

Part II

Town Boards, Commissions,
Committees & Departments

Selectboard

The Selectboard recommended a budget increase of 1.5% with an increase in the tax rate of 0.52% that passed with a 73% majority at Town Meeting 2015.

Proposals for a new public safety building designed for joint use of the Police and Fire Departments were developed by the Town Manager, the Capital Facilities Committee, the Selectboard, and Breadloaf Corporation. Renovations and an addition to the Department of Public Works facility were also proposed and designed. Two separate bond votes in support of these proposals failed. The first vote took place on Town Meeting Day, March 3, 2015. The second vote happened on May 12, 2015, at a Special Town Meeting warned for this purpose.

The Norwich Pool Dam was destroyed by Tropical Storm Irene in August of 2011. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimated the cost of replacement of the structure at \$567,000, 95% of which would be paid with Federal and State Funds. A proposal was developed to apply to FEMA for replacement funds. We note the participation of the Selectboard, Town Manager, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) staff, our state representatives Masland and Briglin, an engineering firm, and local residents to create a design plan that would receive state approval. The Town Manager and the Design Team were responsible for preparing a required Stream Alteration Permit application to be submitted to the ANR. A public forum was held on June 23, 2015 to update the status of the replacement of the Pool Dam.

In more routine matters, the Selectboard voted to adopt ordinances to regulate speed limits and alarm systems. The Selectboard reviewed progress of the Codification of Ordinances project to bring Norwich Town ordinances up to date and address inconsistencies. The Dog Ordinance was reviewed. The Selectboard asked the Town Manager to post signage at Huntley Meadow to regulate dog behavior. Quarterly financial reports were available for review this year. An Investment Policy was enacted on 10/8/14 to protect investment of Town funds in separate, insured accounts. The Selectboard approved an Appropriation Request and Disbursement Policy on 8/27/14.

Quitclaim deeds were drawn up to legally transfer ownership of the properties of the Beaver Meadow Union Chapel Association and Root District Game Club from the Norwich School District to the Town. A second set of quitclaim deeds was drawn up to transfer ownership from the Town to those organizations.

The Selectboard authorized a signed agreement with the bargaining group represented by the New England Police Benevolent Association that runs from 7/1/14 to 6/30/18.

Linda Cook, Chair; Mary Layton, Vice-Chair; Christopher Ashley; Stephen Flanders; Dan Goulet

Town Manager

The following are some notable events during the period from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

- With the assistance of the Energy Committee we entered into an agreement with Solaflect Energy, a local company, to purchase solar energy to offset our electric usage. The system went partially online in December 2013 and by the end of 2014 100% of the electricity use of the Town was solar, except for the streetlights, and without selling the Renewable Energy Certificates, therefore reducing the Town's carbon footprint. All the streetlights were converted to LEDs a few years ago.
- We are continuing to work cooperatively with Hartford, Hanover and Lebanon to improve Household Hazardous Waste collections and composting of organic materials. Effective July 1, 2015, most recyclables were prohibited from being disposed of in the trash compactor.
- A Selectboard committee recommended in 2000 that expansion of the Public Works facilities start in 2001 and identified other needed improvements through 2010, an addition to the Fire Station be done in 2002 and that new police and fire facilities start in 2010. In 2013 and 2014 work has continued on studies of the Public Works, Police and Fire Departments facilities. Structural, functional and regulatory deficiencies have been identified, a space program has been developed and conceptual designs and estimated costs are underway. There were bond votes to fund the improvements in March and May 2015 that failed. Alternatives are now being studied.
- The multi-year Main Street paving project was completed between Church Street and Koch Road. This project included drainage improvements, cold planing the existing pavement, making selective repairs to the base, and laying two lifts of paving material with a pavement fabric between the two lifts.
- A project was started to review and codify all the Town ordinances and have a Town code. Some of the current ordinances are from the 1970s and have incorrect road names and the wrong references to Vermont Statutes. The codification process will result in up-to-date ordinances with an index and table of contents that will be available online.

My thanks to the Selectboard, excellent Town employees and many Norwich residents who have helped me as I serve as Town Manager.

Neil R. Fulton, Town Manager (649-1419, ext. 102)

Collector of Delinquent Taxes

As Town Manager, it is my responsibility to act as the Collector of Delinquent Taxes. Taxes become delinquent after the second payment is due in February if taxes remain unpaid. A Warrant is issued by the Treasurer authorizing the collection of delinquent taxes along with an 8% penalty and 1% interest per month for the first three months and 1.5% interest per month thereafter. A tax collection policy outlines the collection process, which includes payment applications, payment plans and tax sale procedures, if necessary.

Neil Fulton, Town Manager (649-1419, ext. 102)

Tax Year Summary for 2014 – 2015

Final Taxes Billed:	\$15,621,816
Taxes Collected during FY:	<u>15,551,483</u>
Taxes outstanding at close of FY:	70,333

Delinquent Tax Report

6/30/2014 Delinquent Tax Balance:	\$136,507
FY14/15 Delinquent Taxes:	<u>177,254</u>
Subtotal:	313,761
Less delinquent taxes collected:	<u>184,758</u>
6/30/2015 Balance:	\$129,003

Taxes delinquent for FY14/15	\$70,333
Taxes delinquent previous years:	
11-12	5,097
12-13	7,908
13-14	<u>45,665</u>
Total	\$129,003
Delinquent taxes as of December 31, 2015.	\$105,009

Town Clerk

This year we have seen an increase in the number of documents recorded in our office. We went from 2,860 pages recorded in the Land Records to 3,521 pages. This amounts to \$31,689.00 of revenue for the Town.

During this time we have taken the opportunity to scan and index our documents going backwards. Earlier this summer we scanned 32,000 pages in our land records in addition to the 10,230 documents that Judy had scanned backwards. Once we have completed the indexing for this segment our records will go back to April of 2003. This equates to 64 volumes of our 219 volumes of Land Records that reside in the vault. We also have indexed and linked to our system 800 of our Survey Maps which were previously scanned. They can now be accessed from the terminal in the records room. I hope to start the process of restoring some of our old Grand Lists over the next couple of years.

We processed 61 motor vehicle registration renewals, licensed 574 dogs; we sold 175 Fish and Game Licenses which is down again from last year. I believe that being able to now obtain your license and renew your car registration online is what is causing these decreases. We also collected \$180.00 in land posting fees and issued 29 Marriage Licenses; there were fifteen deaths and two home births to report this year. Please note that the vital statistics are based this year on the fiscal year and not the calendar year.

The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. During this time

you may come in and register to vote, purchase cards and stickers for the Norwich Transfer Station as well as for the Hartford Landfill, renew your motor vehicle registration, obtain a burn permit or research the records in the vault.

Dog licenses will be available to purchase in January of 2016 and remember the April 1st deadline to register your dog. If you do not already have a rabies certificate on file with us, you will need to get a copy from your veterinarian.

If you have any questions or need help, please do not hesitate to stop in or call and we will do our best to help.

Bonnie J. Munday, Town Clerk (649-1419, ext. 103)

Judy Trussell, Assistant

Vital Records for 2015

As recorded by the Town Clerk's Office January 1 to December 31, 2015

Marriages

Wheaton, Kelly Marie Kleinman, Douglas William
Wolk, Leah Ruth Derksen, Paul David
Brockett, Travis Clancy Tyler, Emily Anne
Phillips, James Allan Gustavson, Kristen Wilhelmina
Yuan, Angela S. Wang, Sijie Jason
Keats, Alexandra Jean Dickinson, Martha Hellyer
Crane, Amy Alyce Heath, Andrew Steven
Piccirillo, Lisa Christie Barbiero, Seth Thomas
Mills, Maggie Elizabeth Breakstone, Joel Elijah
Rose, Julie Lynn Nachlis, Herschel Seth
Elder, Heather Rose Fisher, Tika Marie
Hopkins, Nicole Lynn Tully, Douglas Gipson
Jenkins, Elizabeth Steele Korpi, Ethan Jareb
Bernstein, Ode Marin Wickner, Dana Gosling
Daly, Niamh Ann Annand, John William
Griggs, Benjamin Graham Giambruno, Rachel Marie
Schleicher, Laura Uihlein Tormey, Eben James
Erickson, Stephanie Jeanne Burrows, Phillippa Jean
McClure, Lindsay Peard Miller, Scott Kellogg
Villarreal, Christina Lynn Walker, Nicholas Sargent
Mahlab, Sarah Jodi Kitzmiller, William Jackson
Gillrich, Jennifer Jean Goulet, Daniel Mitchel
Richards, Laura Huber Pasricha, Kunal
Pomeroy, Elizabeth Ann Rexford, Jeffrey Paul
Richmond, Catherine McCullough, David Inman
Odell, Amanda Kaye Rowlands, Evan Nicholas
Thornburg, Abigail Marie Schmucker, Nathaniel Danhart
Mahlab, Amie Lauren Price, Samuel Pearsall
Gleason, Aurora Kathleen Fullerton, Miranda Jo
Heimsath, Ernest Gustavo Jr. Jakubowski, Holly Ann
Fox, Judith Ann Simmons, Michael Andrew

Board of Civil Authority and Board of Abatement

In any given fiscal year, the BCA and BA, composed of the justices of the peace, Select-board members, Town Clerk and Town Treasurer, meet to adjudicate two kinds of taxpayer appeals or requests. This year, July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, the Board of Civil Authority heard three appeals from decisions of the Listers and, in addition, carried out its usual election duties. The Board of Abatement had no requests for abatement of taxes.

It was an unusually easy year, for these boards.

Nancy Dean, Chairman

Cemetery Commission

The five-member Cemetery Commission is responsible for the care and upkeep, as well as necessary improvements, of all 11 Norwich cemeteries. This includes the Union Village Cemetery.

In FY15, all seasonal maintenance has been performed in a timely manner. In Hillside Cemetery, all pine trees with interior rot were removed. The dead black locust trees in Meeting House Cemetery were removed also. On November 8th, the Town's horse-drawn hearse was given to the Norwich Historical Society for display, with the condition that they cannot sell or give the hearse away.

The financial details of our operations for FY15 are summarized below, based on information provided by the Finance Office and Treasurer:

Revenue:

Appropriation from town of Norwich	\$15,000
Woodworth Unitrust.	6,067
Sales of Cemetery Markers	820
Perpetual Care Fund – Interest	425
Operating Account – Interest	2
Donation.	<u>0</u>
	\$22,314

Expenses:

Purchased Services:

Mowing/Trimming and Brush Cutting	\$ 8,145
Tree Trimming/Removal Costs.	<u>13,493</u>
Purchased Services subtotal	21,638
Employee.	979
Repairs and Maintenance	221
Supplies.	250
Water.	323
Postage.	0
Capital Improvements.	<u>910</u>
	\$24,321

Fred Smith Jr., Chairman (649-1094)

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission endeavors to inventory, monitor and conserve the natural heritage assets in Town. These assets include wildlife, wetlands, waterways, natural plant communities and scenic resources. We share our findings with our fellow citizens, Town commissions and governing bodies. The following projects were undertaken for the benefit of all Town residents:

- Support of land conservation (Upper Valley Land Trust) adjoining the Appalachian Trail corridor and at the Vermont Technical College dairy farm
- Support of invasive plants education and control efforts in the nature area (Milton Frye Nature Area Committee) and in the Ompompanoosuc estuary (Connecticut River Watershed Council)
- Support of trail work at Gile Mountain and elsewhere around Town (Trails Committee).

David Hubbard, Chair (649-3882)

Development Review Board

The Development Review Board (DRB) consists of seven members appointed for three-year terms by the Selectboard. There are also three alternate members. Serving on the Board can directly influence the future shape of Norwich.

The DRB meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month, when applications are before the Board. Hearings are posted and the plans are available for inspection. Meetings are always open to the public.

Two of the most common applications made to the DRB are for site review and subdivision. The plans must comply with the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. Some of the details that are examined are highway access, traffic flow and safety, pedestrian access, site lighting, parking and screening. Development should be consistent with its surroundings.

Some of the most complex applications relate to shore line developments, flood plains and wet lands. Decisions must comply with both the Town, State and Federal regulations. The Board frequently seeks expert advice. For instance developments on the Connecticut River may involve the Army Corps of Engineers, State of Vermont, Federal flood hazard regulations, and agencies regulating River Management.

Applications are heard “on the record.” This is important to understand, since appeal to the Environmental Division of any decision will be based solely on evidence provided to the DRB at the public hearing. Attending DRB meetings and being recorded as an abutter or “interested party” will protect your right to speak at an appeal. Please contact the Zoning Administrator if you have questions.

John E. Lawe, Chair (649-1585)

Emergency Management

Emergency Management’s responsibility is to prepare for disasters and to coordinate responses to situations that may demand extraordinary action. Our approach is to use an “all hazards” management system. These plans are dynamic documents that require annual review and revisions. Floods, storms, fires, and hazardous materials releases have the highest probability of threatening our community.

Hanover Dispatch is now providing CodeRED emergency communication services to Norwich. This is like 9-1-1 in reverse. For example, if there is a missing child in your part of Town, or a severe weather warning, or chemical/gas leaks that may require you to evacuate, your emergency service providers will be able to reach you immediately by telephone (land-line, cell phone and TDD/TTY) with information you need. Register at: http://hanovernh.org/Pages/HanoverNH_WebDocs/codered.

Vermont Alert, <http://www.vtalert.gov/home.aspx>, is the “Vermont All-Hazards Alert and Notification web-based portal....This website contains critical emergency-related information....The information posted here will include severe weather warnings, significant highway closures, hazardous materials spills, and many other emergency conditions.... By signing

up for VT-Alert, you can receive warnings and emergency information via the web, your cell phone, email and other technologies. Signing up for VT Alert is free. Your information is protected and never shared with anyone else.”

The Town Manager is, by statute, the Director of Emergency Management. The Fire Chief is the Deputy Director.

Stephen Leinoff, Deputy Emergency Management Director

Finance Department

The Finance Department is responsible for all accounting functions for the Town and all tax collection. Please review the audited financial statements and the proposed budget included in the Town Report for specific information.

The initial billing for school and Town tax for 2014-15 was \$15,539,603 (\$696,636 more than 2013-14). Revised tax bills for Current Use changes, BCA and State Board changes, and errors and omissions reduced taxes raised by \$9,727. Additions, due to HS-122 changes, increased taxes by \$91,940. These changes resulted in the final tax amount raised of \$15,621,816 or a net increase from the initial billing of \$82,213. There were tax abatements in the amount of \$5,430. State payments (credits) were \$1,222,839 for the education tax and \$60,719 for municipal tax. Of the total taxes raised, \$11,910,945 were in support of education and \$3,623,232 in support of the Town. Windsor County taxes are now assessed by a tax rate separate from the Town and the amount owed was \$62,339.

Please remember to annually file your HS-122 Homestead Declaration. Late filed homesteads will be assessed an 8% penalty on the education tax, as mandated by an adopted Selectboard policy. In 2014-15 the total penalty amounted to \$35,669. Please make sure that you file your Homestead Declaration by April 18, 2016 (no extensions allowed). Refer to your tax booklet for the form or go to www.vermont.gov and file online.

Roberta Robinson, Finance Director (649-1419, ext. 105)
Jonathan Bynum, Finance Assistant (649-1419, ext. 106)

Fire Department

Make a difference in the lives of those around you; please consider joining the Fire Department. Protecting lives and property is hard work, but you will find few things that give you deeper personal satisfaction. Visit <http://norwichfire.com/recruiting-q-a/>. The Fire Department responded to 252 incidents in FY15, 15 more than the prior year. Our rating from the Insurance Services Office results in significant savings on fire insurance premiums.

Call Types	2014-2015
Structure Fires	11
Vehicle Fires	1
Wildland Fire	8
Other Fires	1
Medical	87
Vehicle Crashes and Rescues	35
Hazardous Conditions no fire	31
Service Calls	18
Good Intent Calls	31
False Alarms	29
Other	0
Total	252

The NFD Members presented their peers with awards for distinguished service at the Department's annual dinner. John Kerr, FAST Squad, received the "Jump Start Award", Mark Anderson received the "Behind the Scenes Award", Captain AJ Wyszynski (Fire) received the "Response to Alarms Award", and Chad Poston "Member of the Year Award".

Our formal public education programs reached over 372 adults and 1,715 children.

The severe winter challenged Upper Valley fire departments. There were several multiple alarm fires in sub-zero weather. Dry weather conditions in the spring created one of the highest fire dangers in recent years. There were several multiple alarm brush fires in our region. The largest burned 135 acres on Tigertown Rd. This was probably the largest forest fire in Norwich history. Over 20 area fire departments controlled the fire. Many of these departments responded to large fires in Sharon and Strafford a few days later.

Current Members

Officers: Chief Stephen Leinoff, Deputy Chief Neil Fulton, Assistant Chief Matt Swett, Captain Asaf Wyszynski, Lieutenants, Pete Griggs, Aaron Lamperti, and Pete Schwab.

Firefighter-Emergency Medical Technicians: Jake Blum, Susan Blum, Matt Cohen-Price, Linda Cook, Matt Herbert, Mark Nickels, Dan Schneider, and Jon Wilkinson.

Firefighters: Mark Anderson, Mary Anderson, Tim Cronan, Michael Ducharme, Steve Foltz, Jaden Gladstone, Ryan Malone, Jeffrey Pearson, Tim Webster, and David Yesman.

EMTs: Toni Apgar, Frances Eanet, John Kerr, John Lawe, Kelly Michaelsen, and Bonnie Munday.

Support Team (the team provides food and supplies to emergency responders at incident scenes and the Fire Station): Kris Clement, Allora Craig, Annah Dupuis, Cheri Henry, Cheryl Lindberg, Kandy Foltz, Suzanne Lupien, Liz Russell, Sydney Smith, Laurie Welch, and Linda Cook, advisor.

Stephen Leinoff, Fire Chief (649-1133; sleinoff@norwich.vt.us)

Fire Warden

I would like to thank everyone for making this a safe year. There was a major fire on May 4, 2015 at 495-593 Tigertown Road. The cause of the fire was a lightning strike, which started a pickup truck fire and spread into the surrounding woods covering approximately 137 acres. This forest fire was the largest one in Norwich's history. It took eight hours from start to finish controlling and extinguishing. Many resources were utilized to extinguish and work this fire: some from our mutual aid system, Police Department, Fire Department and great support from Dan & Whit's. Our support team supplied food and water for the personnel and Dan & Whit's was there at a moment's notice supporting and supplying our needs. Thank you all for your quick response. The next day, fire personnel spent time mopping up by extinguishing any hot spots they found.

With community support from our neighboring towns and our own Town resources we are proud to be part of a well-organized team. I would like to thank everyone for your time.

Remember to stop by the Town Clerk's office between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm to pick up a burn permit before kindling a fire. Permits are also available from Fire Warden Linda Cook at 1-603-208-7847 and Assistant Fire Warden Chief Steve Leinoff at 1-802-549-1133 ext. 3.

Linda Cook, Fire Warden

Health Officer

The Town Health Officer and Deputy Health Officer (HOs) are appointed by the Vermont Commissioner of Health on the recommendation of the Selectboard. Their responsibility is to protect public health and to be the local representatives of the State Health Department.

The State of Vermont is now responsible for approving septic system design and installations and dealing with failed systems, but the Health Officers can advise if requested. We also administer the Rental Housing Code and conduct site visits when a tenant suspects a health hazard is present.

Recently there has been renewed emphasis on tackling lead poisoning. Better education and public health measures have significantly reduced blood lead levels in children, who are most vulnerable. Since lead is no longer added to gasoline the greatest environmental danger is from lead in paint manufactured before 1978. Scraping and sanding of older buildings can release lead into the environment and only specially trained and equipped contractors should remove old paint. There are rules which require landlords to carry out routine maintenance and certify their compliance. More information and detailed publications are available from the Vermont Department of Health.

Please keep your protective medical shots up to date. While Ebola may seem scarier, several infectious diseases including Influenza, Polio, Measles, Pneumococcal Pneumonia and Whooping Cough pose a more immediate threat to our health.

*John E. Lawe, Norwich Health Officer (649-1585)
Bonnie Munday, Deputy Health Officer (649-1419)*

Land Management Council

The Land Management Council manages the Norwich Fire District Land, encompassing 917 acres contained in six parcels within the Charles Brown drainage. Our mission is to manage this land for recreation, wildlife habitat and forest resources. In December 2014, we continued a timber stand improvement on Parcel #3, located on the north side of Beaver Meadow Road, concluding in March 2015 with the onset of mud season. In late fall of 2014 a second woodshed was constructed capable of storing 15 cords, giving a total storage capacity of 25 cords. Approximately 20 cords of firewood was distributed in 2014 and the winter of 2015 to households who requested assistance within Norwich and surrounding communities.

During the summer of 2015, a trail crew from the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps built a 28' wooden bridge spanning Brown Schoolhouse Brook, repaired a couple of other wooden bridges and completed general maintenance the length of the trail. Building materials for the new bridge were paid for by a grant from the Norwich Women's Club.

David Hubbard, Chair (649-3882)

Listers

Under the office reorganization that resulted from the 2011 Committee to Review Real Property Assessment Functions, the Board of Listers hears and adjudicates grievances, lodges the Grand List, participates in Board of Civil Authority hearings, sits on the Board of Abatement, and meets, usually monthly, to receive correspondence and attend to other matters. The Board of Listers also plays an important role in educating the public about the assessment process.

Everyday assessment functions, including cyclical and permit inspections, software management, and preparation of the Grand List are performed by the Contract Assessor, New England Municipal Consultants (NEMC), supervised by the Town Manager. The Lister/

Assessor's Office is also staffed by a part-time Clerk.

The role of NEMC and the Board of Listers is to produce a Grand List that equitably assesses every property in Town as close to fair market value as possible. Neither NEMC nor the Listers have any control over the tax rates.

Truncated property record cards containing assessment data for every property in Town can be viewed and printed on the Lister page of the Town website, <http://norwich.vt.us/listers>. Detailed property record cards can be viewed and printed at the public access terminal located in the Lister/Assessor's Office, or requested via e-mail from assessing-clerk@norwich.vt.us.

2015 Grand List

For the 2015 Grand List, the Board of Listers heard and adjudicated 20 grievances. The Listers voted to approve the Final 2015 Grand List 2-1 (yes: Blum & Michaelides; no: Lindberg). Of these 20 grievance decisions, two were appealed to the Board of Civil Authority (BCA). One of these BCA decisions was subsequently appealed to the Hearing Officer appointed by the Vermont Department of Taxes. This is the only appeal pending against the 2015 Grand List.

2016 Homestead Declaration

The Listers would like to remind everyone that if you own and occupy your Vermont residence as your primary dwelling on April 1, 2016, you **MUST** file your Homestead Declaration, Form HS-122, with the Vermont Department of Taxes on or before April 15, 2016. There are **NO EXTENSIONS** given for this filing, even if you file for an extension on your income taxes. The penalty for late-filing is 8% of the education tax. This filing may be completed on paper or online through the website of the Vermont Department of Taxes at <http://tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/homestead-declaration>. Recently a few Norwich taxpayers who have used tax-preparation software or an out-of-state tax preparer have experienced problems with Homestead Declarations not being filed, even though the taxpayer fully believed they had been. This is especially true when the taxpayer is either filing for an extension, or not required to file a tax return at all. The Listers recommend that all Norwich property owners required to file a Homestead Declaration do so themselves or obtain a printed confirmation of a successful filing from their tax preparer.

2016 Reappraisal

NEMC has been contracted to perform a Town-wide reappraisal in 2016. A cyclical reinspection process has been underway since the completion of the last Town-wide reappraisal in 2013. In early May 2016, the Lister/Assessor's Office will mail booklets to all Norwich property owners of record that will list the new assessed values for all properties in Town. These updated values are intended to be reflective of the property's fair market value as of April 1, 2016. Updates on reappraisal progress and a complete list of new values will also be posted to the Lister page of the Town website (<http://norwich.vt.us/listers/>). The website and booklet will include instructions on how to schedule an informal discussion with NEMC if the property owner has concerns or questions about the new value. When the informal process is completed, personalized change of appraisal notices will be mailed as statutorily required to all property owners. These notices will include the owner's new assessed value on the 2016 Preliminary Grand List along with instructions and deadlines for the formal grievance process. Property owners dissatisfied with Lister decisions at grievance will have the opportunity to appeal to the BCA.

Liz Blum (Chair), Cheryl A. Lindberg and Lee Michaelides

2015 Grand List as of 10/23/15

Breakdown of Grand List (number in category)

R-1 Residence with under 6A of Land (801)	\$319,698,400
R-2 Residence with 6A of land or more (489)	321,115,100
MH Mobile Home with or without land (15)	2,171,500
S Seasonal (18)	3,925,300
C Commercial Properties (45)	31,003,200
CA Commercial Apartments (7)	6,513,000
UE Utilities Electric (3)	7,477,300
F Farms (10)	8,918,000
Other (27)	7,129,800
M Miscellaneous (141)	24,860,300
Total (1556)	732,811,900
Cable (1) (Education Grand List only)	<u>1,264,600</u>
Total Education Listed Value	734,076,500

Minus

Veterans (7) (\$10,000 per disabled Veteran by Statute)	70,000
Land Use Appraisal Program (147 parcels; 13,581 acres enrolled)	
Exempt Value of Property enrolled	<u>35,434,587</u>
2015 Education Grand List Total Taxable Property	698,571,913

Municipal Grand List

(from above)	698,571,913
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Minus

Exemptions by Vote

Norwich Fire District	40,000
Beaver Meadow Chapel Association (Beaver Meadow School)	124,400
Root District Game Club	191,800
Upper Valley Community Grange # 34	304,100
Veterans (7) (additional \$30,000 per disabled Veteran by vote)	210,000
Charlotte Metcalf (alternate energy installation)	11,300
Timothy Brownell (alternate energy installation)	19,800
Norah Lake (alternate energy installation)	<u>4,800</u>
Total Voted Exemptions (lost education tax to be made up by remainder of town)	906,200

Exemptions by Agreement

Norwich Housing Corporation (payment made in lieu of property tax)	1,514,800
Cable (Education Grand List only)	<u>1,264,600</u>
2015 Municipal Grand List Total Taxable Property	694,886,313

Real Estate Exemptions by Statute (not included in any calculations above)

Child Care Center, Inc	526,400
Montshire Museum of Science	6,706,500
Norwich Historical Society	446,500
Norwich Nursery School	196,400
The Family Place	736,700
Andrew C. & Margaret R. Sigler Foundation	1,063,500
Norwich Public Library Association	1,563,800
American Legion Post 8	263,700
Religious Organizations (6)	3,608,700
Town, Fire District, School District, Federally Owned Parcels (37)	<u>18,332,200</u>
Total Non-Taxable Parcels (51)	33,444,400

Milton Frye Nature Area Committee (MFNAC)

The Milton Frye Nature Area Committee promotes the care and public use of the 35.5-acre Town property commonly known as the Nature Area. The Committee oversees maintenance of the trails in the area, sponsors educational programs, and is charged with stewardship of the property in accordance with the conservation easement jointly held by the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) and the town of Norwich. The MFNAC reports to the Norwich Conservation Commission. The Area serves as an educational site for the Marion Cross Elementary School.

Selected activities in 2013-14 include:

- Work performed by the Department of Public Works completed the initiative to remove invasive plants from the meadow, including the old fences which promoted the growth of these plants and was limiting mowing.
- UVLT Stewardship Training.
- Two Marion Cross School Stewardship Days to spread mulch on the trails and remove invasive plants.
- A bird walk led by George Clark with 8 participants found 25 species of birds.
- A spring site visit to the nature area by Michael Snyder, Vermont State Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation; he was inspecting the Nature Area to view the work done by a state forester on our invasive management project.
- Work was done by community volunteers towards invasive management project.
- Three walks were conducted with consulting foresters regarding invasive project.
- A walk was made to assess the area for the possibility of locating an educational structure on the property.

Lindsay Putnam (649-1668)

Norwich Energy Committee (NEC)

FY15 projects by the NEC continued to target energy efficiency and solar installations. NEC members gave out information on home energy audits at the winter Norwich Farmer's Market and Dan & Whit's general store. They provided contact information for HEAT Squad (<http://heatsquad.org/>), which offers professional energy audits at a significant discount. HEAT Squad staff reported that the NEC provided them with the most referrals of any Windsor County Energy Committee and second in the entire state.

The NEC urged the Selectboard to pursue a highly energy-efficient building for new police/fire facilities and supported Article II in the May special Town Meeting. This article, for spending to ensure that the building's energy needs could be supplied entirely by renewable sources, was approved by a 52% vote.

In support of Vermont's goal of having 90% of its energy needs met in 2050 by renewable energy, the NEC targets 36 homes going solar annually. In 2014, the NEC's Solarize Norwich campaign resulted in 54 additional Norwich households going solar. In 2015, the NEC continued to work with Norwich-based installers Norwich Technologies and Solaflect. The NEC updated its website (NorwichEnergyCommittee.weebly.com) to include case studies from selected Norwich solar homeowners, a map of solar installations throughout Town, and an online form to request a site visit.

The 2015 campaign ran officially May-June. Activities included outreach at the dump, at Dan & Whit's, and solar open houses. Inquiries and commitments are ongoing throughout the year. As of fall 2015, 21 Norwich households are newly solar.

Other activities:

- * NEC members attended the 2014 VECAN conference
- * NEC members attended a planning workshop for energy committees
- * the NEC cosponsored a workshop on community solar.

The NEC meets regularly on the fourth Tuesday of every month, at 7 pm at Tracy Hall. For more information, contact Linda Gray (649-2032, linda.c.gray@gmail.com).

Linda Gray, Chair

Norwich Historic Preservation Commission (NHPC)

NHPC, established by the Selectboard in 2010, advises the Town on historic preservation issues and carries out public education projects. As one of 14 Certified Local Governments in Vermont, Norwich with NHPC is eligible to apply for CLG grants.

Nancy Hoggson, NHPC Chair, died on January 9, 2015. A community memorial service on January 31 contained an outpouring of remembrances. NHPC seeks to build upon Nancy's work.

NHPC has nearly completed an initial survey ("windshield survey") of all structures, as well as outdoor memorials, sculptures and archeological sites in Norwich. The survey will conclude with a community meeting and recommendations this winter. The survey will provide a comprehensive inventory of all potentially historic structures for Town planning. It will also enable NHPC to prioritize nominations for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. (Such listing does not restrict the rights of the property's owner.) The survey is funded by a grant of \$5,123 from the VT Division for Historic Preservation using National Park Service funds, \$2,610 in donated time, and \$805 from the Town. The Norwich Historical Society (NHS) is providing research assistance to NHPC's contractor, Lyssa Papazian.

The exhibit *Cycles of Change: Farming in Norwich*, developed by NHPC with NHS, continued at the NHS Lewis House. The popular pamphlet *Norwich Historic Walking Tour* continued to be distributed by NHPC and NHS at selected Vermont Welcome Centers, NHS, and the Norwich Inn. NHPC supported the community work to bring water/sewer to the Beaver Meadow Schoolhouse and stabilize the Root Schoolhouse.

Peter Brink, Vice-Chair

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is responsible for drafting the Town Plan which contains historical perspective on the Town, a discussion of current conditions, and a vision for the future. In addition to a narrative, data, and maps, the Plan includes goals, objectives, and a proposed course of action. The role of the Planning Commission in implementing the Plan is drafting land use regulations for zoning, subdivision, flood hazard, and development. The Commission also supports non-regulatory implementation initiatives such as affordable housing and natural resource preservation. The current Plan, approved in 2011, can be found on the Planning Commission page of the Town website.

The Commission has continued preparing amendments to the Town's Zoning Regulations. Proposed changes include flood hazard and river/stream corridor review criteria designed to increase resiliency of new development to future weather events. The Commission also continued exploring mixed-use zoning districts along Route 5 South and River Road at a series of public workshops in the fall and a presentation of proposed guidelines in the spring. The Route 5 South/River Road Study Final Report (May 22, 2015) is on the Planning Commission page of the Town website. A seven-member Affordable Housing Subcommittee has

been exploring options to support more affordable and workforce housing for individuals, families and seniors in Norwich.

The Commission has seven members appointed by the Selectboard to four-year staggered terms. Meetings are on the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., and are open to the public. Agendas, minutes, regulations, the Town Plan, and other documents are available on the Town website.

Jeff Goodrich, Chair

Planning Department

The Planning Department, staffed by the Director of Planning and the Planning Assistant, is responsible for administration and enforcement of the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, advising landowners and their representatives on matters relating to Town and state development regulations, assisting in the preparation of permit and hearing applications, and providing staff support to the Development Review Board, Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission and Affordable Housing Subcommittee. The Department provides research and technical support to the Planning Commission in preparing the Town Plan and land use regulations, to the Historic Preservation Commission for grant administration, and maintains the Norwich Geographic Information System (GIS), the E911 Locatable Address System, and the Tracy Hall server network.

Permits were issued this year for eight new single-family homes, one more than last year. Additions to existing buildings and boundary line adjustments are slightly down from the previous year. There has been little change in the annual number of permits taken out over the past five years. Two approved subdivision applications resulted in three new lots.

Specific information on zoning and subdivision requirements are listed on the inside back cover of this report. Regulations and permit applications are available at the Town website.

Phil Dechert, Director of Planning (649-1419, ext. 4)

Pam Mullen, Planning Assistant

FY 2014-15

Zoning Permits

New Homes	8
Building Additions	23
Accessory Dwelling	0
Accessory Structures	16
Home Occupation	3
Replacements: Bldg./Home	3
Agricultural Review	1
Apartment	0

Development Review Board

Subdivisions - Final Plan Review	2
Conditional Use Review	2
Boundary Line Adjustment	4
Site Plan Review	0
Development Envelope	0
Variance	0
Appeal	0

Police Department

The Norwich Police Department is rich with history, tradition and service to our community. Although we still provide basic services much the same way as we always have, the changes in the development of technology over the years has increased our Department's capability to provide the most up-to-date and professional work by the most dedicated employees any organization would be proud to employ. Technology has dramatically increased our ability to provide you, our customers, with the information you desire. The Norwich Police Department is a community policing-based Department of six sworn police officers, four full time and two part time officers supported by one civilian administrative assistant. Nationwide, police departments average between 1.7 and 2.3 officers per 1000 people in their population. The Norwich Police Department has fewer police officers than the average (1.1 per 1000); this is directly attributed to the hard work and competence of the Norwich Police Department employees as well as the quality of the citizens who live in Norwich.

As a Department, it is our mission to both serve as well as protect the public. We realize that we are also citizens of this community and we strive to provide the service that we would expect if we were the ones in need. It is not uncommon for our officers to unlock car doors for owners, fix a broken bicycle for a child, or help a stranded motorist change a tire. We provide a helping hand in times of need, a listening ear, or a shoulder to cry on when times are tough. I am very honored to serve as the Chief of Police for the town of Norwich. My coworkers are very skilled and professional people who strive each day to make and keep Norwich the safest place to live, work, and play. Ours is a diversified and proactive Department and hopefully you will take some time to visit us.

On behalf of the members of the Norwich Police Department thank you for your continued support.

*Douglas A. Robinson, Chief of Police; Judith Powell, Administrative Assistant;
Michael Scruggs, Police Officer; Francis Schippert, Police Officer; Anna Ingraham, Police Officer;
Phillip Brunelle, Police Officer; Charles Rataj, Police Officer*

Police Department Statistics FY15

911 Hang Ups15	Fraud 30
Abandoned Vehicle. 2	Juvenile Problem/Runaway 11
Accidents. 85	Kidnapping. 0
Agency Assistance125	Larceny/Theft. 37
Alarm 68	Leaving Scene of Accident 1
Alcohol Offense/Intoxication. 0	Littering 1
Animal Problem105	Lost/Found/Recovered Property 24
Arrest on Warrant 0	Missing Person 1
Arson. 0	Motorist Assist./Complaint 62
Assault. 7	Noise Disturbance 13
Attempted Suicide. 3	Parking Problem. 45
Background Investigation 3	Phone Problem. 1
Bad Check. 9	Property Check* 37
Burglary. 6	Public Speaking 6
Citizen Assistance 116	Residence/Vehicle Lockout 33
Citizen Dispute 25	Sex Offense/Offender Registry 6
Condition of Release Violation 2	Stalking. 0
Court Appearance. 19	Stolen Vehicle/OOC 2
Dead Body. 2	Suspicious. 117
Directed Patrol 37	Threatening/Harassment 6
Disorderly Conduct. 2	Training 9

Domestic Abuse Order	4	Traffic Citations	385
Driving License Suspended	4	Traffic Hazard	44
Drugs	3	Traffic Warnings (written)	294
DUI	7	Trespassing	12
Family Disturbance/Fight	7	Utility Problem	9
Fireworks	1	Vandalism	6
Fish and Game Offense	3	Vehicle Serial # Inspection	64
Foot Patrol/Business Checks	90	Welfare Check	<u>26</u>
		TOTAL	2032

**A total of 148 property checks were conducted on 37 days with an average of four per day.*

Public Works Department

The Norwich Department of Public Works/Highway Division is responsible for the maintenance of our Town highways, bridges, sidewalks, and municipal parking areas. We also provide significant support to other Town Departments, including the maintenance of all the Town’s vehicles and equipment. We strive to accomplish these duties with the safety and convenience of the traveling public as a top priority while maintaining a good rapport with our fellow citizens.

The Public Works Department completed several important projects during FY15, including:

- Rebuilding the fire retention pond for the Hawk Pine neighborhood in conjunction with the Fire Department.
- Installing two culverts on Campbell Flats, which were funded by a VT AOT Better Back Roads Grant.
- Regrading the upper and lower parking lots at Huntley Meadow and resurfacing them with material reclaimed from the Main Street rehab project, creating some much-needed additional parking spaces for the recreation fields.
- Removing the old woven wire fence at the Peisch Orchard and hand-removing five different invasive plant species in the field section and chipping the brush. Now in order to keep the plants eradicated, we continue to brush hog the area twice per year.
- Assisting the Fire Department in reconstructing the dry hydrant on Old Bridge Road.
- Completing Phase 3 of the rehab of Main Street. Phase 3 consisted of cold planing and repaving from Hazen Street North to Koch Road.
- Making great strides in getting caught up in paving due to increases in Town funding over the past several years as well as VT AOT Grant funding.

The winter of 2014-15 started early with Public Works/Highway employees being called out for the first time on November 14th. Winter road maintenance included: 43 callouts; 34 times plowing; 57 times treating pavement; 48 times sanding; 40 times sidewalk maintenance and 9 times snow removal.

Much of our time during May and June of 2015 was spent on storm cleanup due to heavy rains and winds. Storm cleanup included removal of fallen trees and washout repairs.

The Buildings and Grounds Division (B&G) of Public Works is responsible for the maintenance of all Town buildings, properties, and recreation areas. During the winter of 2014-15 the B&G Technician, with help from the B&G Custodian, painted several areas inside Tracy Hall, including the gym. They also completed some other repair projects throughout the building.

The B&G Technician and Custodian attended the 2015 Maintenance Workshop sponsored by the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association, New Hampshire Recreation and Parks Association, and New England Sports Turf Managers Association. The B&G Technician is kept very busy during summer months making sure that all of the playing fields are maintained and ready for the many scheduled sports events. The B&G Custodian is responsible for readying Tracy Hall for all public events that are held in the building throughout the year.

I would like to thank the Town Manager, Selectboard, other Town Departments, and Norwich residents for their continued support of the Public Works Department. I would also like to commend the Public Works staff for their hard work and dedication.

Public Works Staff: Neal Rich, Gary Durkee, Albert Lewellyn, Michael Koloski, and Robert Barden

Buildings and Grounds Staff: Ben Trussell and Michael Tebbetts

Andy Hodgdon, Public Works Director (649-2209, ahodgdon@norwich.vt.us)

Recreation Department

The Norwich Recreation Department consists of the Recreation Council who advises and guides the Recreation Director, who is then supervised by the Norwich Town Manager. The Council consists of eight to twelve residents, serving rotating three-year terms. Our mission is to offer a variety of recreational activities to Norwich area residents of all ages. The majority of our youth programs offered are for kindergarten through sixth grade students. In all of our youth sports we stress fun, first and foremost, but also maximum participation and development of skills. The goal of our youth offerings is to inspire a lifetime love of activity in an atmosphere of mutual player respect and support. We organize and run a number of seasonal, free community events to help foster and maintain spirit within the Town of Norwich. We oversee the recreation facilities in Town including Huntley Meadow, the area at the northeast end of the Ballard Trail and Barrett Meadow/the bread oven. Throughout the year we offer over one hundred varied program sessions, always adding one or two new offerings to spark interest and more involvement, such as Youth Yoga this past year.

Our wonderful Buildings and Grounds crew did another outstanding job caring for and improving all of our Town recreational areas this year. The new sign and flowers at Huntley Meadow now welcome everyone as they enter. The Norwich Nursery School has made an annual contribution, planting daffodil bulbs at Huntley Meadow every October. The accumulated effect is now dazzling. Plan to visit in the early spring to enjoy them. We would like to thank the Marion Cross School PTO for giving the Town a grant for a new liner for the skating rink on the Green. We also thank the Norwich Women's Club for awarding us a grant for a beautiful, and much needed new piece of playground equipment at Huntley Meadow, the "Fun Trainer".

Two Recreation Council members, Reese and Karin, went above and beyond - setting up two surveys to help us improve our Baseball Program and Long Range Recreation Plan. Thanks goes out to everyone who took the time to give us feedback.

We are incredibly fortunate to have dedicated, community-minded volunteers serving as coaches and as members of the Recreation Council. We are also appreciative of the many local businesses and organizations willing to help sponsor the events we run. Their contributions, support, time and involvement are truly appreciated. The Recreation Department is always in need of more volunteers. Stop by the Recreation office upstairs in Tracy Hall, or call the number listed below if you would like to get involved.

Please check the Recreation Department portion of our Town website for the latest programs, schedules and events at <http://norwich.vt.us/Departments/Recreation>, or, if you

would prefer to speak to someone directly, please call Jill for more in-depth information. Suggestions for improvement are always welcomed also. For the year ahead... in the spirit of Recreation, I encourage you (and your family) to get out, exercise and rediscover the endless benefits of recreation to your overall well-being.

Recreation Council: Laura Duncan, President; Chris Clapp, Vice-President; Jill Collins; Amy Downard; Karin Dwyer; Ben Forbush; John Girard; Reese Madden.

Jill Kearney Niles, Director (649-1419, ext. 109; recreation@norwich.vt.us)

Transfer Station/Recycling Center

The Transfer Station/Recycling Center is under the direction of the Public Works Director. William Sanborn now serves as the Transfer Station Lead Attendant.

The objectives of the Transfer Station/Recycling Center are to:

- Provide a means of disposing of solid waste, including recycling, in the most efficient and cost effective manner.
- Encourage recycling of as many materials as possible in order to decrease the percentage of materials being disposed of at the landfill, thus reducing our carbon footprint.
- Dispose of waste at a minimum cost within industry guidelines.
- Ensure waste management practices are in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.

With the passage of Act 148, the Universal Recycling Law, the State of Vermont has taken further steps toward reducing the amount of material that ends up in the landfill. These new regulations started taking effect on July 1st of 2015. We will continue to prepare for the next phase of Act 148 in the coming years.

The PaintCare recycling program at the Transfer Station has been a huge success over the past year. We are now exploring adding C&D recycling to our facility. For more information about our facility, please visit the town website at www.norwich.vt.us under Public Works.

Transfer Station Staff: William Sanborn, Lead Attendant (649-1192); Donald Eames, Attendant

Andy Hodgdon, Public Works Director (649-2209, ahdogdon@norwich.vt.us)

Trustees of Public Funds

According to Vermont Statutes, if a Town elects Cemetery Commissioners, then the Town also elects Trustees of Public Funds. The Trustees are elected on a rotating basis for a three-year term. The Trustees of Public Funds manage cemetery funds and other monies left to the Town in trust and accepted by the Selectboard.

During the Town's fiscal year, the Trustees invest cemetery monies not currently in use to maximize earnings for these funds. The Trustees meet regularly to monitor the funds. A decision was made to support area banks with investments in accordance with the Vermont Statutes, typically requesting investment rates at a minimum of six different banks in order to determine the best investment offer. The Cemetery Commissioners apprise us of their plans for working in the various cemeteries. Therefore, we invest to meet their needs. The interest is allocated between sale of lots and perpetual care funds.

John Currier, Ann Harvey and Cheryl A. Lindberg, Trustees



Joe Porter's Eagle Scout project at the Norwich Historic Society with the help of the Boy Scouts of Norwich Troup 253.



Norwich Scouts led by Joe Porter build a new floor for the Historical Society's tool shed as a community service project.