

Part II
Town Boards, Commissions,
Committees & Departments

Selectboard

This year, we began the process of looking at future capital needs, realizing that the Town must establish project priorities. Relevant to this is the anticipated increase in school taxes that we will face in a few years as a result of the school construction project.

For FY08 we have sought a zero growth operating budget, but the need to budget money to support a paid Fire Chief resulted in a slight increase in operational spending. Efforts are ongoing to identify a qualified candidate for that position. We again thank retired chief Jack Fraser and interim chief Neil Fulton for tireless hours of volunteer time to serve Norwich in this position.

Voters at the March Town Meeting expressed their concerns relative to the performance of the Selectboard, the Town Manager, and the Police Department. As a result, the Selectboard sought out volunteers to serve on two committees to review our form of government and to study the functionality of our Police Department. Members of both committees are to be applauded for many hours of work that led to the recent submission of their reports.

Our Planning Commission deserves applause for their efforts to roll out a draft Zoning Ordinance and we are hopeful that this process will be completed before the end of FY08. Efforts of the Affordable Housing Committee continue after determination that the Agway site would not be suitable. A special thanks to the committee for their continued work to identify appropriate sites.

To all those individuals who give graciously of their time to make Norwich a better place to live ~ our most grateful thanks.

Ed Childs (Chair), Jack Candon, Gerard Chapdelaine, Suzanne Lupien, Alison May

Town Manager & Collector of Delinquent Taxes

Highlights of the 2007 fiscal year will long be remembered:

- Tracy Hall was painted inside and out and the gym floor refinished.
- The “far too publicized” Eastman overweight truck case was closed.
- The NORCAP Report or Capital Budget Plan was submitted to the Selectboard.
- Pamela Mullen began working part time with Phil Dechert in the Planning Office.
- Norwich “Village Designation” was achieved.
- Long-time Fire Chief Jack Fraser retired from the Norwich Fire Department.
- Our Department of Public Works signed a Mutual Aid Agreement with several Upper Valley communities.
- The sign at the entrance to Norwich was erected, courtesy of the Norwich Women’s Club.
- The Selectboard held the second annual Pot Luck supper.
- A committee was organized to look at parking issues.
- A bus shelter at the Senior Housing was built.
- The Police Department hired Martha Morse as Administrative Assistant to the Police Chief, replacing Anita Ferry.
- The Highway Administrator’s job description was changed to Director of Public Works in keeping with his ever-expanding role.

- The Selectboard developed an Undesignated Fund Balance Policy.
- Tracy Hall's emergency shelter designation was completed by generator repairs.
- The Police Sergeant position was abolished for FY08.
- Tracy Hall got a new phone system.
- The Town is seeking a full-time Fire Chief.
- Two Town committees were created by the Selectboard:
 - Norwich Police Services Committee
 - Town Governance Committee
- A committee to look at broadband options was created.

As we move into the new fiscal year, we will continue to finalize projects and studies that remain unfinished: e.g., Kendall Station Road reconfiguration, Norwich bandstand/gazebo project, Public Safety Facility needs.

I take this opportunity to thank the Selectboard, staff and Norwich residents for their continued support.

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 thereafter. A tax collection policy outlines the collection process, including payment applications, payment plans and tax sale procedures, if necessary.

Tax Year Summary for 2006 - 2007

Taxes Billed:	\$12,351,332.49
Taxes Collected during FY:	<u>\$12,272,272.74</u>
Taxes outstanding at close of FY:	79,059.75

Delinquent Tax Report

6/30/2006 Delinquent Tax Balance:	\$82,615.02
06-07 Delinquent Taxes:	<u>\$225,897.93</u>
Subtotal:	\$308,512.95

Less delinquent taxes collected & abatements: \$208,711.58

6/30/2007 Balance: **\$99,801.37**

Taxes delinquent for FY 06/07	\$79,059.75
Taxes delinquent previous years	<u>\$20,741.62</u>
Total	<u>\$99,801.37</u>

Delinquent taxes as of December 31, 2007 \$ 53,061.93

Stephen J. Soares, Town Manager (649-1419 x 1)

Town Clerk

We continue to see a decrease in the number of documents recorded in our office. This year we recorded 3,680 pages in the Land Records, which amounted to \$22,080 of income for the Town. Last year we recorded 3,877 pages for \$23,262 for the Town.

This year the Clerk's Office issued 19 Marriage Licenses and 2 Civil Union Licenses. With the changes of documentation needed to cross our borders into Canada or Mexico by air, we saw an increase in the number of passports we processed in fiscal year 2007 (84) from fiscal 2006 (39).

In 2007 we processed 163 motor vehicle registration renewals, down from the 192 in fiscal 2006. We licensed 614 dogs, an increase from the 584 of the prior year, and sold 340 Fish and Game Licenses, which was down from 357 the year before.

The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday we are open from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. During this time you may come in and register to vote, purchase cards for the Norwich Transfer Station as well as the Hartford Landfill, renew your motor vehicle registration, obtain a passport, or research the records in the vault. Also, if you are not sure of a town procedure or where you need to go to obtain information, stop in and we will try to point you in the right direction.

If you have any questions or need help, please do not hesitate to ask.

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

Vital Records for 2007

As recorded by the Town Clerk's Office January 1 to December 31, 2007

Births

Teller-Elsberg, Susannah Eleanor

Taylor, John Grehawick

Deaths

Cabri, Joy

Kreider, Donald L.

Merrill, William Roberts

Stemberger, Richard S.

Cluthe, Frederic S.

Hiecke, Lillian Stromberg

Holley, James MacSporran

Wolff, Nikolaus Emanuel

Loomis, Warren T.

Sixsmith, Herbert (Herbie)

Marriages

Brackett, Travis GlennJordan, Cassandra Elizabeth

Evancich, David PaulKirkland, Kathryn Brawley

Urang, John GriffithSchuberth, Jennifer Maureen

Nelson, William A.Schnurr, Paula Philippa

Tanana, Michael JosephSmith, Heather Johanna

Beckett, Robert ThomasCobb, Jacey Patterson

Young, Howard Sloan IIIChevalier, Brett Hahn

Hussey, Michael SaywardMaynard, Hope Alden

Losee, Andrew JamesDemian, Gretchen Liesel

Joanis, Matthew DavidDale, Carolyn Marie

Richardson, Eric LennoxEilertsen, Amy Barnard

Scull, Peter RussellNoll, Jocelyn Francesca

Rojansky, Matthew AzrielStringer, Lucy Virginia

Perry, Leslie Nathan, Sr.Downing, Marjorie Irene

Bimba, Scott DavidBeck, Anna Cushing

Chandler, Jeffrey AllenFahey, Sara Impi

Rowe, Dale FrederickBrown, Linda Suzanne

Whitfield, Michael LynnPioli, Patricia Ann

Owen, Arthur HerbertRoyce, Carol Ann

Civil Unions

Misener, Pamela SueThompson, April Denise
Boone, Faith BeehlerSaunders, Norma Elizabeth

Affordable Housing Committee

Since 2002, the Norwich Affordable Housing Committee has been charged with recommending actions necessary to ensure that a continuum of affordable housing stock is available in Norwich.

Members of the Committee meet with town, state and regional commissions, committees, boards, coalitions, and housing entities to work toward adding affordable housing in Norwich. The Committee pursued every realistic location for adding some new mixed housing to Norwich. We worked in collaboration with other town and local entities to pool finances and resources to add and maintain existing affordable housing in Norwich.

The Committee is thankful for the support from the town. The high cost and dearth of availability of appropriate land in Norwich continues to be a hurdle; however, a determined committee effort, access to the funds, and Selectboard backing has helped to further the mission of the Committee. We also very much appreciate the individual contributions and pledges we have received that will be useful when we are able to locate and move forward on future sites for affordable housing.

After much work on the part of the Selectboard, the Committee, Housing Vermont, Twin Pines, and Domus, we pursued the purchase of the “Agway” property. We were disappointed to learn that the results of soil tests showed insufficient septic capacity for the desired minimum of mixed housing units.

On a more positive note, we were able to work with the town and local and state agencies to upgrade the road to Starlake Village, and we are happy to report that the town has taken over the maintenance of the road. We are beginning to focus on alternate ways to add to affordable housing in Norwich by working with Habitat for Humanity and others.

Members of the Committee learn and participate in educating others about the need for, barriers to, and availability (or lack thereof) of affordable housing in Norwich and throughout the Upper Valley. We welcome residents and other interested citizens during our meetings, typically 7 pm on the 3rd Monday of every month downstairs in the Norwich Public Library.

Mary Anne Hankel (649-5232), Creigh Moffatt (649-5533), Co-Chairs

Auditors

The Town’s elected auditors, who also serve as members of the Norwich and Dresden finance committees, are statutory officials whose principal responsibility is to prepare the annual Town Report for voters. We distribute the reports to those who want to receive them in one of three ways, as advised by the voters. Last year we mailed about 800 copies and about 50 people picked up a copy at Tracy Hall. Anyone who wants to can view the Report on the town’s website. As voters are added to the checklist, we ask them their preference.

We meet at least once a year with the Town’s outside independent accountants, to review the Town’s annual audit report and to discuss the management letter, which includes suggestions for improving financial controls and procedures. We also regularly attend meetings of the Selectboard and School Board to observe and advise. One of us prepares the town’s monthly bank reconciliation for its general operating account.

We are each elected to three-year terms, one each year.

Henry Scheier, Chair (649-1387)

Boards of Abatement and Civil Authority

Between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007, the Board of Abatement heard and granted two requests for abatement, one due to a mistake of the Listers and the other for an abatement of interest and penalties. The total cost was \$635.

In the same period, the Board of Civil Authority heard and acted upon 16 appeals from decisions of the Listers and assisted the Town Clerk with elections. In hearing appeals, the Board listens to testimony of both the appellants and the Listers, appoints a committee to inspect each entire property, listens to the reports of the committee and adjudicates each appeal, before issuing a notice of decision. The adjustments made by the BCA during the year amounted to \$1,341,400 of value and \$20,685 of taxes. Occasionally, appellants are unhappy with the BCA's decision as well, and choose to appeal at the state level.

Nancy H. Dean, Chairman (649-1324)

Cemetery Commission

The Cemetery Commissioners are responsible for the care and upkeep, as well as necessary improvements, of all Norwich cemeteries and Union Village Cemetery. They meet once a month in the room adjoining the Town Clerk's office in Tracy Hall. The dates of the meetings are posted on the Town bulletin board.

Progress on expanding and developing Hillside Cemetery is going well. The drainage lines have been installed and the new roads are in place. Lots will be laid out in the new part this fall. The usual summer maintenance and upkeep occurred during the summer, and the annual cleaning of gravestones will continue. Corner markers are being placed on all new lots when they are sold.

The financial details of our operations during fiscal 2007 are summarized below, based on information maintained by the Finance Office and Treasurer, as compiled by the Town Auditors:

Revenue Received:

Appropriation from Town	\$12,200
Woodworth Unitrust	.6,487
Perpetual Care Fund - Interest	.3,871
Sales of Cemetery Markers	.600
Operating Account - Interest	<u>.492</u>
	\$23,650

Expenditures Made:

Wages	\$12,916
Purchased Services	.7,010
Capital Improvements	.1,632
Mowing Supplies	.1,272
Payroll Taxes	.988
Repairs and Maintenance	.594
Workmen's Compensation	.509
Water	.201
Liability Insurance	.59
Equipment Purchase	<u>.17</u>
	\$25,198
Operating Deficit	(\$ 1,548)

Schedule 3 of the Independent Auditor's Report states our Fund Balance as \$54,213.

Fred Spaulding, Chairman (649-1121)

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission endeavors to inventory, monitor, and conserve the Town's natural heritage assets such as wildlife, wetlands, waterways, natural plant communities and scenic resources. We also share our findings with citizens and town commissions.

Among the projects undertaken by the Norwich Conservation Commission (NCC) in fiscal year 2006–2007 were:

- Establishment of an NCC email address. The address is: Norwich.Conservation.Commission@gmail.com. We would like to hear about people's sightings of some of our less common wildlife. If you see bear, bobcat, moose, fisher, otter, gray fox, mink, coyote, beaver, cottontail rabbit or snowshoe hare in Norwich, please send us an email letting us know what you saw, where you saw it, and how confident you are of your species identification(s). You are, of course, also most welcome to write us about your other conservation-related concerns, questions and suggestions.
- Completion of a new map of Norwich trails by the Trails Committee. The map is available for purchase at Dan & Whit's. The Trails Committee also continued development and ongoing maintenance of the Town's trails, especially along the Gile Mountain and Ballard trails.
- Grateful receipt of conservation trust fund contributions in the amount of \$3,810 from 17 donors.
- On-going inventory and mapping of vernal pools.
- Work with conservation commissioners in neighboring towns to insure regional linking of efforts to conserve wildlife core areas and corridors.
- Water quality sampling of 15 Norwich waterways. The *E. coli* data can be seen at www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/cfm/volmon/results.cfm?id=15.
- Sponsorship of a public lecture by James Block about bird watching and photography.

Lee Michaelides, Secretary (649-2103)

Corridor Project

After a dozen years, several Selectboards, two Town Managers and the start of a second file drawer filled with plans, documents and email, the Norwich Corridor Transportation Enhancement Project has once again progressed to a point where "revised" final plans have been submitted to the State of Vermont for approval.

At the time I write this report, there are nonbinding discussions ongoing about the possibility of integrating the repaving of portions of Route 5 and Route 10A with various components of the Corridor Project work. The State plans to repave portions of Route 5 and Route 10A in calendar year 2009. If "we" (residents, Town officials and State officials) can muster a collaborative effort, Norwich just might finally see a Corridor Project success - albeit, one which might be considered by some to be too little, too late.

Congratulations to those people who have stayed in game! The residents of Norwich who voted for this Project deserve to see the improvements which the Project can initiate.

Stephen J. Soares, Town Manager (649-1419 x 1)

Development Review Board

The Development Review Board (DRB) has seven regular members serving three-year terms and three alternate members appointed for two years. The Board meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month in Tracy Hall. The DRB applies the Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance, both of which are written by the Planning Commission and enacted by the Selectboard. The Board also advises the Planning Commission on possible improvements to the Subdivision Regulations. It hears and decides on subdivision applications, site reviews, conditional use requests, and boundary adjustments, and hears appeals from decisions of the Zoning Administrator. During the past year, the DRB has reviewed one site plan and heard five subdivision applications. This is a reduced workload, probably due to the current housing slowdown.

The Board has prepared three helpful procedural handouts addressed to Applicants, Abutters & Neighbors, and Members of the Public; these are available from the Planning Office. If you want to be up-to-date on DRB activities, you can ask to join the email list. All DRB hearings are open to the public and we welcome observers. Vacancies do occur on the DRB and if you are interested in shaping development in Norwich, come to observe first and then get involved.

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. Historically, floods, various kinds of storms, fires, and spills of hazardous materials have been Emergency Management's concern. Terrorism and pandemics now join the list.

Day-to-day preparations occur within each Town department, with training and material stockpiling overseen by the department head and Town Manager. Plans exist for activation of an Emergency Operations Center, with various scenarios and responses to them, outlined within that plan. Cooperation with state and federal organizations, as well as private businesses is part of our action plan.

The Town Manager is, by statute, the Director of Emergency Management. He will be assisted by the Fire Chief and all other department heads in the event of a major emergency.

Charles Hodgdon, Emergency Management Coordinator (649-1659)

Energy Committee

During FY07 the Norwich Energy Committee (NEC) conducted the following activities:

- Worked with Marion Cross School and Dresden administrations to follow through on lighting upgrades and solar photovoltaic installation.
- Successfully advocated a wood chip boiler for the Marion Cross School, approved by the voters but then tabled.
- Presented to Marion Cross School board about additional efficiency and renewable energy upgrades including solar hot water, Green Tags, no-idling of school buses.
- Advocated increased use of biodiesel in Town vehicles and school buses.
- Began investigating options for more efficient street lighting and other nighttime lighting in the village.
- Organized a large public event for Step-It-Up Day about the urgency of addressing climate change in public policy.
- Distributed literature and recommendations on solutions to global warming including energy conservation, renewable energy, and state and federal incentives at various local events.
- Consulted with residents on energy conservation and renewable energy options for their homes.
- Presented at a statewide conference of town energy committees (Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network).

*Alan Berolzheimer, Chair (649-2857); bercess@sover.net
Ames Byrd (649-3905): ames.byrd@valley.net*

Finance Committee

The seven-member Norwich Finance Committee, composed of the three elected auditors, three elected Finance Committee members and the Town Treasurer, has advisory responsibilities in the creation of annual budgets for both the Town and the Norwich School District. Together with a like number of members from Hanover, the Committee constitutes the Finance Committee for the Dresden School District, with similar budget oversight duties. Both committees meet most frequently in December and January, when all three budgets are being prepared for submission to Town Meeting in March. The Finance Committee's mission is to advocate for fiscal restraint and discipline, and to increase public understanding of issues affecting local taxation.

During this fiscal year, the Finance Committee continued to assist the Selectboard and Town Manager in crafting financial policies that are in keeping with the town manager form of government. In late 2006, several members contributed their technical and financial skills to the Norwich School Board's discussion and analysis of a proposed wood chip boiler for the Marion Cross School. The Committee drafted budget guidelines for the School District and the town and the members attended meetings of both organizations and actively participated in the budget process. Two of our members, Henry Scheier and Irv Thomae, held sessions to educate and assist individuals on the filing of form HS-122 Homestead Declaration and Property Tax Adjustment Claim. The Finance Committee generally meets at 8:00 a.m. in Tracy Hall on the third Tuesday of each month. Interested members of the public are welcome at all meetings and frequently contribute to discussions.

Karen G. Kayen, Chair (649-2747)

Finance Office

The Finance Office is responsible for all accounting functions for the town. We are happy to report that at year end the 2007 unrestricted fund balance was \$ 307,383! Revenues exceeded the budget by \$103,935, and expenditures were under spent by \$213,274. Please see the audit report for more detailed information.

Due to the late filing of Homestead Declaration forms, 53 amended tax bills were sent to property owners. The result of the revisions increased residential taxes by \$42, 423. Please make sure that you file your Homestead Declaration forms by April 15th of each year! By not doing so, you will pay a 1% penalty on the education tax. Refer to your tax booklet for the form or go to www.vermont.gov and file on line.

The town billed taxes in the amount of \$12,351,332. Of that amount, \$9,221,923, or 75%, was the school district's share and the town's portion was \$ 3,129,409 or 25%. The town alone bears the burden for adjustments in assessment and abatements which for 2007 were \$21,320. By law, the town must pay over to the school the full amount of taxes due by the end of the fiscal year including unpaid taxes. The end result of both items is a reduction in town revenue and cash flow.

Roberta Robinson, Finance Officer 649-1419 ext. 105

Alison McRee, Finance Assistant 649-1419 ext. 106

Fire Department

The Norwich Fire Department's mission is to protect life, property, and the environment. This is accomplished by providing high-quality fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous materials, fire prevention, and public education services. Additionally, the department assists in the search for lost persons, provides mutual-aid to surrounding towns, and responds to weather-related disasters.

Fire Department members donated over \$55,000 of uncompensated time to the department in FY07 for normal Fire/Rescue/EMS training, specialty courses, advanced emergency medical training, and maintaining competency in hazardous materials, bloodborne pathogens, CPR/AED, and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus. Three members are currently taking Firefighter I training, the career level of firefighter training. We have experienced a 195% increase in fire/rescue calls since 1995 and now average 5.5 calls per week. The FAST Squad is licensed at the EMT-I level and four members completed their EMT-I training in the last year. We have 32 active members with eight members trained at the Firefighter I level, one at the Firefighter II level, one at the Fire Officer I level, 15 at the EMT-B level and four at the EMT-I level. We continue to maintain a Public Protection Classification of 4 from the Insurance Services Office, a national organization that rates fire departments across the country for insurance companies to use to calculate premiums. This classification is one of the highest in the area and results in significant fire insurance premium savings to many property owners in Norwich.

During FY07 we obtained a license for a new tactical radio frequency for improved fire-ground communications and reprogrammed all of our mobile and portable radios to improve interoperability. We continue to experience problems with radio and alert pager coverage in portions of the Town.

The existing fire station is not compliant with current building, fire, safety, and environmental codes. We are participating in a study of fire/police facilities that would comply with current code requirements. We support building a fire training facility to improve firefighter safety and efficiency for firefighters. Our most pressing need is the recruitment and training of new members. Our most valuable assets are our current members, who are trained and dedicated to an admirable 24/7 response, 365 days a year, to fire, rescue, and medical calls in the community.

Neil R. Fulton, Acting Fire Chief (649-1133)

Fire Report

Type	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07
Structure	11	7	11	10	9	8	6	3	1
Auto	17	16	18	20	33	32	43	36	40
Wildfire	5	2	5	5	1	5	3	6	5
CO Detector	0	1	2	1	2	3	4	7	14
False Call	15	9	14	10	19	16	40	26	22
Mutual Aid	4	6	3	8	4	13	5	14	18
Other	4	12	15	11	17	22	4	12	31
Arson ¹	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Medical				15	79	94	117	102	120
TOTAL	56	53	68	80	164	193	222	206	251

¹ Not included in total

Firefighters and FAST Squad 2006-2007

Mark Anderson*, Mary Anderson***, Toni Apgar**, Emily Blake***, Jake Blum***, Susan Blum***, Charlene Bradley**, Phil Brunelle (Captain)***, Linda Cook***, Marie D'Amato***, Lisanne Dorion**, Neil Fulton (Chief)***, Joseph Gwin*, Matt Herbert***, Michael Hooper-Goetinck**, Regina Hubbard***, Jennie Lamb**, Nancy LaRowe (Fire Warden)***, John Lawe**, Luke Lindberg*, William Mosenthal*, Bonnie Munday**, Pete Schwab (Lieutenant)*, Anna Sjogren**, Matt Swett (Lieutenant)*, Lisa Talmadge*, Lloyd Tebbetts (Assistant Chief)*, Warren Thayer*, Evan Welch*, Samuel Werbel-Sanborn*, Jay Whitehair***, Jon Wilkinson*.

* Fire ** FAST *** Fire/FAST

Health Officer

The Town Health Officers are responsible for public health in the community. This includes dealing with hazards such as animal bites and possible rabies exposure, enforcement of the Rental Housing Code, improper disposal of dead animals and help with individual water systems. This year the State of Vermont assumed the responsibility for design, permitting and investigating failed septic systems. However, the Health Officers will still follow up if a public health threat is perceived.

Norwich is planning for a possible major health emergency such as a pandemic flu attack. The Town Manager, as Emergency Management Coordinator and the Emergency Management Committee are writing a plan to be implemented in such an emergency. Each household should also prepare by having a stock of supplies. Useful suggestions are published in a "Family Emergency Preparedness Workbook" available from Vermont Emergency Management (800-347-0488). A list is also available from the Town Clerk.

Public health is both a community concern and a personal matter. Smoking and obesity are just as detrimental to health as airborne or water infections. For instance, wearing suitable clothing and using insect repellents will minimize the risk of Lyme disease, West Nile virus, and viral encephalitis infections.

If you have a public health question we can be reached through the Town Manager's Office (649-1419) or at the numbers below.

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

Listers

Definition of and Responsibilities of a Board of Listers

The responsibility of the Norwich Board of Listers is mandated by Vermont statute and is to appraise all real property that is subject to taxation at its fair market value. There are 3 approaches to determining the fair market value of property—the cost, market and income approaches. The Listers utilize all of these methods in their effort to maintain the Grand List both accurately and equitably.

The Grand List is the summation of the taxable assessment of all real property in the town on April 1st in any given year. The breakdown of the 1543 properties in town is: residential (85%), commercial (3%), utilities (.3%), farms (.7%), and raw land (11%).

Decisions made by the Listers towards the final determination of the Grand List are influenced by one or more of the following factors:

1. New construction, continuing sales, subdivisions and developments, changes in the market and economy.
2. The Norwich Board of Listers' local budgetary and personnel parameters.
3. Decisions made by the Board of Civil Authority, Windsor Superior Court, Vermont Property Valuation and Review (PVR).
4. Exemptions by vote, agreement and statute.
5. Current Use.

Components of the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA)

It is important to note that the Norwich Board of Listers maintains the Grand List, but DOES NOT set the tax rate. The municipal tax rate is set by the Selectboard based on the voter-approved budget, which is divided into the Grand List lodged in July. Both the Homestead Education Tax Rate and the Non-Residential Education Tax Rate are set by the Vermont Department of Taxes. The Education Tax rates both increase as the CLA decreases.

The CLA is the ratio of assessments to sales prices for valid (arms length) transactions for the previous three-year period, as calculated annually by the Vermont Department of Taxes, expressed as a percentage. The Listers seek to keep the CLA as stable and as close to 100% as possible, because the more the CLA drops in any year, the greater the Education Tax burden is to the citizens of the town. Also, a CLA of less than 80% shall mean that the Town will be ordered to perform a town-wide reappraisal by the Vermont Department of Taxes (32 V.S.A. section 4041a). For a more detailed explanation of the CLA, refer to a "Citizen's Guide to the CLA," which can be found in the Town Offices, or to the Listers' section of the FY 2005 Town Report (p. 103).

The Listers would like to remind you that last year there was a change in the Homestead Declaration form. The new form (HS-122) must be filed annually with the Vermont Department of Taxes. You must file form HS-122 if you own and occupy a Vermont property as your principal residence as of April 1, 2008. In order to avoid penalties, the form must be filed by April 15, 2008, even if your Vermont income tax filing deadline is extended. HS-122 includes space for income sensitivity filing for your "Property Tax Adjustment Claim."

Review & Summary

For the 2007 Grand List, the Listers inspected over 120 properties based on building permits, observed construction, owner requests and changes in property. 864 Change of Assessment notices were sent out reflecting changes in property value for one or more of the following reasons—material changes to property, unimproved land reassessments, contiguous parcel assessments, foundation values added, mobile home reassessments and miscellaneous changes, ranging from errors in listings to commercial properties readjusted. The taxable

Grand List value as of this writing is \$677,140,900, with 10 appeals from BCA decisions still outstanding. The latest CLA (based on the 2007 Grand List and applicable to FY 2009 taxes) is 100.27%.

As this report goes to press, the Listers are involved in the early phases of anticipating the effect of the loss, after Fiscal Year 2009, of the Dartmouth College payments to the Dresden School District. The impact on Norwich taxpayers for FY 2010 may be significant. The Norwich Finance Committee and the Supervisory Union are currently analyzing the annual impact of this change.

The Listers continue the final phase of the contiguous parcel reassessment, which began in 2005. Each individual parcel, whether subdivided or deeded separately, is being reviewed to determine whether it will be assessed for its own housesite value. In order to avoid this potential increase in assessment value, any contiguous parcels, whether deeded separately or subdivided, must be merged on or before April 1, 2008.

The Listers continue to inspect new construction, as well as improved properties, whether or not these improvements were made with a zoning permit. The Listers will continue to be open and instructional in our dealings with the public. Office hours vary and are posted on the door of the Listers' Office in Tracy Hall.

Change of assessment notices will be sent in early June 2008. Formal grievances must be lodged with the Listers' Office within 14 days of the date of mailing. Grievances can be filed whether or not a change of assessment notice was sent. The Listers remind everyone that a grievance triggers a review of the entire property, and may result in a property value being lowered, raised, or remaining the same.

The Listers recognize the complex nature of the role that we play in determining the Education Tax rates calculated by the state. We strive to balance fair and equitable assessments with full market value of property. Summaries of our activity during fiscal year 2007 and the 2007 Grand List follow.

Dennis Kaufman, Chair; Richard Blacklow & Jean Essex, Listers; Stephen Wheelock, Assessor (649-1419 x 6); (listers@norwich.vt.us)

Listers' Activities

<p>2006 Appeals to Dept. of Taxes, Prop. Val. & Review 5 All resolved at time of this report</p> <p>2006 Appeals to Windsor County Superior Court 1 Resolved at time of this report</p> <p>2007 Inspections 68 Inspections based on building permits 54 Inspections for other reasons <u>122</u> Total physical inspections</p> <p>2007 Change of Assessment Notices 494 Increases 74 Decreases 168 No change in real value 128 Current use changes <u>864</u> Total notices sent</p>	<p>2007 Reasons for Increase or Decrease 147 Material changes to property 173 Vacant land reassessment 170 Foundation values added 14 Mobile home reassessment 77 Miscellaneous <u>568</u> Total increases and decreases*</p> <p>2007 Grievances 2 Continued 2 Withdrawn 2 Increased 30 Denied 63 Lowered at grievance <u>99</u> Total grievances</p>
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* Some fall into more than one category

2007 Grand List

Total Taxable Property (2007 Education Grand List)	\$676,387,200
One percent (1%) of Total Grand List	6,763,872

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
Charlott Metcalf Trustee	34,100
Total Voted Exemption	909,700

(lost education tax to be made up by remainder of town)

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	800,900
Montshire Museum of Science	5,044,100
Norwich Historical Society	470,400
Norwich Nursery School	152,700
The Family Place	651,600
Sands Taylor and Wood Company (Vermont Public Radio)	150,000
Andrew C & Margaret R Sigler Foundation	<u>2,017,100</u>
Total, Real Estate Exemptions	9,286,800

Breakdown of Grand List

R-1 Residence with under 6A of Land (771)	306,104,600
R-2 Residence with 6A of land or over (472)	293,011,100
MH Mobile Home with or without land (17)	2,232,900
C Commercial Properties (45)	29,554,200
CA Commercial Apartments (6)	3,462,400
UE Utilities Electric (4)	5,528,800
UO Utilities Other (2)	156,100
F Farms (11)	7,585,500
Other (38)	8,118,500
M Miscellaneous (164)	20,749,900
Cable (Education Grand List only)	883,200

Land Use Appraisal Program

Number of parcels enrolled in program	129
Number of acres in program	12165
Exempt value of enrolled property	20,591,000

Municipal Grand List as of:

31 December 2003	339,041,736
31 December 2004	<i>Town-wide reappraisal</i> 583,060,623
31 December 2005	622,504,834
31 December 2006	644,879,700
31 December 2007	677,140,900

Land Management Council

The Land Management Council's mission is to manage the recreation and timber activities on the Fire District Land. The Fire District is comprised of six different parcels totaling 917 acres. During the course of each year, we work with a forester who advises the Council on when a timber harvest should take place based on a combination of forest health and economic factors, in that order. All proceeds gained from timber harvests are reinvested in the land itself.

The two major projects undertaken this year were a timber harvest and trail maintenance. The timber harvest was focused on Parcel 1 of the Fire District Lands, which is located near the intersection of Bragg Hill, Tucker Hill, and Kate Wallace roads. After meeting with abutters and addressing their concerns, a log landing was installed and skid roads cleared. Spring thaw thwarted further harvest activities, but we hope to resume the harvest after the ground freezes this winter. The second endeavor was continued trail work on the Ballard Trail, the trail that follows Charles Brown Brook from the Town pool to Tucker Hill Road. This work was completed (for free) by a crew of the Vermont Youth Conservation Commission (VYCC) who worked for two weeks on the section of trail just north of Brown Schoolhouse Lane. A grant was recently submitted for 2008 work as well. Special thanks to Peter and Sydney Griggs who graciously allowed the crew to camp on their property.

Clay Adams, Chair (649-8635)

Milton Frye Nature Area Committee

The Town nature area is a 35-acre tract next to the Marion Cross School. Its trails receive steady daily use by hikers, teachers and students. Countless informal outdoor education classes are held on the property throughout the school year, with topics including nature study, environmental awareness, and orienteering.

This past year saw students at the school using the trails to re-enact an 1800s trip along the Oregon Trail, using garden carts instead of covered wagons and carving out their own wooden spoons to get a feel for the difficulties of life at that time.

The committee has worked to fulfill its mission as steward of the property - protecting it while maximizing its use as an educational and recreational resource. Besides routine trail maintenance, committee members organized and ran a birdwalk with George Clark, a mushroom walk with Faith Hunt, and acted on new requests for use of the area. Dog waste bags have been installed at the trailhead, and have been used by the public, although more compliance would be appreciated.

Ongoing efforts at removal of invasive species and poison ivy continue apace. Sixth grade students have been studying the impact of invasive species on natural areas, and have been helping with removal. We have been concerned with sporadic night-time use of the area by people who sometimes light campfires that are not authorized and could prove dangerous.

This is a precious resource, close to the school and the middle of town, and we would love to have more volunteers work with us!

Warren Thayer, Chair (649-3737)

Planning Commission

A major share of the Planning Commission's time and effort in FY07 was devoted to the ongoing process of revising the Zoning Regulations. Public hearings for the draft regulations were well attended, with lively discussions on many issues. The Commission revised the draft based on public comments and submitted a final draft to the Selectboard on August 23, 2007. Although the Zoning Regulations have undergone minor amendments from time to time, this is the first comprehensive revision since 1990.

Writing a new Town Plan began with a public opinion survey mailed to all Norwich residents and property owners in October 2005. Next, demographic, economic, housing, fiscal impact, and other significant data were collected, organized, and analyzed in a 67-page report received in June 2006. Douglas Kennedy compiled the data and organized them into tables and graphs showing historic patterns and trends. Both of these projects were partially funded by state municipal planning grants awarded to the Town. The Town Plan project continued in the fall of 2007 with a series of four public workshops. It is anticipated that a complete draft will be ready in May 2008.

The availability of affordable housing continues to be a concern of the Planning Commission. In May 2007, a subcommittee was formed to study Inclusionary Zoning, a zoning provision that would require developments of more than a specified number of housing units to include a minimum number of affordable housing units.

The Commission currently meets every second and fourth Thursday at 7:00 p.m. Minutes, regulations, the Town Plan, and other documents are available on the town website.

Daniel Johnson, Chair (649-5533)

Police Department

The Norwich Police Department continues to seek to fill one vacancy. We are searching for someone of high standards and qualifications that the police as well as the community deserve. Our department works as a team to accommodate the many needs of our community. Our fundamental obligations will continue to be to serve and protect the citizens of Norwich, as well as those just visiting or passing through.

Norwich is a relatively low-crime town and, with our proactive enforcement of the law, we intend to maintain this high quality of life. We at the Police Department feel that our role goes beyond arresting criminals. We strive to find avenues to better assist individuals in distress, educate our children on safety, and provide information to prevent crime in our community. We do this by building partnerships with citizens in our community. We will continue to preserve your quality of life with efforts to formulate positive communication between you, our citizens, and our department, and to provide the most professional, comprehensive, and proactive policing for our community.

We value your comments and input, and welcome your questions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me, or any member of my staff, if we can be of assistance to you. Please take the time to stop in at your police department to meet the officers, take a tour of the facility, and ask any questions you may have.

*Douglas A. Robinson, Chief (649-1460); drobinso@dps.state.vt.us
James Beraldi, Patrol Officer; Phillip Brunelle, Patrol Officer; Larry Lamphere, Patrol Officer;
Martha Morse, Administrative Secretary; Michael Scruggs, Patrol Officer*

Police Department Statistics 2006-2007

911 Hang Ups	42	Larceny	26
Abandoned Vehicle	2	Leaving Scene of Accident	15
Accidents	75	Littering	6
Agency Assistance	221	Lost or Found Property	44
Alarm	84	Medical Assist	53
Alcohol Offense	9	Missing Person	7
Animal Problem	100	Motorist Assistance	36
Arrest on Warrant	4	Motor Vehicle Disturbance	94
Assault	4	Noise Disturbance	10
Attempt to Locate	2	Parking Problem	40
Attempted Suicide	3	Phone Problem	13
Background Investigation	30	Property Damage	2
Bad Check	10	Property Check*	108
Burglary	16	Public Nuisance -Intox. Person	4
Citizen Assistance	123	Recovered Stolen Property	1
Citizen Dispute	14	Residence/Vehicle Lockout	62
Condition of Release Violation	4	Sex Offense	4
Dead Body	1	Suicide	1
Disorderly Conduct	8	Suspicious	109
Domestic Abuse Order	6	Traffic Citations	372
Driving License Suspended	6	Traffic Hazard	54
Drugs	5	Traffic Warnings (Written)	352
DUI	16	Trespassing	24
Family Disturbance	17	Unsecure Premises	15
Firearms Offense	1	Utility Problem	10
Fire Investigations & Alarms	2	Vandalism	23
Fish and Game Offense	1	Vehicle Serial # Inspection	63
Fraud	5	Welfare Check	18
Juvenile Problem	12	Miscellaneous	10
		TOTAL	2399

** Property Checks were conducted on 108 days with an approximate total of 1,488 property check visits.*

Public Works Department (formerly Highway Department)

The main goal of the Public Works Department is to provide safe and convenient roadways throughout the year for everyone. We were faced with many challenges over the past year in the form of extreme weather events, which caused many hours of clean up for the department crew and Norwich residents.

A major snow and wind storm on April 15 and 16 took down many trees and power lines. The department spent 352 man hours on clean up after this event. On July 9, 10, and 11 Norwich was hit with a micro downburst in the Route 132 area and several severe thunderstorms, causing many small washouts and downed trees. We were eligible to apply for financial aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for both of these events.

We continued with our culvert replacement program this year. Thirty-four new culverts were installed, along with the related ditching.

During the summer of 2007, to offset increasing energy costs, we took steps to decrease the heating and electricity costs of the Public Works Building (Town Garage). We followed recommendations by the Norwich Energy Committee and Energy Vermont and replaced all the windows in the building. Energy-efficient lighting was also installed. As the last step in this process, we are replacing the two entry doors. We have already realized a significant decrease in the electricity bill.

Over the past year the Norwich school buses have converted to bio-diesel, so now all Town vehicles are using this environmentally friendly product.

An ongoing task over the past year has been addressing the road realignment and new rail crossing at Kendall Station Road. Many steps were required to accomplish this and provide the best solution for all parties involved. We are now close to having the State's permission for this project.

Another undertaking in the works is an erosion control project on Turnpike Road that we will accomplish with the help of the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. This is a Better Back Roads project and will involve stabilizing the road shoulder and stream bank with a vegetative rock wall. Fifty native dogwood shrubs and fifty shrub willows will be planted. We look forward to working with these young people on this conservation project.

The Public Works Department collaborated with other Town departments and organizations on various projects throughout the year. The Fire District rebuilt a section of sidewalk around Tracy Hall and another small section on Beaver Meadow Road with our assistance. We also aided the Norwich Women's Club in the installation of the new "Welcome to Norwich" sign at the entrance to town. During the winter of 2006/2007 the department constructed a new attendants' building and a new book shed for the Transfer Station. The attendants' building is in place and the new book shed will be in place soon.

Our department enjoyed a fun day with Norwich families on May 24 for "Touch-a-Truck" Day.

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

*Andy Hodgdon, Public Works Director (649-2209); Norwich_highway@earthlink.net.
Public Works Department Employees: Neal Rich, John Thorp,
Gary Durkee, Albert Lewellyn, Paul Betters, and Frank Emerson.*

Recreation Department

The Norwich Recreation Council/Department offers a wide range of recreational activities to appeal to Norwich residents of varied tastes, interests, and ages. Our youth programs include offerings for children in kindergarten through eighth grade, with K - 6 as our primary focus. In all of our youth sports, we stress maximum participation, development of skills, and above all, fun. We work with the school, PTO, Police Department, and Norwich Inn to organize year-round events fostering community spirit. Our Council members, and many other volunteer residents and local businesses help us run a large percentage of our programs and events. We appreciate their support, time, and dedicated involvement.

Stop by Huntley Meadow to enjoy the completed portion of our fields project, providing expanded beautiful level playing fields for all. We plan to complete the final stage in 2008 or spring of 2009. This will involve leveling the last undulating portion of Huntley Meadow (Field # 1). Our ski grooming and tracking equipment will continue to be pulled by volunteer Bob Fiske, so you can look forward to the Parcel 5 and Cossingham trails being groomed for classic ski touring. Huntley Meadow will be groomed for both classic and skate skiing techniques, and we plan to have a separate loop for dog-walkers there this winter also.

Please check the Recreation portion of our town website for the latest programs, schedules and events at www.norwich.vt.us. We are always in need of volunteers for a variety of activities and events. Please contact the Director if you would like to get involved. Make time to stay active this year. The benefits of recreation are endless.

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

Recreation Council: Doug Kennedy, President, Kathy Menard, Secretary; Lisa Adams, Lars Blackmore, Kristin Brown, Stuart Close, Ann Greenwald, Kate Halsey, Bernard Haskell, Hugh Huiizenga, Eric Sachsse, and Kris Strohbahn (Kate Robinson ended her term in '07 and we thank her for her long-standing commitment and contribution).

Senior Action Council

The Senior Action Council is composed of seven members appointed by the Selectboard. Our purpose is to answer the needs of seniors in Norwich. Our main duty is the home-delivered 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 eight people receiving the meals.

Martha Drake, Chair (649-1301)

Transfer Station

We had a great year at the Transfer Station although we experienced some staff changes. We said goodbye to Bob (Ronald) Trussell who served the Town for five years. Meagan Avery replaced Bob at the trash compactor. We also welcomed John Wight back after his summer absence.

The Highway Department has built us a new book shed equipped with electricity and a seating bench for browsing through the hundreds of books at the Transfer Station. We thank George Scotten for the great job he does in the book shed. He volunteers his time each week, organizing and cleaning the book shed. Thank you, George!

As always, we would like to remind everyone that the Transfer Station is open Wednesday and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact the Town Manager's Office or me at the Transfer Station.

Judy Trussell - Lead Attendant

Tree Warden

The Tree Warden is primarily responsible for clearing dead and diseased trees from the Town right of way as well as maintaining and adding to the treescape in Norwich. This year we focused on the Town Pool, Hopson Road, Route 10A, Brigham Hill, and Route 132. Recently, we have experienced an increasing number of damaging storms that threaten our safety and roads. Working closely with Andy Hodgdon and the Public Works Department, we continued our proactive approach of trimming and improving the treescape on Norwich roads, maintaining numerous trees that have been planted in recent years, and removing small diseased elms near the center of town to protect the glorious large elm on Church Street across from the school. We cleared sumacs off the north bank of Route 10A above the Ledyard Bridge and began a major improvement of Foley Park. Many poor species were removed, improving the view of the water from 10A and the park.

We continued to make excess hardwood cut in Norwich and other towns available to needy people in the Upper Valley. Volunteers delivered fuel to many people, enabling them to get through a tough winter. This project is taking on extra meaning with the recent soaring fuel prices. Andy Hodgdon and his crew helped tremendously in hauling wood up to our site off Beaver Meadow Road. Killdeer Farm donated the use of its truck for picking up wood and many landowners generously donated wood. We continue to work with LISTEN and SEVCA to identify people who need the fuel. We need volunteers to help cut, split, and deliver the wood and coordinate these activities. If more people would actually roll up their sleeves and help on this, we could assist more households. If you can help with this, have wood to contribute, or need to report tree problems, please contact me at any time.

Jake Blum, Tree Warden (649-2994)

Trustees of Public Funds

According to Vermont Statutes, if a town elects Cemetery Commissioners, then it also elects Trustees of Public Funds. The Trustees are elected on a rotating basis for a three-year term. They 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. They meet regularly to monitor the funds. A decision has been made to support area banks with investments in accordance with the Vermont Statutes, typically checking the rates at a minimum of eight different institutions to determine the best rate. The Cemetery Commissioners apprise us of their plans for working in the various cemeteries and 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 are invested based upon information provided to the Trustees by the respective groups and/or Selectboard, and disbursements are made when a request is received from the Selectboard.

Trustees: Marie Elise Young, Barbara Merrill and Cheryl A. Lindberg (649-1678)

Zoning & Planning Office

The Zoning Administrator/Planning Coordinator's primary responsibility is the administration and enforcement of the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, which includes advising landowners and their representatives on matters relating to these regulations and assisting in the preparation of permit and hearing applications. I also provide technical support to the Planning Commission in preparing the Town Plan and land use regulations, and maintain the Norwich Geographic Information System (GIS) and the E911 Locatable Address System. Additionally, I provide staff support to the Development Review Board. In August 2006, Pam Mullen joined the office as a part-time assistant. This additional support was badly needed and the productivity of the office has dramatically increased.

Permits were issued for 22 housing units this past year ~ 17 single-family homes and one multi-unit building of five attached townhouses. Also, four permits were issued to replace existing homes. Approved subdivision applications resulted in five new lots. Effective July 1, 2007, the state assumed responsibility for issuing all wastewater permits. Although the Town will no longer issue new wastewater permits, we will provide information on old permits and the current regulations.

Specific information on zoning, subdivision, and wastewater permit requirements are listed on the inside back cover of this report. If you have any questions regarding land use regulations, GIS, or street addressing, please call, email, or stop in.

Phil Dechert, Zoning Administrator/Planning Coordinator (649-1419)

Permit Activity (July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007)

Zoning Permits

New Homes	17
Replacement Homes	4
Multi-Unit Building	1 (5 Units)
Building Additions	33
Accessory Structures	14
Commercial	1

Development Review Board

Subdivisions	3 (5 new lots)
Boundary Line Adjustments	3

Septic Permits

Full Systems	13
Partial Systems	21

INTERESTING ARTICLES FROM PAST TOWN MEETINGS

TOWN MEETING MARCH 1, 1910

- Article 11** To see if the town will vote to authorize the selectmen to furnish a place to house the road machine and other tools belonging to the town.

TOWN MEETING MARCH 1937

- Article 18** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money, not to exceed Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars for the purchase of a Fire Truck and equipment suitable for the protection of all property in the Town.

TOWN MEETING MARCH 1945

- Article 14** To see if the Town will vote the sum of Eight Hundred dollars to the Norwich Fire District to help defray expenses in connection with the fire house and equipment.

TOWN MEETING FEBRUARY 29, 1988

- Article 13** Vote for the town to establish and operate a Fire Department and accept the assets of the Fire Department owned by the Norwich Fire District, to become effective January 1, 1989