



**CITY OF MONTPELIER
CAPITAL CITY OF VERMONT**

City Manager's Weekly Report – 12/30/2016



UPCOMING MEETINGS ...

Tuesday, January 3

Montpelier Transportation & Infrastructure Committee,
5:15 P.M. in the City Manager's Conference Room

Design Review Committee, 5:30 P.M. in the City Council
Chambers

Development Review Board Meeting, 7:00 P.M. in the City
Council Chambers

FOR YOUR CALENDAR ...

Thursday, February 9, 2017 “Welcome Legislators” Reception, 5:00 – 7:00 P.M. in
the Capitol Plaza's Ballroom

ATTACHMENTS ...



Montpelier Senior Activity Center's January Newsletter: [http://www.montpelier-
vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/4024](http://www.montpelier-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/4024)

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT ...

Ice Rink

The fence was installed this week. Due to the storm and Public Works coverage needs, the current plan is to flood the rink on Monday, January 2nd. We are hopeful that it will be open for skating on January 4th.

Legal

Illuzzi vs City, et al: No further action to report since the July 12, 2016 VT Superior Court of Washington County issued its “Opinion and Order on Defendant's Motions to Compel, Enlarge, and Amend”.

VCFA vs. City, Supreme Court Appeal: The Vermont Supreme Court heard oral arguments on Wednesday, October 26th at 2:30 P.M. We now await their decision. Represented by Robert Fletcher.

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WEEKLY REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS ...

Assessor's Office

Notification was received from the Vermont Department of Taxes, Division of Property Valuation and Review, that Montpelier's Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) is now 94.2. This is down from last year's CLA of 95.26 and evidences the continuing rise in property values. This means that, on average, properties in the city are assessed at 94% of current market value per the State's analysis of valid sales.

The City's coefficient of dispersion (COD) increased from 10.43 % last year to 10.68%. According to PVR, "The higher the COD, the greater the disparity in how properties are assessed in that town. A COD of 10% or lower is considered to reflect a relatively high level of equity across taxpayers' assessments."

On December 12, 2016, Governor Shumlin appointed the Assessor as a Member of the Vermont Real Estate Appraisers Board.

Coordination of the 2017 Annual Report has begun by this office. Accura Printing has been selected to print the report.

Department of Public Works

Water Main Failures During the Week of December 26th

The week of December 26th proved to be a challenging time for the Water & Sewer Division. It began on the 27th with a water main break on Northfield Street near Independence Green. This section of old water main is very prone to failure with multiple repairs completed over the last few years. Rather than attempt an additional repair, the leak was isolated using a new valve, and service to all customers was restored by relying on the loop configuration serving the Freedom Drive neighborhood. This old water main is scheduled for replacement with the Northfield Street Reconstruction Project next summer.

During the early morning hours of December 28th, an 8" water main on River Street (Route 2) near Wheelock Street ruptured resulting in significant erosion. The road was closed to all traffic until the extent of erosion damage could be fully assessed. As a vital regional arterial highway, the decision to close the road was made in the interest of safety, but the designated detour routes were not ideally suited to accommodate tractor trailer trucks and were an inconvenience for travelers during the morning commute. This was a challenging repair to accomplish because River Street was constructed with a concrete base, and the water main was found underneath the edge of the concrete road slab. The road was deemed safe and was reopened to one-way traffic by about 8:30 A.M. and the repair work was able to proceed.

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Unfortunately, a decision was made to attempt repairs on River St within an unsupported trench excavation. The concrete road base impeded the installation of the trench box that is supposed to be used for worker safety when the depth of a trench is five feet or greater or is otherwise considered to be hazardous. Rather than overcoming the trench box obstacle and believing the trench safe to enter without shoring, staff neglected to consider requirements developed to ensure safe working conditions. Although well intentioned, the attempt to restore water service without adherence to safety requirements is likely to result in 2-3 citations and a fine from the Vermont Occupational Safety and Health Administration (VOSHA). This was a serious mistake that must be addressed through training and other measures to ensure it is not repeated in the future.

While work was wrapping up on River Street, DPW was notified of another major water leak in the Kent Street neighborhood. The leak was quickly isolated and damage was kept to minimum. This 6" water main was found to have a 2' long crack and by 7:00 P.M. on the 28th, the repair was complete and water service restored. However, the crew was called back to the scene a short time later to address a second failure. This second leak was determined to be another crack several feet from the first repair and water was finally restored to the neighborhood shortly after 9:00 P.M. that evening.

At about 3:00 A.M. on Friday the 30th, another water leak was reported to the emergency on-call person. This one was on Liberty Street near the Saint Paul Street intersection. The entire crew was mobilized once again; the location of the leak was found in short order and isolated between Main and Loomis Streets. This older cast iron water main was also discovered to have cracked and the repair was completed by about 9:00 A.M. that morning and all service was restored.

As requested by the Vermont DEC, Drinking Water & Groundwater Protection Division, a precautionary boil water notice was issued to all residences and businesses which lost water pressure as a result of the water main failures on River, Kent and Liberty Streets. The notices were issued to affected customers door to door, by posting in the City Clerk's Office and on the City's website. Water samples were collected over a period of 48 hours following restoration of water pressure and are being tested by an independent laboratory. Upon receipt of confirmation that the water supply is potable, the precautionary boil water notices will be lifted.

Although not verifiable, staff has theorized that a supply side pump problem at the Water Treatment Facility may have caused slight pressure differentials within the water distribution network. The faulty pump was taken out of service, and repairs are now being scheduled. Given the high operating pressures within the Montpelier system, coupled with aging water mains, fluctuations in pressure can sometimes result in failures within a water main weak point.


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TOPICS FOR UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS ...

January 11	Budget Conservation Commission Appointment The Bridge Indoor Rec/Aquatic Facility Update Summit School Request – Waiver of Fee for Rental of City Hall Auditorium Berlin Pond - Stitzel FOG Briefing
January 18	Community Fund Board Presentation Budget – 1 st Public Hearing Warning – 1 st Public Hearing Bond Public Hearing
January 26 (Thursday)	Budget – 2 nd Public Hearing Warning – 2 nd Public Hearing Petitions Kellogg-Hubbard Library Presentation Paving Ordinance Changes
February 8	Zoning


Jessie C. Baker
Assistant City Manager

*Wishing You All a
Happy, Healthy and
Safe New Year!*