

Subject to Change			
Wed., Apr. 1st	Homelessness Task Force	11:30 AM	City Council Chambers, City Hall Conference Call, TBD
Wed., Apr. 8th	City Council Meeting	6:30 PM	City Council Chambers, City Hall



Public Health and Safety

Coronavirus (COVID-19) City of Montpelier Response Update

The Montpelier community continues to be the focus of the City of Montpelier. As the Coronavirus continues to impact our City, we want to share updates on the City's actions to keep residents and employees safe and healthy. City Council meetings continue to have a physical meeting location at City Hall, but we encourage all residents to watch the meeting at home online, and to utilize our call-in option for participation. The City will have the number for the remote call-in option on every City Council meeting agenda.

General Updates:

- The City has immediately suspended use of parking meters and related enforcement. Until further notice, people will not be required to pay for parking at meters and no enforcement will occur for meter violations. Enforcement will continue for improper use of accessible spaces, blocking hydrants, blocking driveways, snow emergency regulations and other such violations.
- Property Tax installments due on May 15th will not accrue interest or penalties for late payments until June 15th.

Additional Building and Event Closures and Cancellations:

- City Hall:
 - o The City Manager's Office is by appointment only.
 - Please contact Jhasmine Lamb at 802-223-9502 or jlamb@montpelier-vt.org
 - o Montpelier Clerk and Treasurer's Office has been closed to the Public until further notice. Services will remain available under restrictions.
 - Please contact jodum@montpelier-vt.org or 802-223-9500
 - o All referrals, meetings, and communication with the Community Justice Center will be held remotely and online until further notice. Please contact 802-223-9606
- The Montpelier Senior Activity Center:
 - o FEAST meals are continuing to be provided on a to-go basis. Folks are welcome to volunteer to help deliver meals, please contact the Senior Center 802-223-2518

New Resources and Community Partners

- Washington & Northern Orange Counties Regional Response Command Center (WNOC-RRCC).
 - o This group is made from Capstone Community Action, Downstreet Housing & Community Development, the Vermont Department of Health, and with involvement from THRIVE partners. Their summary states their purpose as "providing non-critical, but essential social services to municipalities, organizations, and individuals in need, including but not limited to providing or

securing food, shelter, information, medical supplies, transportation, volunteers, etc.”. The City believes that they are our community’s best resource in managing volunteers, assisting our vulnerable populations, and serving as a point of contact for human-service related needs.

- The WNOC-RRCC is currently developing a call center to take direct requests from residents and community partners. The City will share that information as it becomes available.
- The City is still keeping up to date on community events and changes, along with places where you can volunteer your time. Information can be found here: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/1155/Coronavirus-Response>

For those who are able, take any needed precautions, but remember to support your local community businesses. There are many options to support our local shops, by buying a gift card, shopping online or by phone, or by ordering take-out or delivery. Also, please remember to reach out to your neighbors or folks you may think need assistance during this time. We can all support each other in these unstable times.



Responsive and Responsible Government

Message from the Planning & Community Development Department:

The Planning & Community Development Department would like to remind everyone that the building season is right around the corner. While Montpelier, like the rest of Vermont, continues to ‘stay at home and stay safe’ we want everyone to think about any spring and summer projects they were considering before this started. We realize that in uncertain times it may not seem like the best time to plan for projects but we want you to know that permits are good for one to two years so getting your permits done now can make those projects move quicker when you are ready.

For many, local zoning bylaws are long and confusing documents. For that reason the permits division has as our mission to be a guide for applicants. Staff will help with the basics (what district am I in?), inform applicants of their rights (can I put an office above my garage?), instruct applicants of the requirements (do I need to provide a site plan with the application?) and navigate the process to make sure applicants stay in compliance with the requirements of the regulations.

Our goal is also to make the process as efficient as possible. Usually, most administrative permits are issued within one business day of when a complete application is received. Today that may be a few more days as our staff is working from home and away from all the usual resources we have to answer questions but we still have a goal to be as prompt with your permit as possible. Since the zoning was revised, fewer permits require hearings but if a project requires review from one of our boards we look for ways to minimize delays in any application process. While we may not be able to make the experience for getting a permit fun, we do hope to make it less stressful.

We strongly encourage anyone interested in developing a project in the city to contact the Department before starting. Staff can determine if the work requires a permit and, if so, how to move forward to avoid delays later on. If you have questions please send an email to Audra Brown at abrown@montpelier-vt.org. Let her know what your address is and what project you are considering. She will let you know if a permit is needed and, if so, she will send you the applications and instructions for next steps. If you don’t have email you can call 262-6271 and leave a message on her voice mail. She will get that message within a day and get back to you but email is always our preferred form of communication. If you know you need one of our other staff members, they can be reached at: Chris Lumbra (Building Inspector) at clumbra@montpelier-vt.org, Meredith Crandall (Planning & Zoning Administrator) at mcrandall@montpelier-vt.org, or Mike Miller (Director) at mmiller@montpelier-vt.org.

Police Chief Hiring Process

The hiring process continues through March 30th. To date we have received sixteen (16) applications.



Inclusive, Equitable and Engaged Community

Community Transit Week

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission is pleased to announce Community Transit Week, a collaboration of Central Vermont transit providers and advocates that will take place Saturday May 2nd—Friday May 8th. Their goal is to spread awareness of public transit options across the region, and help connect potential riders to routes that serve their needs. The week will feature:

- An Opening Day Celebration on Saturday, May 2nd at the Montpelier Transit Center will focus on accessibility, including a stationary demo bus providing an opportunity to try many GMT accessibility features like wheel-chair lifts and bike racks; Transit partners and advocates will also be tabling there with more information and transit opportunities.
- A Free Ride Day on Monday, May 4th when all GMT rides in the Central Vermont Region will be free of charge
- A week-long On-Board Raffle for bus riders who can enter their name for a drawing of free bus passes and other prizes
- An Elected Officials Ride the Bus Day, where constituents will have an opportunity to connect to their legislators and municipal officials on the bus
- A Ride-the-Bus Photo Competition where you upload your picture to the Community Transit Week Instagram and/or Facebook page
- Plus many other events

Please feel free to contact Grace Vinson (vinson@cvregion.com) at the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission with any questions, comments or concerns.

Staff changes at the Community Justice Center

The Montpelier Community Justice Center is lucky to have found a uniquely well-qualified and competent replacement for Judy Gibson, our retiring Restorative Justice Program Coordinator. We welcomed Carol Plante to our MCJC team on March 16. While she started under adverse circumstances, requiring social distancing and the need to create new ways of doing business to meet the circumstances that have been evolving daily, she has risen to the challenge with professionalism, patience, and flexibility.



Carol holds a Bachelor's Degree in Management from Southern Vermont College and after a diverse career exercising her administrative skills, earned a Professional Certificate in Mediation and Conflict Management from Woodbury College (2003). She has worked with restorative justice panels since 2003, first as a volunteer in her own community and, since 2006, as the Director at the Hardwick Area Community Justice Center. She brings her depth of experience and facilitation skills to her work to address the needs of people engaged in the restorative process and to help realize the most appropriate outcomes for people affected by crime or conflict, for the community and for those responsible for the impact on others caused by their choices and actions. Carol served on the Board of Directors of the Community Justice Network of Vermont for 3 years and works with the Vermont Safe Driver Program.

Carol calls Cambridge, VT home where she likes to spend time in the garden, in nature, bicycling and snowboarding. She had been planning to set up a weekday home in Montpelier, though that plan will have to wait until we are once again able to move about in our community. Meanwhile, Carol will mostly work from home and keep our Restorative Justice Program in operation using online technologies.

Carol can be reached directly at cplante@montpelier-vt.org and 802-522-5566 and she will be checking and responding to messages left at the MCJC office main line 802-223-9606. Starting immediately, please contact her with all matters related to the MCJC's Restorative Justice Program.

Along with the good news of Carol joining Team MCJC, we are sad to say goodbye to Judy Gibson who is retiring. She came to us about fourteen years ago when she was in the process of making a mid-life shift into a career that would change her life and constructively touch the lives of so many people in our community. As she completed her MA in mediation and conflict management she came to volunteer with the Montpelier Community Justice Center, first as a Restorative Justice Panel volunteer and then, briefly, as an assistant in the office, doing whatever needed to be done. Judy was skilled, competent, personable, and funny and we immediately liked and trusted her. She made it clear that she wasn't going anywhere and she intended to work at the MCJC. As soon as we had an opening to hire her, we did. She quickly made herself indispensable.

Judy has become the face of our Restorative Justice Program. She has been critical to its growth, stellar results, and fidelity to restorative practice. She has also become the face of our office, as she insisted on positioning her desk so that she could greet people who came in the door. This action is typical of Judy, who has consistently been willing and able to do just about everything that needed to be done. Since the beginning Judy has shown up for work each day with effusive passion for restorative justice. She continually demonstrates her expertise as a mediator, facilitator, and restorative justice practitioner. She has worked with me to develop and deliver trainings in restorative practice for our volunteers and in conflict resolution for diverse audiences. I've heard nothing but appreciation for Judy over the years – from our RJ program participants who she gently nudges towards accountability and program completion; from our volunteers who she good-naturedly and patiently trains, supports and coaches to ensure that each RJ Panel meeting is as restorative in nature as it can be; from the community partners to whom she is always available, proactively responsive, and full of friendly cheer; and from the people who have benefited from her trainings who always credit Judy as the bright light that made the training such a good experience.

While we are happy for Judy in her retirement, all of us who interact with Judy at the MCJC will miss her terribly. Luckily she is still living in our community and we will continue to see her (once we are out of self-isolation). I'm sure she will continue to add value in multiple ways because she has a generous heart and so much to offer. If you want to know how to stay in touch with Judy, please send Yvonne an email at ybyrd@montpelier-vt.org.

From Montpelier Senior Activity Center:

FEAST Senior Meals, top priority for MSAC, continues to offer home-delivery and to-go meals for age 60+. To streamline operations, prepare for increased numbers, and reduce exposure for volunteer drivers, most at-home recipients now receive one weekly delivery of five frozen meals per week and daily wellness calls. All meal production is by employees of MSAC's long-time catering contractor, Good Taste Catering, and long-time FEAST kitchen and hospitality volunteers dismissed during the pandemic are receiving wellness calls as well.

FEAST To-Go meals continue to be offered Tues/Fri from a tent in front of the center, with demand expected to increase as most local churches cease production of community meals that have long fed many of the community's most vulnerable. MSAC staff are in communication with church community meal coordinators, discussing options for filling the gaps for their under-60 guests.

MSAC staff and the Community Services VISTA member are communicating with members of Montpelier Mutual-Aid, the Sustainable Montpelier Coalition and other stakeholder groups to support collaboration and communications

related to volunteerism, neighborhood groups, and service to the community's most vulnerable. They are looking forward to helping get the word out about the recently established Washington & Northern Orange County Regional Response Command Center (WNOC-RRCC), soon to announce a call center.

MSAC Staff and VISTA are working to initiate some remote Spring class offerings for members who enrolled in Spring classes that would have started the week of April 6. Alternate delivery options for classes will eventually include YouTube Live and Zoom, and staff/instructors will work to also reach class members who don't use internet/devices. Increasingly, MSAC is also announcing other online/remote class options and opportunities offered from other organizations and businesses, with an emphasis on local ones.

Planning is on schedule for (hopeful) Summer Classes that would normally start in July but may be delayed, may be all remote, or may be reduced and/or cancelled, depending on how the pandemic progresses. Proposals for summer classes, due April 10, are invited by the community and reviewed by a member committee. Proposal forms may be requested by emailing the Admin. Asst. at hdivack@montpelier-vt.org.

MSAC's Advisory Council had its first-ever fully remote meeting on March 23 and voted to postpone the June 16 Annual Membership Meeting rather than hold it remotely but advised the Director proceed with plans to mail the FY21 membership renewal forms and a committee-revised Annual Survey in early May.

March 31 is the deadline for nominations to the MSAC Advisory Board, people from MSAC's six supporting towns are especially encouraged to consider running, terms are now two years instead of three, and more information is available by reading MSAC's recently amended Governance Policies & Procedures at <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/6639/MSAC-Governance-2-18-20-AsAmended>. The AC webpage is <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/369/MSAC-Advisory-Council>.

Montpelier Walks on Spring Weekends with Harris Webster will begin on Saturday April 4. Those who have enjoyed past MSAC and Complete Streets Committee walks with Harris, those who heard about them but hadn't yet jumped on board, and those who have yet to experience these fabulous, planet- and heart-friendly outings, may all rejoice in hearing the news: Despite cancelling all our on-site, inside group activities, these MSAC walks WILL proceed (adhering to new Covid-19 social distancing regimens of about six feet between walkers, of course, and subject to amendment if circumstances require). The first walk is scheduled for Saturday, April 4, 9:00-10:30am, and will gather at the corner of Elm and Court Street. They'll be walking up to and down from Hubbard Park through the 'Meadows' and back to the gathering spot. Please RSVP to let Harris know you're coming, by Friday April 3 at noon, by calling 223-7399. Harris hopes to continue these walks every 1st and 3rd Saturday in April, May and June. See attached flyer.

From Parks & Trees:

The Parks and Trees Department has been busy delivering small loads of wood at zero cost to folks in immediate need of fuel to heat their homes. We have a limited amount of locally-sourced firewood - mostly green with some dry - and this will last as long as the firewood does. We have also been asking people with excess amounts of dry wood to donate it to others.



Sustainable Infrastructure

DPW Street & Water/Sewer Divisions:

Department of Public Works Street Division completed many different task throughout the week. Our crews

continued winter operations, (plowing & salting streets and sidewalks) from the approximate 9 inches of snow we received. Crew cleared storm drains to eliminate puddling downtown after winter operations was complete to avoid any freezing areas.

Our crews also completed the following task list:

- Road side repair and pickup (replacement of loose sod and asphalt chunks from winter plow damage)
- Removed fencing on the Bike Path by Shaw's Grocery that blew over from railroad bridge project
- Two Covid-19 meetings with city staff
- Swept sidewalks
- Picked up fallen trees on Gallison Hill Road
- Repaired bent meters Downtown by DMV
- Mailbox repairs on Elm Street
- Obtained a load of cold patch from Pike's in Williston
- Fixed temporary asphalt apron on Freedom Drive
- Serviced mud/rut issues on dirt roads
- Removed plow wings from 6 wheeler trucks
- Stockpiled more 1 1/4 stone for future dirt road problems (nights and weekends)
- Worked on cleaning trucks, desks, doorknobs, hard surfaces, social spacing, handwashing and all around awareness of measures to help prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Next week our Street Division will continue cleaning and wiping down building and equipment while increasing awareness of Covid-19 and social distancing practices, street and sidewalk sweeping (weather permitting), scrape curb line on main line with mini loader to remove thick sand and sediment (Memorial Drive, River Street, Berlin Street, Rte. 2 and 302), Hand sweep bridges, pick up sand barrels, keeping dirt roads passable and if we have another snow event plowing, sanding and salting streets and sidewalks. (No snow events are currently predicted for next week).

The City's Water/Sewer Division completed cleaning for prevention of the COVID-19 as well as two COVID-19 meetings with city staff. Normal daily operations were completed such as:

- Marked out sewer manholes on Murry Hill
- Cleaned sewer pump station back check valves every other day (Mon, Wed & Fri)
- Daily pump station checks
- Manhole repair on Cummings Street
- Water meter readings (still not doing any repairs unless it's an emergency)
- Dig Safe markings
- Cleaned and wiped down trucks daily
- Cleaned and wiped down surfaces in our shop

Next week our Water/Sewer crews will continue our added cleaning efforts trying to prevent COVID-19, begin spring time hydrant maintenance, sewer line cleaning, and continue the added back check valve cleanings with daily sewer pump stations, meter readings and dig safes.

WRRF

The City issued a critical infrastructure letter in response to Governor Scotts ADDENDUM 6 TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 01-20 referencing 6. D. "construction necessary to support the COVID-19 response and maintain critical infrastructure". This letter will allow the upgrade to the facility to continue.

As part of our effort to adapt to COVID 19, we have developed a split shift schedule that will allow for two of the four operators to work at the facility on a given date to reduce the risk of the virus affecting all essential staff at the same time. We hope to implement the change next week. Increased disinfection procedure are taking place daily.

Work on the project this week included dewatering equipment and boiler installation. The boiler startup is anticipated next week. New sludge transfer pump delivery and installation is scheduled for next week. Work will continue on UV gates next week as well, weather dependent.

Water Treatment:

As part of our effort to adapt to COVID 19, we have developed a split shift schedule that will allow for one to two of the three operators to work at the facility on a given date to reduce the risk of the virus affecting all essential staff at the same time. We hope to implement the change next week. Increased disinfection procedure are taking place daily.

DON'T FLUSH THAT:

Due to the public health crisis, not only is our city seeing a shortage on toilet paper, but many communities are as well. Department of Public Works would like to remind everyone what should NOT be flushed. Flushing items listed below could cause sewer blockages, in which could cause plugged and overflowing toilets, poorly draining sinks and showers, raw sewage backing up through floor drains, manholes overflowing onto the ground or into nearby surface waters, health hazards and nuisance odors, increases in the City's maintenance costs and costly maintenance and repair bills for YOU.

- Paper towels
- Baby wipes
- Moist towelettes
- Cosmetics and cosmetic wipes
- Cloth or paper napkins
- Shop towels
- Condoms
- Tampons and pads
- Diapers
- Cat litter
- Cigarette butts
- Dental floss
- Latex gloves
- Hypodermic needles
- Facial tissues
- Fats, oils or grease
- Clothing or rags
- Medications (pills or liquid)
- Bandages
- Cotton balls
- Food scrapes
- Swiffer pads
- Plastic of any kind



William Fraser
City Manager

Upcoming Agenda Items (TENTATIVE)

4/8	Ordinance – Chapter TBD W/S Budget, Rates Parking Fees Parking Garage Update	4/15	DRB Appointments Personnel Plan Tax Stabilization Policy	4/28 - 4/29	Strategic Planning
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