

## Town Manager Report

August 5, 2021

**Junk and Trash:** Complaint of junk cars at various residences around town. The complainant wants action taken in accord with the Town's trash ordinance. There are 3 properties in East Hardwick and one on VT Route 15 West towards Wolcott. The claimant indicated that the Town should take action (this) *"is a legal hot potato that I don't think the select board and the town want to have to handle"*. The Selectboard can take action as it pleases.

ARPA Funding	2021	2022	Total
Town of Hardwick	\$149,756	\$149,756	\$299,512

**Water Wastewater News:** There are potentially 3 requests for water and wastewater hookups. One would cross Wolcott and Mill Streets. Crossing the main roads will require cutting the concrete pad beneath the paved road portions on Mill Street. This will be done at the property owner's expense. The second request is located Wolcott Street and is the old grain building across from Poulin Lumber. This will require some imagination to get water and sewer to the building. Mike Gravel and Ken LaCasse are working on it. The third connection is located on Mackville Road and already has appropriate water and sewer stubs available for connection.

### Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade:

Bids came back very high, similar to the library experience.

- Expected total project cost: \$2,111,825
- Bid – total project cost: \$2,861,560
- Bid price without add alternates: \$2,615,524

Total funding shortfall  $\$2,615,524 - 2,111,825 = 503,699$

Make up difference with ARPA funds and/or rebid in December.

### Survey Needs:

To complete projects: Request to move the bottom portion of Bayley Hazen Road for straightening the road before access to VT Rout 16.

Survey old open reservoir on Bridgeman Hill to delineate the size of the property for gifting to Town by Nancy Shepard.

Survey of swinging bridge area to develop topographical information and property lines for bridge replacement.

**Town Foreman Report**

**Town of Hardwick**

**August 5, 2021**

The Town Highway crew graded and graveled the following roads:

Bunker Hill  
West Woodbury  
West Hill  
Wapanaki  
Tucker  
Smith Farm  
Mountain View  
Ward Hill  
Dutton Rd  
Dusty Swamp  
Nichols Pond  
Scott Road  
Lunderville Road  
Atkins Lane  
Stratton Road  
Upper part of Town Farm Road  
Part of Bridgeman Hill

They finished the project on Bridgman Hill Road. It's all ditched and stay mat was put in.

They replaced a Culvert on Carey Road.

A hydrant on Elm Street was replaced.

Another Meter pit was installed on Glenside.

Lastly, they've been dealing with Beavers on Dusty Swamp Road (Beaver's are currently winning)

Date: Aug. 5, 2021

**To: Hardwick Selectboard**

**From: Hardwick Town Conservation Commission:  
Ken Davis, Renaud Demers, Rachel Kane (Chair), Ben Pougner, Jerry  
Scheider, (Treasurer) Norma Wiesen (Secretary)**

**RE: Notes on CC activities**

## **2019**

1. Organizational meeting (May 21)
2. Elderberry plant fund-raiser at Farmers Market (info to introduce the CC to the community)
3. "Walk arounds" by CC members to survey trees along village residential streets and talk with folks about interest in tree-planting
4. Obtained grant (\$1000) from the VT Urban & Community Forestry Program to use to buy trees to offer to community members to plant along residential streets in Hardwick village
5. Met with Michael Lew-Smith to learn about Natural Resources Inventories

## **2020**

1. Obtained a Caring for Canopy grant for \$1300 from VT Urban & Community Forestry program to prune, mulch and deep fertilize the crabapple trees along Wolcott Street as well as trees near the Village Restaurant
2. Getting educated in the Time of Covid:
  - attended ANR webinars
  - invited ANR biologist Andy Wood to talk about NRIs
  - invited ANR river biologists Sasha Pealer/Staci Pomeroy to talk about Lamoille River and tributary stream issues
  - invited Danielle Owczarski(Lamoille Watershed Planner)/Kerry O'Brien (Dist. Manager, Caledonia County NRCD) to talk about Hardwick Lake, Jackson Dam, water quality, etc.

## 2021

1. Project to trim, mulch and fertilize crabapple trees and trees near Village Restaurant accomplished
2. Grant to provide "give-away" trees for planting along residential village street cancelled
3. Created "master list" of map resources for Hardwick provided by ANR, other publications/books providing Hardwick natural resources information. Some materials stored in the Memorial Bldg.

## GOING FORWARD:

### 1. Events:

Emerald Ash Borer Walk:

Sat. Aug. 14 @ 10:00

Rail Trail—meet at the Health Center parking lot

Leader: Hardwick Tree Warden Geoff Fehrs

Pollinator Walk:

Sat. Sept. 11 @ 1:00

Atkins Field

Leader: Jerry Schneider

(In early planning) Community Meeting to get input about a Natural Resources Inventory

### 2. Goals:

Community Meeting about NRI

Natural Resources Inventory

Increased CC membership

On-going public events schedule

Increased awareness of the CC and of natural resources issues

Projects focused on issues raised by the community

### 3. Challenges:

Funding for NRI

Lack of full complement of CC members

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE- TOWNS & CITIES**

	YES	NO	Don't Know	By whom
Are all town records currently maintained by one individual?		X		Alberta, Casey, Tonia & Amanda
Do you reconcile bank and ledger balances monthly?	X			Alberta & Casey
Are checks always written to specified payees and not to cash?	X			Petty Cash ( PD \$100.00, Library \$100.00, TC&TM share \$300.00 in TC Office)
Does the same individual open the mail and deposit checks?	X			Alberta & Tonia
Are pre numbered checks used for all bank accounts?	X			
Are unopened bank statements delivered to the treasurer as received?		X		To Casey
Have you borrowed money from the Town?		X		
Have Select Board members attended financial trainings?	X			
Are bank statements reconciled on a regular basis?	X			Casey
Does someone other than the Treasurer review bank reconciliations?	X			Casey
Have you deposited town monies anywhere other than a town account?		X		
Have you deposited any non-town monies into a town account?		X		
Is interest in town accounts apportioned to each account?	X			By Casey yearly
Have there been any changes in authorized signatures during the fiscal year?		X		Still Alberta & Tonia
Has a signature stamp ever been used for any town account?	X			Alberta A. Miller
Has there ever been a theft, or unauthorized use of town funds or equipment?		X		
Are financial records maintained in a computerized system?	X			NEMRC
Does the town have written policies and procedures for financial operations?	X			
Does each town official have copies of these policies and procedures?	X			
Have you attended trainings on recordkeeping?	X			Alberta, Tonia, Casey & Amanda
Are checks written by the same individual who approves payment		X		Casey & Amanda write/ Alberta & Tonia sign
Are you a participant in any business which does business with the town?		X		
Do you maintain separate pages, columns or running balances for each fund?	X			Alberta & Casey
Do elected town auditors attend financial trainings?		X		We use outside professional auditors
Are bank accounts and fund balances reconciled on a monthly basis?	X			Alberta & Casey
Does the town loan money to town employees?		X		

**As a signer below I certify to the best of my knowledge that the answers provided in this self-assessment questionnaire are an accurate representation of the Town of Hardwick, Vermont.**

Preparer: (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_



## BUSINESS PLAN ONE-PAGER

1. **We have a realistic and fiscally responsible business plan to deliver quality, high-speed broadband internet to every residence and business in the NEK.**
2. **The plan is divided into four phases.** The first phase will create a brand new corridor of service through the center of the NEK, and will provide new service to addresses in all three counties.
3. **The financial model, while strong enough for a community-based solution, is not attractive enough for a commercial provider without support.** This reinforces our strong belief that **NEK Broadband CUD is the best vehicle to form public/private partnerships that ensure universal service in our area.** Funding for construction in our financial model uses a conservative combination of state grants, subscriber revenue, and loans from the bond market.
  - a. Providing incentives to encourage private companies to expand service is an extremely risky strategy. The business case is simply not strong enough, and the government does not have the authority to hold them properly accountable even if they accept incentives. The most likely outcome of continuing this strategy is that large swaths of the NEK will remain neglected and unserved or underserved.
  - b. Our financial model begins with using grant funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. This will allow us to build enough of the new network to generate income from customers. Once we are generating income and have proven our capacity to build, we can apply to the bond market for loans to complete the network.
4. **We are fully committed to universal service in the NEK. The scope of this project is very large, and it will probably take 6-10 years to bring universal service to the entire NEK.**
  - a. 2,803 miles of backbone & distribution fiber construction is needed.
  - b. 33,336 residential & business addresses will have access to our service.
    - i. Of these, 20,258 addresses are underserved or unserved.
    - ii. 13,078 already have some form of high-speed service from a commercial provider.
  - c. With optimal conditions, including state support in a variety of forms, availability of resources and staff, and continued strong support for CUDs from the state, we could potentially bring service to the entire NEK in 5 years (with the clock starting spring of 2022). However, many conditions are outside our control. We will need to adapt our plan to adjust to the changing landscape. If circumstances are not optimal, it could take substantially longer than 5 years to achieve universal service. For this reason it is vital that you actively support CUDs with your legislators.
5. **As a municipal body, we are committed to transparency and sharing information about this complex process.** However, we may not always have answers to residents' questions because of that complexity.
  - a. In the spirit of that transparency, accurate predictions of when individual addresses or towns will receive service are not possible. We will do our best to provide you with an accurate picture of where we are building and our expected timelines.