
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

TO: SELECTBOARD
FROM: PHIL DECHERT
SUBJECT: MARCH 2016 MONTHLY REPORT
DATE: APRIL 6, 2016

This is the Town Manager's Report for March 2016. Department specific monthly reports are attached.

General

- Interim Town Manager - The Director of Planning & Zoning, Phil Dechert, was appointed "Temporary Interim Town Manager" on February 26 to serve until March 25, 2016. At their March 23rd meeting, the Selectboard extended this appointment to "upon the appointment of a successor". The search for a longer term Interim Town Manager is ongoing.

Projects

- The Request for Bids for installation of the Electric Vehicle Charging Station (EVCS) in the Dan & Whit's parking lot was sent out March 23 and bids are due back April 15. This project is funded with a state grant to the Town and in-kind matches. The Town has an easement and an agreement with Dan and Whit's.

Assessor

- The Assessor continued field inspections of the properties on Map 15, the final piece of the 3-year cyclical inspection process that will culminate in the 2016 Town-wide reappraisal. Inspections also continued on commercial properties and properties with active permits.

Fire Department and Emergency Management

- The Fire Department and FAST Squad continue to actively recruit new members. The number of active members is too low; this seriously affects our response to alarms.
- The Norwich Fire Company purchased a lightweight high-pressure portable pump for use at wildland fires. Half the cost was funded with an ANR grant.

Police Department

- In his attached report, Chief Robinson describes how to identify and avoid several types of scams that appear at "tax season" including phone scams, phishing, and identity theft.

Public Works Department

- The following table shows winter maintenance activities. Winter activities this year are much lower than last year at the same time because of the higher than normal temperatures.

Winter Maintenance: Activity	This Month	This Season, so far	Last Season, as of March 31, 2015
Callouts	1	16	41
Plowing	0	10	33
Treating the Pavement	3	18	54
Sanding	3	23	46
Sidewalks	3	17	38

Pending Projects:

- We will complete our paving program for fiscal year 2015-2016 during the spring of 2016.
- We will start grading all of the gravel roads as soon as they dry out a little bit more.
- Hook Construction will begin work on Bridge #42 during the month of April.
- I will schedule the sweeping of the downtown area during the month of April.

Recreation

- Our Mud Season programs are all successfully underway, including our two Girls Running programs which continue into June.
- The Recreation Council is focused on Huntley field rental schedules and the juggling of program schedules in an attempt to avoid 'the perfect storm' regarding Huntley Meadow parking this spring.

Finance

- The 2015 Worker's Compensation audit with VLCT was performed. The new policy on charging for subcontractors at the appropriate rate will have a full impact in 2016, with the Town having to pay for all subs not having Worker's Compensation Insurance. For 2015, it was estimated that we will only have to contribute at about 30% for uninsured subcontractors.

Planning and Zoning

- Brandy Saxton, the planning consultant who assisted the Planning Commission with drafting, editing, and design of the 2011 Norwich Town Plan and the recent Route 5 South – River Road Study, is drafting sections for the ongoing update of the Zoning Regulations for review by the Commission.

Town of Norwich
Assessors' Office
Post Office Box 376 <> Norwich, VT 05055-0376
(802) 649 1419 x6
assessing-clerk@norwich.vt.us

Monthly Report – March 2016

- (1) The Assessor set a mailer requesting inspections to property owners with an open permit, both those from the current year and incomplete permits from prior years, and began inspections of these properties.
- (2) The Assessor continued field inspections of the properties on Map 15. These property inspections are the final piece of the 3-year cyclical inspection process that will culminate in the 2016 townwide reappraisal.
- (3) The Assessor continued inspections of commercial properties, as well as analysis of returned income/expense forms from commercial property owners.
- (4) Cheryl A. Lindberg was elected as the new Chair of the Board of Listers.
- (5) The Listers were presented with preliminary information for the 2016 reappraisal by the Assessor. The Assessor is anticipating an approximately 5% average increase in assessments townwide.
- (6) The Listers approved and signed the 2015 Certificate—No Appeal or Suit Pending, which certifies that there are no outstanding appeals against the 2015 Grand List.
- (7) The Listers posted reminders to the Norwich Listserv and World List for all those who occupy their Norwich property as their domicile to file their Homestead Declaration (form HS-122) annually with the State of Vermont by April 15th (the actual deadline for 2016 is April 18th). No extensions are granted for this mandatory filing, and an 8% penalty applies to filing late. Declarations may be filed online at <https://secure.vermont.gov/hd/index>. Those with household incomes up to \$137,500 may be eligible for a Property Tax Adjustment credit (also known as "Income Sensitivity"). To apply, fill out Form HS-122, part B. Questions may be addressed to the Assessing Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Bynum
Assessing Clerk
On behalf of
William Krajeski
Assessor
Town of Norwich



Norwich Fire Department

11 Firehouse Lane

P.O. Box 376

Norwich, VT 05055-0376

Phone: 802-649-1133

Chief: Stephen Leinoff

sleinoff@norwich.vt.us Fax: 802-649-1775

To: Phil Dechert, Interim Town Manager
From: Stephen Leinoff, Chief
Subject: Fire Department and Emergency Management Monthly Reports
Date: April 1, 2016

Fire and FAST Department

The Department welcomed back Tim Cronan as an active firefighter. We are continuing our recruiting efforts and have two pending applications that will help improve our staffing. We are still well below our desired number of active firefighters. This seriously affects our response to alarms.

The NFD Members presented their peers with awards for distinguished service at the Department's annual dinner. Steve Foltz, Firefighter received the "Jump Start Award", Bonnie Munday, EMT, received the "Behind the Scenes Award", and Mark Nickles, Firefighter-EMT "Member of the Year Award". Linda Cook was recognized for 35 years of service and retired Deputy Chief Neil Fulton, and retired Assistant Chief Sonny Tebbetts received their helmets in recognition of their service.



The Norwich Fire Company purchased a lightweight high-pressure portable pump for use at wildland fires. We used one of these with a "mop-up kit" of small diameter hose at the Tigertown Fire last year. Members were impressed by its effectiveness. We purchased a "mop-kit" as well. A grant from the VT Agency of Natural Resources funded one-half of the cost.

VOSHA required service and performance testing was performed on half of our self-contained breathing apparatus. Two of the units require minor repairs.

Training

Many FAST Squad Members have re-certified their NREMT certificates through a new, more comprehensive evaluation process. Jeff Fleury, a retired Hanover Police Officer, provided training on drug recognition to our FAST Squad and other area EMTs.

Fire training was on wildland firefighting and included operating the new portable pump. The other training session was “hands on” training performing search operations and advancing hose lines.

Call Types	Month	Year to Date	Prior Year to Date
Structure Fires	1	4	5
Auto Fires	0	0	0
Wildland Fire	1	1	1
Other Fires	0	0	0
Medical	3	19	22
Vehicle Crashes	2	7	9
Hazardous Conditions no fire	3	9	4
Service Calls	2	8	4
Good Intent Calls	0	4	10
False Alarms	3	5	7
Other	0	0	0
Total	15	57	62

Emergency Management

Drafts of our updated Emergency Operations Plan were distributed to members of the Norwich Emergency Management Committee for review and updating.



NORWICH POLICE DEPARTMENT



CHIEF OF POLICE
DOUGLAS A. ROBINSON

P.O. Box 311 ~ 10 Hazen Street ~ Norwich VT 05055 ~ 802-649-1460 ~ FAX 802-649-1775 ~ E-MAIL drobinso@dps.state.vt.us

Phil Dechert
Interim Town Manager
Tracy Hall // 300 Main St.
Norwich, Vermont 05055

April 1, 2016

RE: March 2016 Monthly Report

Phil;

As requested, here are some of the monthly stats of the Police Department from the month of March 2016.

Norwich Officers responded to 99 incidents during the month of March, and of those calls three (3) were outside the officers work schedule meaning officers responded three times (3) to calls during off duty hours.

With the nice weather finally here we are seeing a lot more bicyclists out and about. With the increased bicycle traffic we are also receiving complaints from both motorists and cyclists. There are laws for bicyclists and motorist alike to make the roads safer for both. But better than all the laws is just the common courtesy given each other to make the roads safer for all.

Every year during the "Tax Season" we receive numerous complaints of frauds or scams. This year we have already seen an increase in those reports. The IRS has released its "Dirty Dozen" tax scams reminding taxpayers to use caution during the tax season to protect themselves against a wide range of schemes. These are three of the most common scams and ways to protect yourself from these scams:

Phone Scams

The IRS has seen an increase in phone scams, where consumers receive a call from someone pretending to be from the IRS. The caller typically is hoping to steal either money or the consumer's identity. There are many variations of this scam. Some consumers may receive a call notifying them that they're eligible to receive a huge refund, but need to confirm some personal information such as bank account or Social Security numbers in order to receive the money. Others may be threatened with jail time if they don't pay "overdue" taxes.

Dodging this scam is simple. Just remember that the IRS will never call about taxes owed without first mailing a bill, and will never demand payment without offering the consumer the opportunity to appeal the amount owed. Additionally, local law enforcement will never be called to arrest someone for not paying taxes.

Phishing

Phishing is a scam typically carried out with the help of unsolicited email or a fake website that poses as a legitimate site to lure in potential victims and prompt them to provide valuable personal and financial information. Armed with this information, a criminal can commit identity theft or financial theft. If you receive an unsolicited email that appears to be from either the IRS or an organization closely linked to the IRS, such as the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS), report it by sending it to phishing@irs.gov. The IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email to request personal or financial information.

Identity Theft

This time of year, an identity thief typically uses a legitimate taxpayer's identity to fraudulently file a tax return and claim a refund. The IRS has a special section on their website (www.IRS.gov/identitytheft) dedicated to identity theft issues, including YouTube videos, tips for taxpayers and an assistance guide. The IRS has also increased its efforts to combat this type of fraud. From 2011 through October 2014, the IRS has stopped 19 million suspicious returns and protected over \$63 billion in fraudulent refunds. The best way to protect yourself is to protect your information. Never give out your Social Security number, use the Internet with caution, and always shred documents that contain sensitive information.

Keep these scams in mind as you get ready to file your taxes this year. Always remember: if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

ACTIVITY

CALL TYPES	March 2016	2016 YEAR TO DATE	PREVIOUS YEAR
Burglaries	0	0	9
Vehicles Crashes	4	17	71
Intrusion Alarms	4	22	75
Frauds	3	8	30
One Arrest for Gross Careless & Negligent Operation of a Vehicle and the theft of said vehicle			

1. Over Time Hours 11 hours
2. Sick Time Hours 13 hours
3. Vac/Hol/Per Time Hours 10 hours
4. Part Time Officer Hours 0 hours
5. Total #of calls responded to 99 calls
6. Training Hours 8 hours
7. Grant Funded Hours 6 hours

Respectfully;

D.A.R.

Douglas A. Robinson
Chief of Police



TOWN OF NORWICH
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
26 New Boston Road
Norwich, VT 05055
802-649-2209 Fax: 802-296-0060
Ahodgdon@norwich.vt.us

To: Phil Dechert, Acting Town Manager
From: Andy Hodgdon, Public Works Director
Subject: Public Works Monthly Report
Date: March 31, 2016

Part of this month's report will come from an excel program that provides statistics for all Public Works functions.

Winter Maintenance:

Activity	This Month	This Season, so far	Last Season, as of March 31, 2015
Callouts	1	16	41
Plowing	0	10	33
Treating the Pavement	3	18	54
Sanding	3	23	46
Sidewalks	3	17	38
Snow Removal	0	2	9

From the Daily Log:

- Wed., March 2: Because of snow and rain, I called everyone in at 4:30 am. We treated the pavement and sanded all of the gravel roads. Mike T. did the sidewalks. Everyone finished at 1:00 pm.
- Mon., March 7: Because of snow squalls, after lunch Sonny treated the pavement as needed-Beaver Meadow area, Turnpike Road, and New Boston. Gary checked and sanded the gravel roads in these same areas.
- Thurs., March 24: Because of snow covering the roads, Gary was on Truck #4, Neal was on Truck #5, and Mike was on Truck #8. They treated all of the paved roads and sanded all of the gravel roads as necessary. Mike T. did the sidewalks.

Grant Projects:

- I submitted the yearly financial plan and the applications for the VT AOT Structures and Paving Grants to the District 4 office.
- I also submitted a request to VT AOT to use the remainder of the funds from our 2015 Structures Grant, that weren't needed for Bridge #42, to be used for the replacement of Bridge #48 on Bragg Hill.

FEMA Alternate Projects:

FEMA is now reviewing the alternate projects: the replacement of a dilapidated box culvert on Route 132, the restoration of the pool dam area, and the renovations of the Public Works facility.

Personnel:

- Bob Barden returned to work on March 14th. He had been on medical leave since October 26th following surgery.
- I have been out sick for most of the past two weeks with pneumonia.

Transfer Station:

- March 16th: Clean Harbors Environmental Services picked up 2400 lbs. of paint to be recycled.
- In February, the recycling rate was 60% of all materials collected at the Transfer Station.

Fleet Repairs and Maintenance:

The Fire Department's vehicles will be due for Vermont State Inspections in May and June.

Out-to-Bid Items:

- We went out to bid last month on a new backhoe to replace the 2004 430D Cat backhoe in accordance with the Public Works-Highway Equipment Replacement Plan.
- We also went out to bid for a used pickup to replace the Buildings and Grounds Truck #9, the 1987 Dodge, which will no longer pass Vermont State Inspection. This is also budgeted for in the Public Works-Buildings and Grounds Equipment Replacement Plan.

The bids are in for these two items and I have submitted my recommendations to the Town Manager.

Pending Projects:

- We will complete our paving program for fiscal year 2015-2016 during the spring of 2016.
- We will start grading all of the gravel roads as soon as they dry out a little bit more.
- Hook Construction will begin work on Bridge #42 during the month of April.
- I will schedule the sweeping of the downtown area during the month of April.

NORWICH RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Jill Kearney Niles - Director

649-1419; Ext. 5

Recreation@norwich.vt.us

March 2016 - Monthly RECREATION Report

Recreation Program Update: Our Mud Season programs are all successfully underway, including our two Girls Running programs which continue into June. March was spent lining up coaches, practice and game schedules as well as facilities for a myriad of spring programs. Early on-line registration was set up for the following Spring Youth activities: Lacrosse for 3rd/4th and 5th/6th Grade Girls and Boys, Baseball for 3rd/4th and 5th/6th Grades, Softball and 3rd & 4th Grade Boys' Soccer

Meetings: It was wonderful to introduce six new Recreation Council members to the Select Board on March 23rd. Thank-you for approving their collective terms. At our March Recreation Council meeting we welcomed our new members. There were discussions on spring programming, Huntley field rental schedules and the juggling of schedules that needs to happen in an attempt to avoid 'the perfect storm' regarding Huntley Meadow parking this spring. This is an ongoing challenge. Ideas for extended summer programs were discussed. Women's Club Grant suggestions were considered and it was concluded that we would ask for funding for a new rink liner. Everyone was excited that an Eagle Scout project by Roger Danilek is underway to fix the Huntley Tennis court fencing problem.

At our monthly Upper Valley Recreation Association (UVRA) meeting at CCBA, we solidified baseball & softball rules, as well as Jamboree dates and locations. Individual Town involvement in the UVRA Baseball League was confirmed. Tournament and jamboree dates were set. Baseball game scheduling followed.

I attended an important evening Interstate Lacrosse Community meeting at which we confirmed lacrosse rules and set spring game schedules. I also took part in a meeting at the Norwich Public Library to help brainstorm on finding solutions to an overabundance of unattended children who frequent the library after school hours.

On the state level, it was also a busy month with first, a quarterly meeting focused on better understanding the potential effect of a new Workman's Compensation law in relation to sub-contracting recreation instructors.

On March 31st at the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association Executive Committee meeting in Barre I officially opted to step down from the board after a half decade of service. We found a few eager young replacements, one of which I am certain will do a great job. It was a fabulous experience that provided me great insight into the workings of an excellent state organization.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jill Kearney Niles

TOWN OF NORWICH
FINANCE OFFICE
PO BOX 376
NORWICH, VERMONT 05055-0376
rrobinson@norwich.vt.us
802-649-1419 ext 105

March 29, 2016

TO: Phil Dechert, Interim Town Manager

FROM: Roberta Robinson, Finance Director

RE: Finance Department Monthly Report for March

- Delinquent Tax collections through March were \$ 63,335. Delinquent Taxes as of March 31, 2016 are \$ 177,321, March 31, 2015 they were \$ 158,883 and March 31, 2014 they were \$199,517. Interest collected was \$ 1,505 and penalty collected was \$ 5,361. New interest posted against delinquent taxes was \$ 2,251.
- General Fund interest earnings at the end of February were \$ 5,092 with \$ 4,500 being the budgeted amount for the entire year.
- The 2015 Worker's Compensation audit with VLCT was performed. The new policy on charging for sub-contractors at the appropriate rate will have a full impact in 2016, with the town having to pay for all subs who do not have Worker's Compensation Insurance. For 2015, it was estimated that we will only have to contribute at about 30% for uninsured sub-contractors.
- Pamela Sargent, Grant Specialist for the Vermont Agency of Transportation came and did an in-house audit for all grants administered by their department. We received a letter from her today with no findings and a couple of recommendations.
- The Finance Department continues to monitor spending and year end projections.
- Responded to landowner's requests for taxes paid in 2015 and copies of tax bills for use in their preparation of income taxes and homestead declarations.

TOWN OF NORWICH ZONING & PLANNING

April 6, 2016

March 2015 Monthly Report – Director of Planning & Zoning

1. Planning Commission
 - Drafted new mixed-use Site Plan Review and Planned Unit Development criteria for the Route 5 South & River Road Study areas. These will be integrated into existing sections.
2. DRB
 - Final Subdivision Plan Review Hearing on March 3rd for Crewe property on Route 132. Notice of Decision issued March 22,
 - No future meetings or hearings are scheduled
3. Zoning Administrator – Activities included:
 - Meetings with landowners on future development plans, permits, and hearings.
 - Site visits and office visits regarding permit applications, permit research for properties to be sold, and inspections of possible violations.
4. Historic Preservation Commission
 - a. Grant Agreements with the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation were signed March 2nd. The first is for a “Mid-Century Modern Historic District National Register Nomination” for \$9,006. The second is for a “Goodrich Four Corners Historic District National Register Nomination” for \$6,518. These projects will probably start in May or June.
5. Other
 - a. The Director of Planning & Zoning was appointed “Temporary Interim Town Manager” on February 26 to serve until March 25, 2016. At their March 23rd meeting, the Selectboard extended this appointment to “upon the appointment of a successor”. Brandy Saxton, the planning consultant who assisted the Planning Commission with drafting, editing, and design of the 2011 Norwich Town Plan and the recent Route 5 South – River Road Study, is drafting sections for the ongoing update of the zoning regulations for review by the Commission.

Phil Dechert