

Part II

Town Boards, Commissions,
Committees & Departments

Selectboard

During the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2011, the Selectboard joined in the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Norwich charter with a number of events organized and overseen by several Norwich groups with leadership from the Historical Society that culminated in September with the presentation of a newly refurbished copy of the original 1761 charter.

The Board suffered a loss with the passing of Uwe Bagnato. We thank Uwe's family for lending him to us for a short while. We thank members Suzanne Lupien and Sharon Racusin for their time on the Board and welcome new members Steve Flanders, Christopher Ashley and past Board member Linda Cook.

In spite of a difficult economy, we were successful in presenting a Town budget that maintained a level tax rate. Our thanks for that effort go to Town Manager Pete Webster and all Department Heads and staff.

The Board made significant progress on several fronts including efforts to improve the Town Manager evaluation process along with the writing and review of several policies such as a new Vehicle Acquisition Policy. Three committees were formed consisting of dedicated members of the community willing to give their time and effort. These committees, Public Works Review, Capital Facilities Planning & Budgeting, and a Committee to Review Real Property Assessment Functions, were charged with issues such as the evaluation/possible improvement of existing services and long-term capital needs of the community. We express our thanks to all involved in those efforts.

As this report is written, we are in the midst of recovery efforts from Tropical Storm Irene. We wish to express our appreciation to the staffs of the Highway, Police and Fire Departments along with other Norwich citizens for their outstanding efforts in responding to this emergency. We further thank all community members who offer their services to the various committees and commissions that support the future of Norwich.

*Ed Childs, Chair; Christopher Ashley, Vice-Chair;
Roger Blake; Linda Cook; and Stephen Flanders*

Town Manager Report

Peter Webster was Town Manager during Fiscal Year 2011, the period covered by this Town Report. Neil R. Fulton was appointed Interim Town Manager on September 20, 2011.

The following are some notable events during the period from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

- An analysis of the radio communications system for fire, police and public works was undertaken. The study identified significant deficiencies in the system that will be made worse by Federal Communications Commission regulations requiring the use of less radio spectrum by January 1, 2013.
- The Capital Planning and Budget Advisory Committee has been meeting and receiving input from Town departments and others on potential future facility needs. Their report is expected to be finished in time for consideration as part of the Fiscal Year 2014 budget that starts on July 1, 2013.
- The Public Works Department Review Committee conducted a review of Public Works functions which include highway, solid waste and buildings and grounds. They also conducted a Town-wide survey with results available in the fall of 2011.
- The Vermont Legislature has approved the Vermont Agency of Transportation entering into a contract with the town of Norwich transferring responsibility for maintaining Church Street and the Routes 5 and 10A section of Main Street to the Town. This

will facilitate the construction of the Safe Routes to School sidewalk on Church Street that will extend to Carpenter Street.

- The Zero-Sort® facility at the Transfer Station has increased recycling and reduced the amount of solid waste that needs to go to a landfill.
- While August 28, 2011 was not during this reporting period, it is the date that Tropical Storm Irene ripped through Vermont causing significant damage. Although the damage in Norwich was not as severe as that of some of our neighbors, we estimate that road, bridge and damage to the Norwich Pool dam may be as much as \$850,000. The Public Works Department with the assistance of the Fire and Police Departments responded to the storm and the Public Works Department had all roads passable for emergency vehicles and school buses within 96 hours of the storm.

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

Neil R. Fulton, Interim 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% per month interest thereafter. A tax collection policy outlines the collection process, which includes payment applications, payment plans and tax sale procedures, if necessary.

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

Tax Year Summary for 2010 – 2011

Final Taxes Billed:	\$14,135,296.26
Taxes Collected during FY:	<u>\$14,057,845.35</u>
Taxes outstanding at close of FY:	\$77,450.91

Delinquent Tax Report

6/30/2010 Delinquent Tax Balance:	\$127,221.36
FY10/11 Delinquent Taxes:	<u>\$265,307.56</u>
Subtotal:	\$392,528.92
Less delinquent taxes collected & abatements:	<u>\$271,259.55</u>
6/30/2011 Balance:	\$121,269.37

Taxes delinquent for FY09/10	\$77,450.91
Taxes delinquent previous years	<u>\$43,818.46</u>
Total	\$121,269.37

Delinquent taxes as of December 31, 2011	\$87,736.01
--	-------------

Town Clerk

This year we have seen an increase in the number of documents recorded in our office. We went from 3,320 pages recorded in the Land Records last year to 4,207 pages. This amounts to \$37,863 of revenue for the Town.

In FY11, we had to stop issuing passports due to an administrative change in that an office that issues birth and death records cannot be a passport acceptance agency. This change took effect on April 30, 2011. Therefore, my office only accepted 18 applications for the fiscal year of 2011. We processed 104 motor vehicle registration renewals, licensed 644 dogs, up from last year's 612, and sold 261 Fish and Game Licenses, which is the same number sold last year. We issued 26 Marriage Licenses; there were 10 deaths and no home births to report this year.

This year we restored the Town Charter and had an archival digital reproduction made of it which was on display for the Town's 250th celebration. It is now on display in the Town Clerk's Office. Please stop by and see it. Another project that is being undertaken is a digitally enhanced and archival reproduction of the Town's Birth, Death, and Marriage records Volume Four, which covers the years 1857 to 1867. Due to the age of the book, the paper, and ink used we have lost a significant amount of the Town's vital records. By using this process we are hoping to capture a lot of the information which has been lost to the naked eye and regain the ability again to research this time in our history.

The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm; on Thursdays we are generally open from 8:30 am to 5:00 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, or research the records in the vault. Dog licenses will be available to purchase on January 2, 2012. 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)

Vital Records for 2011

As recorded by the Town Clerk's Office January 1 to December 31, 2011

Marriages

All, Sarah Michelle	Garant, Herve Irene III
Nichols, Jill Elizabeth	Simpson, Benjamin Kinsley
Elro, Janet Lee	McCarthy, Robert Christopher
Thompson, Alicia Christine	Brooks, Zachary Thomas
Bentley, Mary Helen	Tchana, Katrin Hyman
Arnold, Michael Tynan	Rowland, Dana Elizabeth
Jackson, Daniel Seth	Stein, Alexandra Chelsea
Sinopoli, Dominic Edward	Sellmann, Kimberly Anne
White, Thomas Robert	Irish, Sarah Lenora
Milo, Amanda Carrie	Allen, Robert Anthony
Hooper, Rebecca June	Holland, Joseph Johnston
Finn, Christine Theresa	Stone, David Howard
Carroll, Bryan Paul	Van Dillewijn, Diana Marcela
Smith, Pamela Elizabeth	Healy, John Christopher
Morrison, Daniel William	Brown, Cheslee Stuart
Roth, Rachel Ann	Bern, Michael Evan

Jellin, Melinda Jane	Nowak, James Brett
McGuire, Barton Patrick	Arvidson, Valerie Marie
Sateaia, Caitlin Northern	King, Kristopher Warren
Mock, Sarah Anne	McCampbell, Christopher Stuart
Rehm, Elissa Linn	Bradley, Joel Matthew
Pachucki, Mark Andrew	Carroll, Winslow Chamberlin
Matless, Sally Ingalls	Hunt, James Robert
Molina, Daniel Jerome	Balch, Melissa Elizabeth
Friets, Eric McKenzie	Cerra, Patricia Ann
Callaway, David Beniah	MacDonald, Patricia Lynn Wampler
Trautz, Nicholas	Kilian, Katya Marie
Bentwood, Johanna Jeanne	Kerr, Alfie Eden Collins

There were 0 homebirths and 8 deaths which occurred in the Town of Norwich.

Boards of Abatement and Civil Authority

Our Town has 12 elected Justices of the Peace who, along with the Town Clerk and the five members of the Selectboard, comprise the Board of Civil Authority (BCA). Property owners who are dissatisfied with the valuation of their property as set by the Listers may, after pursuing a grievance with the Listers first, appeal their valuation to the BCA. The BCA, in turn, conducts a full hearing and may lower, raise or affirm the figure determined by the Listers. BCA hearings take place in the summer; in fiscal 2010-2011 there were 10. These proceedings offer a useful, final opportunity to resolve valuation issues at the local level prior to taking such disputes to the judicial system or state tax officials.

Along with the members of the Board of Listers and the Town Treasurer, the BCA also serves as the Town’s Board of Abatement, which hears requests for abatement of property taxes based on hardship, destruction of property, etc. BCA members also assist the Town Clerk with elections, a process that has been consistently smooth and uneventful under the skilled stewardship of our Town Clerk, Bonnie Munday. And, of course, Justices of the Peace are also empowered to perform weddings, anywhere in Vermont. But don’t forget to obtain a marriage license from the Town Clerk first!

Donald M. Kreis, Chair (649-3073)

Cemetery Commission

The five-member Cemetery Commission is responsible for the care and upkeep, as well as necessary improvements, of all 10 Norwich cemeteries. This also includes the Union Village Cemetery.

The Hillside Cemetery improvements and new construction of a maintenance/equipment building have been completed and the roads have been upgraded. New lots have been designated and corner markers are being placed as new lots are sold.

We have a contract with the Vermont Department of Corrections for maintenance and upkeep and this new arrangement is working well. Annual cleaning of some gravestones was performed and will continue as needed. Fall clean-up and winter preparations were performed as needed.

The financial details of our operations during FY11 are summarized below, based on information maintained by the Finance Office and Treasurer:

Revenue Received:

Appropriation from Town Manager	\$15,000
Hillside Expansion from Trustees of Public Funds .....	.0
Woodworth Unitrust	5,843
Sales of Cemetery Markers	930
Perpetual Care Fund – Interest	922
Operating Account – Interest	13
Payment for Damages	<u>50</u>
	\$22,758

Expenditures Made:

Wages	\$4,423
Capital Improvements	1,200
Purchased Services	7,590
Repairs and Maintenance	229
Mowing Supplies	539
Payroll Taxes	338
Workmen's Compensation	492
Water	285
Equipment Purchase .....	.0
Liability Insurance .....	.0
Postage	<u>2</u>
	\$15,098

Schedule 3 of the Independent Auditor's Report states our Fund Balance as \$37,561.

Fred Spaulding, Chair (649-1121)

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 projects listed below were undertaken for the benefit of all Town residents.

Among other projects, in FY11 the Norwich Conservation Commission:

- Displayed local photography and elementary school activities at the post office
- Hosted a public lecture discussing bat biology, "Bats in the Balance", by Scott Darling from the VT Agency of Natural Resources
- Participated in the Source-to-Sea cleanup of the Connecticut River
- Maintained and improved trails (the Trails Committee)
- Continued the inventory of wildlife road crossing areas.

Craig Layne, Secretary (296-7298)

Development Review Board

The Development Review Board (DRB) has seven members appointed for three-year terms by the Selectboard. There are also three alternate members. The DRB meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month, whenever applications are before the Board. Hearings can include subdivisions, site reviews, conditional uses, variances, and appeals. Meetings are posted on the notice boards and you may also sign up with the Zoning Administrator to receive email notices.

During the year we heard three subdivision applications and two amendments, one boundary line adjustment, and a Ridge-Line development project as well as two conditional use hearings and a site plan review.

Both video and sound recordings are made of all public hearings and these can be reviewed by applying to the Zoning Administrator. This year Board hearings have been greatly enhanced by computer projection of plans and documents. This enables participants in the proceedings as well as abutters and visitors to follow the details of the development on the screen. Attending public hearings enables one to keep up with significant changes in Norwich. For instance our recent review of the detailed plans for the renovations and expansion at King Arthur Flour described the whole project. Hearings are an opportunity to keep up to date and comments on the plans are helpful and welcome. All meetings are open to the public.

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. This meets the National Incident Management System (NIMS) standards established by the Department of Homeland Security. Many Norwich officials have received NIMS-compliant training in incident management and planning. Our current Emergency Operations Plan and Rapid Response Plan are NIMS-compliant. 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.

Communications Design Consulting Group (CDCG) was engaged to study radio communications in Norwich. The consultant analyzed the communication needs of the Fire, Police, and Public Works Department. It is essential that these Departments communicate effectively internally, with each other, and with outside agencies. Our radio system suffers from severe radio coverage issues, which impacts the safety of our community. CDCG developed plans to improve our communications capabilities, but the equipment needed is both sophisticated and expensive. The estimated cost is about \$520,000. We are aggressively seeking grant sources to fund portions of this project.

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

Stephen Leinoff, Deputy Emergency Management Director

Energy Committee

During FY11, the Norwich Energy Committee (NEC) revised plans for a large-scale municipal photovoltaic system, rebidding the project after a master site plan was completed for the Town Garage property. Funding was to come from a grant from the Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF) and a Town bond. The project was designed to replace the electricity the Town purchases from Green Mountain Power and lock in a stable electricity price for at least 25 years.

While overall project financing met this goal, in some years during the bond payback period payments could have exceeded expected utility costs. The Finance Committee would not support the project under these circumstances; the NEC reluctantly withdrew the project and returned the grant.

In addition, the NEC:

- Concluded the CEDF Municipal Technical Assistance Grant awarded in 2009 and presented to the Town a final report surveying renewable energy resources in Norwich, including a study of a district heat-and-power system.
- Provided extensive input into the updated Town Plan, scheduled for final approval by the Selectboard in the fall of 2011.
- Followed legislative changes to Clean Energy Assessment Districts (now known as PACE, Property Assessed Clean Energy), which would enable residents to opt in to a special assessment district to finance energy efficiency or renewable energy home improvements.
- Arranged with Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission for an energy audit of Tracy Hall.
- Attended the annual conferences of the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network and the Upper Valley Energy Committee Roundtable.
- Provided input to the Capital Facilities Planning and Budgeting Committee.
- Held a forum at Town Eating Day.
- Began investigating the feasibility of a privately financed rooftop solar installation at Marion Cross School.

The NEC meets regularly on the third Thursday of every month, at 7:00 pm at Tracy Hall. For more information, contact me or Linda Gray (649-2032, linda.c.gray@gmail.com).

Alan Berolzheimer (649-2857, bercress@sover.net)

Finance Committee

The Norwich Finance Committee (NFC) is composed of seven Norwich residents: six members appointed by the Selectboard to serve a three-year term on a staggered basis and the elected Town Treasurer. These seven also serve on the Dresden Finance Committee (DFC). The NFC meets monthly throughout the year and more frequently during budget season when all four budgets (Town, School District, Dresden, and SAU) are being adopted by the various Boards for voter approval at Town Meeting in March.

The NFC provides guidelines for the Norwich budgets and expresses opinions on the final town of Norwich and the Norwich School District budgets that are proposed for voter approval by the two Boards. As DFC members they perform a similar oversight for the Dresden School District and the Supervisory Administrative Unit #70. The NFC's mission is to advocate budgetary restraint and fiscal responsibility and to increase public awareness and understanding of issues affecting local taxation.

During FY11, the NFC discussed and opined on the purchase of an additional grader for

the Town Highway Department, voted on guidelines for the Town and School District budgets, and attended many of the Selectboard and School Board meetings. The NFC has continued to monitor the upcoming teacher contract negotiations and the deficit position of the School District. A significant amount of meeting time was dedicated to the Statement of Purpose for the NFC and how the members should be appointed. The NFC has voted to continue to be appointed by the Selectboard, with attendance at meetings a critical part of each member's role. The NFC takes part in the annual Town Eating Day in order to highlight the NFC's purpose and answer questions from the residents of Norwich.

Keith Moran, Chair (649-3910)

Finance Office

The Finance Office is responsible for all accounting functions for the Town and all tax collection. We processed \$2,508,728 in Town bills and \$1,284,791 in gross payroll and payroll taxes. The total income processed included current year Town tax of \$3,219,902 and other revenues in the amount of \$697,098.

When Town and school taxes were initially billed the total tax raised was \$14,150,081. After all amended bills were sent, the final tax billing was \$14,135,296. The original amount of billed taxes was reduced by \$2,578 due to six BCA appeals. On the other hand, 57 late-filed HS-122's resulted in an increase in residential taxes of \$30,851. Tax adjustments were \$48,213 and abatements were \$4,241 resulting in an expense of \$52,454 and interest expense of \$325. The final school true up from the State of Vermont resulted in residential and non-residential school taxes of \$10,944,004.

Recent legislative changes to HS-122 Homestead Declarations do not require you to file on an annual basis unless there is a change in status or sale. Late, undeclared or incorrectly declared homesteads will be assessed an 8% penalty on the education tax. Please make sure that you file your Homestead Declaration forms by April 15. Property Tax Adjustment-HS-145 claims are also due by April 15 but can be filed up to September 1 (\$15 late fee). Refer to your tax booklet for the forms or go to www.vermont.gov and file online.

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

Fire Department

The Norwich Fire Department responded to 200 incidents in fiscal 2011, down by 5% from the prior year. Our rating from the Insurance Services Office remains one of the best in the area, resulting in significant savings on fire insurance premiums.

Call Types	2010-11
Structure Fires .....	.9
Auto Fires .....	.3
Wildland Fire .....	.1
Other Fires .....	.3
Medical .....	.85
Vehicle Crashes .....	.22
Hazardous Conditions, no fire .....	.13
Service Calls .....	.21
Good Intent Calls .....	.16
False Alarms .....	.26
Other	<u>.1</u>
Total	200

The Department continues its focus on fire prevention, visiting properties to help identify and mitigate potentially hazardous conditions. Our formal public education programs reached 224 adults and 530 children. Structure fires declined from 13 to 9 over the past year.

The FAST Squad's monthly training and rapid response pay off. This year, members saved a life by arriving quickly and using advanced life medication.

Our leaking roof was replaced and R30 insulation installed for \$29,000, far less than the \$60,000 budgeted. We received a \$7,767 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (FEMA) to purchase protective clothing used in fires and hazardous environments. The grant covered 95% of the cost, making the Department's share \$408. The 75-foot Quint truck purchased in 2010 has found consistent and productive use.

Matt Swett completed Firefighter 2 training, and was promoted to Captain. Bryan Carroll and Tim Cronan joined the Department. Aaron Lamperti, Grant Simpson and Bryan Carroll completed Firefighter 1.

I thank our members and the community for their continued outstanding support.

Current Members

Officers: Chief Stephen Leinoff, Deputy Chief Neil Fulton, Assistant Chief Lloyd Tebbetts, Captain Phil Brunelle, Captain Matt Swett, and Lieutenant Pete Schwab

Firefighter-Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT): Jake Blum, Susan Blum, Linda Cook (Fire Warden), Matt Herbert, Regina Owens, Nancy LaRowe, Dan Schneider, and Jon Wilkinson

Firefighters: Mark Anderson, Mary Anderson, Bryan Carroll, Tim Cronan, Mathew Davis, Peter Griggs, Aaron Lamperti, Luke Lindberg, William Mosenthal, Chad Poston, Grant Simpson, Lisa Talmadge, Warren Thayer, David Yesman, Alex von Reyn, Tim Webster, Evan Welch, and Asaf Wyszynski

EMTs: Toni Apgar, Eric Bivona, Charlene Bradley, Frances Eanet, John Lawe, Bonnie Munday, and Hope Rennie

Support Team

The team provides food and supplies to emergency responders at incident scenes and the station. Members include: Linda Cook, Kenneth Cracknell, Linda Danilek, Annah Dupuis, Jean Fraser, Jaden Gladstone, Cheri Henry, Cheryl Lindberg, Lizanne Peyton, Liz Russell, Anne Marie Smith, Gerry Tolman, Janet von Reyn, and Laurie Welch,

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

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 HOs can advise on septic system problems, although the State of Vermont has assumed responsibility for both systems permitting and investigating failed systems. The HOs also administer the Rental Housing Code and conduct a site visit when a tenant reports a health hazard. Giving advice about possible rabies exposures and follow-up of dogs that have bitten humans are additional responsibilities.

Despite other news taking the front page, influenza remains a significant public threat. Both the H1N1 strain and Avian flu are being reported around the world. These strains as

well as the seasonal influenza are a threat to the young, the elderly and people with chronic illness as well as immuno-suppressed residents. Recommendations for personal protection remain the same: Get your flu shots, wash your hands frequently, use antibacterial gels, and stay home if you are sick.

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

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

Norwich's new HPC was appointed by the Selectboard in April 2010. The goal of the Commission is to work in an advisory capacity to increase appreciation of Norwich's wealth of historic and cultural resources, essential to our unique sense of place and character.

Norwich is now one of 14 Certified Local Governments, designated by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP), making the Town eligible for federal and state preservation grants.

To date, the Commission has:

- Joined with the Norwich Business Council to organize a February coffee and informational meeting hosted by the Norwich Inn. All commercial property owners in the Designated Village Center were invited to learn more about the state tax credits and pro-active maintenance of historic properties.
- Provided information to property owners and potential developers regarding the detrimental effects of vinyl siding.
- Received funding (\$7,901) from VDHP for a historic walking tour brochure focusing on our village center. To meet the required 40% match for this federal grant, we received an individual gift and support from the Town, Historical Society, Preservation Trust of Vermont, and Dartmouth Printing, who underwrote the printing costs. The brochure, with map, historic photos, and engaging text, is available locally and at selected Vermont Welcome Centers. It can also be downloaded by going to www.norwichwalkingtour.org.
- Met with representatives of the Beaver Meadow Association and members of the Root District about a condition assessment of both historic school houses.

Nancy Hoggson, Chair, Historic Preservation Commission (649-5740)

Land Management Council

The Land Management Council manages the Fire District Land, encompassing 917 acres in six parcels within the Charles Brown drainage. Our mission is to manage this land for recreation, wildlife habitat and forest resources.

We intend to begin a timber stand improvement on Parcels 2 and 3, in the winter of 2012-13. This will start in the area behind where the wood shed is currently located. Prior to beginning, we will move the shed to a new improved location opposite Parcel 5 in a current log landing.

In June 2011, a trail crew from the Vermont Youth Conservation Corp (VYCC) worked on the lower portion of the Ballard Trail above the Norwich pool, addressing erosion issues. This work was paid for by a grant from VTrans. Additionally, many thanks to Peter and Sydney Griggs for hosting the VYCC crew for two weeks' camping on their property.

David Hubbard, Chair (649-3882)

Listers

Responsibilities of the Board of Listers

The primary responsibility of the Norwich Board of Listers, as mandated by Vermont statute, is to draw up the Grand List, a record of all real property in Norwich that is subject to taxation, and assess that property at its fair market value. The Vermont Department of Taxes, Division of Property Valuation and Review has determined that for the purpose of levying education taxes for FY12, Norwich's Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) is 0.9190, which implies that assessments are on average at 91.90% of fair market value based on those properties that have sold between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2010.

Homestead Declaration

- (1) Vermont law (32 V.S.A. § 5410) now requires that the homestead declaration (Form HS-131) be filed only once unless the ownership of the parcel changes. Form HS-132, withdrawing the homestead, also needs to be filed when the status of the property changes (e.g., a sale). The rules for filing and the forms are available at <http://www.state.vt.us/tax>. The Property Tax Adjustment form HS-145 (income sensitivity) must still be filed annually with the Vermont Department of Taxes by those homestead property owners eligible for a property tax reduction.
- (2) The homestead declaration is due on or before April 15, 2012. The Listers urge everyone who needs to file not to be late, since the penalty for late filing has been increased to 8%.

2011 Summary

Norwich voters approved a Town-wide reappraisal last year. New England Municipal Consultants, Inc. (NEMC) was hired for this purpose, and started their inspections in July. This will continue, resulting in a new Grand List as of April 1, 2013, which will be available and searchable online. The Board of Listers has attended a series of four training classes, plus assisted NEMC in their inspection work. A Public Forum was held in May, and new software has been installed that will help maintain equity in the Town. In 2011, the Listers sent out 92 change of assessment notices. Thirty-two grievances were filed with the Listers. Ten appeals were filed with the Board of Civil Authority (BCA) from the Listers' grievance decisions. Of the ten BCA decisions, four have been appealed to the Windsor Superior Court and one to the Director of Property Valuation & Review, Vermont Department of Taxes. The 2011 taxable municipal Grand List value as of this writing is \$704,357,700.

2012

In the spring of 2012, the Listers will inspect new construction to maintain the accuracy of the Grand List. NEMC will continue with its property data collection in preparation for the April 1, 2013 Grand List. Change of assessment notices will be sent in early June, 2012. Notices are mailed only to taxpayers whose property's value (total, homestead, housesite or current use) has changed. Formal grievances must be lodged in writing with the Listers within 14 days of that date of mailing. A taxpayer may grieve his or her assessment in any current year, whether or not the property's value has changed. The Listers remind everyone that a grievance triggers a review of the entire property, and may result in a property's value being lowered, raised, or remaining the same. The results of grievance may be appealed to the Norwich BCA. Information about the grievance process can be found on the Town of Norwich website.

The Listers can be contacted via telephone at 649-1419, ext. 6, or via email at listers@norwich.vt.us. One or more of the Listers is usually in during weekday mornings, and the Listers Clerk is available Wednesday and Thursday from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Listers' office hours do vary, but we try to return phone messages and emails as quickly as possible.

Liz Blum, Ernie Ciccotelli, Jonathan Vincent

2011 Grand List

Total Taxable Property (2011 Education Grand List)	\$708,099,900
One percent (1%) of Total Grand List	7,080,999

Real Estate Exemptions by Vote

Norwich Fire District	40,000
Beaver Meadow Chapel Association	109,200
Root District Game Club	254,900
Upper Valley Community Grange Inc # 34	351,500
Veterans (4)	120,000
Charlotte Metcalf Trustee	34,100
Timothy Brownell	21,300
Total Voted Exemption	\$931,000
<i>(lost education tax to be made up by remainder of town)</i>	

Real Estate Exemptions by Agreement

Norwich Housing Corporation	1,546,600
-----------------------------------	-----------

Real Estate Exemptions by Statute

Veterans, Statutory (4)	40,000
Child Care Center, Inc	781,900
Montshire Museum of Science	6,104,000
Norwich Historical Society	470,000
Norwich Nursery School	144,900
The Family Place	636,500
Sands Taylor and Wood Company (Vermont Public Radio)	150,000
Andrew C. & Margaret R. Sigler Foundation	1,993,600
Norwich Public Library Association	1,721,800
Total Real Estate Exemptions	\$12,042,700

Breakdown of Education Grand List

R-1 Residence with under 6A of Land (780)	315,350,300
R-2 Residence with 6A of land or over (484)	318,321,400
MH Mobile Home with or without land (15)	2,247,200
C Commercial Properties (48)	30,847,300
CA Commercial Apartments (8)	6,068,500
UE Utilities Electric (4)	6,008,400
UO Utilities Other (2)	156,100
FFarms (11)	9,878,600
Other (40)	10,373,500
M Miscellaneous (150)	31,411,900
Cable (Education Grand List only)	1,264,600

Land Use Appraisal Program

Number of parcels enrolled in program	136
Number of acres in program	12,614
Exempt value of enrolled property	\$23,637,900

Municipal Grand List as of:

31 December 2005	622,504,834
31 December 2006	644,879,700
31 December 2007	677,140,900
31 December 2008	692,512,148
31 December 2009	698,955,700
31 December 2010	702,033,300
31 December 2011	\$704,357,700

Milton Frye Nature Area Committee (MFNAC)

The MFNAC promotes the use and care of the 35.5-acre Town property commonly known as the Nature Area, which contains forest, meadow, and apple orchard. 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 and Town of Norwich. The MFNAC reports to the Norwich Conservation Commission.

Selected activities in 2010-2011 included:

- Apple tree pruning workshop, led by Stan Williams.
- Norwich 2010 Birding Quest bird banding program by Chris Rimmer of Vermont Center for Ecostudies.
- Spring Bird Walk, led by George Clark.
- “Trails Day” Work Day focusing on management of invasive plants.
- Cooperative efforts with the Tree Warden and the Department of Public Works to remove invasive growth from the meadow edge, improving views at the “Gateway,” and managing invasive encroachment.
- Regular use of the area for educational experiences by Marion Cross School (MCS) children. Use of the area for training by the Middle School running team.
- Volunteer work by MCS students and teachers to a) mitigate the spread of invasive plant species such as buckthorn and b) maintain the trail surface with wood chips and boardwalks.
- Revels Summer Solstice celebration.
- Justin Hybel (5th grade) study and report of nest box diversity and success rate. Success rate high.

Special thanks to all community members who volunteered in any of these activities.

Lindsay Putnam (649-1668)

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is responsible for drafting the Town Plan and the land use regulations to implement the Plan. The Town Plan contains historical perspective, current conditions, and a vision for the future of the Town. In addition to a narrative, data, and maps, the Plan includes goals, objectives, and a proposed course of action. The Planning Commission’s role in the implementation of the Plan is drafting land use regulations for zoning, subdivision, flood hazard, and other development issues. The Commission also supports non-regulatory implementation initiatives such as affordable housing and natural resource preservation.

This past year, after five years of extensive research, public workshops, and hearings, a final draft of a new Town Plan was sent to the Selectboard for more public review and adoption. The Commission also has been drafting technical corrections and updates to the Subdivision Regulations, originally amended in 2002.

Commission members continue to participate in the Upper Valley Municipal Network along with volunteers and officials from the other Upper Valley towns.

The Commission is a seven member board appointed by the Selectboard to four-year terms with meetings open to the public every second and fourth Thursday at 7:00 pm. Minutes, regulations, the Town Plan, land use regulations, and other documents are available on the Town website. Agendas and notices are emailed to those requesting at planner@norwich.vt.us.

Daniel Johnson, Chair (649-1969)

Police Department

As we move ahead, it is our wish that we move ahead together, one community, bound together by history, neighborhoods, common concerns, and the desire to keep Norwich a great place to live. We want the Police Department to remain as a pinnacle in service, efficiency, training, technology, and professionalism without losing our small town ambience. However, we cannot do this alone. The only way we can be responsive to our community is through your input. We, therefore, urge everyone to be ever vigilant and to call the Police Department when the need arises. If you don't tell us we may never know. Sometimes the smallest piece of information is of crucial importance. So it is our request that we all stay together and connect as we create a professional, progressive, and responsive Police Department that everyone in the town of Norwich will respect, trust, and be proud of.

Goals and Objectives for 2012

- Continue to ensure our officers receive the best training in modern-day police practices.
- Host community-based programs to reduce crime and to foster our partnership with the community.
- Through education, motor vehicle enforcement, and police presence, reduce the number of motor vehicle collisions on the roadways of Norwich.
- Continue to identify and arrest criminals and to provide educational programs to parents and children through our schools.
- Continue to utilize the Police Department's Directed Patrol System with emphasis on neighborhood presence to reduce the opportunity for criminal activity.

As I begin my eleventh year with the Norwich Police Department, I am very thankful to the wonderful employees of the Department, who have committed themselves this past year to quality law enforcement. Without each individual's involvement, we would not be where we are today. Our police employees are our number one asset and they are constantly striving for continued improvement.

I am also very grateful for the support of the Selectboard and residents of the town of Norwich. Public safety is now and has always been a priority and you consistently provide us with the resources necessary to accomplish our vital mission.

Douglas A. Robinson, Chief of Police

Judy Powell, Administrative Secretary

Police Officers: Michael Scruggs, Charles Rataj, Francis Schippert

Part-Time Officers: James Beraldi, Phil Brunelle, Stuart Rogers



Police Department Statistics FY11

911 Hang Ups	48	Kidnapping	0
Abandoned Vehicle	0	Larceny/Theft	23
Accidents	84	Leaving Scene of Accident	3
Agency Assistance	129	Littering	2
Alarm	83	Lost or Found Property	26
Alcohol Offense	2	Medical Assist	11
Animal Problem	97	Missing Person	2
Arrest on Warrant	3	Motorist Assist./Complaint	92
Assault	4	Noise Disturbance	13
Attempted Suicide	1	Parking Problem	32
Background Investigation	4	Phone Problem	12
Bad Check	11	Property Check *	72
Burglary	5	Public Speaking	6
Citizen Assistance	75	Residence/Vehicle Lockout	43
Citizen Dispute	19	Sex Offense	3
Condition of Release Violation	2	Stalking	0
Court Appearance	35	Stolen Vehicle	2
Directed Patrol	82	Suspicious	113
Disorderly Conduct	1	Training	28
Domestic Abuse Order	3	Traffic Citations	501
Driving License Suspended	2	Traffic Hazard	55
Drugs	2	Traffic Warnings (written)	611
DUI	11	Trespassing	18
Family Disturbance/Fight	7	Unsecure Premises	1
Fireworks	0	Utility Problem	9
Fish and Game Offense	2	Vandalism	19
Foot Patrol/Business Checks	169	Vehicle Serial # Inspection	54
Fraud	22	Welfare Check	13
Juvenile Problem/Runaway	14	Miscellaneous	5
		TOTAL	3262

* An average of 8 property checks were conducted on 72 days for 576 property checks.

Public Works Department

Norwich Public Works strives to maintain a system of Town highways and bridges that provides safe and convenient travel for our residents throughout the year. Our Buildings and Grounds division maintains all Town buildings, properties, and recreation areas.

I have worked closely with the Public Works Review Committee and the Capital Facilities and Budgeting Committee over the past year, providing information that will help to determine the needs of our residents now and in the future. I would like to thank all of the committee members for their work. I also thank all of the residents who completed the Town-wide Public Works survey. We will consider your input when making decisions and performing our daily activities.

During FY11, Public Works collaborated with several other Town departments and organizations to complete projects. We worked with the Recreation Department on the complete renovation of Huntley Field 1. Inmates from Southeastern Vermont Department of Corrections completed the new OSHA-compliant stairs as part of this project. We also worked with the Norwich Historical Society to restore the historic jail cell that had spent 40 years outside behind our shop.

In July 2010, we worked in conjunction with the Water Department on the sidewalk project from the Koch Road/Main Street intersection to the Turnpike/Main Street intersection.

In August 2010, we worked with the VT Youth Conservation Corps on Burton Woods Road, installing stone-lined water bars and completing other erosion control measures.

We worked with the Tree Warden and the Conservation Commission, taking out invasive plant species in the area of the Peisch Orchard. We have collaborated on many other projects with the Tree Warden this year and I would like to thank Jake Blum for his dedication to the Town.

The Public Works Department completed the bike/pedestrian path from Moore Lane to the pool during the summer of 2010 and continued with our culvert replacement program, completing related ditching projects.

The cost of petroleum products increased as the fiscal year progressed, causing a shortfall in the Public Works fuel budget. The long, difficult winter of 2010/2011 also contributed to this shortfall. All aspects of Public Works activities are affected by high petroleum prices, including the cost of asphalt paving. We went out to bid on a new grader and purchased a John Deere 672G at the end of June, 2011.

We were approved for a \$175,000 structures grant for a new box culvert on Bragg Hill and the related safety improvements. This box culvert is located across from the Highlander Farm sugarhouse. Work will begin on this project after the end of the school year in June 2012.

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 also commend the Public Works staff for their hard work and dedication.

Andy Hodgdon, Public Works Director (649-2209, Norwich_highway@earthlink.net)

Public Works staff: Neal Rich, Gary Durkee, Albert Lewellyn, Paul Betters, and Michael Koloski

Buildings and Grounds staff: Justin Lewellyn, Ben Trussell

Recreation Department

The final stage of renovating Huntley Meadow is complete. This has been a gradual process that began when I started in the position of Norwich Recreation Director 18 years ago. It is very rewarding to see the last portion of our playing areas become level, safe and beautiful. New wide, inviting stairs were put in from the top parking lot to further enhance the area. We thank everyone who donated to our Huntley Meadow Improvement Fund over almost two decades to help make this happen. Our Norwich Public Works Department was instrumental in following through on the vision to make it a reality.

Our first year of on-line program registration has made the 'signing up' process significantly more convenient for participants. David Bibeau has worked hard to provide a smooth transition to the system for users with his ongoing evaluation and improvements. Thank you to our customers for your adaptability and acceptance of our new updated method.

We would like to thank the Norwich Women's Club for awarding us a grant for a quaint, Amish-made equipment storage shed. It stands just behind Girard Field at Huntley Meadow and is both attractive and functional. It will make our baseball and softball coaches' lives a lot easier for decades to come.

The Norwich Recreation Council/Department offers a varied range of recreational activities and events for ages four through seniors. The goal of our youth offerings is to inspire a lifetime love of activity. We rely heavily on the dedication of many community-minded volunteers, particularly the Recreation Council. We are extremely fortunate not only to have these individuals on board but also to be blessed with many local businesses and organiza-

tions willing to help sponsor the events we run. Their contributions make it all possible. We could not manage without their support, time and dedicated involvement. Note that the Recreation Department is always in need of, and appreciative of more volunteers. Stop by the Recreation office, upstairs in Tracy Hall or call the number listed below if you would like to do something rewarding for both yourself and your community.

Please check the Recreation Department portion of our Town website for the latest programs, schedules, and events at www.norwich.vt.us.

Recreation Council: Lars Blackmore, President; David Bibeau, online registration master; Lisa Adams; Giulia Alexander; Kristin Brown; Stuart Close; Laura Duncan; Everett Logan; Bill Miles; Scott Neuman; Clayton Simmers; John Starosta; Ian Strohhenn; Kris Strohhenn.

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

Senior Action Council

The Senior Action Council is a group of seven people appointed by the Selectboard. Our purpose is to answer to the needs of seniors in Norwich. Our main duty is the home-delivery meals program known as "Meals on Wheels." We coordinate this program with the Bugbee Center in White River Junction (White River Council on Aging), where the meals are prepared. We have volunteer drivers for each weekday to deliver the meals to Norwich. Currently there are six people receiving meals in Norwich.

Martha Drake, Chair (649-1301)

Transfer Station/Recycling Center

The Transfer Station/Recycling Center is under the direction of the Public Works Director. Judy Trussell continues to capably serve as the Transfer Station's lead attendant, supervising two part-time employees.

For the past year we have been working toward becoming a state-certified collection facility for e-waste. In June of 2011, we achieved this goal through the Vermont E-Cycles Program. Vermont's electronic waste law banned the disposal of electronic waste starting January 1, 2011 and started providing convenient free collection of certain electronic waste on July 1, 2011. Manufacturers will pay for the e-waste collection and recycling program.

The town of Norwich's expanded recycling program includes electronics covered by the E-Cycles Program, which are all computers, monitors, printers, computer peripherals, and TVs. Items not covered by E-Cycles are accepted for a small processing fee, including other electronics, batteries, ballasts, capacitors, transformers, fluorescent lighting, mercury-containing devices, and CFC appliances.

The implementation of the Zero-Sort Recycling System in June of 2010 has made recycling much easier for Norwich residents. There is no more sorting of recyclables into multiple bins. We are able to accept more types of materials for recycling at our facility, thus diverting more trash from the waste stream. We also continue the recycling of textile materials through SEVCA. I am very proud of the fact that we have one of the most complete recycling facilities in the area.

Once again, I would like to thank all of our part-time employees and dedicated volunteers who make our facility successful.

The Transfer Station/Recycling Center is open every Wednesday and Saturday from 8:00 am -4:45 pm. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact me or Judy Trussell at 649-1192.

Andy Hodgdon, Public Works Director (649-2209; Norwich_highway@earthlink.net)

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 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.

The Land Management Council Trust Fund, WTCU Fountain Trust Fund and the other non-cemetery funds were turned over to the Town at the beginning of FY11.

Deborah Hall, Cheryl A. Lindberg, Doug Rexford, Trustees

Zoning and Planning Office

The Zoning and Planning Department, staffed by the Planner/Zoning Administrator 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 these and other town and state 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 the Ancient Roads Committee.

The Department provides research and technical support to the Planning Commission in preparing the Town Plan and land use regulations, 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 four single-family homes, continuing the decline over the past few years and below the prior five-year average of seven. Additions to existing buildings decreased from the previous year. Approved subdivision applications resulted in two new lots. Major projects reviewed included an expansion of the King Arthur Flour retail/education/restaurant facility and a pavilion at the Montshire Museum.

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, Planner/Zoning Administrator (649-1419, ext. 4)
Pam Mullen, Planning Assistant*

Permit Activity (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011)

Zoning Permits		Development Review Board	
New Homes	4	Subdivisions	
Building Additions	27	Preliminary Plan Review	2
Accessory Structures	12	Final Plan Review	2
Home Occupation	2	(creating 2 new lots)	
Development Envelope	0	Conditional Use Review	4
Replacements: Bldg./Home	1	Boundary Line Adjustment	3
Agricultural	0		
Apartments	3		

