



Peter B. Webster  
Town Manager

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Board of Selectmen

**FROM:** Peter B. Webster, Town Manager

**DATE:** June 3, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Information for the Selectboard

### Health Insurance

The past two weeks have seen some great changes from our current provider, the VLCT Health Trust, in response to the changing marketplace. As you know, I have been looking at the advantages of possibly changing carriers from CIGNA to MVP, utilizing a consultant and insurance broker, in an effort to achieve benefits for both our employees and our taxpayers. Our Health Trust has taken some dramatic steps just last week, and is now able to offer not just the plans through CIGNA, but is also able to now offer coverage through either MVP or Blue Cross/Blue Shield. I will continue to weigh the pros and cons of changing carriers as I learn more from our Health Trust (they're working through some of the specific issues we've raised); whether we go with a new broker or stay with the League, and update you as we go forward.

On a somewhat related topic, Aging In Place held an evening forum on the Single Payer (Universal Health Care) plan the same day it was signed into law (H. 202) by Governor Shumlin on May 26<sup>th</sup>. A good crowd of 50-60 was there to hear from a panel of 5 representing different views and concerns. My compliments go out to Don McCabe for being the energy behind this effort and coordinating this informative evening.

## **Listers Department**

Jonathan and his fellow Listers are working hard on finishing up the final property changes in advance of the abstract being filed next week. It has not been an easy transition with the new Listers, as a lot of familiarity and knowledge of the software programs was lost with the last election. Vincent will probably give you an update himself next Wednesday.

## **GUVSWD**

The Solid Waste District owns a 175 acre parcel in Hartland, bounded by the Ct. River and I-91, that is the location for a 40 acre permitted landfill. As most of you know, this has been a 10 town effort going back to 1991 to create this regional landfill. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on how one perceives municipal solid waste, garbage generation has been decreased greatly since the economic downturn, the tonnage being off about 25%. Because of this, currently operating landfills are aggressively searching out sources of garbage, making the opening of our landfill at this point in time not a wise course of action. We would need a minimum of about 50,000 tons/year to open and operate our landfill at existing tipping fees, so the Board of Directors has put this on the back burner until the outlook has changed. This may not occur for another 10-15-20 years, and in the meantime we are all supporting an inactive landfill that is currently valued at a bit over \$2.5 million by our auditors (land--\$611,000, bridge over I-91--\$1,850,000, building and equipment--\$65,000). The Board met this past week at a retreat (I am your alternate, and was filling in for Brion McMullan) to begin exploring options for the land, other ways we can generate revenue to support the budget for the GUVSWD. If you have any thoughts, feel free to pass them along to Brion or me. We had a site visit, walking the property which is really a beautiful and valuable piece of land bounded by the Ottauquechee and Ct. Rivers, with an active rail line running along the eastern boundary and the interstate forming the western boundary. We may apply for a Municipal Planning Grant to bring in some consultants and give us their analysis of 'highest and best use' for this property.

## **Miscellaneous**

Ben and Sarah Smith, owners of a home on Lewiston Hill Road, sustained some damage to their septic system from a broken water main about two weeks ago. They will possibly be requesting an easement on abutting Town property for a new field, after they have had their property lines surveyed. I met with them, along with Brion and Sam, to go over the Town property line and their own line, to determine the best way to proceed with their repairs.

I will be going down to Nortrax Monday with Andy and Sonny to check out the new grader that has recently arrived from Arkansas. The grader has been thoroughly inspected by their mechanics, and I should have a detailed report on this unit, with photographs for you prior to going out to bid again.

We had a number of cows get loose this past week, and the suggestion was made that we might consider some kind of ordinance. This is part of life in rural Vermont, and I'm not in full agreement that another ordinance is in order.

The two committees appointed by the Selectboard, the DPW and the Capital Facilities Committees, have been meeting and generating requests for information from Andy and me. We are trying to comply with their various requests as they move forward to accomplish their respective charges.

Nancy and I will be working with Wade Masure, our Loss Control Expert, on establishing a new Safety Committee. I've mentioned the benefits of this in a previous report, and we are now ready to begin the implementation.