

Circa 1910 Photo of Sunderland Train Depot on Dunham Road



Taken by William F. Hayden

Sunderland Annual Report

For the Fiscal Year Ended
June 30th, 2024

Notice

Town Business Meeting: Monday, March 3rd, 2025 at 7 PM
Sunderland Elementary School,
98 Bear Ridge Road, Sunderland VT

Ballot Boxes Open for Australian Voting:
Tuesday, March 4th, 2025 from 10 AM until 7 PM
Sunderland Town Municipal Building
104 Mountain View Road, Sunderland VT

TOWN OF SUNDERLAND CONTACT INFORMATION

SUNDERLAND TOWN WEBSITE		SUNDERLANDV.T.ORG
TOWN CLERK/TREASURER'S OFFICE		802-375-6106
<i>Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm</i>		TOWN@SUNDERLANDV.T.ORG
	<i>(Subject to change)</i>	
ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER	KEVIN HEWES	802-379-4173 DRHEWES@YAHOO.COM
CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS	NEIL HUMPHREY	802-753-8265
	KATHLEEN JOHNSTON	802-681-8971
	AVIS HAYDEN	802-375-1503
FIRE WARDEN/BURN PERMITS	MARC JOHNSTON	802-375-2865
LISTERS		LISTERS@SUNDERLANDV.T.ORG
SELECT BOARD		SELECTBOARD@SUNDERLANDV.T.ORG
TOWN HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT/GARAGE		802-375-2865
<i>Hours: Monday through Friday 6:00 am - 2:00 pm</i>		HIGHWAY@SUNDERLANDV.T.ORG
JUSTICES OF THE PEACE	JULIA HUTCHINSON-SMITH	914-263-8524
	TED RAPPAAHAIN	TED.RAPPAAHAIN@GMAIL.COM
	LORENE ZEIF	ZEIFLOREE@GMAIL.COM
	VIRGINIA DEXTER	GINDEX78@GMAIL.COM
	SAMUEL LISS	SLISS_980@COMCAST.NET
		or 802-491-9057

OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

EMERGENCY CALLS - RESCUE SQUAD - FIRE - POLICE		911
STATE POLICE (non-emergency)		802-442-5421
FIRE DEPARTMENT (non-emergency)		802-375-2323
TRANSFER STATION-CASELLA'S		802-375-7345
<i>Hours: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. 7:30 am - 2:00pm & Sat. 7:30 am - 11:30am</i>		
BCRC	(Bennington County Regional Commission)	802-442-0713
ARLINGTON POST OFFICE		802-375-6904
MANCHESTER POST OFFICE		802-362-1170
MANCHESTER CENTER POST OFFICE		802-362-3070
MARTHA CANFIELD LIBRARY		802-375-6153
ARLINGTON TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE		802-375-2332
SANDGATE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE		802-375-9075
STRATTON TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE		802-896-6184
STATE FIRE SUPERVISOR	LARS LUND	802-777-4188
ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	PATRICK LOWKES	802-747-8127

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Cover Photo: Provided by the Hayden Family

**WARNING
TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The legal voters of the Town of Sunderland, Vermont in the County of Bennington are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Sunderland Elementary School at 98 Bear Ridge Road in said Town on Monday, March 3, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. to transact the following business: Articles 1 through 14 from the floor.

The legal voters of the Town of Sunderland, Vermont are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Sunderland Town Municipal Building at 104 Mountain View Road in said Town on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at 10:00 A.M. until 7:00 P.M. for voting by Australian Ballot: Articles 15 through 18.

To be acted upon on Monday, March 3, 2025:

Article 1. To elect a Town Moderator.

Article 2. Shall the voters of Sunderland authorize the payment of the personal and property taxes to the Town Treasurer in equal installments with the payments to be in the hands of the Treasurer by Wednesday, October 15th 2025 and Wednesday, April 15th 2026?

Article 3. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of **\$70,000.00** to be added to the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund?

Article 4. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of **\$70,000.00** to be added to the Paving Reserve Fund?

Article 5. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of **\$1,500.00** to be added to the Building Maintenance Reserve Fund?

Article 6. Shall the voters of Sunderland establish a reserve fund to be called the Audit Reserve Fund to be used for the engagement of professional auditing and financial services?

Article 7. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of **\$700.00** for the support of **Arlington Area Childcare, Inc.** (Happy Days Playschool) to provide services to the residents of the town?

Article 8. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of **\$500.00** for the support of **WindowDressers** to provide services to the residents of the town?

Article 9. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of **\$1,500.00** for the support of **Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Service, Inc.** to provide services to the residents of the town?

Article 10. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of **\$5,000.00** for the support of the **Recreation Park in Arlington** to provide services to the residents of the town?

Article 11. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of **\$10,010.00** for the support of the **Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library, Inc.** to provide services to the residents of the town?

Article 12. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of **\$700.00** for the support of **Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging** to provide elder services to the residents of the town?

Article 13. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of **\$150.00** for the support of the **Project Against Violent Encounters (P.A.V.E)** to provide victim services to the residents of the town?

Article 14. Discussion of other non-binding business that may come before this meeting.

The following articles will be voted by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 4, 2025:

Article 15. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of **\$ 21,245.00** for the Cemetery Maintenance Budget?

Article 16. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of **\$ 403,314.00** for the General Fund Budget?

Article 17. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of **\$ 556,215.00** for the Highway Fund Budget?

Article 18. To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers, as required by law:

Cemetery Commissioner – 3 year term

First Constable – 1 year term

Lister – 3 year term

Selectboard Member - 1 year term

Selectboard Member – 3 year term

Auditor – 2 years remaining of a 3 year term

Town Treasurer- 3 year term

Delinquent Tax Collector – 1 year term

Second Constable – 1 year term

Auditor – 3 year term

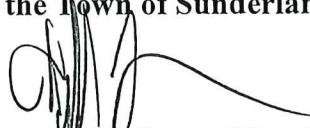
Selectboard Member – 1 year term

Town Moderator- 1 year term


Town Clerk - 3 year term

DATED THIS 21st DAY OF JANUARY A.D., 2025
By the Select board members of the Town of Sunderland, VT

Richard Zens, Chair



Todd Lawrence, Clerk



Andrew McKeever



Bruce Mattison



Martin Nadler

**SOUTHWEST VERMONT REGIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO V009
WARNING OF ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 3'RD AND MARCH 4'TH, 2025**

The legal voters of the Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District Service Region (consisting of Arlington, Bennington, Dorset, Glazenbury, Manchester, North Bennington, Pownal, Readsboro, Sandgate, Searsburg, Shaftsbury, Stamford, Sunderland, and Woodford) are hereby NOTIFIED and WARNED to meet at the Bennington Fire House, 130 River Street, Bennington, Vermont or to participate in the meeting by videoconference by joining Zoom Meeting Link <https://tinyurl.com/mrxakmud>, on **Monday, March 3, 2025 at 6:30 o'clock in the evening (6:30 PM)** to transact the following business from the floor:

- ARTICLE 1: To establish the annual salaries of the District Directors at \$1,500 each*.
*As long as they attend 50% of the meetings.
- ARTICLE 2: To establish the annual salary of the District Treasurer at \$15,000.
- ARTICLE 3: To establish the annual salary of the District Clerk at \$1,200.
- ARTICLE 4: To establish the annual salary of the Assistant District Clerk at \$600.
- ARTICLE 5: To establish the annual salary of the District Moderator at \$100.
- ARTICLE 6: To authorize the School District Board to borrow money in anticipation of revenues to meet current operating expenses of the District for the 2025-2026 school year.
- ARTICLE 7: To hold a public informational hearing on articles to be voted upon by Australian Ballot on March 4, 2025.
- ARTICLE 8: To transact any other business found proper when met.

The legal voters of Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District #V009 are hereby NOTIFIED and WARNED FURTHER to meet on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, when the polls will be open to transact business by Australian ballot as follows:

- ARTICLE A: To elect four (4) School Directors, who are legal residents of the Service Region as listed above in accordance with the bylaws of the Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District, each for a term of three (3) years.
- ARTICLE B: To elect one (1) School Director, who is a legal resident of the Service Region as listed above in accordance with the bylaws of the Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District, for unexpired term of one (1) year.
- ARTICLE C: To elect a Moderator for a term of three (3) years.
- ARTICLE D: To elect a Treasurer for a term of three (3) years.
- ARTICLE E: To elect a Clerk for a term of three (3) years.
- ARTICLE F: Shall the voters of the Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District approve the school board to expend \$5,154,303 which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year?
- ARTICLE G: Shall the voters of the Service Region of Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District increase the existing Reserve Fund for Capital Improvements and existing Reserve Fund for Equipment by the sums of \$60,000 and \$20,000 respectively?

Voting on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 shall be at large by Australian ballot. The polls will be open as indicated below for each respective town, as follows:

Residents of Arlington vote at Arlington Memorial High School, 529 East Arlington Road, Arlington, Vermont. Polls will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Bennington vote at Bennington Fire Department, 130 River Street, Bennington, Vermont. Polls will be open from 7 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Dorset vote at The Dorset School, 130 School Drive, Dorset, Vermont. Polls will be open from 7 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Glazenbury vote at Shaftsbury Town Garage, 526 North Road, Shaftsbury, Vermont. Polls will be open from 7 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Manchester vote at Manchester Town Hall, 40 Jeff Williams Way, Manchester Center, Vermont. Polls will be open from 8 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of North Bennington vote at North Bennington Village Trustees Office, 2 Depot Street, North Bennington, Vermont. Polls will be open from 7 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Pownal vote at the Town Office, 511 Center Street, Pownal, Vermont. Polls will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Readsboro vote at Readsboro Central School, 301 Phelps Lane, Readsboro, Vermont. Polls will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Sandgate vote at the Sandgate Town Office, 3266 Sandgate Road, Sandgate, Vermont. Polls will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Searsburg vote at Searsburg Town Office, 18 Town Garage Road, Searsburg, Vermont. Polls will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Shaftsbury vote at Town Garage, 526 North Road, Shaftsbury, Vermont. Polls will be open from 7 AM to 7 PM.

Residents of Stamford vote at Stamford Elementary School Community Room, 986 Main Road, Stamford, Vermont. Polls will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM.

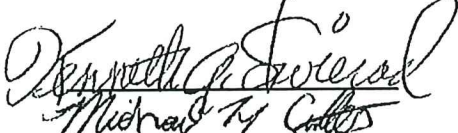
Residents of Sunderland vote at Sunderland Town Municipal Building, 104 Mountain View Road, Sunderland, Vermont. Polls will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM.

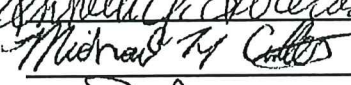
Residents of Woodford vote at Woodford Town Hall, 1391 VT Route 9, Woodford, Vermont. Polls will be open from 7 AM to 7 PM.


Register to Vote! Residents of Member Towns may register to vote at their Town Clerk's Office or online at <https://olvr.vermont.gov/>. Eligible residents registering on Election Day must do so at the polling place where they will cast their Town Meeting ballot.


Interpreting services for this meeting will be provided upon request. If this service is required, please notify the SVRTSD at 447-0220, at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.


Signatures

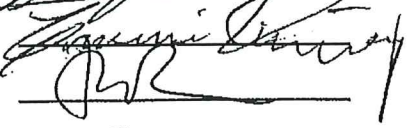
Kenneth Swierad, Chair 

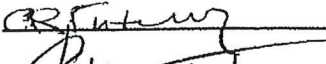
Michael Cutler, Vice Chair 


John Orzehowski, Clerk 

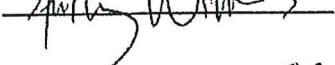
Asher Edelson 

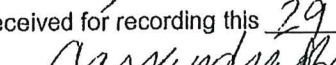
Leon Johnson 

Francis Kinney 


Timothy Kane 

Charles Putney 

Glen Sauer 

Anthony Williams, Jr. 

Received for recording this 29 day of January 2025.



Cassandra Barbeau, Clerk or Kayla Thompson, Assistant Clerk,
Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District

NOTICE TO VOTERS For Local Elections

CHECKLIST POSTED at Clerks Office by February 2nd, 2025. If your name is not on the checklist, then you must register to vote. **SAMPLE BALLOTS** will be posted by February 22nd, 2025.

HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE: There is no deadline to register to vote. You will be able to register to vote on the day of the election. You can register prior to by visiting the town clerk's office or going online to mvp.vermont.gov.

REQUEST EARLY or ABSENTEE BALLOTS: You or a family member can request early or absentee ballots at any time during the year of the election in person, in writing, by telephone, email, or online at mvp.vermont.gov. The latest you can request ballots for the Annual Town Meeting Election is the close of the Town Clerk's office on Monday, March 3rd, 2025. (Any other person authorized by you who is not a family member must apply in writing or in person for a ballot for you.)

WAYS TO VOTE YOUR EARLY BALLOT:

- You may vote in the town clerk's office before the deadline.
- Voter may take his or her ballot(s) out of the clerk's office and return in same manner as if the ballots were received by mail.
- Have ballot mailed to you, and mail or deliver it back to the clerk's office before Election Day or to the polling place before 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- If you are sick or disabled before Election Day, ask the town clerk to have two justices of the peace bring a ballot to you at your home. (Ballots can be delivered on any of the eight days preceding the day of the election or on the day of election.)

REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE OF TOWN OFFICIALS (Unless otherwise warned)

Select Board

2nd and 4th Monday of each month at the Sunderland Town Office Building at 7:00PM

Cemetery Commission

2nd Wednesday of each month (excluding Winter months) at the Sunderland Town Office Building at 9:00AM.

Planning Board

4th Wednesday of each month at the Sunderland Town Office Building at 6:00PM.

Committee Meetings held as Warned.

**ELECTED TOWN OFFICERS
2024-2025**

TOWN MODERATOR

Vacant

TOWN CLERK (3 year term) Expires 2025

Susan Whitney

TOWN TREASURER (3 year term) Expires 2025

Susan Whitney

SELECT BOARD:

3 year term -Expires 2027

Martin Nadler

3 year term -Expires 2025

Andrew McKeever

3 year term -Expires 2026

Bruce Mattison, Road Liason

1 year term -Expires 2025

Richard Zens, Chair

1 year term -Expires 2025

Todd Lawrence, Clerk

FIRST CONSTABLE (1 year term)

Wayne Godfrey

SECOND CONSTABLE (1 year term)

Kevin Hewes

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR (1 year term)

Richard Davis II

LISTERS:

3 year term -Expires 2027

Peter Van Vleck Jr.

3 year term -Expires 2025

Neil Humphrey

3 year term -Expires 2026

Robert Goodfellow

CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS:

3 year term -Expires 2027

Avis Hayden

3 year term -Expires 2025

Neil Humphrey

3 year term -Expires 2026

Kathleen Johnston

AUDITORS:

3 year term -Expires 2027

Vacant

3 year term -Expires 2025 - Appointed

Theodore Rappahahn

3 year term -Expires 2026

Cathi Comar

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE-Elected November 2024. Term begins February 2025

2 year term -Expires February 2027

Samuel Liss

2 year term -Expires February 2027

Virginia Dexter

2 year term -Expires February 2027

Julia Hutchinson Smith

2 year term -Expires February 2027

Theodore Rappahahn

2 year term -Expires February 2027

Lorene Zeif

**APPOINTED TOWN OFFICERS
2024-2025**

(One year term unless otherwise noted)

ANIMAL CONTROL	drhewes@yahoo.com	Kevin Hewes
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	emergencymgmt@sunderlandvt.org	
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT- COORDINATOR		Todd Lawrence
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT-ASSISTANT		Morgan Kelley
GREEN-UP/ENERGY CHAIRMAN	jets1627@gmail.com	Jeff Dexter
HEALTH OFFICER	drhewes@yahoo.com	Kevin Hewes
DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER		Vacant
POUND KEEPER		Vacant
SERVICE OFFICER	802-491-9057	Samuel Liss
TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN	802-375-2865	Marc Johnston
TREE WARDEN	802-375-2865	Marc Johnston
WEBMASTER	webmaster@sunderlandvt.org	Susan Whitney
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR	zoningadmin@sunderlandvt.org	David Kiernan
PLANNING BOARD:	planningboard@sunderlandvt.org	
Term Expires 2025		Robert Zeif, Chair
Term Expires 2026	3 year appointment	Benjamin Travis
Term Expires 2025	2 year appointment	David Kiernan
Term Expires 2026	3 year appointment	Gordon Dossett
Term Expires 2025		Michael Pugliese
ZONING BOARD:	zoningboard@sunderlandvt.org	
Term Expires 2026	3 year appointment	Peter Van Vleck Jr.
Term Expires 2026	3 year appointment	Martin Nadler
Term Expires 2025		Matt Vanderberg
Term Expires 2025	2 year appointment	Peter Van Haverbeke
Term Expires 2025		Michael Pugliese
TOWN GRAND JUROR		James Ayrey
BENNINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVES: (BCRC)		Richard Zens Andrew McKeever

GENERAL FUND FY26 BUDGET

Account	Budget FY23/24	Actual FY23/24	Budget FY24/25	Anticipated FY24/25	PROPOSED BUDGET FY25/26
Payroll	88,000	79,869	93,000	93,000	98,000
Retirement	2,500	2,493	2,500	2,500	2,500
Fica/Medi/Emp Expense	9,000	8,413	9,300	9,300	9,800
Health Insurance	-	-	3,600	3,609	15,233
Dental Insurance	-	-	-	159	640
VT Child Care Tax	-	-	420	500	525
Office Equipment/lease	2,000	1,343	1,500	1,500	1,500
Software Maintenance/contracts	7,000	7,561	7,500	7,500	9,000
Office Supplies	5,000	3,896	5,000	5,000	5,000
Postage	1,000	1,397	2,000	1,800	2,000
Planning Expenses	500	79	200	200	200
Zoning Expenses	500	366	800	500	800
Town Meeting	500	-	500	200	250
Tabulator Programming	3,000	824	2,000	1,500	2,000
Town Meeting Officials	1,000	-	-	-	-
Town Reports	3,000	1,028	2,000	1,600	2,000
Electricity	1,500	1,472	1,500	1,500	1,600
Telephone/Internet	3,000	3,120	3,300	3,300	3,400
Heat	2,500	1,794	2,500	2,000	2,500
Office Maintenance	1,200	1,655	1,200	1,200	1,200
Technology Expense	2,000	303	2,000	2,000	1,700
Office Building Alarm Sys	2,000	2,050	1,700	2,000	2,000
Janitorial	3,500	3,000	3,250	3,000	3,250
Office Bldg Debt Service	25,300	25,212	24,025	24,025	23,420
Dues	2,600	2,489	2,600	2,566	2,625
Benn County Court	14,000	15,110	17,900	17,900	18,500
BCRC	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Insurance	11,000	9,426	14,000	14,000	14,000
Ambulance/Rescue	26,750	26,750	26,750	26,750	26,750
Animal Control	1,000	169	500	500	500
Green Up Appropriation	50	50	100	100	100
Fire Protection	66,208	66,208	72,882	72,882	74,366
Fire Warden	50	-	50	50	50
Landfill/Recycling	8,800	7,338	8,500	8,500	8,500
Solid Waste Fees	13,000	6,986	8,000	8,000	8,000
Hazardous Waste	1,825	-	2,000	2,000	1,000
Law Enforcement	49,000	43,409	35,000	35,000	38,605
Legal	7,000	5,659	7,000	7,000	7,000
Legal Warnings	1,000	994	1,000	1,000	1,000
Public Communications-GNAT	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Training/Workshops	500	240	500	500	500
Audit	9,750	-	9,750	9,750	6,000
Employee Appreciation	-	-	200	200	200
Miscellaneous	100	153	100	100	100
General Fund Budget Subtotals	383,633	337,856	383,627	381,691	403,314
VOTED ARTICLES					
Appropriations	28,150	28,150	28,150	28,150	18,560
Tech Reserve-Transfer	-	-	-	-	-
Town Office Bldg-Transfer	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Special Projects Reserve-Transfer	-	-	65,000	65,000	-
Voted Articles Subtotals	29,650	29,650	94,650	94,650	20,060
Total General Fund Budget with Separately Voted Articles	413,283	367,506	478,277	476,341	423,374

**GENERAL FUND (NON-PROPERTY TAX) REVENUE/INCOME BUDGET
FOR FISCAL YEAR JULY 1ST, 2025 THROUGH JUNE 30TH, 2026**

Account	Budget FY23/24	Actual FY23/24	Budget FY24/25	Anticipated FY24/25	Budget FY25/26
Revenue-Beverage Licenses	115	115	115	115	115
Revenue-Dog Licenses	1,000	950	1,000	950	950
Revenue-Copier/Supply Reimbursement	5	0	5	5	5
Revenue -Zoning Fees	3,000	2,840	2,000	2,500	2,500
Revenue -Hauler Permit Fees	50	0	50	50	50
Revenue-Dog Fines	0	280	0	40	0
Revenue-Traffic Fines	2,400	152	500	891	500
Revenue-Checking Interest	500	8,053	2,000	4,000	2,000
Revenue-Delinquent Taxes Interest	0	9,924	0	3,545	0
Revenue -Late Taxes Interest	0	706	0	1,500	0
Revenue-Current Use Tax Adjustment	20,000	26,563	21,500	21,500	21,500
Revenue-State Property Tax Adjustment	0	13,448	0	23,694	0
Revenue-Fish & Wildlife Tax Adjustment	950	962	963	963	963
Revenue-Railway Tax Adjustment	275	276	275	275	275
Revenue-State Cannabis Control Bd. Fees	100	0	100	0	0
Revenue-Delinquent Taxes Collected	0	128,396	0	41,365	0
Revenue-ARPA Transfer	0	65,000	0	0	0
Revenue-Miscellaneous	0	2	0	63	0
Total Revenues (EXCLUDING TAXES)	28,395	257,667	28,508	101,456	28,858

Proposed FY25/26 General Fund Expense Budget

403,314

Services included in the General Fund Budget:

<i>Arlington Fire Protection</i>	<i>74,366</i>
<i>Arlington Resue Squad</i>	<i>26,750</i>
<i>GNAT</i>	<i>2,000</i>
<i>Green Up Vermont</i>	<i>100</i>

FY25/26 Articles to be Voted Upon:

Town Office Building Reserve Fund	1,500
Arlington Area Childcare Inc.	700
WindowDressers	500
Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Services	1,500
Arlington Recreation Park	5,000
Martha Canfield Memorial Library	10,010
Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE)	150
Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging	700

SUBTOTAL

20,060

Proposed FY25/26 General Fund Expense Budget with Articles

423,374

HIGHWAY FUND FY26 BUDGET

Account	Budget FY23/24	Actual FY23/24	Budget FY24/25	Anticipated FY24/25	PROPOSED BUDGET FY25/26
Payroll	194,200	176,073	197,000	187,100	196,200
Retirement	9,700	6,450	9,900	6,600	9,800
Fica/Medi	15,600	13,963	15,825	14,815	15,750
Health Insurance	28,400	29,497	32,250	27,500	35,105
Dental Insurance	1,800	1,802	1,800	1,802	1,950
VT Childcare Tax	0	0	915	852	910
Electric	1,500	1,581	1,500	1,600	1,600
Telephone/Computer	1,550	1,553	1,550	1,800	1,800
Heat- Propane	7,500	3,089	5,600	5,000	5,600
Garage Maint/Supplies	4,500	10,311	4,500	4,500	4,500
Insurance	21,000	20,720	21,000	21,000	21,500
Storm Wtr Runoff St Permit	2,250	1,350	2,250	2,250	2,250
Sublet Services	8,000	2,875	3,000	2,000	3,000
Trash	1,000	768	1,000	850	1,000
Training/CDL/Testing	500	210	500	500	500
Uniforms	2,500	2,547	2,500	2,500	2,500
Tools/Safety	1,000	691	1,000	1,000	1,000
Road Signs	800	239	800	800	800
Culverts	5,500	5,461	5,500	5,500	5,500
Equipment/Truck Maintenance	50,000	45,183	55,000	57,000	55,000
Diesel & Gas	30,000	36,278	30,000	35,000	35,000
Radio Maint/Service	1,800	1,740	1,800	2,940	1,800
Erosion Control	2,000	2,009	2,000	2,000	2,000
Sand	25,500	21,383	25,500	25,500	25,500
Salt	60,000	54,405	60,000	60,000	55,000
Road Material-gravel/stone	35,000	34,596	35,000	35,000	40,000
Cold Patch	1,000	975	1,200	1,200	1,200
Chloride	16,000	4,398	16,000	14,500	16,000
Pavement Marking	8,750	1,395	8,750	13,000	13,000
Employee Appreciation	0	0	200	200	200
Miscellaneous	250	0	250	250	250
Highway Fund Budget Subtotals	537,600	481,542	544,090	534,559	556,215
VOTED ARTICLES					
Bridge Co-op Fund-Transfer	5,000	5,000	0	0	0
Equip Reserve Fund-Transfer	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
Paving Reserve-Transfer	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
Guardrail Reserve-Transfer	1,500	1,500	0	0	0
Road Projects Reserve-Transfer	15,000	15,000	0	0	0
Special Projects-Transfer	0	0	200,000	200,000	0
Voted Transfers Subtotals	161,500	161,500	340,000	340,000	140,000
<hr/>					
Total Highway Fund Budget with Separately Voted Transfers	699,100	643,042	884,090	874,559	696,215

**HIGHWAY FUND (NON-PROPERTY TAX) REVENUE/INCOME BUDGET
FOR FISCAL YEAR JULY 1ST, 2025 THROUGH JUNE 30TH, 2026**

Account	Budget FY23/24	Actual FY23/24	Budget FY24/25	Anticipated FY24/25	Budget FY25/26
Revenue-Overweight Permits	200	210	200	200	200
Revenue-Interest earned	300	5,677	400	4,000	1,500
Revenue-State Aid to Hwys	88,000	92,002	89,000	94,745	90,000
Revenue-Road Cut Permits	40	100	40	50	50
Revenue-National Forest	62,000	68,673	64,000	73,038	69,000
Revenue-ARPA Transfer	-	200,000	-	-	-
Total Revenues (EXCLUDING TAXES)	150,540	366,662	153,640	172,033	160,750
Proposed FY25/26 Highway Fund Expense Budget					556,215
FY25/26 Articles to be Voted Upon:					
Equipment Reserve Fund					70,000
Paving Reserve					70,000
SUBTOTAL					140,000
Proposed FY25/26 Highway Expense Budget with Articles					696,215

CEMETERY FUND FY26 BUDGET

Account	Budget FY23/24	Actual FY23/24	Budget FY24/25	Anticipated FY24/25	PROPOSED BUDGET FY25/26
Payroll	2,250	2,250	3,000	3,000	3,000
Fica/Medi	172	172	230	230	230
VT Childcare Tax	-	-	15	9	15
Sublet Mowing & Maint	13,000	11,450	13,000	14,300	13,000
Cornerstones/Foundation	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies	578	41	1,000	200	500
Headstone cleaning/repair	-	-	2,000	2,000	4,500
Mapping Services	-	-	2,000	1,500	-
Cemetery Fund Budget Totals	16,000	13,913	21,245	21,239	21,245

2024 Cemetery Commission Report

This year Commissioners supported our local historian, Bill Budde, in his effort to map and catalogue the headstones in the Lawrence and Mt. Pleasant Cemeteries. This effort involves reading names on the stones and noting their location. The earliest burial at Lawrence appears to have occurred in 1784. Several monuments are recommended for proper repair. Mt Pleasant Cemetery began for the Hicks Family, on land donated by Capt. Simeon Hicks (1755-1855). Capt. Hicks is known as the oldest surviving Revolutionary War veteran from the Battle of Bennington. The earliest known burial was in 1794. Most of the gravestones in the Mount Pleasant cemetery are in good condition, with only two recommended for repair.

Commissioners have identified survey markers for the true boundary of the Lawrence Cemetery and have authorized the mowing crew to clear away large brush and overgrown plants to the property line. This work was completed in the fall of 2024.

Commissioners have been concerned about changes and erosion in the roadways at Ira Allen Cemetery. It was last surveyed in 1991 and some of the plots near those roadways are no longer usable as gravesites. We found a volunteer to overlay our survey map on google earth so we can determine which lots need to be prohibited from sale.

Commissioners authorized the removal of trash barrels at Ira Allen Cemetery, which were being used for general trash disposal. Cemetery Rules changed to reflect that all visitors must take out their own trash.

We located the deed for 0.25 acres of land from Ira Allen to the town of Sunderland, dated July 25, 1786. This is posted on the Town website

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Johnston
Avis Hayden
Neil Humphrey

2025-2026

Proposed Schedule of Salaries, Wages and Allowable Expenses

Animal Control Officer		\$ 225.00	Monthly
Auditors		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Board of Civil Authority		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Cemetery Commissioners		\$ 1,000.00	Annually
Constables		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Delinquent Tax Collector			Fees Collected
Emergency Management-Coordinator		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Emergency Management-Assistant		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Health Officer		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Health Officer Deputy		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Listers		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Listers-Chairman		\$ 30.00	Hourly
Moderator		\$ 100.00	per Meeting
Planning Board Member		\$ 700.00	Annually
Recording Secretary		\$ 21.00	Hourly
Road Foreman	<i>Current FY25 Rate:</i>	\$ 34.10	Hourly
Road Worker	<i>Current FY25 Rate:</i>	\$ 24.00	Hourly
Road Worker	<i>Current FY25 Rate:</i>	\$ 24.00	Hourly
	<i>Road Dept. budgeted increase to be distributed based on performance reviews:</i>	\$ 3.00	Hourly
Select Board- Chairperson		\$ 2,000.00	Annually
Select Board- Member		\$ 1,500.00	Annually
Service Officer		\$ 20.00	Hourly
Town Clerk		\$ 21,000.00	Annually <i>plus fees collected</i>
Town Clerk/Treasurer Assistant		\$ 23.00	Hourly
Town Treasurer		\$ 16,000.00	Annually
Webmaster		\$ 2,400.00	Annually
Zoning Administrator		\$ 32.00	Hourly
Zoning Board - Chairperson		\$ 350.00	Annually
Zoning Board - Secretary		\$ 300.00	Annually
Zoning Board - Member		\$ 200.00	Annually
Mileage Reimbursement			Federal Rate per Mile

Town of Sunderland Treasurer's Statement
Cash Balance for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Bank of Bennington	6/30/2024 Statement Balance	1,118,903.32
Bank of Bennington	Cemetery Reserve CD	90,000.00
Petty Cash on Hand	6/30/2024	100.00
Subtotal Cash Balance as of June 30th, 2024		1,209,003.32
Less Outstanding Checks		(20,692.34)
(Payments Remaining Uncashed as of 6/30/20234)		
Total Fund Balance as of June 30th, 2024		1,188,310.98

General Fund Cash Balance 6/30/2024	128,087.08	
Highway Fund Cash Balance 6/30/2024	272,180.79	
Cemetery Fund Cash Balance 6/30/2024	2,134.63	
Reserve/Savings/Trust Funds Cash Balance 6/30/2024	778,242.72	
ARPA (American Rescue) Fund Cash Balance 6/30/2024	7,665.76	
Total Balance on Hand by Fund as of June 30th, 2024		1,188,310.98

Town Auditors' Statement of Opinion

The accompanying financial statements of the Town of Sunderland for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024 were supplied by the Town Treasurer. The Auditors' responsibility is to review these financial statements and offer an opinion of the accuracy of the information contained therein.

Based upon the review, it is our opinion that the financial position of the Town of Sunderland as of June 30, 2024, has been presented fairly and in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Catherine Comar
Theodore Rappahahn

Town of Sunderland Auditors

Town of Sunderland Treasurer's Statement
Receipts & Disbursements for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
GENERAL FUND

Beginning Balance-Cash in Bank 7/01/2023	\$ 68,367.69
Fiscal 23/24 Revenues:	
Tax Revenues-Current	\$ 163,080.30
Tax Revenues-Delinquent Collected	\$ 128,395.70
State of VT-Property Tax Adjustments	\$ 13,448.00
State of VT-Current Use Tax	\$ 26,563.00
State of VT-Railway Tax	\$ 276.03
State of VT-Fish & Wildlife Tax	\$ 962.61
Interest Earned	\$ 8,052.78
Interest-Delinquent Taxes	\$ 9,924.17
Interest-Late Paid Taxes	\$ 705.76
Dog Licenses & Penalties	\$ 1,230.00
Beverage Licenses	\$ 115.00
Hauler Permits	\$ -
Zoning Fees	\$ 2,839.61
Traffic Fines	\$ 152.50
Miscellaneous Revenues	\$ 1.90
ARPA Transfer	\$ 65,000.00
Total Revenues	\$ 420,747.36
Fiscal 23/24 Disbursements:	
Orders PR 1- PR 52 Paid:	
Payroll - Wages & Retirement	\$ (82,362.05)
Payroll - Expenses	\$ (8,413.41)
Orders GF 1- GF 25 Paid:	
Office Building Debt Service	\$ (25,211.64)
Services, Insurance & Dues	\$ (191,828.81)
Operational Expenses	\$ (30,040.29)
Voted Appropriations	\$ (28,150.00)
Subtotal Disbursements	\$ (366,006.20)
Voted Transfers to Reserve Accounts:	
Tech Reserve Fund	\$ -
Town Office Building Reserve Fund	\$ (1,500.00)
Subtotal Inter-Fund Transfers	\$ (1,500.00)
Grand Total Disbursed	\$ (367,506.20)
Ending Balance- 6/30/2024	\$ 121,608.85
Plus Outstanding Payables	\$ 6,478.23
Cash On Hand (Bank & Petty)-6/30/2024	\$ 128,087.08

Town of Sunderland Treasurer's Statement
Receipts & Disbursements for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
HIGHWAY FUND

Beginning Balance-Cash in Bank 7/01/2023	\$ 18,763.16
Fiscal 23/24 Revenues:	
Tax Revenues	\$ 529,797.00
Interest Earned	\$ 5,677.44
Overweight Permits	\$ 210.00
Road Cut Permits	\$ 100.00
State Aid to Highways	\$ 92,001.89
National Forest Revenue	\$ 68,673.00
ARPA Transfer	\$ 200,000.00
Total Revenues	\$ 896,459.33
Fiscal 23/24 Disbursements:	
Orders PR 1- PR 52A Paid:	
Payroll - Wages & Retirement	\$ (182,522.34)
Payroll - Expenses	\$ (13,963.46)
Orders HF 1- HF 25 Paid:	
Equipment Maintenance & Supplies	\$ (81,460.82)
Road Maint. Materials & Supplies	\$ (125,551.86)
Operational Expenses	\$ (78,043.22)
Subtotal Disbursements	\$ (481,541.70)
Voted Transfers to Reserve Accounts:	
Bridge Co-op Reserve Fund	\$ (5,000.00)
Equipment Reserve Fund	\$ (70,000.00)
Paving Reserve Fund	\$ (70,000.00)
Road Projects Reserve Fund	\$ (15,000.00)
Sunderland Hill Rd. Safety Fund	\$ -
Guardrail Reserve Fund	\$ (1,500.00)
Subtotal Inter-Fund Transfers	\$ (161,500.00)
Grand Total Disbursed	\$ (643,041.70)
Ending Balance-Cash in Bank 6/30/2024	\$ 272,180.79

**Town of Sunderland Treasurer's Statement
 Receipts & Disbursements for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
 CEMETERY MAINTENANCE FUND**

<hr/> Beginning Balance-Cash in Bank 7/01/2023	\$ 3,778.26
Fiscal 23/24 Revenues:	
Tax Revenues	\$ 12,222.00
Interest Earned	\$ 47.58
Total Revenues	\$ 12,269.58
Fiscal 23/24 Disbursements:	
Orders CEM 1- CEM 6 Paid:	
Payroll - Wages	\$ (2,250.00)
Payroll - Expenses	\$ (172.14)
Mowing and Maintenance	\$ (11,450.00)
Foundations/Stones	
Supplies	\$ (41.07)
Total Disbursed	\$ (13,913.21)
Ending Balance-Cash in Bank 6/30/2024	\$ 2,134.63

Town of Sunderland Treasurer's Statement
Receipts & Disbursements for Fiscal Year Ended June 30,2024
RESERVES-INVESTMENT, SAVINGS & TRUSTS

Account	Beginning Balance 7/1/2023	Interest Earned	Transfers In & Other Revenues	Transfers Out & Expenses	Ending Balance 6/30/2024
Orders SF 1 - SF 16 Paid					
Record Preservation	\$ 19,587.29	\$ 655.38	\$ 4,172.00	\$ (1,200.00)	\$ 23,214.67
Landfill Litigation	\$ 12,990.15	\$ 404.62			\$ 13,394.77
Municipal Building	\$ 8,793.90	\$ 207.30	\$ 1,500.00	\$ (7,475.00)	\$ 3,026.20
Technology	\$ 5,614.72	\$ 174.98	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,789.70
Tri-centennial	\$ 291.78	\$ 9.12			\$ 300.90
Cemetery Trust ¹	\$ 109,261.05	\$ 3,105.03	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (7,540.00)	\$ 107,826.08
Highway Equipment	\$ 128,902.03	\$ 5,534.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ -	\$ 204,436.03
Paving	\$ 63,250.86	\$ 3,471.77	\$ 70,000.00	\$ (2,584.48)	\$ 134,138.15
Bridge Co-op	\$ 47,661.55	\$ 1,466.04	\$ 5,000.00	\$ (15,048.76)	\$ 39,078.83
Housing Re-hab	\$ 6,371.88	\$ 198.58			\$ 6,570.46
National Forest	\$ 65,685.19	\$ 2,047.43			\$ 67,732.62
Guardrails	\$ 13,459.88	\$ 451.98	\$ 1,500.00		\$ 15,411.86
Reappraisal	\$ 132,753.28	\$ 4,217.74	\$ 6,001.00		\$ 142,972.02
Road Projects	\$ 59,361.40	\$ 1,978.98	\$ 15,000.00	\$ (33,213.12)	\$ 43,127.26
Sunderland Hill Rd. Safety ²	\$ 54,428.63	\$ 1,419.38	\$ -	\$ (87,709.16)	\$ (31,861.15)
Grants	\$ -	\$ 95.57	\$ 4,000.00	\$ (1,011.25)	\$ 3,084.32
	<u>\$ 728,413.59</u>	<u>\$ 25,437.90</u>	<u>\$ 180,173.00</u>	<u>\$ (155,781.77)</u>	<u>\$ 778,242.72</u>

Please Note:

1.- Cemetery Trust fund includes Bank of Bennington Account and CD

2.- Sunderland Hill Road Safety fund received grant reimbursement after 6/30 of \$48,726.53

**Town of Sunderland Treasurer's Statement
 Receipts & Disbursements for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
 ARPA (American Rescue Plan) FUND**

Beginning Balance-Cash in Bank 7/01/2023	\$ 288,600.37
 Fiscal 23/24 Revenues:	
Grant Revenues	\$ -
Interest Earned	\$ 4,363.77
Total Revenues	\$ 4,363.77
 Fiscal 23/24 Disbursements:	
Orders ARP 1- ARP 4 Paid & Transfer Journal Entries:	
Tech Services and Devices-Grant	\$ (20,246.15)
Voted Transfer to General Fund	\$ (65,000.00)
Voted Transfer to Highway Fund	\$ (200,000.00)
Tech Services - local funds (from interest earned)	\$ (52.23)
Total Disbursed	\$ (285,298.38)
Ending Balance-Cash in Bank 6/30/2024	\$ 7,665.76

TAX RATES

			<u>Grand List</u>
General Fund Amount to be Raised	\$ 304,135.00	÷	\$ 1,626,168.00
			Rate = \$ 0.1870
Municipal Bldg. Debt Amount to be Raised	\$ 24,025.00	÷	\$ 1,626,168.00
			Rate = \$ 0.0148
Highway Fund Amount to be Raised	\$ 458,269.00	÷	\$ 1,626,168.00
			Rate = \$ 0.2818
Cemetery Fund Amount to be Raised	\$ 19,110.00	÷	\$ 1,626,168.00
			Rate = \$ 0.0118
Local Agreement to be Raised	\$ 6,237.70	÷	\$ 1,626,168.00
			Rate = \$ 0.0039

By the authority duly granted by Title 17 Sec. 2664 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, we do hereby establish the foregoing rates of taxation for the 2024-2025 fiscal year which concludes June 30, 2025



Richard Zens



Todd Lawrence



Andrew McKeever

Bruce Mattison

Martin Nadler

Sunderland Town Loan # 556 Series 2017-4
Vermont Municipal Bond Bank
Series 2013-1 Loan #21 Original Principal \$351,000

Date	Principal	Interest	Rebate	TTL Due
2013-11	0	3,947	0	3,947
2014-05	0	5,872	0	5,872
2014-11	17,550	5,872	0	23,422
2015-05	0	5,802	0	5,802
2015-11	17,550	5,802	0	23,352
2016-05	0	5,699	0	5,699
2016-11	17,550	5,699	0	23,249
2017-05	0	5,561	0	5,561
2017-11	17,550	5,561	-875	22,236
2018-05	0	5,392	0	5,392
2018-11	17,550	5,392	-238	22,704
2019-05	0	5,188	0	5,188
2019-11	17,550	5,188	-224	22,514
2020-05	0	4,955	0	4,955
2020-11	17,550	4,955	-248	22,257
2021-05	0	4,698	0	4,698
2021-11	17,550	4,698	-243	22,005
2022-05	0	4,416	0	4,416
2022-11	17,550	4,416	-245	21,721
2023-05	0	4,112	0	4,112
2023-11	17,550	4,112	-244	21,418
2024-05	0	3,793	0	3,793
2024-11	17,550	3,793	-782	20,561
2025-05	0	3,460	0	3,460
2025-11	17,550	3,460	-702	20,308
2026-05	0	3,110	0	3,110
2026-11	17,550	3,110	-686	19,974
2027-05	0	2,750	0	2,750
2027-11	17,550	2,750	-673	19,627
2028-05	0	2,380	0	2,380
2028-11	17,550	2,380	-663	19,267
2029-05	0	2,000	0	2,000
2029-11	17,550	2,000	-762	18,788
2030-05	0	1,610	0	1,610
2030-11	17,550	1,610	-660	18,500
2031-05	0	1,215	0	1,215
2031-11	17,550	1,215	-661	18,104
2032-05	0	813	0	813
2032-11	17,550	813	-573	17,790
2033-05	0	408	0	408
2033-11	17,550	408	-365	17,593
	351,000	150,415	(8,844)	492,571

**TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
TOWN CLERK'S STATEMENT OF
DOG LICENSE SALES
FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 2024**

2023 - July 1st Through December 31st

7 New Neutered/Spayed	@ \$13.00	\$	91.00
1 New Males/Females	@ \$17.00	\$	17.00
			2023 Subtotal \$ 108.00

2024 -January 1st through June 30th

129 Neutered/Spayed	@ \$13.00	\$	1,677.00
18 Males/Females	@ \$17.00	\$	306.00
23 Late Neutered/Spayed	@ \$17.00	\$	391.00
5 Late Males/Females	@ \$23.00	\$	115.00
28 Late Fines	@ \$10.00	\$	280.00
			2024 Subtotal \$ 2,769.00

July 1st, 2022 through June 30th, 2023 Grand Total \$ 2,877.00

Less Town Clerk Fees 183 @ \$4.00 \$ (732.00)

* Less State of Vermont Fees 183 @ \$5.00 \$ (915.00)

Total General Fund Revenue \$ 1,230.00

All dogs are required to be licensed by **April 1st** of each year.

The licenses for the new year are available beginning January 1st.

A copy of a current (non-expired) rabies vaccination certificate is **required** for licensing.

*Please note, the State of Vermont Fee will increase for 2025 to \$7.00



Second Chance Animal Center organizes a low-cost rabies vaccine clinic each March to help you comply with dog registration requirements. Watch their Facebook page or call 802-375-2898 to find out this year's schedule. They also offer a fee-waived pet food pantry, low-cost spay/neuter clinic, and other programs to assist Bennington County residents to care for their pets.

Town of Sunderland Delinquent Tax Collectors Report

Delinquent Taxes as of 12/31/2024

Parcel	Property Owner	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
0459	Phillip Ackermann				3683.44	4214.06	\$7,897.50
0835	Phyliss Allen	41.50	83.28	82.22	78.66	89.99	\$375.65
0509	Lance Chila					75.08	\$75.08
0567	Gene Cole			888.06	849.57	971.96	\$2,709.59
0397	Tammy Danforth					1584.09	\$1,584.09
0646	Valerie Donatelli	2583.75	2592.22	2559.34	2448.42	2801.13	\$12,984.86
0472	Donna Livingston				642.58	1050.71	\$1,693.29
0632	Richard Marzec			156.75	296.96	339.74	\$793.45
0396	Alan L Tate					371.23	\$371.23
0138	Stanley J Wabisky					2579.16	\$2,579.16

I would like to thank Susan and Caroline for all of their help.

Richard A Davis II
Delinquent Tax Collector

2024 VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Name	Date of Event
Budro, Weston James	October 2024
Cary, Willa Jade	March 2024
Filipkowski, Carmela Bradford	September 2024
Kelley, Coraline Leanore	May 2024
Lacoste, Addison Rae	October 2024
Secoy, Kennedy Grace	February 2024
Stewart, Molly Virginia	July 2024
Stork, Remington Lou	April 2024

DEATHS

Name	Date of Event
Allaire, Sharon Leigh	January 2024
Ayrey, Sally	February 2024
Bahan, Wendy Lea	February 2024
Chandler, Darrin Wayne	January 2024
Ennis Sr., Lewis John	June 2024
Gossman, Frank Karl	May 2024
Hahn, Louise M.	August 2024
Herrick, Phyllis Dunn	October 2024
Johnston, Barbara H.	February 2024
King, Shirley Marie	September 2024
Morse, Diane Marie	May 2024
Stark, John W.	July 2024
Walsh, Cindy Marie	July 2024
Ward Jr., Michael F.	April 2024
Whitaker, Betty T.	July 2024

MARRIAGES

Names	Date of Event
Hammler, Laura Simone	May 2024
Wolff, Jonathan Asher	
Blanchard, Kelsey Kendra	June 2024
Goodrich, Austin James	
Morse Mahos, Marise Delphine	June 2024
Campbell, Hunter Nathaniel	
Loomis, Karen Lynn	September 2024
Squire, Timothy Joseph	
Cosentino, Kathryn Elizabeth	September 2024
Yuhas, Vincent Ronald	
Caples, Amy Marie	October 2024
Bowleg, Billy Osceola	

**TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES AND RESULTS**

MARCH 4TH & 5TH, 2024

Select Board Chair, Richard "Dixie" Zens called the Town of Sunderland Annual Meeting to order at 7:00PM with an audience attendance of 61 and select board members Alex Bresnick, Bruce Mattison, Andrew McKeever and Martin Nadler, as well as Town Clerk Susan Whitney and Assistant Town Clerk Caroline Hartshorn also in attendance.

Article 1. To elect a Town Moderator. Andrew McKeever nominated Alyson Grzyb. No other nominations were received. Alex Bresnick seconded the nomination. All in favor, Alyson Grzyb was declared Moderator.

Moderator Grzyb welcomed everyone. Chairperson Dixie Zens requested briefly tabling the articles to make some announcements. No objections received. Dixie Zens informed the audience of the passing of longtime former moderator, Sally Ayrey. He also recognized former select board chair, Jon French for his service. He then thanked the town office staff, Susan Whitney and Caroline Hartshorn for their work. He also thanked the town highway department, Marc Johnston, Josh Corey and Keegan Hawley for their work.

At approximately 7:05PM, with the arrival of State Representatives Kathleen James and Seth Bongartz, Moderator Grzyb paused the meeting and turned the microphone over to the State Representatives to address their constituents. The meeting resumed at 7:15PM. Moderator Grzyb thanked Representatives James and Bongartz.

Moderator Grzyb then reviewed Roberts Rules of order with those in attendance. Reminding all present of the meeting procedures and to be respectful

Article 2. Shall the voters of Sunderland authorize the payment of the personal and property taxes to the Town Treasurer in equal installments with the payments to be in the hands of the Treasurer by Tuesday, October 15th, 2024 and Tuesday, April 15th, 2025?
Harriet Welther moved, Joe Boutin seconded. All in favor. Motion passed with no discussion.

Article 3. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$70,000 to be added to the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund?

Melanie Virgilio moved the question. Marge Skinner seconded. Joe Boutin asked about the amount of the transfers, questioning an increase? Bruce Mattison responded that the amount requested is the same as last year. A new dump truck has been ordered. Road Foreman Marc Johnston stated a new dump truck's total cost is \$260,000. All equipment pricing has increased. John Garrow asked if one truck will be gotten rid of? Bruce Mattison responded yes. He also noted that the total highway fund transfers are less than last year as some reserves are not requesting a transfer this year. With no further discussion, Article 3 was unanimously approved.

Article 4. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$70,000 to be added to the Paving Reserve Fund?

The question was moved by David Traver Adolphus, seconded by Colleen York. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 5. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$1,500 to be added to the Building Maintenance Reserve Fund?

Lenore Bresnick moved the question, seconded by Michael Welther. Joe Boutin asked how much is currently in the fund? Treasurer Susan Whitney responded approximately \$3,000. With no further discussion, the motion passed with all in favor.

Article 6. Shall the voters of Sunderland establish a reserve fund to be called the Special Projects Fund to be used for Projects that benefit the Town of Sunderland and its residents in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2804 and fund this reserve fund using anticipated fund balances of up to \$200,000 from the Highway Fund and up to \$65,000 from the General Fund?

Moved by Harriet Welther, seconded by Melanie Virgilio. Melanie asked why if there is a fund balance are monies being asked for? Dixie Zens explained that the fund balance is created by ARPA Funds and rolling it into a reserve fund eliminates when and how the monies are spent. Marge Skinner asked if residents will get a vote on the use of funds? Dixie Zens isn't sure, not finalized yet. Harriet Welther wonders if the money could be used for extending the bike path? Alex Bresnick says that was discussed as a possible use. He also explained that this article is a procedural maneuver to "turn the clock off". Michael Welther asked what things are under consideration? Martin Nadler responded that the ARPA committee has looked at several things, including protection for the town equipment, fire department requests, pavilion or gazebo for public use, enclosed bulletin boards, welcome signage etc. Colleen York explained the bike path extension has already received another grant approval for its extension. Joe Boutin asked for clarification about the wording and will this be a reoccurring reserve fund transfer? Martin Nadler responded that is not our intent. Joe Boutin asked how residents can communicate to the board regarding the usage of funds? Martin Nadler suggested completing the ARPA survey and attending board meetings. Alex Bresnick explained the transfer procedure and mechanics of the process. Rick Timmerman asked what happens if the article does not pass? Dixie Zens replies it is back to surplus. Ryan Porter asked why voters can't vote on the usage? Alex Bresnick stated that with a large variety of suggested uses there isn't a straightforward way. By creation of the Special Projects Fund it would buy more time. Joe Boutin made a motion to amend the article to require a public vote prior to using the money in the fund. Bruce Mattison seconded the motion. Jeff Dexter explained that he knows of no other towns requiring a public vote prior to using the funds. Caroline Hartshorn said she believes a petition could be done following the article, but an amendment of this type cannot be made. Dixie Zens mentioned the number of small cost items under consideration. Joe Boutin suggested a spending cap. Alex Bresnick pointed out that the board could have already spent the funds, but have gone to great lengths to garner public input. He supported the article as written. Colleen York asked how many have filled out the ARPA survey? A few attendees responded positively. She suggested filling out the survey during voting. Jeff Dexter reiterated that creation of the reserve fund would allow for more time to decide on uses. Ryan Porter asked about the guidelines for fund usage? Martin Nadler responded that the guidelines have broadened and encouraged all to attend select board meetings, the spending of funds will be on the agenda and warned ahead of time. Come to meetings and participate. Moderator Grzyb asked if the amendment motion stands or is rescinded. Joe Boutin rescinds his motion to amend. The original article is approved.

Article 7. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$700.00 for the support of Arlington Area Childcare, Inc. (Happy Days Playschool) to provide services to the residents of the town?

Melanie Virgilio moved the question, seconded by Brandon Smith. Melanie Virgilio stated the request is the same as prior years. Juliann Filipkowski asked if this allowed for Sunderland children to attend for free? Moderator Grzyb stated no, this is just to support their daily operations. Motion passed with all in favor.

Article 8. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$11,000.00 for the support of Northshire Day School to provide services to the residents of the town?

Article was moved by David Traver Adolphus and seconded by Alex Bresnick. Brandon Smith asked why the amount is so different from Happy Days. Moderator Grzyb responded it is just what was asked for. Is it a non-profit? Moderator Grzyb responded yes. Ryan Porter asked about wait lists? Members of the audience confirmed yes. Irene Nadler read a prepared statement in support of the Northshire Day School and the importance of early childhood programs for the later school success. Maria Timmerman asked about the number of Sunderland students. Irene Nadler responded 11. Kim Norman asked about other town's appropriation requests? Irene Nadler responded \$13,000 from Dorset and \$80,000 from Manchester. Jared Bianchi spoke in support of Northshire. No further discussion, ayes have it, motion approved.

Article 9. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$1,500.00 for the support of Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Service, Inc. to provide services to the residents of the town?

Marie Litowinsky moved the question. Melanie Virgilio seconded. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 10. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$5,000.00 for the support of Recreation Park in Arlington to provide services to the residents of the town?

Juliann Filipkowski moved the article, Colleen York seconded. Moderator Grzyb stated she uses the park daily. No other discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 11. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$9,100.00 for the support of Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library, Inc. to provide services to the residents of the town?

Harriet Welther moved the question. Leslie seconded. Question raised as to whether this is for upgrades to the library? Moderator Grzyb, speaking as a trustee replied it is for daily operations. Colleen York spoke in support. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 12. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$700.00 for the support of Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging to provide elder services to the residents of the town?

Joe Boutin moved the question, Marge Skinner seconded. No discussion followed. Motion was approved with all in favor.

Article 13. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$150.00 for the support of Project Against Violent Encounters (P.A.V.E.) to provide victim services to the residents of the town?

Harriet Welther moved the article, Melanie Virgilio seconded. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 14. Discussion of other non-binding business that may come before this meeting.

Jeff Dexter, Chair of the Sunderland Energy Committee explained Green Procurement designation. The Energy Committee held an energy forum last fall in Manchester. Will be sending a survey to residents. There will be an energy audit of energy efficiency at the town municipal building and garage through the Act 172 Municipal Resiliency grant.

The committee is also continuing the Windows Dresser project. Window inserts are built to mitigate drafts and help residents save on their fuel bills. Cost for residents is \$40 to \$80 each. The next build will be October 17th, likely at the Legion.

Arlington will be having an energy and resiliency fair June 1st at Arlington Commons.

Green Up Day is May 4th, it's 52nd year. 67 bags collected last year by 72 volunteers. Thank you to the road crew, Marc Johnston and Josh Corey.

Jeff also spoke regarding the progress of the installation of a State of Vermont historical marker honoring Lucy Prince. The area where Lucy Prince lived was near Ondawa Road. Expect installation of historic marker by end of the year. Film being released by Jay Craven featuring Lucy Prince. Jeff thanked Susan, Caroline and GNATV.

Joe Boutin asked about the cost of sheriff patrols and minimal revenue? Martin Nadler and Alex Bresnick explained their review of patrol logs and cost analysis. Ryan Porter asked if state police might be an option? Isn't really an option? Pete Luca asked about the revenue? Susan Whitney explained the state says payments are only sent to the town when someone actually pays their fine. Patty Rutins asked about drugs and if that is an issue in town? Dixie Zens responded not that we are aware of.

Marie Litowinsky spoke in favor of Window Dressers. Encouraged volunteers.

Todd Lawrence introduced himself as Emergency Management Coordinator and raised awareness of resources residents can use in an emergency. Rick Goddard asked about using the school in an emergency? Todd Lawrence responded it would be considered a secondary shelter for only limited use as it does not have a kitchen, showers etc. Arlington High School and Mount Anthony would be primary shelters.

Brandon Smith asked for a Village Center update. Andrew McKeever says the progress is slow. More discussions with BCRC and the state are pending. Reality is that very little will probably change as the area does not fit the classic definition. Dixie Zens added that there is no financial commitment to get the designation.

Pam Harder would like to see an alternative found by the Highway Depart to burning wood debris. Suggests a chipper or composting to help with air quality.

Joe Boutin asked why the employee appreciation line item is so small? Dixie Zens replied just starting small with a luncheon.

Dixie Zens invites the audience to attend the next ARPA meeting. Martin Nadler stated the next one will be in April, usually on a Sunday at 7PM. The agenda will be posted.

Moderator Grzyb reminded everyone that the remaining articles would be voted by Australian ballot on Tuesday from 10 AM until 7 PM. With no more discussion, this portion of the meeting adjourned at 8:37PM.

Polls were declared open on Tuesday, March 5th, 2024 at 10:00AM by Town Clerk Susan Whitney and closed at 7:00PM. Balloting Results as follows:

Article 15. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$ 21,245.00 for the Cemetery Maintenance Budget?

YES	249
NO	34
BLANK	14
TOTAL	<u>297</u>

Article 16. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$ 383,627.00 for the General Fund Budget?

YES	246
NO	38
BLANK	13
TOTAL	<u>297</u>

Article 17. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$ 544,090.00 for the Highway Fund Budget?

YES	236
NO	51
BLANK	10
TOTAL	<u>297</u>

Article 18. To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers, as required by law:

(* Denotes Elected)

Auditor- 3 year term

Write-ins	6
Blank	291
TOTAL	<u>297</u>

Cemetery Commissioner – 3 year term

Avis Hayden	247	*
Write-ins	2	
Blank	48	
TOTAL	<u>297</u>	

Delinquent Tax Collector- 1 year term

Richard A. Davis II	235	*
Blank	62	
TOTAL	<u>297</u>	

First Constable- 1 year term

Wayne Godfrey	192	*
Write-ins	14	
Blank	91	
TOTAL	<u>297</u>	

Second Constable- 1 year term

Kevin Hewes	224	*
Write-ins	3	
Blank	70	
TOTAL	<u>297</u>	

Lister- 3 year term

Peter R. Van Vleck	228	*
Write-ins	2	
Blank	67	
TOTAL	<u>297</u>	

Select Board Member- 3 year term

Martin Nadler	119	*
Michael Pugliese	118	
Write-ins	1	
Blank	57	
Overvotes	2	
TOTAL	<u>297</u>	

Select Board Member- 1 year term

Todd Lawrence	150	*
Michael Perra	94	
Ryan Porter	73	
Richard "Dixie" Zens	107	*
Write-ins	6	
Blank	160	
Overvotes	4	
TOTAL	<u>594</u>	

Town Moderator- 1 year term

Write-ins	15
Blank	282
TOTAL	<u>297</u>

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Whitney

Town Clerk

Approved 3/11/2024 Select Board Meeting

Town of Sunderland Selectboard

Annual Report for 2024

This past year has been another very good year for our Town of Sunderland! An update for our Town's aging technology has been installed, the Sunderland Hill Road bike path has been extended to Bacon Hollow Road, the skilled and dedicated Road Crew has kept our roads, bridges, and town equipment in great condition throughout the year, new "Welcome to Sunderland" signs have been installed, our Energy Committee has been very active with projects and procuring a large grant to make our Town Hall & Garage more energy efficient, a community dinner with all the Town's residents invited is planned for this year, reappraisals of all the residences in Sunderland has begun, and our Town Clerk, Susan Whitney with her assistant, Caroline Hartshorn, have made certain our Town business served our community well.

The updates to our aging technology were installed this past year. This included new office and garage computers, adding document scanners, adding a ZOOM Meeting system with camera, microphone and display, and a new phone system. The WiFi was improved which allows residents to connect to the internet from our Town Hall's parking lot.

The Safe Roads Committee worked with V-Trans to acquire a grant to extend the Sunderland Hill Road Bike Path from the top of the "S" turn above the Town Hall to Bacon Hollow Rd. The Road crew did all the prep work for the bike path and filled the shoulders after paving.

The Road Crew, headed by Marc Johnston, has continued to do a fantastic job keeping our roads, bridges, culverts and vegetation along our roadways in wonderful condition for the safety of all our residents. This year the Covered Bridge road surface showed some signs of wear which were repaired by James Hawley and his team with help from our Road Crew, so the ride is very smooth through it now. Replacing culverts and upsizing several to meet state standards was done without major disruption to traffic flow. Ryker Kozal joined Marc Johnston and Keegan Hawley on our road crew this year. Thank you all for your fine work!

Four new "Welcome to Sunderland" signs have been installed with the help of our Road Crew. Conceived by our Planning Commission and inspired by the Sunderland Elementary Students, the beautiful signs were purchased using a few hundred dollars from the Special Projects Fund.

Our Energy Committee, headed by Jeff Dexter, has guided our small town to be a model for the State. This year, after organizing Green Up Day and recruiting town folks to participate in Window Dressers, Jeff, working with BCRC (Bennington County Regional Commission), had applied for and received a state grant for improving the

energy efficiency of Municipal Buildings. The \$206,632. Grant will cover the cost of Heat Pumps in the Town Hall Meeting Room and at the Town Garage, major insulation and repairs to reduce heat loss for the town garage will be done in the coming year as well as solar panels for both the Town Hall & Town Garage.

Window Dressers was held in October at the First Congregational Church in Manchester this year. The Northshire Build included energy committees from Dorset, Manchester, Arlington as well as Sunderland. Over 300 inserts were assembled and delivered to homes and churches in the Northshire Towns, saving thousands of gallons of heating fuel per year. There will be more to build next year for the wonderful event.

Three new members joined the Energy Committee this year, Colleen and Scott York and Liz Miller. Thank you all!

Later this Spring, the town of Sunderland will be hosting a "Community Visit," organized by the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD). For those not familiar with community visits, they are a way to bring together residents of a community to discuss current issues, common goals and future directions for a town, and work out ways of achieving them. It's a three month-long process, with community members meeting together with a Visiting Team of federal, state and regional experts organized by the VCRD, who will help community members access resources they may need to move forward on the identified goals.

The Community Visit will feature a community dinner, where town residents can share their ideas about what they would like to see happening to move Sunderland forward. Before that, there will have been a "focus forum," where some preliminary ideas will have been discussed. Following the community dinner, a series of committees and task forces will meet over the following two months to work out how to implement the community priorities that have been highlighted. We are hoping to have the Community Visit launched possibly this coming May and extended out over the summer.

This seems like a good time for our town to gather as neighbors and exchange ideas. Sunderland's population is at an all-time high of slightly more than 1,000 people. We have new neighbors who have arrived recently. We will be getting the word out about meeting times as soon as those have been set up. We want to encourage as many townspeople as possible to participate in one way or another. We're interested to see if the town's folks would be favorable to do the dinner as a community potluck. The dinner is most likely going to be held at the Sunderland Elementary School building.

For more information about Community Visits, you can visit the VCRD's website, at <https://www.vtrural.org/community-visits/>.

Reappraisals for the Town of Sunderland were initiated this year. The appraisers are going road to road over the next year or so, reassessing all the properties in our town. So, if you see folks looking at properties around you, they may be the appraisers. They will be sending out postcards to let each home know when they are going to visit.

Our wonderful Town Clerk and Treasurer, Susan Whitney, is retiring in March. She has been excellent in her work. She has kept the Selectboard on task and nudged us back on course when we might stray from the proper rules. To do both the Town Clerk's and the Treasurer's duties could be quite daunting, but Susan has made it seem easy (although we know that she had put in many, many hours after the office was closed). Added to her duties, Susan utilized her skills to be the Town's Web Master, keeping our website up to date with postings of agendas, minutes, and committee reports and other town business information.

Caroline Hartshorn, assistant to Susan, always greets folks with her wonderful smile when they enter the Town Office. Caroline is quick to help anyone in need with any of the many tasks provided by the Town Office.

The Town would like to thank Andrew McKeever for his many years serving on our board, as he is not running for another term. He has been a great asset to our community through his fine work with GNAT and serving on the Energy Committee. Andrew's thoughtful input to our Selectboard has been truly appreciated by all.

From all the members of the selectboard, we wish Susan the best in her retirement. Thank you so much for all the help and guidance you have given our board over the 6 years you have served our Town so well!

Please check the Town's Web for town's business news, agendas, minutes, announcements, Town's calendar and much more at: <https://sunderlandvt.org/>

Richard "Dixie" Zens
Sunderland Select Board Chair

ZONING ADMINISTRATORS REPORT 2024

Forty-one zoning applications were received in 2024 including ten new single-family homes. Eleven applications unfinished from the previous Zoning Administrator in 2023 were also completed.

Please contact me with any concerns regarding the application of the Land Use Bylaws and your project. During 2024 many proposals were reviewed with landowners, engineers, surveyors, and architects.

Office hours for 2025 will be Monday and Tuesday 9AM – 11AM at Town Hall. I can be contacted at zoningadmin@sunderlandvt.org, emails are preferred, phone messages will only be checked during office hours. During office hours I can be reached at 802-430-7146.

The Selectboard passed a **Short-Term Rental Ordinance (STR)** in 2024. Two applications to operate new short-term rental were received under the new ordinance and permits were issued.

This Ordinance was adopted by the Selectboard on the 23rd day of September, 2024 after warned public meetings and hearings by the Planning Commission and Selectboard. A forty-five-day waiting period to allow for a citizen petition ended on November 7. No petitions were received. As provided by law the ordinance became effective November 22, 2024.

Properties used for short-term rental in the 12 months prior to December 1, 2024 will be required to apply for a zoning permit using the Short-Term Rental Application form to continue the short-term rental use within 6 months of the effective date. After December 1, 2024 if there are no short-term rentals of such a property for a period of 12 months the use will be considered discontinued and a zoning permit will be required to resume offering the property for short-term rental. Properties starting operation as an STR are required to file an application before rentals begin.

Thank you

David Kiernan
Sunderland Zoning Administrator

PLANNING REPORT

While we did not receive many permit applications in the past year, the Planning Commission Board was busy in 2024 working on town-wide initiatives. The Board proposed and the Selectboard agreed to install welcome signs at key entrances to town. Sunderland Elementary school children drew models which were integrated into a final design and made for a fun, productive community project. Comments regarding the signs have been overwhelmingly positive. Thanks to the children and others who helped create the welcome signs.

In March Sunderland was awarded a state designation for its Village Center. The designation was the result of two years' work to create and submit a winning proposal, which in turn opens up potential state and federal funding for the town and land owners within the Village Center district. The board believes that the vast majority of residents wish to maintain Sunderland's character as a "small, rural town". However, change is inevitable. With the proper guidelines and policies in place, the town will be able to have better control of its destiny, thereby ensuring growth does not alter our town's character.

In collaboration with the Selectboard, in 2025 we will organize a town-wide meeting inviting residents to weigh in on: subjects of general interest, direction they wish to see the town proceed, ideas with regard to the Village Center as well as wishes & concerns as we update the town's Masterplan due in 2026.

This past year we passed a Short-Term Rental Ordinance. In our deliberations we were guided by the need to protect the character of our residential neighborhoods--from noise, lights, excessive parking, trash and crowds. Also ensuring if neighbors need to be able to contact a responsible party, should renters cause problems, contacts will be readily available and close-by to address the problem. Just as important, we strived to ensure the safety of visitors to our town. We blended language from several towns around the state with input from others to create a policy that represents a strong first step in a rapidly changing legal climate. Starting in 2025, all residences used as short-term rentals will need to be licensed annually.

In 2025 we will work on revising the format of the town zoning by-laws to create what we believe will be a more user-friendly document. In addition, by state statute we must update our town masterplan which will be accomplished with input from you, the residents, and our Selectboard. The Bennington Regional Planning Commission as always will be instrumental with their guidance and resources to put thought to paper in a form which state administrators will accept.

We encourage you to attend our meetings in person or virtually, we welcome your voice!

Robert Zeif
Planning Board Chair

More than 50 years ago, a small group of residents dedicated their time, energy, and resources to start the Arlington Rescue Squad (ARS). ARS is a non-profit organization which provides 24/7 365 days-a-year emergency medical services to your town. ARS now employs a small staff to provide daytime coverage, seven days a week. We continue to rely on volunteers to provide nighttime coverage. We are the only agency in the county who still relies on this "hybrid" model of paid staff and volunteers. We are sincerely grateful to all of our highly trained and dedicated providers who respond to 911 emergencies with up to Paramedic level capabilities. Our staff and volunteers engage in continuing education and training in order to maintain a high level of proficiency at their individual license level. We respond to nearly 700 calls a year.. We respond to medical emergencies and automobile accidents; we also assist the Arlington Fire Department with stand-by assistance for structure and brush fires. We respond to many calls in which we do not transport a patient; however, we incur the same expense for those calls.

We would like to sincerely thank the residents of Arlington, Sunderland, Sandgate and North Shaftsbury for their continued financial support through the generous town appropriations. The financial support of these towns helps ARS remain financially solvent in order to respond to emergencies with a dedicated crew..

We are especially thankful to the members of the Arlington Fire department. They are there for us when we need extra help, whether it is driving an ambulance, assisting with a lift assist, or providing CPR support during a critical call. Thank you! Several members of the Department have completed the Vermont Emergency First Responder (VEFR) course, receiving their licenses at this level. Some of these members are considering pursuing an Emergency Medical Technician license.

We were very happy to meet and get-to-know many in our community during several events including Norman's Attic, Trunk-or-Treat at Arlington Memorial High School, the Lighted Tractor Parade, and several sporting events. In early spring, ARS members participated in a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) training. This large-scale training was held at the Manchester Recreation Park and involved multiple rescue and fire agencies from the surrounding areas. This was an excellent training that provided our members the opportunity to hone their skills and work with other agencies in the area.

As we look to the future, we have ordered a new ambulance with an expected delivery date of 2027. We plan to fundraise in order to offset the significant cost of this necessary vehicle. We will continue to have a presence in the community; we will offer training to those who would like to become involved; and we will continue to provide exceptional emergency medical care to those in our community.

We are always eager to welcome volunteers who might be interested in becoming involved with ARS. There is nothing more satisfying than helping those in your own community. If you would like to learn more about ARS, please give us a call. Our non-emergency number is (802) 375-6589. We would love to hear from you!

Finally, please remember to post your house number clearly so we can find you in an emergency. We would like to thank you again for your continued support. We could not do the good work we do without you.

Respectfully submitted,
Arlington Rescue Squad Board of Directors



Strengthening Communities Through Local Independent Media

GNAT-TV Service Territory:

Arlington
Dorset
Londonderry
Manchester
Peru
Rupert
Sandgate
Stratton
Sunderland
Weston
Winhall

WAYS TO WATCH

COMCAST CABLE CHANNELS:

1074 (PUBLIC)
1084 (GOVERNMENT)
1094 (EDUCATION)

GNAT-TV.ORG

YOUTUBE

ROKU & APPLE TV

LISTEN VIA PODCAST

Thank you for your continued support of GNAT-TV. Your generosity enables us to provide reliable local information and ensure transparent access to government processes. As the only independent nonprofit media outlet in our area, GNAT-TV plays a vital role in keeping our community informed, engaged, and connected.

In FY 2024, GNAT-TV aired and archived **43 Sunderland government meetings**, including 22 Select Board meetings, 13 Taconic & Green School Board meetings, 6 BRSU meetings, 1 Town Meeting, and 1 Special Meeting. Across our region, we produced **703 local programs**, including live-streaming **228 local government and public meetings**, ensuring civic transparency and access for all. As well as **47 community video announcements** produced, and we supported **1,580 community calendar events**—underscoring our commitment to keeping the community informed and engaged.

GNAT-TV Operating Revenue / Expense Summary Year Ending 9.30.2024

Operating Revenue

Mandated Cable Funding	\$386,180
Municipal Contributions (7 Towns)	\$14,000
Program Services, Contributions, Grants	\$113,704
Investments / Other	\$27,561
Cable Capital Funding:	\$38,617
Total Operating Revenue	\$580,062

Operating Expenses

Program / Production	\$532,289
General / Management	\$99,825
Fundraising	\$4,104
Total Operating Expense	636,218

Full financial reports available at gnat-tv.org

2024 Usage Data

703 Local Public Programs Produced

228 Government Meetings

167 News Projects Produced

47 Community Video Announcements

1580 Community Calendar Events

216,713 Online Video Views

366 Equipment & Facility Reservations

156 Training Sessions

231 People Trained

We expanded our training efforts, offering **156 sessions** that **trained 231 people** in media production. Our facilities and equipment were **reserved 366 times**, showcasing their value as a community resource. Online, GNAT-TV's content garnered **216,713 video views**, amplifying local voices and stories beyond our immediate area.

We continued producing interviews and discussions with legislators, airing Governor Scott's press conferences, and bridging statewide issues to the local level. We worked with schools to share their stories and stream graduation ceremonies, partnered with faith organizations to broadcast weekly services, and documented community events to preserve them for future generations.

As the media landscape evolves and cable funding becomes less reliable, your support is more important than ever. GNAT-TV remains dedicated to being a trusted, independent resource for the citizens we serve and a platform for diverse community voices. A strong local media organization is essential to our community, democracy, and collective future.

Thank you for considering a gift to sustain GNAT-TV and help us continue this critical work. Your support makes all the difference.

Greater Northshire Access Television is a 501c3 Not for Profit Organization
Created by Community Members in 1995



“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

~ Dr. Jane Goodall

Town of Sunderland
104 Mountain View Road.
Sunderland, VT 05250

**Thank You Sunderland
for helping keep Vermont a
beautiful place to live, work & play!**

**Your contribution makes a difference
#togetherwecan #greenupVT**

Green Up Vermont
P.O. Box 1191
Montpelier, VT 05601-1191

www.greenupvermont.org

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TREASURER
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Lucas Herring
Nick Miele
Bryn Oakleaf
Denise Palmer
Gene Richards

Green Up's mission is to promote the stewardship of our state's natural landscape and waterways and the livability of our communities by involving people in Green Up Day and raising public awareness about the benefits of a litter-free environment.

Green Up Vermont is a 501(c)(3) private nonprofit corporation.

Appropriation Request Letter

Oct. 15, 2024

Dear Residents of Sunderland

Thank you for your past appropriation to Green Up Vermont in support of Green Up Day. We had an amazing turnout with a 30% increase in volunteers (30,176) who picked up 404 TONS of trash and 15,813 tires from our roads and waterways. This amazing community service and sense of pride keeps our towns not only looking good, but also safe, healthy, and economically vibrant places to live.

Your help is crucial in sustaining this mission of clean environments and teaching our youth to care about and get involved in their communities. Your annual contribution is so appreciated and makes a real impact.

As Green Up rolls into our 55th year, we are again requesting your support for the usual \$100.00 appropriation.

The amount requested is based on town population and funds go directly back into your town in the way of supplies, educational tools for your schools, and local promotion for Green Up Day.

Population	\$ Request
• 0- 1,000	\$50
• 1001 - 2000	\$100
• 2001 - 3000	\$150
• 3001 - 4,000	\$200
• 4,001 up	\$300

This past Green Up Day we attempted and achieved a GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS® title. That's right little old Vermont holds a **world title** for "The most pledges received to pick up trash in 24 hours."

Mark your calendar for **Green Up Day 2025, May 3rd** - its Green Up Day's 55th Anniversary!

I am honored to serve your community and look forward to working with you again. Thank you so very much!

Kate Alberghini, Executive Director
802-522-7245 • greenup@greenupvermont.org



Arlington Area Childcare, Inc.

An Early Childhood Education Center

Arlington Area Child Care Annual Report 2024

As the new Executive Director of Arlington Area Childcare Inc., I am excited to write this Annual Report for you. It will highlight the center's fantastic accomplishments and explain our current areas of need.

In 2024, 77 students from Arlington, Sunderland, Sandgate, and neighboring towns attended our program part-time or full-time. These children (aged six weeks to twelve years) attended our Early Education program, Afterschool program, and Summer Camp.

Accomplishments-

- Maintained our 4 STARS with the State of Vermont.
- Maintaining SEED AND SEW accreditation.
- Family Advocacy Program- Our program continued its diaper and wipes bank and our food shelf and Christmas wish program that helped assist five local families with Christmas essentials for their families. We added Holiday meals to our programs, giving a total of 6 families and 30 people complete holiday meals at both Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- Fundraisers—Our center has worked hard in the last year to continue our essential annual fundraisers, such as the Mac and Cheese, Pizza, and Cheesecake fundraisers, which benefit the children within our program. We added a restaurant fundraiser, a 50/50 raffle, and a school support fundraiser. Our staff, board, and families all unite to make these fundraisers successful.
- Staff Growth—We currently have 11 teachers enrolled in CCV, either in college courses or the Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals course, to further their education. We also offer half- and full-day training to help our current staff members earn 30

professional development hours annually. We currently have all qualified staff working in-house. We have been able to offer our staff more competitive pay and time off as well.

- Camp Community Connections—This past Summer, we were excited to have our School Ageders for the entire summer with around 25 campers per day. The campers engaged in many different enrichment programs. To highlight one, the Music Junk Man taught the children how to repurpose materials and make music. They all participated in a concert that was featured in the Bennington Banner. Our camp remains the only one in our area for summer with a waiting list (a mile long).
- We are currently partnering with many different community and state programs, such as First Children Finance, Let's Grow Kids, VTAEYC, Vermont Afterschool, Building Bright Futures, the Directors group of Bennington County, Arlington Area Alliance, NAEYC TEACH, and CCV, and we are growing our connection with Stratton Mountain Foundation and other partners.

The contribution from Sunderland has remained the same for many years and will be all we seek this year as well.

Again, thank the area communities for supporting our program, special events, and fundraisers. We couldn't keep the program running without you!

December 31st, 2024

Town of Sunderland Select Board
104 Mountain View Rd
Sunderland VT 05250

Dear Members of the Select Board,

On behalf of the Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Service, I am writing to express our appreciation for the continued financial support of the board and the citizens of Sunderland. The Nursing Service is respectfully requesting that the board consider funding for the year 2025 in the amount of \$1500. The nursing service continues to provide financial support for those in need of medical assistance, as well as camp scholarships, support for the Red Stocking and summer lunch programs, and JISP/KAP participation for area students. We also continue to provide four rolling scholarships to graduating students pursuing careers in healthcare. We were able to increase this scholarship amount for each recipient by \$500 in the 2024-2025 academic year. We sincerely hope that you are able to grant our request, so we may continue to provide these important services in the community throughout the year.

On behalf of the thirty community members that comprise our Board of Trustees, thank you for your service to our town and for your continued support of our missions.

Sincerely,

Jessica Massey

Jessica Massey, President
Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Service, Inc.

The Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library

The Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library (MCMFL) serves the communities of Arlington, Sandgate, Shaftsbury, and Sunderland; over 300 of our patrons reside in Sunderland. This has been a transition year for our library with the retirement of Phyllis Skidmore after 44 years of dedicated service. The new director, Kyrre Howard, started in June and is excited to embark on this new chapter at the MCMFL.

During 2024, the library welcomed 10,535 patrons and hosted over 100 free programs. The MCMFL stepped out of the uncertain times the COVID-19 pandemic brought and began hosting more programs for patrons, and looks forward to more in the new year. The library is committed to the towns and communities it serves, striving to provide the best service possible. Plans have begun for new programs for all ages, including a cookbook club and a book making program with Vermont children's book illustrators.

Programming is only a piece of what this library has in store for patrons. The MCMFL Canfield Gallery will showcase a variety of local artists and themes for patrons to experience and learn about. From upcycled art to mining, there will be a lot to see in the gallery this coming year. Also, available are computers, a copier, printers, and a 3D printer. For kids, there are learning kits and book express boxes for families and local schools to check out for their classrooms. These are available to help kids learn about gardening, building circuits, tools and machines, and so much more!

The Russell Vermontiana Collection and MCMFL's curator Bill Budde have a wealth of local and state history to share. Whether you are looking for information about family genealogy, a local residence, or a general history of Bennington County or Vermont, Bill can work with you to search for more information. 2024 was a busy year for the Russell Collection. The major activity was preparing and installing the Main Street: Past and Present exhibit at Arlington Common. Three presentations related to the exhibit were given: "Main Street, Past and Present," "Arlington Industries," and "Mill History of Arlington, Sandgate, and Sunderland." Other recordings and interviews included eight "History Minutes" for radio, and video segments for GNAT-TV on the Hawley/Crofut House, the History of the Intersection of Rtes. 7A and 313, and the Ira Allen House. Other presentations included one on the Carthusian Monastery, and participation in promoting and follow up Q and A for the Les Craven movie "Lost Nation." Preparation for the 250th anniversary event of the March to Fort Ticonderoga focused on identifying the Arlington residence and purchases of Ethan Allen. Preservation work included the completion of a finding aid for the USS Bennington Collection, as well as scanning important early ledgers, including the early Arlington Masonic Lodge Ledger (1799, Newton Lodge), the Mallory/Brownson Ledger (1757-1820), and a general store ledger from Williston, Vermont (1812-1815).

To help support all of these community programs, events, and services, the Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library is requesting \$10,010 from the Town of Sunderland for the fiscal year 2025. Thank you all for your support and we hope to see you at the library soon!

Respectfully submitted,

Kyrre Howard, Library Director
Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library
528 East Arlington Rd, PO Box 267
Arlington, VT 05250
martha_canfield_lib@hotmail.com
www.marthacanfieldlibrary.org

Rutland Office
143 Maple St
Rutland VT, 05701
(802) 786-5990



Bennington Office
160 Benmont Ave, Suite #90
Bennington VT, 05201
(802) 442-5436

Report to the Citizens of Sunderland

This report describes the services that the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging (SVCOA) provided to older residents in Sunderland during SVCOA's most recent annual reporting period of 10/1/2023 through 9/30/2024.

Nutrition Support

The Council helped provide 64 meals that were delivered to the home of 2 older residents in your community. This service is often called "Meals on Wheels". In addition, 3 older Sunderland residents came to a luncheon site in your area to enjoy a nutritious meal and the company of others; 222 meals were provided.

Additionally, SVCOA provided 1.75 hours of one-on-one nutrition support, including nutrition assessments and resource connections and referrals, to 3 residents of Sunderland.

Case Management Assistance:

SVCOA case management and outreach staff helped 4 older residents in your community for a total of 17 hours. Case managers meet with an older resident privately in their home or at another agreed upon location and assess their individual situation. They will work with the older resident to identify needs and talk about possible services available to address those needs. If the older resident desires, the case manager will link the client to appropriate services, coordinate and monitor services as necessary, and provide information and assistance to caregivers. Case managers also help residents connect with in-home assistance programs, including a program called Choices for Care. This program is especially helpful to frail older Vermonters facing long term care placement who still wish to remain at home.

Other Services and Support:

- "Senior Helpline" assistance at 1-800-642-5119. Our Senior Helpline staff provide telephone support to older Vermonters and others who need information on available programs and community resources.
- Medicare and health benefit counseling information and assistance through our State Health Insurance Program.
- Legal service assistance through the Vermont Senior Citizens Law Project.
- Information about issues and opportunities that directly affect older Vermonters via various agency articles and publications.
- Nutrition education and counseling services provided by SVCOA's Registered Dietician.
- Senior Companion support for frail, homebound older Vermonters.
- Outreach services to older Vermonters dealing with mental health issues through our Elder Care Clinician. This service is provided in cooperation with Rutland Mental Health.
- Transportation assistance.
- Caregiver support, information and respite to family members and others who are providing much needed help to older Vermonters in need of assistance.
- Money Management programs that offer either a volunteer bill payer or representative payee services to older Vermonters and younger disabled individuals.



**PROJECT AGAINST
VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS**

Mailing: P.O. Box 227, Bennington, VT 05201
Physical: 102 Dewey St, Bennington, VT 05201
Office: 802.442.2370 | Hotline: 802.442.2111
www.pavebennington.org

11/26/2024

Town of Sunderland;

PAVE has spent the last year building community with the survivors we support in hopes of creating a strong, resilient group of people with lived experience who have broken the cycle of abuse. We have been blessed to be able to continue to provide emergency support, housing and advocacy and also long-term support with survivors after the crisis of fleeing has ended.

Our 24/7 emergency hotline is often the open door for survivors looking to flee from violent relationships need to leave. Powered by PAVE Advocates and dedicated volunteers the hotline fielded over 1000 calls. Our Emergency Shelter, the first stop for many survivors who are working to rebuild their lives, provided over 110 individuals with safe, free housing. Ongoing case management was able to aide 25 individuals with obtaining long term housing support vouchers. 4% of survivors supported identified as residents of Sunderland.

PAVE’s collaboration with local law enforcement generated approximately 100 referrals and led to 60 protection orders for survivors. Our work with local early childhood centers, schools and other youth organizations allowed us to reach close to 300 youth with a message of healthy relationships.

As we move forward into the new year, we are happy to announce we will be hiring a new Advocate to our team. This Advocate will focus on providing support to those who have been sexually assaulted. This support will especially focus on the outlying towns in Bennington County, where accessing medical care in Bennington maybe a challenge. Support and financial assistance will be made available through this new Advocacy position to help survivors of Sexual Assault access the services they deserve.

Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE) is requesting level funding this year from the Town of Sunderland in the amount of \$150.00. We greatly appreciate the support the town provides to PAVE.

With Gratitude,

Lindsay

Lindsay Brillon, M.Ed. LSW
Executive Director



PAVE Budget Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Income	
Contributions - Indiv, Bus, Group	66,553
Contributions - Towns	9,000
Grant Income	636,137
Total Income	711,690

PAVE is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and your donation is fully tax deductible, less the value of any goods or services received. PAVE does not appraise the value of gifts. Our tax ID number is 03-0285583.

Taconic and Green Regional School District Directors' Message

January 2024

Herbert G. Ogden, Chair

Our full annual report is available at your Town Clerk's office or online at www.brsu.org/page/annual-and-town-reports. We hope you will read about the important issues facing our nine town district and give us your thoughts, especially regarding elementary school reorganization and the possible regional middle school. When you get to the section on the budget, please note that Vermont has income sensitivity that reduces the property tax on primary residences for many people. Income sensitivity can also reduce renters' taxes.

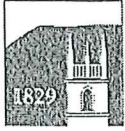
Before the Annual District Meeting, which will be held at Flood Brook School in Londonderry on February 25th, from 6:30 until 7 p.m. we are hosting an informal get-acquainted time with board members and some of our Senators and Representatives. There will be refreshments. At 7, the formal meeting begins with floor votes including the election of the District Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer.

As always, voting on the budget, reserve funds, and high school tuition will be by Australian Ballot on Town Meeting Day, March 4th. **You will not automatically receive an absentee ballot.** If you want to vote by mail, you must request a mail ballot from your Town Clerk.

Developing a budget was only one of our tasks. On a statewide level, we are still contending with the performance of the State Agency of Education, including its mistakes in counting students and its delay in enforcing the antidiscrimination rules that took effect in 2022. I represented our part of the state on a Vt. School Boards Association task force that sought to analyze and improve the Agency's performance. Our report is at <https://link.vtvsba.org/FINALTaskForce.pdf>.

Locally, the big issues this year were a possible middle school serving all nine towns and a reorganization of the elementary schools. We thank all the people who attended public forums about this in the fall. We held one at each of our five schools and one for staff. Most of those who spoke favored a regional middle school but there were concerns including whether we can afford it. Most of those who spoke wanted to keep all five elementary schools open. The Superintendent has shown this is not a very reasonable long term prospect as enrollments decline and buildings become more expensive to maintain as they age – unless the district is willing to pay much more to provide high quality education at the same time. We anticipate further pressure from the Governor to reduce the number of staff per student by closing one or more of the schools. Vermont has the highest number of school employees per student in the entire country.

If you want to know more about how we operate or comment on our work, please attend one of our meetings either remotely or in person. We also welcome comments and questions by letter or email. We meet at least monthly. We usually begin at 6:30 p.m. and aim to end by 8:30. There is a ten minute public comment period at the beginning. Agendas, minutes, and information on how to attend remotely are available on the Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union website, www.brsu.org.



Dear Sending Town Voters:

The Burr and Burton Academy (BBA) Board of Trustees has set BBA's per-pupil tuition rate at \$21,972, a 4.8% increase, for the 2025-2026 school year. Please find below an explanation of the thought process:

- Our educators are the lifeblood of this school. Like most schools, BBA salaries and benefits constitute 75% of our total costs. A 4.8% increase is necessary for salaries to keep pace with inflation while providing healthcare benefits. In addition, we will increase our fundraising efforts and expand our international program to stay financially balanced.
- Cost vigilance has been constant. Several years ago, we changed health insurance suppliers to escape VEHI's high costs, instead adopting a plan that includes significant self-insurance on BBA's part but lowers our premiums. We continually evaluate our course offerings and class sizes, "pruning and grafting" so BBA students have a wide range of opportunities within a responsible economic framework. This year, we paused the Mountain Campus semester program to help manage costs.
- Tuition only covers ~80% of our per-pupil cost. Each year, we raise \$1.5 million in annual fund donations, draw \$1.0 million from our endowment, and generate \$2 million in private tuition from international students. This supplemental revenue provides an additional \$5700 per pupil that enhances our program for all.
- We raise funds privately to support and expand BBA infrastructure. This coming summer, we will invest ~\$5 million in private funds to renovate the Smith Center, turning it into a full-blown Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics facility offering robotics, coding, science Olympiad, engineering, along with math and science; and we will upgrade athletic facilities. In the past year, we added state of the art LED lighting into our theater to support performing arts programming. These investments are critical in ensuring our students have access to high quality educational opportunities, and they come at no cost to taxpayers.

We appreciate our partnership with all of our sending communities, and we remain diligent in our efforts to be fiscally responsible partners while providing the highest quality educational experiences.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark H. Tashjian
Headmaster

Charley Stevenson
Chair, Board of Trustees

2024 Legislative Report

The Vermont General Assembly passed new legislation in 2024 related to property taxes, land use and housing, PFAS, and public safety, among other subjects.

Last March, voters around the state passed school budgets that were up nearly 19 percent on average. The legislature stepped in to reduce the impact on property taxes, but in Sunderland the homestead rate ultimately increased by 7.4%--still a substantial amount. With education budgets rising again, there is a growing consensus that the state's complex education funding formula needs to be revised. I am working with a bipartisan group of about two dozen House members committed to finding solutions.

For the first time since they were enacted in the 1970s, Vermont's Act 250 land-use laws have been updated. Act 250 has helped to contain sprawl and maintain the Vermont landscape, but today we face a widespread housing shortage. To encourage new housing construction, town and village centers with infrastructure will now be exempt from Act 250's permitting requirements, while the most environmentally sensitive areas will gain additional protections from development.

A decade after PFAS compounds were first detected in North Bennington well water, laws updated in 2024 will ban these "forever chemicals" from a growing number of consumer products (including cosmetics and cookware, as well as artificial turf). Meanwhile, the state is continuing to conduct random well testing, and has installed filters in some homes in the southeast section of town.

Our judicial system has become somewhat overwhelmed in recent years, with trial dates routinely scheduled for 12 months out as opioid-related arrests have increased. To address this backlog the legislature beefed up court resources in the 2025 budget, adding three new judges (who have recently been seated) along with more prosecutors and other court personnel. And to deal with the problem of defendants being charged with new crimes while awaiting trial, we removed the \$200 cap on bail when conditions of release aren't followed.

Amending Vermont's constitution is a lengthy process that requires four votes of the Legislature over three years, and ultimately ends with voter ratification at the ballot box. In 2024 the House concurred with two proposed amendments that were passed unanimously by the Senate. Proposal 3 would protect the right of Vermonters to form a union. Proposal 4 would add an equal rights clause to Vermont's constitution, joining 22 other states that have already done so. Both the House and Senate need to approve these amendments again before they would go before the voters in November 2026.

Vermont's economy remains strong, with historically low unemployment and rising wages. Using a consensus forecast developed by state economists, the Legislature builds a balanced budget each year based on anticipated revenues and expenses. Midway through the fiscal year, the state anticipates a revenue surplus of nearly \$200M, much of which will be available to apply to next year's expenses.

The legislative session resumes after Town Meeting week and will run through mid-May. Please don't hesitate to contact me to discuss legislation, or if I can be of any assistance, at ddurfee@leg.state.vt.us or 802 828-2228 (Montpelier) or 802 442-4414 (home).

Respectfully submitted,

David Durfee, State Representative, Bennington 3

2025 TOWN MEETING REPORT: Reps. Kathleen James and Rob Hunter

The Vermont General Assembly's 2025 legislative session kicked off on January 8. During the first week, House members took the oath of office, elected Rep. Jill Krowinski as Speaker, attended a joint assembly to hear Governor Scott's inaugural address, and received committee assignments for the 2025-2026 biennium.

Rep. James was named chair of the newly created House Energy and Digital Infrastructure Committee. This panel considers matters relating to energy, utilities, telecommunications, broadband, information technology, cybersecurity, and other similar policies. Rep. Hunter will serve on the House Education Committee. This panel covers education, libraries, and literary and scientific subjects.

The legislature meets in person at the State House in Montpelier every Tuesday through Friday during the five-month session, January through May. At the General Assembly website (legislature.vermont.gov), you can see legislator bios (including voting records), follow committee agendas, read bills and testimony, and watch all committee hearings and floor debate (both live and recorded).

Reps. James and Hunter will hold regular constituent coffee hours during the session. These informal get-togethers are open to all residents of the Bennington-4 district, which includes Arlington, Manchester, Sandgate and northwest Sunderland. Coffee hours are held on Saturday mornings from 9 to 10:30 am following the schedule below. We also attend town and school meetings in the communities we represent.

January 11: Charlie's Coffee House (Manchester)
January 25: Corner Market (East Arlington)
February 8: Wayside Country Store (West Arlington)
February 22: Charlie's Coffee House (Manchester)
March 1: Corner Market (East Arlington)
March 15: Wayside Country Store (West Arlington)
March 29: Charlie's Coffee House (Manchester)
April 12: Corner Market (East Arlington)
April 26: Wayside Country Store (West Arlington)
May 10: Charlie's Coffee House (Manchester)
May 24: Corner Market (East Arlington)
June 7: Wayside Country Store (West Arlington)

We see shared and urgent priorities for the upcoming two years, most of which are directly related to affordability and building a stronger, more vibrant state. Education funding — supporting high-quality schools that deliver an excellent education at an affordable, sustainable cost — has been and remains at the top of the list. We need to build a new funding system that's fair, transparent and that more clearly connects local spending decisions to tax rates.

The challenges facing Vermont — education, healthcare, housing, climate resiliency — are complicated and hard to solve. We're ready to develop and vote on specific proposals that we think will move the needle — policies that will make life better and more affordable for all of us, and legislation that will move Vermont forward. These times call for collaborative leadership, and we welcome your ideas.

To receive regular legislative updates, please join Kath and Rob's shared mailing list (sign up at kathjamesforstaterep.com). We're also easy to reach:

Rep. Kathleen James: KJames@leg.state.vt.us, 802.733.1435, kathjamesforstaterep.com

Rep. Rob Hunter: RHunter@leg.state.vt.us, 802.683.8945, hunterforrep.com

Bennington County Regional Commission

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) works with and on behalf of its member municipalities to build strong, resilient, and sustainable communities, to foster economic prosperity, and to promote a high quality of life for residents of the region. The BCRC plays an important role in coordinating work among local governments, state and federal agencies, regional public and nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and private interests. The organization is governed by local appointees from seventeen area municipalities and commissioners who represent interests ranging from public health to economic development. Regular meetings are held on the third Thursday of every other month, with frequent special meetings throughout the year (information at: www.bcrcvt.org).

In addition to its ongoing role in supporting the comprehensive planning work of municipal officials, the BCRC is a regional center for programs in community and economic development, transportation, energy, environmental conservation, water quality, public health, solid waste management, and emergency management. BCRC staff is available to provide direct assistance in these areas and to serve as a liaison with state and federal agencies.

During the past year, the BCRC has worked to implement its comprehensive plan through a variety of programs and cooperative work with member municipalities. Economic development planning at the BCRC is conducted by dedicated staff and supported by a committee with representatives appointed by the regional development corporation. The goal of this BCRC program is to support workforce development and business retention, growth, and recruitment. Related BCRC planning and community development initiatives support redevelopment initiatives in downtowns and village centers, grant assistance for local businesses, and have produced reuse planning studies for key properties throughout the region. Concern over the state's water quality has led the BCRC to identify and implement local projects that not only reduce stormwater runoff, but also protect roads, bridges, culverts, and private property from damage. Other important activities have included: an assessment of land use regulations affecting housing in each town and village, expanded staff capacity to assist with implementation of local energy plans, village center and neighborhood development area designations, implementation of the regional solid waste management plan and the development of a new permanent hazardous waste facility in the region, and planning for roadway, bicycle and pedestrian, and public transportation improvements.

In the coming year, the BCRC will continue to provide information and resources to assist business and local governments to take advantage of opportunities created through a variety of state and the federal programs. We expect to see continued focus on infrastructure (including broadband) improvement projects, housing creation, business support services, and resilience.

Our downtown Bennington offices are located at 210 South Street, but staff work remotely at times, so it generally is easiest to contact us via email (see contacts at www.bcrcvt.org).

Respectfully submitted,



William Colvin
Director

Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance

Arlington, Bennington, Dorset, Glastenbury, Manchester, Pownal, Rupert, Sandgate, Searsburg, Shaftsbury, Stamford, Sunderland, and Woodford

The Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance (BCSWA) is a partnership of 13 towns working together to reduce the amount of waste disposed in landfills through recycling, reuse, repair, and through other means of resource conservation. Since 2015, BCSWA has followed a solid waste implementation plan to assist residents, schools, businesses, and other organizations meet the requirements of Vermont's Universal Recycling Law.

Total spending for the Alliance in Fiscal Year 2024 (7/1/23 through 6/30/24) was \$228,330.72. Program costs are shared by the thirteen member towns of the alliance, and divided proportionally by each town based on their population. Additional funds are provided by grants from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the Agency of Agriculture and Markets. Members of the public may visit [bcswa.org](https://www.bcswa.org), or reach out to the Program manager at sgrimmyon@bcrcvt.org for budget details.

From May through October of 2024, BCSWA operated a Household Hazardous Waste depot at the Bennington Transfer Station to collect paint, pesticides, cleaning products, flammable liquids, and other over the counter items that are banned from landfill disposal. The facility collected over 30 tons of waste from 327 households and 6 small businesses during its 2024 season.

During 2024 the Alliance provided training and/or assistance to 41 businesses 13 event organizers, and 4 schools. BCSWA also co-hosted two repair events with the Bennington Public Library, held a landlord compliance and training event, hosted a waste hauler training and compliance event, led composting and recycling events at local libraries, produced regular content for public access television stations, and hosted tables at several farmers markets.

The Alliance hosts a website at www.bcswa.org, and is present on social media at [facebook.com/solidwastealliance](https://www.facebook.com/solidwastealliance), [instagram.com/bcswa_vt](https://www.instagram.com/bcswa_vt), and [youtube.com/@bcswa](https://www.youtube.com/@bcswa). Outreach on these channels provide resources and information to residents about:

- Scheduling a household hazardous waste drop off appointment
- Battery recycling through the Call2Recycle program
- Disposal of used motor oil at retail establishments and select transfer stations
- Recycling of paint through the PaintCare program, including retail stores that accept paint
- Prescription drug disposal including drop-off locations
- Recycling of textiles by the Apparel Impact, Goodwill, and others
- Disposing of fluorescent bulbs, compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and other mercury items at transfer stations and retail establishments
- Disposal of E-Waste at area transfer stations, Goodwill, Staples, and retail establishments
- Diverting food scraps by composting and annual sales of compost bins and kitchen containers
- Waste reduction resources for businesses, schools, events, institutions, and residents



Southern Vermont
Communications
Union District
www.sovtcud.net

January 2025

To our Member Towns and their Residents:

The Southern Vermont Communications Union District (SoVT CUD) has had another busy and successful year.

Consolidated Communications, Inc. (CCI) completed construction of the fiber network in Bennington County in September 2023, which was funded by a grant from Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB). Since the completion of the network, the CUD and CCI have continued to meet on a regular basis to discuss operational concerns and quarterly network performance reports. The CUD has also significantly advanced its sustainability planning through the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with Otter Creek and Lamoille CUDs and the development of a joint sustainability plan.

In July of 2024, SoVT, Otter Creek, and Lamoille CUDs executed a Memorandum of Understanding and jointly developed a ten-year sustainability plan which was presented to the VCBB. The sustainability plan outlines a transition to a tri-CUD model of joint compliance administration and oversight of CCI. The plan was approved by the VCBB and agreed to by CCI, which also agreed to fund the administration and compliance costs of the CUDs from 2027-2034!

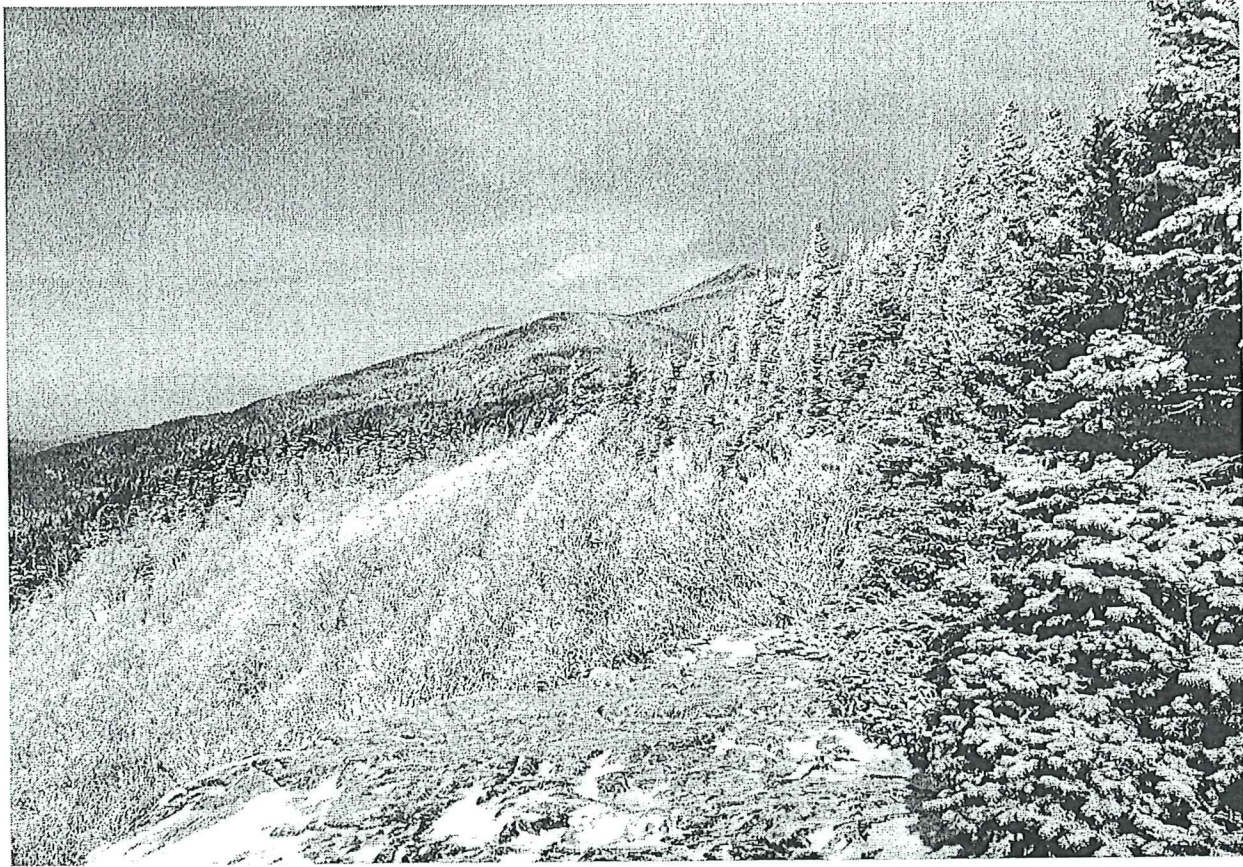
SoVT CUD recently secured \$220,000 in Preconstruction Grant funding from the VCBB to cover operational expenses in 2025 and 2026, including funding for a federal single audit to take place in 2025. Throughout 2025 and 2026, SoVT CUD will work with Otter Creek and Lamoille CUDs to transition to joint compliance administration and advance governance and succession planning.

SoVT CUD has also continued to explore solutions for the remaining hardest to reach addresses that constitute Phase 3. These addresses are primarily located in Arlington and Pownal and are unserved according to state data. In discussions with VCBB staff, it was decided that SoVT CUD's remaining addresses would be incorporated into the state administered Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD).

SoVT CUD meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:00 PM. Please join us and learn more at sovtcud.net.

Sincerely,

Terrence Dorsey, Chair
Southern Vermont Communications Union District



USDA Forest Service Photo. A high elevation winter wonderland.

Green Mountain National Forest Town Meeting Report

The employees of the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) depend heavily on support from many municipalities, volunteers, partners, and contractors. The Forest would like to take this time to thank you and your community for the support and interest that you have shown in helping with the management of the approximately 400,000-acre GMNF. The GMNF is proud to be a part of Vermont and your town. It is truly one of Vermont's treasures and the largest contiguous public land area in the state. Forest staff work hard to achieve quality public land management under a sustainable multiple-use management concept to meet the diverse needs of all people -- people in your town as well as all of the visitors who come to Vermont every year. This has been another exciting year for us, and we have worked hard to support new opportunities on the National Forest that benefit the people and communities that we serve.

*** *THE COMPLETE REPORT IS AVAILABLE AT THE SUNDERLAND TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE* ***

DOG LICENSING & THE VT SPAY NEUTER INCENTIVE PROGRAM aka "VSNIP"!

Pursuant to: 20 VS.A. §3581 of the Vermont Statutes Title 20: Internal Security and Public Safety, Chapter 193: Domestic Pet or Wolf-hybrid Control. Sub-chapter 002: Licenses: A dog must be licensed (registered) by six months of age at your town office to be legal. Proof of a rabies vaccination within the last year is required. Dogs not licensed can be seized and euthanized per state statute.

Registering identifies your dog. It's proof of protection against rabies in case an animal or person is bitten. Immediate medical attention is needed. Animals not vaccinated and registered could be quarantined or possibly seized and euthanized, enabling the brain to be tested. Rabies is deadly. PLEASE LICENSE NOW!

Vermont Statutes Title 20 - Internal Security and Public Safety Chapter 193 - Domestic Pet or Wolf-Hybrid Control §3621. Issuance of warrant to impound; complaint.

(a)(1) The legislative body of a municipality may at any time issue a warrant to one or more police officers, constables, pound keepers, or appointed animal control officers, directing them to promptly impound all dogs or wolf-hybrids within the town or city not licensed according to the provisions of this subchapter, except as exempted by section 3587 of this title, and to enter a complaint against the owners or keepers of the impounded dogs and wolf-hybrids.

A puppy (or kitten) can have their first rabies vaccination after 12 weeks of age. Community Animal Aid hosts a Wellness Clinic, including rabies vaccinations, for those unhoused or those receiving state benefits usually on the 2nd Saturday of the month: East Barre Fire Station. Check for updates: AnimalAidVT@gmail.com or 802-734-0259. Tractor Supply Stores host a monthly rabies clinic, and some VT Humane Societies and veterinarians offer a rabies clinic in March.

THE VT SPAY NEUTER INCENTIVE PROGRAM aka "VSNIP"

VSNIP helps income eligible Vermonters have dogs and cats spayed/neutered and vaccinated at a very reduced cost to them. Veterinary offices are throughout the state and we invite other veterinarians to join this altruistic effort to help continue eliminating routine euthanasia of mostly, an over population of cats and kittens. For an application, call 802-672-5302. Push #2 for instructions, or visit: VSNIP.VERMONT.GOV Sue Skaskiw, Administrator

TOGETHER WE DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Local Health Office Annual Report: 2024

Bennington Local Health Office | 324 Main St, Suite 2, Bennington VT
802-447-3531 | AHS.VDHBennington@Vermont.gov

Twelve Local Health Offices around the state are your community connection with the Vermont Department of Health. The Bennington Local Health Office provides essential services and resources to towns in Bennington County. Some highlights of our work in 2024 are below. For more information, visit HealthVermont.gov/local/bennington



Improve Family and Child Health

- In 2024, our WIC team conducted 1,410 visits with families, including in-person and tele-WIC appointments. This provided 1,030 participants in Bennington County with nutritious food and valuable nutrition education and support.
- Through our Farm to Family Program, our staff helped our WIC clients access \$6,000 in fresh, local produce.



Protect Community Health

- Our team investigates reports of infectious diseases and outbreaks and works closely with long-term and residential care facilities to keep residents safe and healthy.
- We vaccinated uninsured or underinsured individuals with COVID, flu, Mpox and other important immunizations. We provided 70 vaccines to individuals through our office clinic times and off-site Equity clinics.



Create Resilient Communities

- Our office provided Stop the Bleed training to 14 schools in Bennington County in 2024. This training is ongoing and more schools in both the Bennington Rutland Supervisory Union and the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union are scheduled for 2025.
- Our Bennington County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) played an important part in this effort. We are always in need of volunteers to help with emergencies and events. Contact us for more information.

