preparation of Growth Center maps
- Preparation of Floodplain and Floodway maps
- Worked with Assessor on updated parcel maps

City Council Goal:
Become a nationally known bike and pedestrian friendly city.

- Organizing Bike Summit November 7, 2012
- Obtained grant for more bicycle racks downtown

Department of Planning and Community Development: Responsibilities and Current Projects

City Council Goal: Create an environment where businesses thrive throughout Montpelier.

- Drafted Guide to "Starting a Business in Montpelier."
- Participation in Vermont Business Expo.
- Compiled list of green job employers in the city.
- Drafted zoning that reduces regulatory barriers to locating businesses in Montpelier (parking requirements, mixed use, creative economy incentives)
- Drafted grant application to National Endowment of the Arts to foster a creative economy in the city.
- Technical assistance to Local 64, a new incubator space.
- Applied for CDBG planning grant for arts and music space on Barre Street in partnership with CALM.
- Repackaging and remarketing the Montpelier Business Loan Fund (MBLF) to be more attractive to small scale tech entrepreneurs.

City Council Goal: Make significant progress on three major outstanding capital projects: District Heat, Transit Center and Montpelier/Berlin Bike Path.

Major Development Projects

- Completed construction of Turntable Park.
- Continued work on the district energy project: customer recruitment, agreements, design.
- Senior Center and housing completed.

City Council Goal: Provide comprehensive, accessible and useful information to constituent groups about the City government and the community.

Montpelier CAN!

- Ongoing support to 12 Neighborhood Associations throughout the city,
- Held regular meetings with CAN team leaders,
- Provided residents with winter preparedness information,

Blackboard, Alerts, Communications

- Worked to implement Blackboard emergency communication system.
- Maintained and integrated Alerts system with Blackboard
- Purchased integrated permitting software.
- Regular updates to enVision stakeholders.

Web Site Redesign

- Continued to improve web site – upgraded search and filing features.
- Integrated web site redesign with planning, assessor and Clerk information systems

Department of Planning and Community Development: Responsibilities and Current Projects

Gwendolyn Hallsmith, Director
Planning and Community Development
Responsibilities include land use and comprehensive planning for the city, strategic direction for the department, coordination with City Manager and other departments, staff support to City Council, Planning Commission, enVision committees, District Energy Committee, Energy Team, grant writing and management, staff supervision, oversight of development projects.

Master Plan & Zoning Revision
Planning Commission & City Council
Conservation Commission
District Energy project
Montpelier CAN!
REACH project supervision
Food System Council
Staff Supervision: CRS, CLG,
Development Review,
Community Development

Clancy DeSmet
Planning and Zoning Administrator
Responsibilities include development review, ordinance review and drafting, staff support to review boards, historic preservation, and floodplain management.

Development Review Board
Design Review Committee
Historic District Grants: Certified Local Government administration
Floodplain Regulation: Community Rating System management
Growth Center application assistance
Zoning permit intake

Audra Brown
Planning and Zoning Assistant
Responsibilities include administrative support for department staff, management of program documents and information, reception, customer service, and entry level zoning, grant management, and community development support.

Zoning and building permit intake
Permit issuance on simple projects
Basic mapping requests
Payroll and Accounts payable
Information management
Meeting Preparation: packets to DRB and DRC

Kevin Casey
Community Development Specialist
Responsibilities include development assistance, housing support, grant writing and management, state and federal compliance, loan application evaluation, and general community development.

Federal Program development
Revolving Loan Fund
Housing Trust Fund
Housing Task Force
Housing Preservation Grants
Development Assistance: CVCLT projects, business locations.

Glenn Moore
Building Inspector and Health Officer
Inspection and enforcement

Eric Scharnberg
Web/GIS Specialist (1/2 time)
Responsibilities include maintenance and updating web site, mapping community resources, coordinating with regional and state GIS repositories, and support to other city departments for mapping needs.

Web Site maintenance and redevelopment
GIS mapping: Assessor’s office, 911, Master Plan, development assistance
Historic District maps
Public information maps

Department of Planning and Community Development: Preliminary Goals for 2013

Master Plan & Zoning Revision

1) Implement the master plan for a sustainable city with high participation by city residents
2) Conduct Neighborhood meetings to obtain feedback on zoning drafts.
3) Continue adoption process of enVision Action plan by stakeholder organizations

Community and Economic Development

1) Convene Creative Economy stakeholders.
2) Update business loan program.

Major Development Projects

3) Complete District Energy and Carr Lot projects.
4) Relocate businesses displaced by bike path.

Montpelier CAN!

1) Maintain support for Neighborhood Associations, support their activities
2) Distribute winter emergency information
3) Assist city with meetings on zoning

Web Site Redesign

1) Implement survey system for citizen feedback
2) Complete ADA accessibility project

Grant Writing and Management

1) Continue efforts to obtain funding for implementation of city plans and policies
2) Expand funding sources for sustainability grants
3) Initiate new community development projects to support CD Specialist position

Permits and Development Review

1) Continue efforts to streamline permit process
2) Implement new permit software
3) Raise awareness among property owners about necessary permits and design review
4) Provide timely technical assistance to applicants
5) Begin process of linking past permits to on-line information

Staff Development

1) Hold annual staff retreat and continue staff training and development
2) Support and sustain teamwork and cross-training for high quality public service

Planning and Development Departments by Town

	Barre City	Hartford	Middlebury	Montpelier	St Albans	St Johnsbury
Population (2010)	9052	10677	6252	7855	6918	6193
Budget Planning Dept FY13*	211403	359940	152,855	324829	181958	0
Budget per capita	$23.35	$33.71	$24.45	$41.35	$26.30	0
Committees Staffed	3	5	4	12*	3	3

*These budgets do not include outside agencies, other departments, or consultants. Since the CDA responsibilities are managed by an outside organization in Barre, by an Assistant City Manager and the ACEDC in Middlebury, and by consultants in Hartford, this is not a fair comparison.

Staffing	**Barre City**	**Hartford**	**Middlebury**	**Montpelier**	**St Albans**	**St Johnsbury**
Planning	**2.5**	**3.5**	**2.25**	**2.5**	**3**	**0.5**
Planning Director	1	0.5	1	0.5	1	
Zoning Administrator		1	1	1	1	
Planning/Zon Ass't			0.25	1		0.5
Permit Administrator	1					
General Planner		1				
Clerical	0.5	1			1	
Community Development	**1.5**	**0.5**	**3**	**1.5**	**0.5**	**0**
CDA Director		**0.5**		**0.5**		
Comm Dev Specialist				1		
Downtown Prog Coord					0.5	
Barre Area Development	1					
Administrative Assistant	0.5					
Middlebury Asst. TM			0.5			
Business Dev. Director			1			
ACEDC			1.5			
VISTA Volunteers				2*		
Code Enforcement	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
Building Inspector	1			1		
Information Technology	**0**	**0**	**0.25**	**0.5**	**0**	**0**
Web/GIS			0.25	0.5		
TOTAL	5	4	5.5	5.5	3.5	0.5

* VISTA Volunteers cost $10,000 for two full time workers. Not included in FTE.
** VLCT 2011 lists 9 towns with Building Inspectors. Montpelier moved BI into Planning Dept. Jan. 2012
Not counted in Montpelier FTE or budget total. Separate budget for BI.

Planning Department	**Barre City**	**Hartford**	**Middlebury**	**Montpelier**	**St Albans**	**St Johnsbury**
Permitting	x	x	x	x	x	x
Land use planning	x	x	x	x	x	
Grant writing/prog mgmt	x	x	x	x		
Regs writing		x		x		x
Master Plan/zoning update	x	x	x	x	x	x
Historic Design Control				x		
Floodplain Mgmt/CRS		x		x		
Compliance/public education		x		x		
Growth Center desig		x		x		
Regulation re-writes		x		x		x
Web/soc media			x	x		
GIS			x	x		

Community Development	**Barre City**	**Hartford**	**Middlebury**	**Montpelier**	**St Albans**	**St Johnsbury**
CDBG Grants	**x**		x	**x**		
Econ Development			x	x	x	x
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)				***	x	

Development Projects	x		x	x	
Barre City Place	x			n/a	
Barre Nelson Hydro Project	x			n/a	
Downtown Housing Projects			x	x	
Multimodal transit				x	
District Energy Project				x	
Web/soc media				x	x
Ad hoc w/state/fed funding				x	x
Grantwriting/mgmt				x	x
Irene Recovery		x		n/a	
Emergency Management/CAN				x	
Code Enforcement					
Building Inspection	x			x	
Health/Housing complaints	x			x	

*** we did prepare information about TIF, City Council decided not to pursue it.

<u>* Committees Staffed</u>

Planning Commission
Development Review Board
Design Review Committee
Montpelier Historical Commission
Conservation Commission
Housing Trust Fund
Housing Task Force
Business Loan Fund
Revolving Loan Fund
Food Systems Council
Capital Area Neighborhoods (CAN)
Energy Advisory Committee

<u>Committees Attended</u>

Montpelier Alive
City Council
Regional Housing Partners
VLCT Quality of Life
Public Transit Advisory Committee
Tree Board
Americans with Disabilities Act

1. The City Manager and the Superintendent of Schools report to the City Council and the School Board no later than ____ 2012:

a. An analysis of recreation department spending including personnel and service costs provided by the recreation department to the school system, the city, including the senior center., and non government entities such as the Mountaineers. This shall include

1. an identification of education vs. general fund benefits for taxpayers
2. the identification of recreation department and school budget transfers and a policy for including such transfers in budgets.
3. a method for assuring Montpelier tax dollars supporting recreation activities do not subsidize non residents.

b. An evaluation of the benefits of retaining the current system of oversight versus the transfer of the recreation department to the supervision of the city manager. Such evaluation shall include an assessment of the issues of personnel management, program management and ability to delivery services and the relative benefits of an association between the recreation and school functions versus those derived from an association between recreation, parks, senior center and other city functions.

c. A proposal for incorporating recreation facilities and equipment in the city's capital funding process.

2. The recreation board be immediately expanded to include a City council representative, appointed by the City Council; and School Board representative, appointed by the School Board. Further, terms and procedures for filling vacancies, including the requirement that all vacancies be advertised by the recreation board and approved by the city council.

3. The City Council proposes that the Recreation Board, the School Board and the City Council meet no later than July 1, 2012 to consider the reports from the Manager and Superintendent to establish a management structure for the Recreation Department.

A proposal for Recreation Department Governance

The Board of Commissioners of the Montpelier School District, in response to concerns raised by the Montpelier City Council, proposes the following for the governance of the Montpelier Recreation Department:

The Montpelier School District Business Office maintains the management of financing for the Montpelier Recreation Department.
The recent audit once again shows that the school district Business Office carries out its financial management of school and recreation Department accounts in an exemplary fashion.

The Montpelier School District maintains the personnel management of the Recreation Department employees.
The staffing of the Recreation Department leads to the efficient and effective delivery of services. Furthermore, the staff of the Recreation Department works closely with employees of the School District in managing shared facilities and properties.

The Board of Commissioners should continue to review the annual budget submissions for the Montpelier Recreation Department.
The Recreation Department budget submissions over the past few years have had increases below the rate of inflation and the program services are increasing. The School Board also is reviewing other recreational opportunities developed for the school district and maintaining reporting on both sets of recreation opportunities is necessary to understand the physical education opportunities for our students. Furthermore, the maintenance of school facilities relies on sharing services with the Recreation Department. The recent addition of a full time facilities director overseen by the Superintendent will strengthen the ability to coordinate facilities management.

City Council should continue to maintain its responsibility in reviewing the budget submission for the Recreation Department.
The result of the School Department review of the Recreation Department is a recommendation to City Council for including the budget submission on the Ballot for Town Meeting Day. We encourage City Council to review the budget with the School Board, but acknowledging that the schedule for a joint meeting is difficult to coordinate, City Council can continue to hold budget hearings on the specifics of the Recreation Department budget.

The City should establish a Coordinating committee to investigate any possible areas for resource and facility development between all of the Departments under direct control of City Council, the Schools, and the Recreation Board.
The review process of the Recreation Department oversight ranged into discussions regarding the state of the current facilities managed by the Recreation Department and shared by various city departments and the schools. There is value for a coordinated effort to review additional opportunities for development of the Recreation Department's facilities that would benefit the city and schools. It is the opinion of the School Board that this coordination activity be managed so that the Coordinating committee only review specific opportunities brought to it from the School Board, City Council or Recreation Board. It is not the intent to establish another volunteer Board to brainstorm ideas. Any individual that has an idea will have to convince one of the Boards that the idea is worthy of the committee consideration.

Furthermore, the Montpelier School Board wishes to acknowledge the good work of the Montpelier Recreation Board in overseeing the detailed delivery of recreational services to the population of Montpelier residents.

Maintenance for the Schools includes MHS, MSMS, Union, Harrison Ave., Vermont College/fall.				
Month	**Staff**	**Weeks/Month**	**Total Weeks**	**Costs**
April	2	4	8	
May	2	4	8	
June	2	4	8	
July	1	4	4	
August	2	4	8	
September	2	4	8	
October	2	4	8	
November	1	2	2	
Total Weeks			**54**	
	Staff Pay	Weeks/Staff	Hours	
Michael Healy+Benefits	$23.09	27	40	$24,937.20
Rob Morissette + Ben	$10.50	27	20	$6,104.00
Phillip Tomasi + Ben	$10.25	27	20	$5,958.00
Total Cost Field Staff	**$43.84**	**54**	**80**	**$36,999.20**

Rick Plowing Normal Hours Nov. - April - Ave. 6 hours/week*20 weeks.				$4,075.00
Plowing - overtime Budget				$4,598.00
Penny - Reservations	10% of her time. Includes Benefits			$4,991.20
Total Cost Other Staff				**$13,664.20**
Field Paint Gallons				$3,000.00
Spray Paint Cans				$1,000.00
Fertilizer, Seed, etc				$1,200.00
Equipment Costs	Mowing/Plowing	$7,200.00	$7,350.00	$14,550.00
Total Supply Costs				**$19,750.00**
Total Costs for Rec. Work				**$70,413.40**

School Rentals for Rec.	2010/2011	2011/2012
Union	$9,930.00	$10,980.00
MSMS	$6,105.00	$7,015.00
MHS	$3,968.00	$6,445.00
Ski/Skate Sale	$1,530.00	$1,530.00
Totals	$21,533.00	$25,970.00

Rec Dept / School Study 10/12/2012

Position/Description	Amount
Payroll	5,653
Accounts Payable/Po's/Requisitions	5,167
AR/Insurance	3,688
Business Manager	10,952
Superintendent	13,105
HR/Contracts/Attendence	1,286
Technology Director	1,784
Facilities Director	1,814
	43,449
Est of charge for rental of buildings and grounds - Arne's est if they had to pay based on usage FY12.	25,970
Supplies - po, requisitions, checks, forms	1,000
Total	70,419

Est.10% of time for Finances/Superintendent, 5 days a year for other staff.

Payroll, accounts payable, receiveables, benefits, budget, reports, construction, workers comp, unemployment, contracts, meetings, attendance, HR supplies, no charge for rentals of building and grounds.

CITY OF MONTPELIER, VERMONT
- THE SMALLEST CAPITAL CITY IN THE UNITED STATES -

Mayor Mary S. Hooper

City Council:

Tom Golonka
Andy Hooper
Sarah Jarvis
Nancy Sherman
Angela Timpone
Alan Weiss

William Fraser,
City Manager
wfraser@montpelier-vt.org

Beverlee Pembroke Hill
Assistant City Manager
bhill@montpelier-vt.org

MEMORANDUM

To:	Council Member Timpone, Chair of Recreation Study Committee
From:	William Fraser, City Manager
Re:	Recreation Department
Date:	February 3, 2012

At your request, I have prepared some information about a potential transition of Recreation Department oversight from the School Board to the City Council.

As a starting point, here is the relevant section of the City Charter:

Section 7. Recreation.

(1) The city may establish, maintain and conduct a system of public recreation including playgrounds; may set apart for such use any other land or buildings owned or leased by it; may acquire land, buildings and recreational facilities by gift or purchase, and may issue bonds therefore as provided by law and equip and conduct the same; may employ a director of recreation and assistant; and may expend funds for the aforesaid purposes.

(2) The legislative body may conduct the same through a department or bureau of recreation; or may delegate the conduct thereof to a recreational board created by them, or to a school board or to any other appropriate existing board or commission.

(3) The recreation board of the City of Montpelier shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the legislative body for three-year (3) terms, or in the case of a commission, elected at large at the annual meeting of the city. The recreation board shall perform such planning functions and duties as may be required by the legislative body, charter, ordinances, or applicable state laws.

(4) The recreation board budget shall be an integral part and under the control of the legislative body.

I have included two organization charts:

1 – The first chart reflects the current city budget proposal. In this scenario, the Assistant City Manager will supervise the Senior Center, Justice Center and Parks/Trees Department and would exercise general oversight and coordination with the Cemetery and Recreation Departments. The latter two departments would remain administratively aligned with the Cemetery Commission and School Board respectively. In addition to the School Board and City Council, there are six different citizen boards - two elected, one appointed, three self populating (with reps from the Council or School Board) – who have a role in the operation of the five departments.

2 – The second chart shows the transition of the Recreation Department to the City. All of the citizen boards remain in place with the city administratively operating Parks/Trees, Recreation and Seniors while remaining in close coordination with the Cemetery. The Assistant City Manager would provide direct oversight and supervision.

The charter says that the Council may delegate the operation of the Recreation Department to a recreational board or school board or other existing board or commission. This gives the council flexibility except that, if they choose the Rec Board model, the terms and size are pre-determined. It also makes clear that a Rec Board cannot function as an independent agency. This chart shows the Rec Board as being directly appointed by the City Council as per the charter.

Advantages to the Recreation Department being under the city:

- Improved alignment, communication and opportunity to share resources with other similar city departments.

- City government is structured to work with multiple types of departments; the School department has a huge responsibility with education which must be its primary focus. Recreation is not a natural fit.

- Better accounting of costs and fund transfers between the general fund and education fund. Rec department expenses for things like field maintenance, gym management and the like appropriately assigned to the school budget could result in a "better deal" for local taxpayers.

- Aligning all components of the Municipal Tax Rate under the City Council and all components of the Education Tax Rate under the School Board.

Disadvantages to the Recreation Department being under the city:

- System works now. City has plenty to do without adding another department.

- Rec Department uses School facilities regularly for programming and for distribution of information. School Dept relies on Rec for management/maintenance of fields and gyms. This relationship should continue under either scenario. Splitting from the School could potentially create more difficult or distant communication and coordination.

Transition issues to be addressed:

- Seemless continuation of all programs and services currently being offered.
- Continuation of effective services for the school performed by the Rec Dept and proper accounting of these services.
- Continuity of employee payroll and benefits – identifying appropriate changeover date, identifying differences in offerings and correcting any problems which may arise. Mitigating any unintended adverse effects.
- Reconciliation of budget and accounting systems.
- Impact on City and School administration work load.
- Transition plan, with dates, developed by the City Manager, Superintendent of Schools and Recreation Director and approved by both City Council and School Board.
- Clear definition of role and function of Recreation Board and its relationship with the City Council and administration.

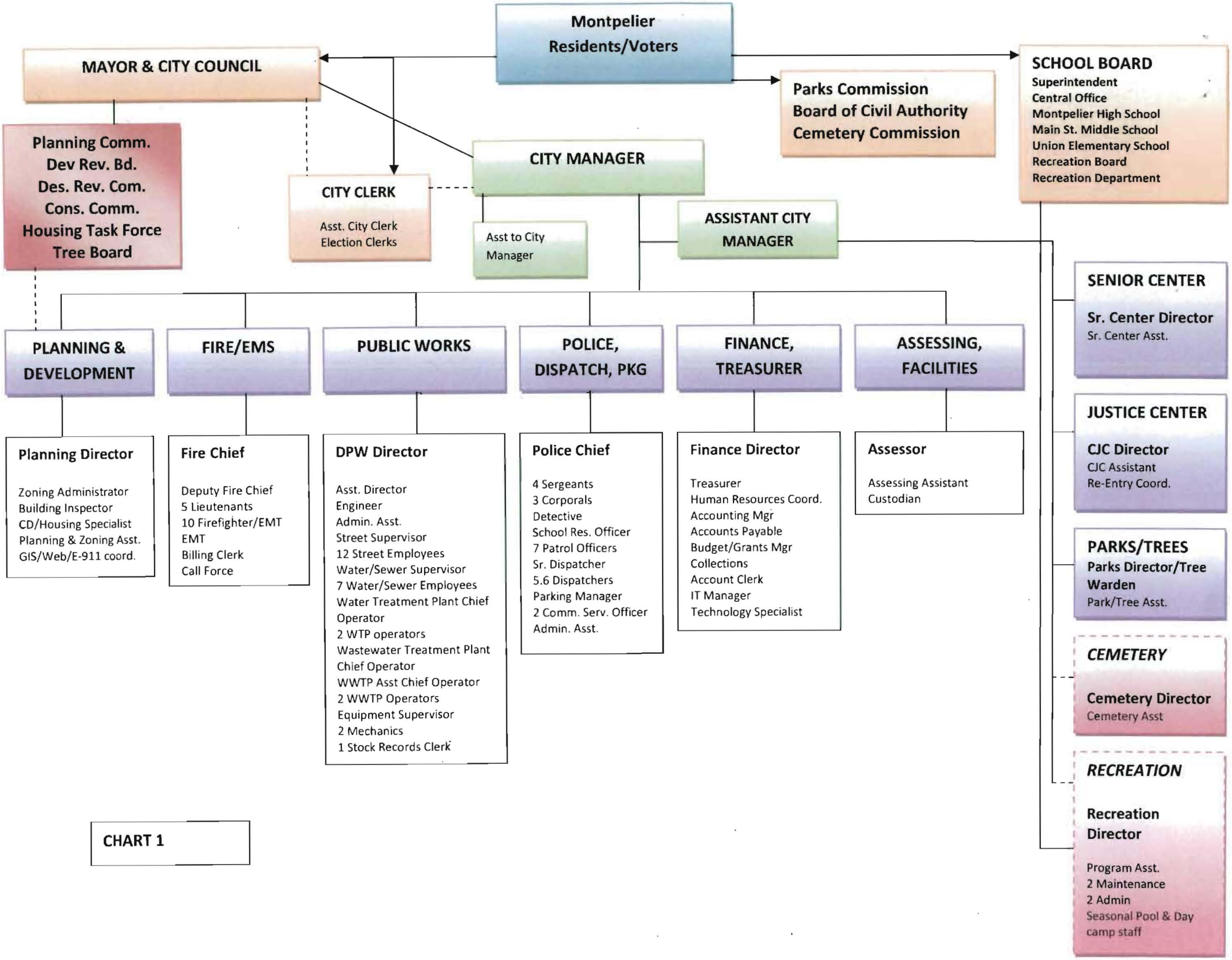

Montpelier Residents/Voters
MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL
Parks Commission
Board of Civil Authority
Cemetery Commission
SCHOOL BOARD
Superintendent
Central Office
Montpelier High School
Main St. Middle School
Union Elementary School
Recreation Board
Recreation Department
Planning Comm.
Dev Rev. Bd.
Des. Rev. Com.
Cons. Comm.
Housing Task Force
Tree Board
CITY CLERK
Asst. City Clerk
Election Clerks
CITY MANAGER
Asst to City Manager
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
FIRE/EMS
PUBLIC WORKS
POLICE, DISPATCH, PKG
FINANCE, TREASURER
ASSESSING, FACILITIES
Planning Director
Zoning Administrator
Building Inspector
CD/Housing Specialist
Planning & Zoning Asst.
GIS/Web/E-911 coord.
Fire Chief
Deputy Fire Chief
5 Lieutenants
10 Firefighter/EMT
EMT
Billing Clerk
Call Force
DPW Director
Asst. Director
Engineer
Admin. Asst.
Street Supervisor
12 Street Employees
Water/Sewer Supervisor
7 Water/Sewer Employees
Water Treatment Plant Chief Operator
2 WTP operators
Wastewater Treatment Plant Chief Operator
WWTP Asst Chief Operator
2 WWTP Operators
Equipment Supervisor
2 Mechanics
1 Stock Records Clerk
Police Chief
4 Sergeants
3 Corporals
Detective
School Res. Officer
7 Patrol Officers
Sr. Dispatcher
5.6 Dispatchers
Parking Manager
2 Comm. Serv. Officer
Admin. Asst.
Finance Director
Treasurer
Human Resources Coord.
Accounting Mgr
Accounts Payable
Budget/Grants Mgr
Collections
Account Clerk
IT Manager
Technology Specialist
Assessor
Assessing Assistant
Custodian
SENIOR CENTER
Sr. Center Director
Sr. Center Asst.
JUSTICE CENTER
CJC Director
CJC Assistant
Re-Entry Coord.
PARKS/TREES
Parks Director/Tree Warden
Park/Tree Asst.
CEMETERY
Cemetery Director
Cemetery Asst
RECREATION
Recreation Director
Program Asst.
2 Maintenance
2 Admin
Seasonal Pool & Day camp staff

CHART 1

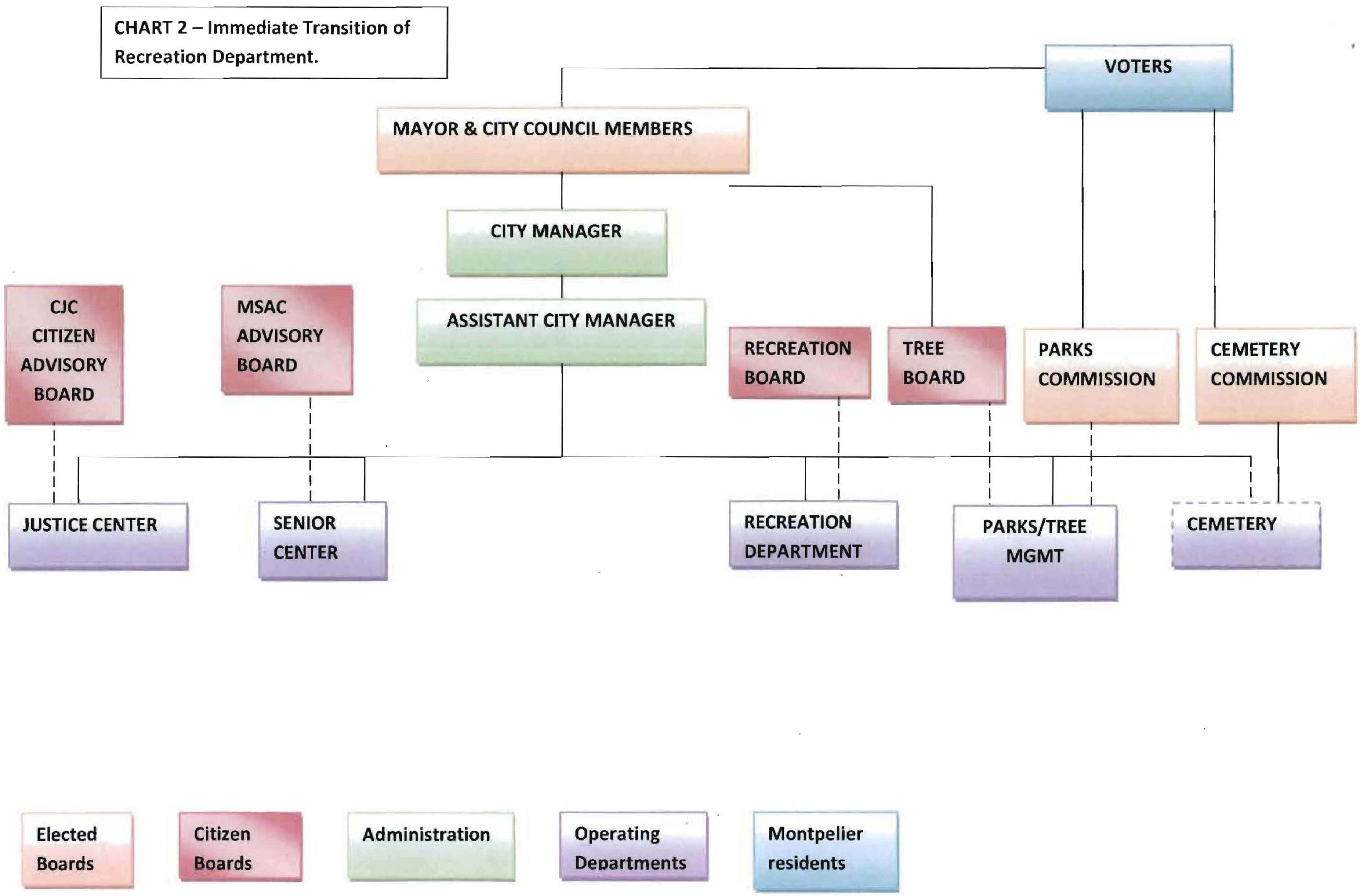


CHART 2 – Immediate Transition of Recreation Department.
VOTERS
MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
CITY MANAGER
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
CJC CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD
MSAC ADVISORY BOARD
RECREATION BOARD
TREE BOARD
PARKS COMMISSION
CEMETERY COMMISSION
JUSTICE CENTER
SENIOR CENTER
RECREATION DEPARTMENT
PARKS/TREE MGMT
CEMETERY
Elected Boards
Citizen Boards
Administration
Operating Departments
Montpelier residents

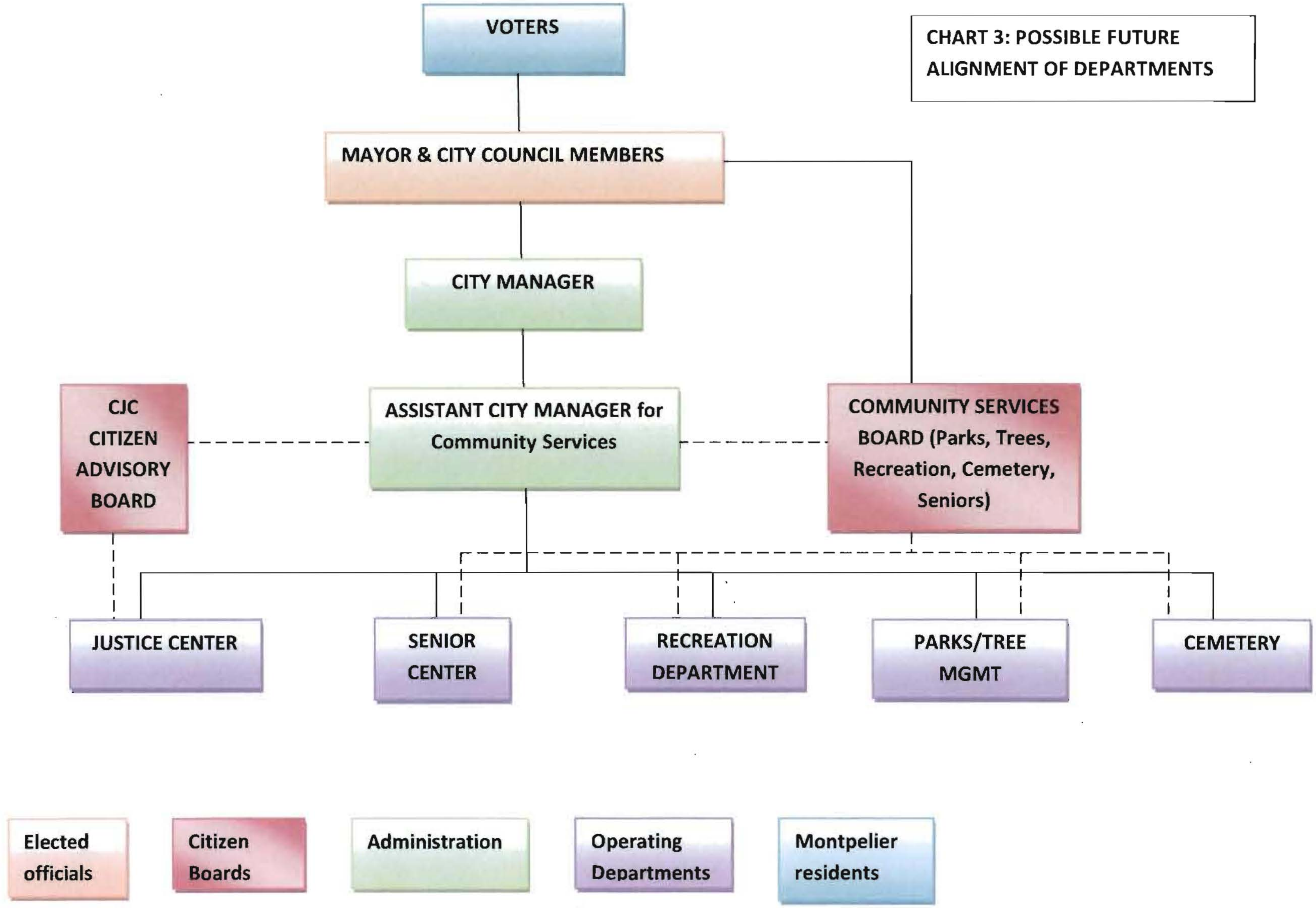


CHART 3: POSSIBLE FUTURE ALIGNMENT OF DEPARTMENTS
VOTERS
MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
CITY MANAGER
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER for Community Services
CJC CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD
COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD (Parks, Trees, Recreation, Cemetery, Seniors)
JUSTICE CENTER
SENIOR CENTER
RECREATION DEPARTMENT
PARKS/TREE MGMT
CEMETERY
Elected officials
Citizen Boards
Administration
Operating Departments
Montpelier residents

CITY OF MONTPELIER, VERMONT

- THE SMALLEST CAPITAL CITY IN THE UNITED STATES -

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Hollar & City Council Members
School Board Members
Recreation Committee Members

From: William Fraser, City Manager
Dr. Brian Ricca, Superintendent of Schools

Re: Recreation Department

Date: October 19, 2012

The City Manager and Superintendent of Schools were asked on February 22nd to prepare a report which analyzed certain aspects of the Recreation Department and offered suggestions for its future operations. This report was requested for July 1st, we apologize for the tardiness of its submission.

An analysis of recreation department spending including personnel and service costs provided by the recreation department to the school system, the city – including the senior center, and non government entities such as the Mountaineers. This shall include:

1. **An identification of education vs. general fund benefits for taxpayers**.

   Attached worksheets indicate that the Recreation Department expends $70,413 in general fund money for the behalf of the School Department and Education Fund. Conversely, the School Department provides $70,419 Education Fund money and in kind value for the operation of the Recreation Department.

2. **The identification of recreation department and school budget transfers and a policy for including such transfers in budgets.**

   Each year accompanying the Montpelier Public Schools, the Superintendent of Schools will reconcile Recreation Department funds and School funds in the same manner as the attachments. The attachments document that there is a relatively small amount of discrepancy between the work that is done for the Schools by the Recreation Department and the work that is done for the Recreation Department by the Schools. The School

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www.montpelier-vt.org

Department auditors (Fothergill, Segale, and Valley) consider the current accounting system to be appropriate and reasonable.

3. **A method for assuring Montpelier tax dollars supporting recreation activities do not subsidize non residents.**

   The Recreation Board and Department annually review resident versus non-resident participation. This use is taken into consideration when setting programming fees.

An evaluation of the benefits of retaining the current system of oversight versus the transfer of the recreation department to the supervision of the city manager. Such evaluation shall include an assessment of the issues of personnel management, program management and ability to deliver services and the relative benefits of an association between the recreation and school functions versus those derived from an association between recreation, parks, senior center and other city functions.

Supervision: The Superintendent of Schools supervises the Director of the Recreation Department like every other District Level employee. There are weekly meetings throughout the year. The Director of the Recreation Department sets goals annually with the Superintendent of Schools and is evaluated based on those goals. In terms of the budget, the Recreation Department Board creates a budget that is evaluated by the Superintendent of Schools and the Business Manager, in consultation with the City. For example, the City asked the Recreation Department to lower the allocation for FY13 and that was done. That process included meetings with the Director of the Recreation, the Superintendent of Schools, and the Business Manager.

The City Manager uses a very similar system for supervising municipal departments. From a daily operational standpoint, there is no specific structural advantage for having the Rec Department supervised by either the Manager or the Superintendent.

Personnel Management: Neither the City nor the School present a particular advantage with regard to personnel management. Both organizations have established policies, procedures and personnel structures. Recreation Department employees presently fall under School Department benefit plans - a transition to the City would require a transition plan for these employees, similar to the system used for the Senior Center.

Program management and ability to deliver services and the relative benefits of an association between the recreation and school functions versus those derived from an association between recreation, parks, senior center and other city functions:

Advantages to the Recreation Department being under the city:

- Improved alignment, communication and opportunity to share resources with other similar city departments.

- City government is structured to work with multiple types of departments; the School department has a huge responsibility with education which must be its primary focus. Recreation is not a natural fit.

- Better accounting of costs and fund transfers between the general fund and education fund. Rec department expenses for things like field maintenance, gym management and the like appropriately assigned to the school budget could result in a “better deal” for local taxpayers.

- Aligning all components of the Municipal Tax Rate under the City Council and all components of the Education Tax Rate under the School Board.

Advantages to the Recreation Department remaining with the School Board:

- System works now. City has plenty to do without adding another department. Each organization is geared for its current capacity.

- Rec Department uses School facilities regularly for programming and for distribution of information. School Dept relies on Rec for management/maintenance of fields and gyms. This relationship should continue under either scenario. Splitting from the School could potentially create more difficult or distant communication and coordination.

The recreation board be immediately expanded to include a city council representative, appointed by the city council; and school board representative appointed by the school board. Further, terms and procedures for filling vacancies, including the requirement that all vacancies be advertised by the recreation board and approved by the city council.

The City Charter states the following:

Section 7. Recreation.

(1) The city may establish, maintain and conduct a system of public recreation including playgrounds; may set apart for such use any other land or buildings owned or leased by it; may acquire land, buildings and recreational facilities by gift or purchase, and may issue bonds therefore as provided by law and equip and conduct the same; may employ a director of recreation and assistant; and may expend funds for the aforesaid purposes.

(2) The legislative body may conduct the same through a department or bureau of recreation; or may delegate the conduct thereof to a recreational board created by them, or to a school board or to any other appropriate existing board or commission.

(3) The recreation board of the City of Montpelier shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the legislative body for three-year (3) terms, or in the case of a commission, elected at large at the annual meeting of the city. The recreation board shall perform such planning functions and duties as may be required by the legislative body, charter, ordinances, or applicable state laws.

(4) The recreation board budget shall be an integral part and under the control of the legislative body.

The charter clearly allows the council to establish a recreation board or delegate the operation of the department to the school or “any other appropriate existing board or commission”. Interestingly, the charter then specifies the size of the recreation board at 5 members – which is in conflict with the current 7 member committee.   There appears no reason why a council member and/or school board member could not be part of the 5 member board nor why they could not attend as ex officio members in addition to the 5 members.   A strict reading of the charter would seem to require an amendment if the board were to be formally expanded.

Recommendation:

A significant structural and organizational change has been suggested by the Matrix report where several community service departments become administratively aligned with their related citizen boards consolidated. Specifically, the Recreation, Parks, Trees, Cemetery, Senior Center and possibly Community Justice Center operations could be combined into one Community Services Department with one Community Services Board replacing the six boards and committees which currently exist and possibly under one department head. This change, or something similar, will require charter amendments. Enacting this change will require a lot of work and a lot of communication with multiple boards and constituent groups.

If a substantive organizational change with serious commitment to proceeding is desired, then we recommend placing the Recreation Department under the City to create full administrative flexibility for implementing that change.

The current operating system includes a Department Head, Professional Chief Administrator, independent Recreation Board and an elected body providing general oversight. If this system remains there appears to be no obvious advantage to placing the Recreation Department under either the city or school department as that structure can be mirrored under either organization.

The Recreation Department and School Department rely on each other significantly. However the Recreation Department also works cooperatively and communicated relatively well with other city departments. If the desire is to keep the operating structure of the Recreation Department and the other departments basically the same, we recommend keeping the Recreation Department under the School Department's supervision seeing no compelling case for administrative change.

Attachments:

Council direction from February 22, 2012

School Board proposal for Rec Dept governance, February 2012

City Manager's memo to Rec Committee, February 3, 2012

Superintendent's analysis of School and Rec costs

Draft of possible Community Service Department structure

Report of the Montpelier City Council's

Citizen Budget Review Committee

October 4, 2012

STAFF COMMENTS added

October 19, 2012

a. Summary of Recommendations

The BRC decided to include all of the Recommendations developed by the subcommittees in the Executive Summary as the best means for summarizing the work that was accomplished, while avoiding the pitfalls of "watering down" or "wordsmithing" in order to gain the consensus of the overall BRC. *However, due to the limitations discussed above, the recommendations are made by the individual subcommittees, and not the group as a whole.* The recommendations from each of the subcommittees, listed alphabetically, appear below in the order in which the reports are presented in this document.

Administration & Finance Subcommittee Recommendations

1. Because there appears to be a constant flux of employees within city departments, we recommend the City Manager work with the City Council at the start of the budget process to provide a clear organizational chart of current positions, showing filled/vacant and salaries as well as the City Manager's plans for moving/adding/deleting positions in the next budget period.

   This already occurs each year In early December, when the Council receives the "Budget Book", organizational charts for the city and all its departments are included in the "Charts and Graphs" section. Salary and staffing information is also provided at that time and any changes in proposed staffing are detailed.

2. City staff FTE has grown 9.8% from 106.85 in 1992 to 117.28 in 2013. In about the same timeframe, the population of Montpelier has shrunk 4.8% from 8247 to 7855 (US Census). We recommend that City Council and the City Manager work together to carefully review all new potential hires as well as potential projects that may be handled more efficiently and effectively by other local or regional organizations.

   This data indicates that the total number of employees, including the Recreation Department which has not always been under city control, has increased by 10.43 FTE from FY92 to FY13, a span of 21 years. Employee changes are made as a result of service needs, funding structure and various legal requirements.

   The changes from FY92 to FY13 include the following:

   Dispatch: + 2.6 FTE which have been paid for by contract with Capital Fire Mutual Aid System.

   Fire Department: +1 full time EMT which was fully paid for by reduced overtime and ambulance revenues.

Water Treatment Plant: + 3 full time employees. The City was ordered by the state to construct a treatment facility. The plant was completed in 2000 and 3 employees were hired to operate it. They are paid from water rates, which did increase as a result of the plant.

Community Justice Center: + 2.55 FTE. This is a new program which is almost entirely paid for by the State of Vermont Department of Corrections

Recreation Department: + 1.5 FTE. These changes have not been made by the city administration so we don't know the specific basis for them. Presumably they have been paid for by program fees but that is not certain.

The above changes total 10.65 new FTE in programs which are either supported by outside revenues (dispatch, CJC, rec presumably), mandated (WTP) or implemented as a cost savings measure (EMT).

In all other areas of City government combined, the total workforce numbers are essentially the same as in FY92, (actually reduced by 0.22 FTE). Positions have been reallocated among departments and programs as needs arise but the total has remained constant.

3. When city employees retire and are then re-hired to return to work for Montpelier City government, we recommend that it is with a contract for a specific time period and with clearly stated compensation and benefits. This recommendation is intended to clarify staffing roles, succession planning, and budgeting.

   The city does not regularly engage in this practice. In FY13 two employees were retained on this basis for specific jobs that had been budgeted. These employees were retained based on their expertise, experience and abilities, particularly during a unique organizational transition.

4. In our review of five other communities, we found three others are served by Community Justice Centers (CJCs). Like Montpelier, Brattleboro and St. Albans treat CJC staff as city employees in addition to providing space and other in-kind benefits. Barre City provides only in-kind resources to its nonprofit CJC. There is no formal CJC in Bennington, but the city allocates $3000 for related services. There is no CJC in Middlebury, nor does it contribute anything for such services. We did not have the time or the resources to compare the effectiveness of these centers.

   We recommend that City Council regularly examine the relationship between the Community Justice Center and Montpelier City to see if expenses can be matched with outside revenues so that the city contribution, which has varied from year to year, can be minimized or eliminated. It will be particularly important to keep an eye on this if state funding is reduced.

In the 2009 National Citizen Survey, Montpelier residents identified the CJC as the number one area to cut city costs, if cuts were necessary. It was named by 53% of the respondents. While we understand that the CJC is doing good work, this suggests that some Montpelier residents have concerns about costs that could benefit from a broader discussion of the CJC.

It is also possible that citizens are not fully aware of the CJC's services or that it is almost entirely funded by state grants.

5. We recommend the City Council review how IT services are provided and the cost of those services. Comparison towns in this report all use contract services.

   See separate memo responding to this recommendation and the committee report.

Budget Process Subcommittee Recommendations

The following recommendations support Goal 1 of the City Council's Goals for 2012-2013 and the Finance Recommendations [7.1 (1) through 7.2 (7)] of the Matrix Report:

1. The BPSC recommends that the Council provide the City Manager with clear direction and specific goals before the budget process begins.

   This is done each year to the extent that the Council is able to reach a clear consensus without knowing all the financial particulars. Information about budget targets, possible increases, cuts or items to be held harmless is solicited annually at the beginning of the budget process.

2. The BPSC recommends that the City Manager's performance related to the specific budget development goals and assignments should be included in the City Manager's annual performance review.

   This is already done and is a key component of that review.

3. The BPSC recommends that the City Council first understand and then focus on the "gap," or difference, between the projected available budget year revenues - without any tax or fee increases - and the projected expenses, which should be adjusted for known increases or decreases (changes in union contracts, health plan, debt service, etc.).

   For the FY14 Budget, the City Council received preliminary "gap" information in September. This information is usually provided. We could add this early projection report to our annual schedule for preparing the budget. One of the first steps of the budget process is to determine whether existing services and council goals can be delivered within current revenues.

4. The BPSC recommends that the City Manager and Council should focus on realistic efficiencies, cost savings and/or program changes that could mitigate or resolve any negative “gap” (deficit), as well as important uses for any positive “gap” (surplus) to further the Council’s fiscal goals before considering tax increases.

5. The BPSC recommends that the City Council should require the City Manager to provide a Budget Worksheet, or “gap” analysis (see Attachment 3), or similarly formatted document, for the total projected municipal budget, including revenue and expenses for all funds and capital improvements, for the upcoming fiscal year, at the first City Council Meeting following Labor Day. This Worksheet is intended to be a summary level document (not line item detail or narrative) showing changes by major revenue and expense categories.

   For the FY14 Budget, the City Council received this preliminary “gap” information in September. This can be done annually but is very preliminary for a fiscal year which is ending nearly 21 months later.

6. Budget related instruction memos from the City Manager’s Office to department heads, and to the Mayor and City Council, vary from year to year. Clear, concise and consistently formatted budget instructions improve reader/user understanding and timely decision making. The BPSC recommends the adoption of standardized content and format. Improvements in format and measurement should be incorporated to best serve the City Council.

   The City Manager provides clear direction to staff each year. Yearly memos/instructions/budget schedules are prepared with a similar format and are sent out in late September and early October. Department Heads meet in September and October to discuss the process and parameters.

7. In the context of the above recommendations, the BPSC recommends additional training on budgeting methods and processes for City department heads, which is available through VLCT. This will support department heads’ full participation in and responsibility for their department’s financial operation and budget control.

   All staff can benefit from additional training and professional development. All Department Heads currently participate fully in the budget process from start to finish.

8. The BPSC concurs with the City Council’s plan to increase and maintain a sufficient General Fund balance (reserve) for fiscal stability and the ability to respond to emergencies. (Matrix recommendation 7.2 (5)).

9. The BPSC supports Matrix recommendation 7.2 (1) for the development of a five-year financial plan (Plan). This plan should be a living document, reviewed and revised annually.

   This is an important goal which the Finance Department is looking forward to achieving.

Data Subcommittee Recommendations

The City should take measures to create a system in which inter-city/town comparisons sought by the Council could be made with some confidence and urge the League of Cities and Towns to consider establishing such a system.

Debt/Capital Planning Subcommittee Recommendations

A. Make the Capital Plan a top priority in the budget.

We recommend that the state of the city's infrastructure be raised as a top budget priority and that the 6 year Capital Improvement Plan be adhered to as closely as possible. After our interviews with Bill Fraser and Sandy Gallup it was clear to us the monies for emergencies and other urgent needs were disproportionately taken from the Department of Public Works over a period of years. This may partially explain why our roads and sidewalks look the way they do. In order to catch up and to create a better mixture of maintenance, repair and replacement, other departments and programs should also be considered as a source of emergency funds when these situations arise and a re-balancing of our spending should be considered with all aspects of the budget on the table.

The City Manager has drafted a 10 year plan which increases capital funding in all categories and fully funds the recent recommendations for both road and facility improvements. This draft is being considered by the Capital Improvements Committee.

B. Look for savings throughout the budget.

Given the scope of the work to be done on our infrastructure in the future, additional bonding may be necessary. We recommend that the council look for savings in the current budget to offset the cost of new bonds that would otherwise raise the annual debt service, taxes and the overall budget. Any monies saved could be re-directed to our most urgent needs like fixing our neglected infrastructure and reducing the amount of borrowing the city ultimately has to do. Additionally, we recommend not taking money from normal maintenance or repair of roads to fund any new projects or to pay for emergencies because over the long run it costs more to do so.

The City Manager's 10 year draft plan includes both bonding within the debt limit policy and increases in annual maintenance. The plan requires increases in capital expenses over the next five years. The City Council will need to determine the appropriate mix of service and capital expenses.

C. Implement the following Matrix Report recommendation.

The Matrix report says "Greater detail should be provided regarding the specific funding source for each capital program" and recommends that "The City provide data demonstrating the impact on capital expenditures for the adopted CIP and Equipment Replacement Program on the operating budget".

We agree. **If the general public was aware of the benefit of the costs of maintenance as compared to waiting for things to fall into disrepair then perhaps our Capital Improvement Plan would become a publicly supported high priority, fully funded and executed.**

D. Create a Public Works Committee

In Middlebury, they have a committee comprised of department heads, the town manager, several select board members and some residents to decide on capital expenditure priorities. This committee allows the other department heads in the city to see what is truly needed and move their resources around based on those needs. It also alleviates the insularity that often exists between departments. Instead of lobbying for the biggest share possible for their departments, managers get to see the broader needs of the community and might be willing to give and take their share from year to year depending on the circumstances to benefit the community at large. This type of committee also empowers a broader spectrum of the community by decentralizing the decision making, which can create more open and less closely held control of the decisions regarding how money is spent on Public Works. Perhaps if something similar was established in Montpelier, resources could be moved thoughtfully to where the City's urgent needs truly lie while fostering a shared community spirit of sacrifice and unity.

The City has a Capital Improvements Committee consisting of city council members, a planning commissioner and several staff members. This committee annually recommends the level of capital and equipment funding as well as the specific projects and items to be funded. Additionally all capital and equipment items are reviewed and prioritized with the Department Heads as a group. Final recommendations of these groups are considered and acted upon by the City Council in open session.

Health Benefits Subcommittee Recommendations

Conclusions:

Currently, health care costs make up approximately 9% of the municipal budget.[1] With average annual premium increases of 8.5%, the city is facing an escalating fiscal burden. Health benefits are negotiated as part of the overall union contract, usually in conjunction with wages and other benefits, such as retirement, and as such are part of a broader discussion. Short of reducing staff, the only major tools towns (and other employers alike) have in addressing their exposure to rising health care costs are to reduce the benefit package and increase cost-sharing.

Recommendations:

That being said, it will be important for those in city governance to continue to find ways of offsetting foreseeable yearly increases in health care costs. At some future

[1] This number is derived by comparing the city's share of employee medical costs (approximately $1 million) with the city's total general fund expenditure of $10,862,379 (for 2012).

point Green Mountain Care may offer more affordable solutions, however, that is unlikely to happen before 2017.

Health insurance costs have been a major concern for 10 years or more and have eaten into service and capital finding opportunities. We agree that diligence is essential.

Matrix Report Subcommittee Recommendations

1: Refer to the Appendix Matrix 1 to read the City's Status Update on Recommendations to review which recommendations have been accomplished and which are outstanding.

2: View City and staff responses to the Matrix report by going to Montpelier-vt.org. Click "View City Meetings" in left hand menu. Then, go to upper right hand box and click "City Council." When the list of meetings appears, click on August 10, 2011 to see the agenda. Click on "Matrix Recommendations" to hear responses from City.

Planning Subcommittee Recommendations

1. **The City Manager, Planning Director and City Council should complete the Matrix recommendation to hold a work session to review Planning Department services and then establish priorities prior to allocating necessary resources. (Matrix Report 10.2 (3)) City Council should consider the Matrix finding that the heavy emphasis on special projects diverts attention from core planning functions.**

What Matrix calls "Special Projects" are part of the department's core function of Community Development.

"The project team would recommend, prior to making any increases in staffing levels, that the City Manager and Planning Director undertake a Planning work session with the City Council to discuss the level of effort and time resources allocated to these special projects. The Council should be responsible for establishing the commitment of the City to conduct these special projects/efforts, establishing the relative priority of these activities, and setting parameters for staff time and resources to be dedicated to them. From this effort, the City Planning Director should develop an annual work plan setting forth the core services to be provided and the identification of special projects (and associated resources – staff or external) that will be supported by the Planning Department." (Matrix Report, pg. 87)

The Planning Director has submitted an annual work plan every year with the materials provided City Council with the budge

This Matrix recommendation remains incomplete and that is of concern to the subcommittee. It states in the Matrix Status Update 10.2 (3) that the Planning Department's annual work plan for FY13 was completed without this review. (See Appendix Matrix 1) It is noted as high priority.

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2. **Following a work session with the City Manager and the Planning Director, City Council should establish the commitment of the City to conduct special projects, establish a process and procedure (including the Council's approval of individual Project Charters) for formalizing the city's commitment of resources as well as their relative priority, including establishing parameters for staff time and resources to be dedicated to them. (Matrix Report, 10.2 (3))**

   Assisting the City Council in this task was the basis for the recommendation to convene a standing economic development committee for the city. All projects and programs of the Planning Department have been previously approved by the City Council.

   While commending the Planning Department for certain aspects of their work, Matrix also noted:

   "However, in this Department, more than any other in the City, there have been many "special projects" and efforts assigned to (or assumed by) staff that fall outside what would typically be found in a municipal Planning Department for a community the size of Montpelier.

   We agree that this work falls outside of the scope of typical Planning Departments but this work is very consistent with the scope of work for a Community Development Agency.

   This special project (sic) all have value and importance to the community, but the project team has noted that they divert significant resources and focus away from the core services provided – with a noticeable impact on both staff and the attention given to these services. The long-term focus of the department cannot continue, if the City wishes to provide a high level of services on "core planning functions" without either a reduction in the number and time spent on special projects or an increase in staff." (Matrix Report, p.87)

   This recommendation highlights the Matrix focus on decision-making at the City Council level, with staff input. Coming out of the Matrix concern that time spent on special projects diminishes the effectiveness of efforts on core planning functions, is an emphasis that the City Council is responsible to determine which projects are core as well as which projects to fund and conduct.

   The Council is meeting with the Planning Department on October 24th to review department activities and priorities

3. **Given the concerns stated in the Matrix report about the noticeable impact on both staff and attention to services resulting from the Planning Department's focus away from core services, as well as the employee responses noted below, the City Council and the City Manager should identify core functions and how they will be addressed in the Planning Department's annual work plan.**

   Community Development is a core service of the department.

   In the Summary of the Employee Survey section of the Matrix report, the consultants noted that 84% of employee responses received were positive (i.e., either 'strongly agree' or 'agree').

"With the exception of the Planning & Development Department, all departments had over 80% positive responses. In the Planning & Development Department, 55% of responses were positive." (Matrix Report, p.221)

During the time of the Matrix study, the department was overloaded with work – one of the staff was out sick with cancer and two major federal projects plus the 58 Barre St redevelopment were taking up a large amount of time. This has changed some since then, and things have been on a more even keel.

This marked discrepancy, in conjunction with the concerns described in the other Recommendations, highlight and emphasize the importance of the subcommittee's recommendation that City Council and the City Manager be involved in establishing and approving the Planning Department's annual work plan before approving its budget.

The Director has submitted an annual work plan to the City Manager and the City Council every year and it has been approved with the budget. The first draft – marked "preliminary" – has been included in the documents submitted this week with the department's report.

4. **As part of establishing its annual priorities, the City Council should also consider when and how other organizations can appropriately initiate and implement projects now initiated by the City Planning Department.**

The Planning subcommittee agrees with helping all citizens within the community. This recommendation is intended to urge City Council to consider all possible sources of that support. We urge City Council to continually ask the question "is there someone else offering this service?" in order to avoid any duplication of services. This kind of strategic planning has become crucial for government and all nonprofits as funding dollars are stretched. Food sustainability, time banks, neighborhood organizing and others are all worthwhile efforts that are, and can be, addressed by local and regional nonprofits.

All of these efforts were part of the City Council goals when they were initiated. Most have since been transferred to other non-profit agencies.

5. **With the discussion of hiring a new full-time assistant City Manager to replace the part-time Assistant City Manager position, the City Council should consider whether both the planning and development functions should be housed in the same department. The community development position now in the Planning and Community Development office could be moved to the City Manager's office, supervised by a full-time Assistant City Manager, or directly by the City Manager.**

Currently the department is able to achieve a level of integration and synergy due to the co-location that would be more difficult otherwise. This change would involve different qualifications and responsibilities for staff in the department.

A major portion of the work done by the Planning and Community Development office relates to community and economic development. This includes grant writing, grant management, promoting Montpelier businesses, helping with community projects, administering housing programs, and working on special projects like the biomass heating plant. According to the City Manager, if you leave aside the Building Inspector, half the department's work pertains to planning and zoning and half involves community and economic development work.

According to the City Manager, concerns have been expressed in the past as to whether these divergent planning and development duties should be housed in the same department. One portion of the department (zoning, building permits, etc.) is regulating development, while the other portion is promoting and working on developments, creating potential conflicts of interest, or the appearance of a potential for a conflict of interest, and thereby undermines public confidence in the Department's impartiality. Splitting up the department and bringing the economic development work into the City Manager's office has been considered more than once, according to the City Manager, but never acted upon, in part due to concerns it might require hiring more employees – specifically two department heads, one for planning and zoning and one for economic development.

While it is true that this sort of division has been considered in the past, it is also true that this option has been rejected as not being in the best interest of the city both financially and programmatically. The co-location of planning and community development serves the best interests of the community because of the coordination that is possible. Despite theoretical conflicts, the reality is that there have not been problems in this area.

6. **In the 2009 National Citizen Survey, 67% of Montpelier citizens interviewed cited the city's economic development services as "poor" or "fair" (Figure 29). Based on these responses, as well as information gathered during the process of this study, the committee highly recommends these areas for future study as soon as feasible:**

It is not completely clear what citizens consider "economic development services." The City Council has, to date, been unable to develop any sort of definition of economic development. The type of work done in the department tends to be focused on infrastructure and other core economic functions – not business recruitment and retention. The department has brought over $14 million in funding and projects to the City in the last six years

- Economic Development: Policy, Staffing, Management, and Implementation
- Revenue Responsibilities of the Planning Department: Policy Management and Implementation
- Grant Writing: Oversight and Management

Public Safety Subcommittee Recommendations

1. **Time did not allow for a review of police services therefore, we believe that a review of operational efficiency and effectiveness of the police department in the near future is necessary and appropriate.**

As far as further analysis of police operations, the police department has addressed the areas of concern listed in the Matrix Report (with the exception of promoting a sergeant to a designated number two position [captain] since they are too flat of an organization). The department welcomes any further discussions and analysis of its operation in order to address any deficiencies as well as identify any opportunities that would strengthen our ability to carry out our core mission in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

2. **The City of Montpelier should arrange for professional development for its Public Safety Department Heads in the specific areas of optimizing fiscal management and finding operational efficiencies.**

The administration is fully supportive of professional development. The Police Chief is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. All police supervisors attend the supervisor training at Roger Williams University. The Fire Chief has attended appropriate management classes at the National Fire Academy as have the Deputy Fire Chief and most department Lieutenants.

3. **Budget presentations and information regarding public safety cost centers (police, fire service, ambulance, dispatch and emergency management) should be presented distinctly and separately in order to enable the most detailed analysis by each individual public safety function.**

With the exception of Fire and Ambulance which are combined, all other public safety budgets are presented in separate cost centers.

4. **Budget targets should be established by the City Council with appropriate specificity and conveyed to the City Manager. The City Manager should be directed by the council to apply those targets. Department Heads (including Public Safety) should develop and present budget recommendations that meet the targets. Public Safety Department Heads should be directed to prepare budgets for their respective departments that, in their professional judgments, *have the least detrimental effects* on overall public safety in Montpelier, while considering effectiveness and efficiencies.**

This is exactly what happens now. At the beginning of the budget process, the City Manager lays-out the City Council's budget expectations and guidelines for all Department Heads to follow. The Department Heads and the City Manager meet multiple times through out the budget session to review department budgets and to insure expectations and guidelines are being met and followed. For example, Department Heads and the City Manager meet as a group to review equipment, and the priorities for the year. Budgets are built in collaboration with each department, and the mindfulness of the needs of entire city

5. **The City should consider promoting the establishment of a regional or county-wide dispatch center.** The City has been studying the regionalization of public safety for years with little progress. We believe that starting a regional dispatch center could be the catalyst for regionalization of all public safety for Central Vermont and could lead to substantial cost savings.

The City is an active member of a regional study committee examining all public safety services in Central Vt. Dispatch appears to be a priority of the committee.

6. **The City should develop a plan for recruitment and retention of a supplementary voluntary firefighting force (call force), emphasizing membership of both city residents and employees of public and private entities located in Montpelier.** *Matrix Report section 8.1(4) recommended the City evaluate the use of part-time firefighters and qualified, available and interested City and regional volunteers for shift coverage.*

The Department continually recruits for Call Force Members. One new call Force member was hired in October, and there are currently 5 applicants being evaluated through the hiring process. Call Force members have to go through the same physical fitness evaluation and background screening as a paid firefighter to insure the safety of all of the Montpelier firefighters and citizens.

7. **The City could utilize a pager system for evening coverage of fire response**s **by an enhanced Call Force**. Two call force members could respond with the initial tone for any fire call in the City after the close of normal business hours. This type of response meets the O.S.H.A. requirement of the "Two in Two out Policy" for hazardous conditions and enables regular employees the ability to gain entry, rescue residents, and increase fire ground safety and effectiveness while working to confine and extinguish the fire. This system would increase fire ground safety and effectiveness of initial fire ground operations for confinement, rescue, and suppression of fires without delay. (With an advanced call force response program the City can save monies paid in overtime to regular employees. This program would also protect the City from being in violation of O.S.H.A. regulations pertaining to fire ground operations, which cannot currently be met on every call due to staffing levels.)

   With a well-trained, well-staffed and well-deployed call force to augment the professional force, the City could realize the dual benefits of both cost-savings and improved effectiveness.

   It appears that the current Fire Union contract offers overtime to employees before a call-force member can be fully utilized and will require adjustments in order to gain maximum savings for the City. The City should offer a stipend, training, and competitive compensation, etc., for the retention of an active and trained Call Force,

   The Department currently uses a pager system and all call force members are supplied with radios. All Call Members are encouraged to attend all fire calls, and are compensated for call response and training. The Fire Union contract does not restrict any call force member from responding to a fire call. The Department is currently researching how they can better utilize call force members. One system being reviewed is in place in Williston, where they supplement the current staffing levels on nights and weekends with a call force member.

8. **Update the Matrix Recommendation to require that the Fire Department Secretary be a Certified Billing Clerk.** This will provide assurance that the City's medical billing procedures for Ambulance services remain up-to-date.

   The finance department is exploring options for long term ambulance billing, and looking at the administrative needs of all departments.

9. **Analyze the costs and benefits of utilizing ambulance vans rather than the larger, box-like units currently employed to deliver Emergency EMS care.** Box units are designed more for comfort and space on long-distance critical care transfers when more than two personnel are required. Vans are smaller, easier to handle, provide ample space for patient care with one or two attendants on short runs to the hospital and are much less costly to purchase and maintain. The City should undertake this analysis prior to making any replacement purchases for existing ambulance units.

Over the past several years, the American emergency medical field has steadily moved away from the use of van style ambulances (Type II) towards ambulances that are built on a light- or medium-duty truck chassis and cab (Type I). The Montpelier Fire Department is one such example of this, and there are several reasons for this:

- Safety: Type I ambulances are generally recognized as being safer than Type II ambulances. Type II ambulances are more top heavy than Type I ambulances and have a shorter wheelbase, making them more prone to rollover during turns or other high speed maneuvering that is often the norm for emergency response driving. The patient compartment area (commonly referred to as, "the box") is also generally of a m onstruction in a Type I ambulance, as the boxes in these trucks are specifically designed for EMS operations
- Work Space: Over the past two decades, the focus of emergency medicine has shifted from loading and transporting a patient as quickly as possible to now working to stabilize a patient in the back of the ambulance by means of aggressive medical interventions. These interventions take the right set-up and amount of space in the back of the ambulance, allowing multiple advanced life support EMTs to work efficiently at the same time. A Type I ambulance offers substantially more work space than a Type II.
- Cost: Every vehicle has a certain life span. With a Type II ambulance, once that life span is reached, the whole ambulance becomes obsolete, as the cab, chassis, and box on a Type II ambulance are all basically one piece. Conversely, with a Type I ambulance, the box is able to be remounted on a new cab and chassis once the original cab and chassis has reached the end of its life span. This allows for a Type I ambulance box to be used two to three times longer than a Type II ambulance box. A new truck chassis can be purchased for $30-50,000 and the box can be remounted,

effectively creating a new ambulance for about half the price of a new Type II ambulance. The Montpelier Fire Department's Ambulance 1 is an example of this. The box on our current Ambulance 1 is fifteen years old, being used effectively and safely after having been remounted on a 2006 Ford cab and chassis, and it will be remounted again once the current cab and chassis hits the end of its life expectancy.

10. **Undertake a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the practice of performing ambulance transfers using Montpelier equipment and personnel and consider eliminating the service if it is not profitable**. The City was unable to provide this subcommittee with a real cost of ambulance transfers and unable to substantiate that transfers make money for the City. The City should be able to calculate a COST OUT THE DOOR to claim it is making money off transfers. (COTD includes fuel, lights, heat, storage, overtime, etc.) With overtime costs of over $200,000 at time and one half, the City should be able to provide an initial cost to the taxpayer. It appears the Montpelier taxpayer is subsidizing non-residents by doing transfers with Montpelier Firefighters and overtime cost shifted to the City**.**

    There is no need to undertake a thorough analysis of non-emergency ambulance transfers. The marginal cost of even the most expensive transfer (two people for 3 hours to Burlington) is still $200 less than the lowest fee revenue generated for the transfer. Non emergency transfers, when managed properly, reduce the net costs for all other core functions of the Fire/EMS Department. With a few exceptions, non emergency transfers are Montpelier residents only, per an agreement with surrounding ambulance services.

    The 2011 Fire Department overtime cost was $207,666. However, with new operational changes to better utilizes the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, and Operations Officers reduced overtime expenditures in 2012 to $134,294. The current FY13 budgeted overtime is less than 2012 at $130,000. Recently, the new negotiated Fire Union contract allows the Chief additional flexibility in overtime shift coverage. Non emergency ambulance transfers are scheduled to utilize on duty personnel, eliminating the need to hire extra personnel on overtime. We are currently evaluating our current ambulance billing rates. It is important to point out that ambulance revenue has increased ($406,000) while overtime has been reduced.

11. **Consider charging for Fire Department services to all non-residents by use of City ordinances.** Montpelier property taxpayers underwrite the cost of our public safety and emergency services, yet we are the host to thousands of non-residents who also have access to Montpelier services. The City should consider instituting a system where non-residents are billed for certain services they require from the public safety departments (e.g. (haz mat, car fire, etc.). Montpelier officials should investigate this system, which we understand is in place in some other municipalities by use of City ordinances.

    The Department is currently exploring this suggestion, including contacting other communities and researching the legality of separate billing.

12. **The City should consider removing all Fire Alarm Boxes from the streets due to potential liability issues.** These call boxes within the City limits are outdated, not well maintained or appropriately upgraded, and have been the topic of removal since the 911 system entered our emergency dispatching. The City Council should determine if this condition creates a liability for the City or not.

    The Fire Chief will be recommending to the City Manager that this system be removed from service and sold. Parts of the system are currently out of service. The Department has not received a report of fire from this system in 20 plus years. Additionally, this system is not monitored 24 hours a day as the station is occasionally left unattended.

13. **The City should consider renegotiating the work shifts for Fire and Ambulance services.** The Fire/Ambulance employees presently work a shift that is 24 hours on and 72 hours off. The department has four (4) crews of three employees and Special Project Officers who work most days and some nights. However, on most weekend days and nights, the shift coverage is only three (3) firefighters. The City should negotiate a more productive and safer shift configuration, such as 10 and 14 hour shifts. It amounts to the same number of hours worked but puts more firefighters on each shift both day and night and allows the Department to meet OSHA standards around the clock. It could have the added benefit of reducing call back for sick and/or vacation time, thereby creating a cost savings within the department. If savings can be found by reducing overtime, the City could consider hiring three more firefighters full time and leave the 24/72 schedule.

    Over the last two years, the Department has reduced overtime costs from $207,366 in FY11 to $134,294 in FY12, and is budgeted in FY13 for $130,668. Recently, the negotiated two year union contract allows the Chief more flexibly in staffing. Over the course of this contract, we will meet as a group, the Joint Labor Management Committee (City Manager, Fire Chief, and the Union) to open dialogue to discuss different work reconfigurations that can best serve the City of Montpelier while maintaining costs and improving response capabilities.

14. **The City should investigate what difference in the Insurance Services Offices (ISO) rating would be incurred by extending the life of Fire Apparatus from 20 years to 30. Barre City has an ISO rating of 4 where we are at a 3.**

The ISO rating is evaluated on a scale from 1 to 10; 1 represents exemplary fire protection, and 10 indicates the municipalities fire suppression program does not meet minimum criteria. A city's ISO rating has three contributing factors and is evaluated on the following:

- Dispatching and ability to communicate
- Fire protection services
- Water supply

Montpelier's ISO rating is a 4/9. The majority of the city is a 4 because the buildings are within 1,000 feet of a hydrant. When a building is more than 1,000 feet from a hydrant they receive an ISO rating of 9. Some examples of other Vermont ISO ratings are Barre is a 4/9, Hartford is a 3/9, Williston is a 5/9, Burlington is a 4, and Springfield is a 6/9.

As for the ISO rating for vehicles, it takes into consideration the following factors:

- Condition of vehicle
- Pumping capabilities
- Water Tank Capacity
- Equipment
- Age of a vehicle is not a contributing factor

In a recent discussion with the regional director of ISO, he advised that 4/9 was an excellent and hard to obtain rating in rural New England.

15. **The City should investigate the costs and benefits of the current practice of deploying a fire truck on every ambulance call.** Most residential calls can be handled by the two personnel on the ambulance call (oxygen and defibrillators can be affixed to the ambulance cot as they are designed to accommodate these tools).

Deploying three firefighters on emergency ambulance calls is the National best practice and industry standard and all professional departments in Vermont follow this practice. The Department feels it is saving more lives because of advanced live saving measures. Sending a third firefighter on ambulance calls does not increase the cost to the City, however it does increase the effectiveness of the service. We try and utilize either a pickup truck, or the Fire Chiefs car whenever possible.

Public Works Subcommittee Recommendations

1. **If Montpelier wants to improve its quality of sidewalks (see City Council goals in next page) from pretty average to better than average, we suggest it will need to increase its current relatively low average of expenditures per mile of sidewalks per year.**

2. **Thus, we suggest there should be a Pedestrian Plan developed by a citizen's committee with limited professional help to help better in the long run the development of the types of sidewalks envisioned in the 2012 Montpelier City Council Goals.**

   DPW is working to obtain a sidewalk inventory and assessment of the sidewalk conditions on GIS. This will also help the planning process.

3. **Further, it is clear to Montpelier citizens and its City Council that Montpelier needs to improve their streets, and make it a priority.**

   Agreed. The new Road Surface Management System (RSMS) provides the pavement condition index (PCI) and construction cost estimates help to

establish plans for future street improvements. The evaluation needs to be updated at a minimum of every 3 years for VTRANS funding and also helps to update the road improvements plan for the Capital Improvements Plan Committee.

4. **It seems that, the recommended and privately accepted, but not officially acknowledged, Complete Streets Policy should be followed; a policy that calls for improving all uses of the street whenever construction takes place.**

    Complete streets are required by State Statute. The DPW Director has attended training on the requirements of the Complete Streets legislation and obtained the AARP/ VTRANS Complete Streets guide book that provides great detail on Complete Streets and the necessary evaluation for all users of the street segments.

5. **Formal inventories must be established for <u>all</u> assets the DPW is responsible for. *Much of this institutional knowledge should be contained in a written document similar to what was presented for the Equipment department being supervised by Eric Ladd.***

    *Detailed inventories were presented for the **Equipment** sub department, this included purchase date, life, salvage value, depreciation, net value and purchase cost.*

    Agreed, the sanitary sewer is complete, the storm system has been started and the next priority for inventory and assessment would be the water system. A great deal of information for the water system is available in the updated water system evaluation from 2001 performed by an engineering consultant.

6. **Work orders should be used for all departments.**

    *Work orders were submitted for 2 departments **Equipment** and **Water and Sewer.** Using work orders will catalog, archive and quantify all work activities,*

    Work orders were started years ago in the equipment division for fleet maintenance. The Matrix report discussed expanding work orders and project tracking using an upgrade to the existing program, which has proven to be very beneficial. We started the expansion with the water/ sewer division with the intent and directions to expand to the street division, which is currently occurring. Another expansion of the program is necessary and in the process to begin the transition to the wastewater treatment facility. The last expansion will be completed for the water treatment facility will begin soon after the completion of the WWTF.

7. **A formal schedule of maintenance should be developed for the Streets department.**

    If recommendation #2 is adopted these work orders would fit hand and glove with this schedule.

Agreed. There are a great deal of "annual tasks" that are completed by the division with typical schedules each year. This will allow an easier transition when filling supervisors positions and also provide information for others in determining if our annual maintenance plan can be accomplished with other tasks that may be assigned.

8. **Level of service standard as provided by Todd Law September 2012 should be amended to include in the final bullet point a specific measure (1") to assess if sidewalks need to be fixed.** *(See Appendix DPW 1)*

   Agreed.

9. **A formal work planning process should be established for all departments.**

   ***Equipment**, **Streets**, **and Wastewater Plant** submitted non-standardized project plans for October 2012. It was unclear how these plans were created.*

   The plans for each of the divisions are established from the known tasks that are necessary for preparing for winter operations and closing out construction projects. These tasks are fairly typical in nature, depending on summer work schedules, staffing levels and capital project involvement. It will still be possible to develop general formal work plans. The Director will work with the division supervisors to establish work plans for each division.

10. **Corrective actions should be standardized and include the following: Date for follow up; how it affected the department; and what will happen if the unacceptable action continues.**

    This is an essential management tool that should be used regularly and as needed for the following reasons:

    a. *It sets a clear expectation for employees so they know what is expected of them;*
    b. *It holds them accountable to that expectation;*
    c. *It creates a paper trail that illuminates patterns in employee behavior;*
    d. *It sets a date for supervisors or directors to follow up with employees to acknowledge when behavior has improved.*

    *The department should continue to use merit pay as an incentive to **reward achievement in top employees.***

    Agreed. Possibly a more standardized discipline form and process will assist the supervisors in establishing consistency in disciplinary actions.

11. **The subcommittee recommends that the Director of DPW improve communication and information sharing among his 5 divisions, and suggests holding regular group meetings.**

    The city manager should attend each of these sub-department meetings with in the DPW at least once a year. Workers in these departments have valuable *information that must be filtered back into all of the above recommendations. Without a formal process to share information it is unlikely to happen effectively.*

Agreed, the meetings that were held this summer were beneficial in organizing projects and coordinating efforts. It also helps to determine the workload from the divisions and establish if additional work for capital projects are possible in house.

12. The director of the DPW should relocate his office the Dog River facility.

The men need to see their director more. There are several people to field visits from the public, other city departments, and other requests for information. If the director must be involved he is very effective at e-mailing.

The Department does not agree with moving the Director full time to the garage at 783 Dog River Road for several reasons. The City Manager, supervisors and DPW Director have established that a more regularly scheduled, weekly meeting time at each facility would be beneficial to improve communications between the Director and the Supervisors. The majority of the employees (with the exception of the equipment maintenance staff) of the DPW garage perform their work outside the facility, which would negate the interaction with the Director. The Director is also the City Hall facilities manager and being at a satellite location would make communications with the custodian more difficult. Also, during the construction months, there is a great deal of time where the engineering staff is outside the office, providing project oversight, design services, etc. The Director is the only technical employee remaining at City Hall a good deal of time during that period.

13. Department Director and all 5 sub-department supervisors should be required to attend budget training sessions.

Agreed. Professional development is important for all supervisors.

14. The city manager should take an active role in supporting the director of this department through mentoring and establishing clear and direct expectations for the director.

DPW is a very large and visible department. They must continue to adapt to the recommendations that were made in the summer of 2011. This department has several large known projects and most likely several that are unknown at this time. Without strong leadership this department will struggle to deliver value in exchange for the taxes this department consumes. A level of standard for service delivered should be established and maintained.

Agreed. The City Manager meets with the Director on a regular basis to establish expectations. The Director will also attend additional professional development sessions to continue to improve on Project Management and Public Administration. The recommendations above, to include the

communications with leadership will improve upon the efficiency and effectiveness of the department.

Recreation Subcommittee Recommendations

- Other cities and town interviewed are able to run Recreation Departments on smaller budgets per capita and, often with greater reliance on fees or donations from the business community and social organizations. Montpelier should undertake a study based on these other towns (especially St. Albans, Middlebury and Brattleboro) to see what changes Montpelier could adopt for more efficient and effective delivery of recreation services. For example, in at least two cases, maintenance needs are met by the city public works department. There may be other differences worth examining.

- Montpelier should continue its discussion of and reach a conclusion about governance structure, including whether the Recreation Department is better supervised by the School Board or the City (whatever the decision, both a City Council representative and a School Board representative should sit on the Recreation Board). The Matrix Report calls for bringing the Recreation Department under the city's supervision, in a new department with the Senior Center. The Council should revisit this suggestion in the context of the report from the City Manager on the Recreation Department that is now being prepared. Ideally, this discussion could occur soon, before budget matters dominate Council meetings. The City Council, in conjunction with the School Board and the Recreation Board, need to resolve the governance issue.

  The City Manager and Superintendent of Schools have just issued a report addressing governance of the Recreation Department.

[End recommendation Summary]

2. INTRODUCTION

a. History and Background Information

Montpelier's municipal property taxes are relatively high compared to other Vermont cities and towns, and have been for many years. As shown in Appendix A to this report, Montpelier's median R1[2] residential municipal tax bill is the highest among comparable communities in the state, and our municipal effective tax rate is near the top statewide (by contrast, our effective[3] school tax rate is right at the state average).

Some Montpelier homeowners – those with household incomes of $47,000 or less – get tax relief on the municipal portion of the property tax bill, but not nearly as many as qualify for school property tax adjustments, which are available in full for those with household incomes up to $90,000. Therefore, a greater proportion of Montpelier homeowners pay the entire municipal property tax than pay the full school property tax.

Property tax levels – and whether the services we receive provide for them are a good value – are a concern of at least some Montpelier residents. In the 2009 National Citizen Survey of Montpelier residents, less than half of respondents felt that the value of services for taxes paid was "excellent" or "good." The greatest number of answers in an open-ended question in the survey asking what the most important issue Montpelier will face over the next five years was in the category of "Taxes/Property Taxes Too High."

Many reasons have been cited to explain why Montpelier's municipal taxes are higher than average. We are a small city with public safety services and miles of paved roads and sidewalks not found in rural towns. Much of our prime real estate – which otherwise might be developed and subject to taxation – is owned by the state, by churches, or by other nonprofit entities that do not pay taxes but do require services. According to both the current and former police chief, the fact we have a larger percentage of low-income rental units and group homes than nearby towns leads to more demands on the police. Our status as a regional center and state capital with an influx of daytime workers and other visitors increases demands on city services. And over the years, Montpelier has chosen to offer a broad range of optional municipal services, among them our popular parks and recreation facilities.

The city's budget and spending choices also play an important role in our levels of taxation. This study was designed to compare Montpelier's municipal spending levels and its approach to municipal government with those of other comparable Vermont communities to see if there is anything to learn that might help the city increase efficiencies and/or relieve budgetary pressures. In the end, of course, final budget and spending decisions are made by the City Council and by the

[2] An "R1" Property is defined a residence on less than 6 acres of land

[3] The "effective tax rate" is the calculated rate if all of the valuations for all properties on every grand list in the State were at the fair market value (100% of Market Value).

voters of Montpelier, and it may be that the community is satisfied with the services and tax bills we currently have.

An additional factor is that residential property values have risen at a pace higher than other property values in the city. While the city's current tax rate represents the lowest percentage of property value being taxed since 1988, residential values have risen from 54% of the grand list in 1985 to 66% in 2010. This is most directly illustrated in FY11 when the effective municipal property tax rate rose by only 0.8% yet the median residential tax bill rose by 9.5% as a result of the city's property reappraisal.

One other point is worth mentioning about property taxes. For those who deduct property taxes on their income tax returns, the effect of high property taxes is somewhat reduced due to tax savings. But the future of these deductions is in question at both the state and federal levels. A 2011 report by Vermont's Blue Ribbon Tax Structure Committee recommended lowering state income tax rates by eliminating deductions, including the property tax deduction, at the state level. Legislative leaders have said they want to consider such changes in the upcoming legislative session. At the federal level, there has also been talk of eliminating or reducing tax deductions as part of federal tax reform. If either or both of these changes came to pass, Montpelier residents who deduct property taxes would be more adversely affected than taxpayers in most of the rest of the state and nation.

While some of the subcommittee reports in the report show that certain levels of staffing in Montpelier are high compared to other cities and towns, we want to emphasize that we are not criticizing city employees or the job they do. City staff has generally been very helpful to the committee's work, and we want to particularly thank City Manager Bill Fraser and Finance Director Sandy Gallup for their time and assistance.