

**4/22, the Montpelier City Council continued suspension of all Task Force, Committee, and Advisory Board meetings that are not required by law, through June 30<sup>th</sup>.**

Mon., May 4 <sup>th</sup>	Design Review Committee	5:30 PM	<a href="#">Click here for Zoom Access</a>
Wed., May 13 <sup>th</sup>	City Council Meeting	6:30 PM	Meeting information TBA



## Public Health and Safety

### CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) CITY OF MONTPELIER RESPONSE UPDATE

Facing down the weekend, which will be the 50<sup>th</sup> day since the Governor declared a State of Emergency for Vermont- there has been no aspect of our daily lives that have not been altered by the response to the Coronavirus. In the face of our community's challenges- the City of Montpelier remains committed and focused supporting our residents, larger region, and employees. We want to share updates on the City's actions to keep residents and employees safe and healthy.

#### **State Updates:**

- The Vermont Foodbank and the Vermont National Guard will set up and operate Commodity Points of Distribution (CPODs) at state airports in North Springfield, Bennington, Newport and South Hero on separate days over the next two weeks. Those in need of food can go to these locations on the appointed days and receive a seven-day supply of Meals Ready-to-Eat (MRE) for each member of their household. For details, or to donate to the Vermont Foodbank visit <https://www.vtfoodbank.org/>.
- April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020: Governor Phil Scott today outlined some additional openings as part of the phased restart of Vermont's economy. The Governor's Stay Home, Stay Safe order remains in effect, but with modeling continuing to indicate Vermonters are significantly slowing the spread of the virus, the Administration is taking a cautious, incremental and evidence-based approach to putting Vermonters back to work.
  - [Addendum 11](#) to the Executive Order directs any entity currently operating, or soon to be opened, to implement specified physical distancing, health, and sanitation measures, including requiring employees to wear face coverings for nose and mouth. It also requires all employers to provide – and all employees to complete - training on these health and safety requirements by May 4th.
- April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020: the State is significantly increasing and strengthening its testing and contact tracing programs in order to quickly identify, contain and suppress outbreaks of COVID-19.
- Canada and the US are extending border restrictions until May 21<sup>st</sup> 2020.

#### **General City Updates:**

- New City Policies to Protect Staff and Residents:
  - To comply with the Governor's Addendum 11- all staff is taking the mandatory VOSHA training on health and safety requirements
- Our DPW teams want to remind residents that you may not see as many crews out working on Streets projects as you normally would this time of year. Many of our DPW crew went on voluntary furlough to help

the City through the financial crisis COVID-19 triggered, and they are working as hard as they can with a reduced capacity.

### **Regional Aid Groups Update:**

- The City is maintaining a list of situational updates and resources for those who may need them on the COVID-19 Response page on the website here: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/1155/Coronavirus-Response>
- As a reminder: the Washington and Northern Orange Counties Regional Response Command Center (WNOC-RRCC) is now open to receive folk's calls for assistance. If you need any support, they are open 7 days a week from 8am-10pm, and are available at:
  - Call line: 802-477-5160
  - Text line: 802-477-5130
- The Capital Area Neighborhoods (CAN) are still looking for volunteers- and will be distributing a flyer to neighborhoods soon- this will also include contact information for the WNOC-RRCC system.
- Montpelier Mutual Aid have opened up their website <https://www.montpeliermutualaid.org/>
  - They are a group focused on food resources and food delivery if you need assistance

### **Additional Building Closures, Program Cancellations, or Changes:**

- City Hall is remaining locked and closed due to safety concerns due to a lack of personnel in the building.
- The Montpelier Senior Activity Center's FEAST To-Go program on Tuesdays and Fridays is maintaining the new Noon-12:30pm pick up times for food in front of the Senior Center.
- The Vermont Mountaineers announced that they have cancelled their 2020 season out of an abundance of caution and concern for the safety of their fans, their host families, their volunteers, vendors and their players and coaches. For further information, contact Brian Gallagher at 802-272-8728.

### **City Committee Updates:**

- All City Committee, Advisory Boards, and Task Force meetings (unless required by law) have been suspended by Council through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Remember to support your local community businesses, if you are safely able to! 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. Updates for what is open can be found through Montpelier Alive: <http://www.montpelieralive.com/515/COVID-19-Updates>. Also, please remember to reach out to your neighbors or folks who may need assistance during this time. This situation is one we can get through only if we work together, remain patient with ourselves and our neighbors, and take time to help out when we can.



Responsive and Responsible Government

### **POLICE CHIEF SELECTION PROCESS**

Interviews with the final six candidates begin today and continue through the end of next week. Our team will identify a smaller group of finalists who will be interviewed by the leadership team and a group of community members/interested parties. This will, ideally, be completed by May 15<sup>th</sup> or thereabouts. Our goal is to complete background checks and negotiations and make an announcement by June 1<sup>st</sup>.



### 2020 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This week, April 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, Council and Staff held public zoom meetings to work through the Strategic Planning Process for 2020. Staff had presented proposed “key initiatives” to Council for them to consider, and Council spent the first half of the retreat discussing them. Council also proposed new additional initiatives and held discussion around their proposals and ideas.

The second night, Council further discussed the Council proposed initiatives, and straw-pollled which ones had support from the majority. Council is currently ranking their top-10 priorities out of all the combined staff and Council approved initiatives- and the draft strategic plan will be compiled from that ranking. The draft plan will be presented at the May 13<sup>th</sup> Council meeting for approval or edits.

If you were unable to tune-in to the meetings, look for the recordings to be shared on Montpelier’s social media soon.

### MONTPELIER SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER

#### **MSAC Newsletter for May is published: Great volunteer profile included!**

The [May issue of MSAC’s monthly Active Times newsletter](#) is published on our website and in the mail. We’d like to call attention, in particular, to our cover story: a volunteer profile of **Kris Clark, National Life volunteer** for our FEAST Program, and also updated **FEAST program information** on page 11. The newsletter also includes updates about our operations, community resources, how our community is keeping busy during Covid-19, and **information about our instructors who are offering private online classes** (see page 10). It can be viewed here: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/4892>

#### **Thank you, Vermont Community Foundation, for a grant of \$5,000**

We are grateful for a recent grant of \$5,000 from the Vermont Community Foundation, which established a Covid-19 Response Fund to support nonprofits that are particularly equipped to address community impacts of the spread of the pandemic in Vermont. As part of their first phase, they gave such grants to every senior center and senior meal site in the state.

#### **MSAC public education events now online!**

We are pleased that two of our community partners have created online versions of events that would have been offered in our facility this month, and more are in the works for later in the month and in the future. These are all free and open to the public, with registration through the partners and instructions in the descriptions.

- **Free Online Medicare & You Workshops** (Remote on Zoom: Call-in or video) Two options (attend one): Tuesday, May 5, 10:00am-12:00pm, Tuesday, May 19, 1:00-3:00pm

Turning 65 and have questions about applying for Medicare? Confused about the options available within Medicare plans? In this workshop, we will walk you through the ins and outs of Medicare plans and options, including Parts A, B, and D prescription coverage, supplemental plans, Advantage plans, and more. Central Vermont Council on Aging provides information, counseling, and assistance to all Medicare eligible persons under the auspices of the State Health Insurance & Assistance Program. CVCOA is your local non-profit Medicare expert with nothing to sell. Our presenters are State Health Insurance Program Coordinators with knowledge of the most recent changes to Medicare. This workshop is interactive, lively and fun, so please join us! Pre-registration is required. To pre-register, call 479-0531 or email [medicareworkshops@cvcoa.org](mailto:medicareworkshops@cvcoa.org). If you can’t attend but have questions, or to learn about more 2020 workshops in Central Vermont, visit [www.cvcoa.org](http://www.cvcoa.org) or call CVCOA at 479-0531.

- **Backyard Compost Basics: A Free Webinar**

Thursday, May 7, 1:00-2:30pm

In this webinar, you'll learn how to compost successfully - whether you're starting for the first time, or are a compost veteran. We'll cover cold composting, as well as active and passive management techniques. You'll leave with strategies for jump-starting an old pile, keeping smells down and animals out, and how to compost safely during this time of COVID-19. We'll also review Vermont's food scrap ban from the landfill, and other options for managing food scraps in addition to home composting. Join Cassandra Hemenway, Outreach Manager at the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District, trained and certified in turning food waste into soil! Also presenting is Theron Lay-Sleeper, CVSWMD outreach coordinator, and lifelong composter. Please register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/backyard-compost-basics-a-free-webinar-tickets-103752003034>. Free and open to the public, pre-registration required.



## Sustainable Infrastructure

### DPW STREET & WATER/SEWER DIVISIONS

Our Street Division completed the following tasks throughout the city:

- Graded City dirt roads such as Gould Hill and Bliss Road
- Repaired pot holes around the City that were problematic
- Sink hole repair On Phelps Street
- Lawn repairs at the City Garage and on Meadow Brook including seeding and topsoil
- Covid-19 training for division completed per the State of Vermont
- Street Sweeping
- Equipment maintenance (wash and grease)
- Delivered cones and barricades to the farmers market volunteer in charge of them
- Delivered a folding barricade with attached clip board to planning at City Hall for social distancing permit info
- Picked up trash and tires from ballfield across from the shop (over flowing)
- Wiping down trucks and equipment as used along with common areas and surfaces at the shop

Next week our Street Division will continue street sweeping, filling problematic pot holes, fixing sink holes on Harrison Avenue and Loomis Street, Hubbard Park will be graded (weather permitting) and we'll continue safe practices that go along with COVID-19 guidelines and executive orders from the Governor.

The City of Montpelier's Water/Sewer division continued hydrant flushing (except night time flushing) as well as numerous dig safes. Our crew had several resident calls they responded to. Completion of the following list as well:

- Curb stop repair on Isabel Circle
- Camera work on Loomis Street
- Sewer pump station maintenance (back checks)
- Checked on possible water leak on Highland Avenue
- Vactor truck operations, cleaned some problematic structures and prepped truck for syphons early next week

Next week our Water/Sewer Division will finish up hydrant flushing with the night time flushing, culvert repair on Harrison Avenue, sinkhole repair on Loomis Street, repair water line one Highland Avenue and or under drainage as needed and continue sewer line cleaning and other Vactor truck operations as much as possible. We'll also be installing seasonal meters as requested and a new meter at the ballfield.

## WRRF

This week the second screw press and drum thickener were started up successfully. Additionally, the existing boiler was relocated into the new boiler room. New week work will continue on the control cabinets for the screw presses and rotary drum thickeners. Overhead sludge piping and HVAC work will also continue in the dewatering room.

## COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOWS

In response to several concerns recently raised to City Council members, we offer the following information about the City's effort to mitigate Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO's). The City of Montpelier has been working diligently on reducing/eliminating CSO's since the first studies conducted in the late 1980's. The sewer collection system in Montpelier was originally built with twenty-five (25) Overflow structures in 1962 in conjunction with the construction of the wastewater treatment facility. Since that time, a series of storm separation projects have been completed with an investment of over \$10 million dollars. These projects have allowed the City to reduce the total number of active overflows to the current number of six (6). Of the remaining 6 overflow structures, over flow frequency has been greatly reduced and now only result from larger rainfall events.

Now that the majority of the storm water from street runoff has been removed from the sewer collection system, the City has performed a series of next steps in mitigating this long standing issue including the following:

- Conducted an overflow weir evaluation study and raising the overflow elevation at each remaining structure to the extent possible without impacting adjacent buildings. This reduced the number of annual CSO events by maximizing the use of available capacity in the collection system.
- Conducted an updated Roof Drain Study to identify the remaining commercial buildings that are tied into the sewer collection system.
- Developed a Long Term Control Plan with a funding plan for projects within the collection system that restrict the flow to the wastewater treatment facility during high flow events.
- Survey and preliminary design for an upgrade to the sewer truck line on State Street which directly impacts the number of overflow events at the intersection of State St. and Taylor St. This is the overflow location that recently had two events reported. Construction is scheduled for this summer/fall. We anticipate this project will significantly reduce overflow events at this structure.
- Completed stormwater separation work and new sewer main installation along Clarendon Ave in 2019 reducing wet weather flows to two CSO structures.
- Grant funding and contract award for an electronic CSO monitoring system. This system will improve reporting response time and provide data on flow volumes to allow staff to better prioritize improvement projects. Construction is scheduled for this summer/fall.

If there were a way to immediately stop CSO events, the City would have done so. However, if these overflow structures were to be blocked off now, the combined rain and wastewater flows would be diverted onto the streets and into buildings which poses an ever greater health hazard. The solution is not a simple one as it requires a holistic approach to evaluating the entire sewer collection system, including removing groundwater infiltration and direct inflow as well as prioritizing improvements within the sewer collection system which restrict the high flows from reaching the treatment plant. These improvements will require significant investment which we have committed to through our funding plan.

Please know that that City Council and the staff take this issue very seriously and will continue to work to eliminate Combined Sewer Overflows.

## 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)

5/13	Ordinances Tax Stabilization Strategic Plan COVID-19 Parking Garage	5/27	COVID-19 Ordinances Personnel Plan	6/10	COVID-19 Ordinances Personnel Plan
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