

# VLCT NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES & TOWNS

SERVING AND STRENGTHENING VERMONT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

November 2007

## TOWN FAIR 2007 PLAY-BY-PLAY ON A SUCCESSFUL DAY

One word sums up this year's Town Fair experience: wow!

A beautiful, sunny day with breathtaking fall foliage greeted guests of Town Fair as they arrived at the Champlain Valley Fairgrounds. The Robert E. Miller Expo Center boasted plenty of free parking, convenient workshop and meeting space, and most importantly, one roof over the whole "shebang." Had it been a rainy day, we would have been set for anything during Town Fair's first trip to Chittenden County.

With less than a year to plan, there were many items to consider: what training topics will be covered; what types of exhibits will we have; and most importantly, who will cater the all-important turkey dinner? With the outstanding support of the team of professionals at the Champlain Valley Expo, no detail was left unaccounted for. From Ray and Clay in maintenance, to Tom Oddy and Susan Petrie in the front office (and countless



others), we barely had to think of something we needed before it arrived.

We were fortunate to have great attendance by the membership. More than 400 local officials representing 180 municipalities from all corners of the state joined us in Essex Junction. This is a 20 percent increase in attendance over last year's event in Barre. We hope that the plan of rotating this event

*(Continued on Page Thirteen)*

## 2008 MUNICIPAL POLICY ADOPTED

### MEMBERSHIP ENDORSES EDUCATION INCOME TAX

Members attending the VLCT Annual Meeting adopted a 2008 Municipal Policy that calls for the repeal of the homestead education property tax in order to replace it with a resident income education tax.

The endorsement of the switch to a resident income education tax comes about as a result of local officials seeking ways to reduce the heavy reliance on property taxes to fund schools, police and fire services, road maintenance and repair, and many other things at a time when costs are rapidly increasing; and the growing administrative quagmire that has resulted for towns billing and collecting the statewide education property tax. The proposal, which is a significant tax policy change, also comes at a time when the

*(Continued on Page Nineteen)*

## GROWTH CENTERS PROGRAM UNDERWAY

The "Planning Coordination Group" is beginning to act on the first municipal applications seeking growth center designations through the Growth Centers Program that was created by the legislature in 2005 (Act 183).

The Planning Coordination Group (PCG), an advisory organization to the expanded Downtown Board of the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), is charged with four primary tasks: (1) to ensure consistency between regions and municipalities regarding growth center designations and related planning; (2) to provide municipalities with a pre-application review process early in the local planning process; (3) to coordinate state agency review on matters of agency interest; and (4) to provide the state Downtown Board with on-going, coordinated staff support and expertise in land use, community planning, and natural resources protection.

The designation process is multi-faceted, rigorous, lengthy, and expensive (so far) for those municipalities seeking a growth center designation. The first two municipalities

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**Trevor Lashua, Allyson Barrieau,**  
Interim Editors, *VLCT News*

The *VLCT News* is published eleven times per year (the August and September issues are combined) by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, a non-profit, nonpartisan organization founded in 1967 to serve the needs and interests of Vermont municipalities. The *VLCT News* is distributed to all VLCT member towns. Additional subscriptions are available for \$25 to VLCT members (\$60, non-members), plus sales tax if applicable. Please contact VLCT for subscription and advertising information.

## LEADERSHIP CHANGES ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Sandra Grenier**, the Town Clerk/Treasurer in St. Johnsbury, was elected to serve as VLCT's next president. She follows Chester Town Manger **Susan Spaulding**, whose term expired. Spaulding will stay on the board as immediate past president. Thank you Susan for your dedicated leadership!

Middlebury Selectperson **William Perkins** was elected to serve as vice president, replacing Grenier.

Waterbury Municipal Manager **William Shepeluk's** latest term as immediate past president expired at the meeting and, for now, he is off the Board of Directors. Shepeluk's service to VLCT as a member of the Board of Directors, a member of the Health Trust Board, and as someone committed to serving and strengthening local government is deeply appreciated.

Wilmington Town Manager **Bob Rusten** was subsequently selected by the Board of Directors to fill the vacant seat. Welcome Bob!

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# LEGAL AND REGULATORY NOTES



## ON-SITE SEWAGE; NFPA TURNOUT TIMES; "INTELLIGENCE REFORM" DELAY

### ON-SITE SEWAGE AND POTABLE WATER SYSTEMS

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has finalized a guidance document for towns seeking delegation of the Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules.

A municipality may seek authority from DEC to administer the entire Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Program. The law does not allow municipalities to administer portions of the program – to assume delegation is an "all or nothing" proposition. DEC makes the determination whether a municipality is capable of assuming delegation (and by extension assuming responsibility for the program).

The municipal delegation guidance document explains what towns may require of applicants without taking delegation of the wastewater and potable water supply program; what they may require if they do take delegation; and what they may not require regardless of whether or not they take delegation of the program. Additional guidance documents that will eventually be posted pertain to replacement wells, failed water systems, conversions of seasonal residences to year-round residences, addressing property line disputes, and reconstruction of buildings.

The municipal delegation guidance and other guidance documents may be found at: <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/ww/eng-serv.htm>.

Presently, Charlotte and Colchester are the only municipalities taking delegation of the program from the state.

*Karen Horn, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy*

### NFPA "TURNOUT TIMES" UNDER REVIEW

What should the "turnout time" be for fire department personnel, especially for those municipal fire departments that also happen to be career fire departments?

The discussion over whether the one-minute turnout time objective currently in the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) standards is appropriate or should be replaced by a 90-second standard is happening now as part of a regular review process.

The NFPA standards are essentially a collection of "best practices" which often figure into calculations for insurance, along with the benefit of bolstering public safety and fire prevention efforts. Section 1710, laid out in 2001, looks to define levels of service and staffing levels – along with deployment capabilities – for "substantially" career fire departments. Municipal officials and others interested in the NFPA standard for career fire department turnout time objectives and

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## LEGAL/REG. NOTES -

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minimum staffing levels have until November 26, 2007 to propose changes in the current NFPA 1710 standard to address such questions.

An NFPA technical committee charged

A complication in evaluating this time objective is the technology available to actually measure the time required to turnout. The Center for Public Safety Excellence, the organization that accredits fire and emergency service agencies, will survey companies to collect data to support the review process.

Another consideration is whether to provide guidance in the standard's explanatory

For information on the standards-making process, contact NFPA at (617) 984-7249, or contact Cathy Spain, director of member programs for NLC, via e-mail at [spain@nlc.org](mailto:spain@nlc.org), or by calling (202) 626-3123.

Written proposals must be submitted on an NFPA form and include new or revised wording as well as a statement of the problem resolved by the recommendation and

*"... a one-size-fits-all approach to standard setting does not work and the standard must continue to recognize that attainment of the various objectives is affected by local circumstances ..."*

with reviewing public proposals and developing its own recommendations met in September to discuss possible changes, as well as amendments, to explanatory materials that accompany the standard. One issue that has been brought to the committee's attention is the proposal to modify the existing 60-second turnout time objective by increasing it to 90 seconds. Turnout time is the time it takes for the first crew to depart a fire station after the emergency call is placed.

Other suggestions include having different objectives for day and night calls and fire and emergency medical operations.

Representatives from the National League of Cities (NLC), the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and others interested in the standard serve on the committee.

materials on deployment capability for medium-hazard occupancies such as apartments, offices, mercantile and industrial occupancies, and high-hazard occupancies such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, explosive plants and refineries. The current standard specifies the full alarm assignment capability needed to respond to a structural fire in a typical 2,000 square foot, two-story, single-family home.

NLC and ICMA representatives emphasized that a one-size-fits-all approach to standard setting does not work and the standard must continue to recognize that attainment of the various objectives is affected by local circumstances, including the response personnel who are not on duty, the location of fire station facilities, traffic congestion, water supply, and population density.

The standard revision process occurs every five years and extends over a two-year period.

substantiation for the proposal. A copy of the form can be obtained by contacting Trevor Lashua, VLCT Senior Associate, at [tlashua@vlct.org](mailto:tlashua@vlct.org) or (800) 649-7915.

*Adapted from an article written by Cathy Spain, Director of Member Programs, National League of Cities.*

### ANOTHER DELAY FOR "INTELLIGENCE REFORM" REGULATIONS

The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) announced that there would be another delay in the release of the draft regulations included as part of the federal "Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act."

Passed by Congress in 2004, the "Intelligence Reform Law" regulations will very likely include a number of fairly significant changes in the way vital records (birth and death certificates) are handled. It is hard to say what changes will occur for certain, since nothing will be known until the draft regulations are released, perhaps in "early 2008," according to VDH.

A few of the changes that will likely be a part of the draft regulations are: the creation of a centrally located statewide database for birth and death records; the "closing" of birth and death certificates from 1935 on (making them available only to family members and legal guardians); and a mandate for towns to perform background checks on employees who will have access to vital records.

Originally, the deadline for the release of the draft regulations was 2006, with an implementation deadline of 2008. After a number of delays, town clerks and others who deal with vital records still face an unknown timeline with regards to the release of the draft regulations.

## Vermont State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) Loan Funds are Available

The Vermont State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) is a low-interest loan program operated by the Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA) and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).

**Eligible Borrowers** include municipalities, regional development corporations, and certain private sector companies.

**Eligible Projects** must be transportation-related, enhance economic opportunity, and help create jobs. Examples are road construction or reconstruction, certain facilities related to rail transit, and bridges and intermodal transportation facilities.

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# ASK THE LEAGUE

## UNANTICIPATED SURPLUS; ZA CONFLICTS; TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

*A recent audit revealed a sizeable surplus, which has accumulated from previous fiscal years. What are our options for managing this situation?*

The most important thing for the selectboard to remember is that the surplus belongs to the voters, not the board. Voter approval – either at a special or regular meeting – is necessary to determine the appropriate

ance of at least five to 15 percent of the general fund. Under Vermont law, the best way to do this is to ask the voters to create a “reserve fund,” which may be used for a specific purpose when created or for purposes authorized by the voters at a subsequent meeting. 24 V.S.A. § 2804.

The occasion of an unanticipated surplus presents an opportunity for the voters to debate a wide range of alternatives, including

*What should a town do if its zoning administrator has a conflict of interest with regard to a zoning permit application?*

The assistant zoning administrator or acting zoning administrator should administer the zoning permit application.

State law provides towns with two mechanisms for dealing with a conflicted zon-

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*The occasion of an unanticipated surplus presents an opportunity for the voters to debate a wide range of alternatives, including reducing taxes in future years, creating a reserve fund, or directing the funds or a portion thereof to a specific use.*

---

use of these funds. The options before the voters, however, are almost limitless so long as they are legal activities for a municipality to engage in.

From a policy perspective, the national Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends budgeting so as to maintain or create an unreserved fund bal-

reducing taxes in future years, creating a reserve fund, or directing the funds or a portion thereof to a specific use. Any one of these solutions, or combination of them, is a legitimate use of the funds, so long as the voters authorize them.

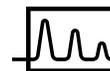
ing administrator. First, towns may establish the position of an assistant zoning officer to, among other things, serve in the zoning administrator's stead when such conflicts arise. Towns with an assistant zoning administrator must have “clear policies regarding the authority of the administrative officer in

*Dominic Cloud, Director, VLCT  
Municipal Assistance Center*

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## ASK THE LEAGUE -

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relation to the acting or assistant officer.” 24 V.S.A. § 4448(b). Such policies should direct the assistant zoning administrator to administer any permit application for which the zoning administrator is conflicted.

For towns without an assistant zoning administrator, state law instructs that “the planning commission may nominate and the legislative body may appoint an acting administrative officer who shall have the same duties and responsibilities as the administrative officer in the administrative officer’s absence.” 24 V.S.A. § 4448(b). The acting zoning administrator would then serve as the zoning administrator for purposes of the conflicted application only.

The harder question to answer is determining when a zoning administrator is conflicted. Conflicts of interest with respect to zoning administrators can generally be broken down into three categories: those where a zoning administrator has a personal interest in an application; those where a zoning administrator has a financial interest in an application; and those where a zoning admin-

istrator has exhibited a bias or prejudice towards an application.

Whether a particular zoning administrator is conflicted can only be answered by examining an individual town’s conflict of interest policy. Such a policy can be adopted by the selectboard or the voters at an annual or special town meeting, or can be found embedded within a town’s charter or personnel policy.

*Garrett Baxter, Senior Associate, VLCT  
Municipal Assistance Center*

***The town is contemplating hiring a full-time temporary highway employee for the winter. At what point does the town need to provide insurance benefits?***

Neither the Fair Labor Standards Act nor state law requires an employer to provide insurance benefits, such as health and dental insurance. With no law mandating employers to provide such benefits, look to the municipality’s personnel policy.

In addition to providing guidelines for acceptable behavior in the workplace and expectations for continued employment in a municipality, a personnel policy should outline which employees are eligible for insur-

ance benefits. A general rule for municipalities to follow is to treat similar classes of employees equally. If a town’s personnel policy does not address this specific issue, VLCT recommends clarifying in the job description or possibly in a separate employment contract that the temporary highway position does not include benefits. If a town chooses not to extend insurance benefits to temporary full-time employees, the town is subject to contributing to the state’s Catamount Health Plan, because seasonal employees are reportable.

The Municipal Assistance Center created a model personnel policy, which can be found on VLCT’s website within the resource library (<http://resources.vlct.org>). You can also find additional information on the Catamount Health Plan reporting requirements there.

*Stephanie Smith, Senior Associate, VLCT  
Municipal Assistance Center*

## TRIVIA

Congratulations to Cynthia Gibbs, the treasurer in Grafton. Cynthia correctly identified U.S. Senator Ralph Flanders as the source of the quote, and Springfield as his hometown. Flanders, originally from Barnet, moved to Springfield in 1910 in order to work in the machine tool industry. He was appointed to replace Warren Austin (who left his seat to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations) in the U.S. Senate by Governor Mortimer Proctor, just days before voters elected Flanders for the seat in 1946. Flanders was re-elected in 1952, but chose not to run again in 1958.

Here is our November trivia challenge:

**Metalsmith Reuben Harmon, one of the first settlers of Rupert, was granted the right to perform what service for the Republic of Vermont in 1785?**

Contact us with your answer: VLCT, 89 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602, tel. (800) 649-7915, fax, (802) 229-2211, e-mail, [tlashua@vlct.org](mailto:tlashua@vlct.org).



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# TOWN FAIR 2007 IN PHOTOS



VLCT 1967 - 2007  
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## HEALTH TRUST ANNUAL MEETING

The VLCT Health Trust, Inc. Board of Directors invites all participating municipalities to its 18th Annual Meeting on Friday, November 16, 2007, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Montpelier, Vermont.

The VLCT Health Trust and CIGNA continue to be partners in the battle to hold down the cost of health insurance for municipal members. Your input and suggestions in November are necessary to provide guidance to the Board and CIGNA so that we address the health care issues that are important to you. We hope you will make every effort to attend this important meeting.

## HEALTHY BABIES PROGRAM

The VLCT Health Trust is pleased to announce its new Healthy Babies Program, which includes a robust set of benefits intended to encourage expectant mothers to seek top quality prenatal care. This enhanced health benefit will be effective January 1, 2008, and will be included in all CIGNA Health Trust insurance plans.

## VOLUNTARY LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM

Voluntary Life Insurance will be offered to members' employees effective January 1, 2008. This benefit will provide employees the opportunity to purchase life insurance as a separate benefit at a favorable rate and, in most cases, without a physical exam.

## VOLUNTARY OR PACKAGED VISION PLAN

The VLCT Health Trust is pleased to announce its new vision benefit effective January 1, 2008. This stand-alone vision plan will be available to all Health Trust member municipalities on a packaged or voluntary basis. The plan, sponsored by the Health Trust, will be provided by Vision Service Plan, a non-profit company that provides vision care benefits.

## VLCT QUILT CONTINUES TO GROW

Much like the effect Flintstones vitamins have on kids, VLCT members have continued to contribute squares for the Local Government Quilt to keep it growing.

The quilt was on display at Town Fair 2007, showing off the 53 squares that offer fabric representations of communities throughout the state. Another eight squares will be added soon.

So far, municipalities from all but one of Vermont's 14 counties have submitted 8" x 8" squares. When a square is received, VLCT staffer and quilter extraordinaire Pat Boyle puts a border around it (making the square 12" x 12") and adds it to the quilt.

Since the quilt was started in 2005, it has grown not only in size, but also in notoriety. The quilt and its assorted contributors have been featured in a number of newspaper and newsletter articles. Other state municipal leagues have also embarked on similar projects.

To learn how you can submit a square for your town, contact Pat Boyle at [pboyle@vlct.org](mailto:pboyle@vlct.org) or (800) 649-7915.





## EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANNING

There's an old adage that goes, "hope for the best, plan for the worst."

Regardless of the type of occupancy – a police station, public works garage, town hall or any other municipal building – the key to successfully handling any emergency situation that may arise is to follow that adage by having and executing an effective emergency evacuation plan.

The complexity of the emergency evacuation plan will depend on the type of occupancy and the level of preparedness to which the occupants are organized.

Why plan for any emergency? There are many reasons. Emergency situations cannot be predicted. They cannot be eliminated. Automatic systems are not enough on their own. The only way to be certain that you

and your staff will react to an emergency effectively is to make sure that people are properly trained, equipped, and prepared.

Effective emergency evacuation plans don't come bundled as a perfect packet of information. You must tailor your emergency plan for your specific facility based on location, type of building, building use, other facilities available in your area, building occupancy, and the potential types of emergencies you may encounter. Some of the emergencies you may encounter are bomb threats, medical emergencies, hostage situations, hazardous material spills, and workplace violence.

Since there is a lot of critical information to assemble when creating a plan, consider breaking the process down into five steps.

- Identify and analyze your issues.
- Select the plan or combination of plans to be utilized in handling an emergency.
- Assign an Emergency Management Team to coordinate the plans.
- Implement the plans chosen.
- Monitor the decisions made and take corrective actions when necessary.

When developing an emergency evacuation plan, be sure to include the following:

1. Evacuation routes. Provide each department or area of occupancy with a primary and secondary route of exit from a structure. Post maps showing these routes in conspicuous locations. The



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## TOWN FAIR 2007 -

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around the state will help members continue to participate.

Here is the remainder of the current five-year plan for Town Fair:

- 2008 – Killington Grand Hotel, Killington
- 2009 – Barre Municipal Civic Center, Barre
- 2010 – Robert E. Miller Expo Center, Essex Junction
- 2011 – Killington Grand Hotel, Killington

Staff began preparations for the 2007 training schedule in early April. We always have the tremendous task of narrowing more than 30 suggestions into the designated time slots. This year we offered 15 training sessions covering everything from emergency management and planning to the basics of tax maps. The hardest part for attendees may have been deciding what to attend. Beginning in November of 2007, we will officially solicit training ideas and outlines for the 2008 event. If you are interested in present-

ing a training session, please contact Jessica Hill at [jhill@vlct.org](mailto:jhill@vlct.org) or (800) 649-7915.

Town Fair attendees have an opportunity to win \$100.00 in the VLCT Grand Raffle each year. The ten lucky winners for 2007 are:

- Erica Reed – *Morristown*
- Gail Bevins – *Swanton*
- John Benson Jr. – *Dorset*
- Dick Thompson – *Swanton*
- Joe Zingale, Jr. – *Rutland Town*
- Katy Thornblade – *Castleton*
- Don Waterman – *Newbury*
- Mary Helen Hawthorne – *Springfield*
- Harry Hinrichsen – *Barre Town*
- Pete Bouvier – *Bristol*

The days of the “cash prize” are over, however, and the lucky individuals were mailed a check. Thanks to everyone for participating!

The trade show aspect of Town Fair was a success – it sold out back in August. The Expo Hall boasted more than 80 exhibitors selling large equipment, engineering services, lighting supplies, financial services,

and everything in between. VLCT wishes to thank all of our vendors for attending. Specifically, we are pleased for the support of the following sponsors: Chittenden Bank, Citizens Bank, Graham & Graham, Northeast Delta Dental, and New England Tank. VLCT offered a free 2008 exhibit space to the company that best represented this year’s theme, “VLCT 1967-2007: Celebrating 40 Years of Local Leadership.” The winner, selected by the attendees, was Municipal Leasing Consultants from Grand Isle, Vermont. Congratulations!

We were pleased to work again with the New England Culinary Institute (NECI). Over the years we’ve questioned the tradition of having an old-fashioned turkey dinner. Each time we’ve put the question to the members, there has been an overwhelming vote to keep the turkey! The students and trained chefs at NECI provided an excellent turkey dinner no one could walk away hungry from.

We handed out an evaluation form in your packet of materials. We greatly appreciate any and all feedback you have.

*Jessica Hill, Director of Administrative Services*



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## IDEAS, COMMENTS, AND COMPLAINTS... WE TAKE ‘EM ALL!

We learned at least one important point at this year’s event: the early bird does not always get the worm! The awards luncheon ended extremely early (more than 30 minutes). In an attempt to get things moving along and get everyone on their way, we decided to bump up the start time of the annual meeting and afternoon sessions. Unfortunately that message wasn’t communicated to the masses as clearly as we had hoped. We do apologize for any confusion that may have occurred and will certainly make a point to communicate more clearly with all of you at next year’s event.

If you have other comments or thoughts regarding this year’s event or any other VLCT event, please share them with Jessica Hill at [jhill@vlct.org](mailto:jhill@vlct.org) or (800) 649-7915.

Save the date for October 2nd, and pack your bags for Town Fair 2008 in Killington!



## EMERGENCY EVACUATION -

(Continued from Page Eleven)

map should indicate the meeting location after everyone has exited the building, and someone should be assigned to count the number of employees present to ensure that no one is left inside. Give this information to the emergency responders when they arrive.

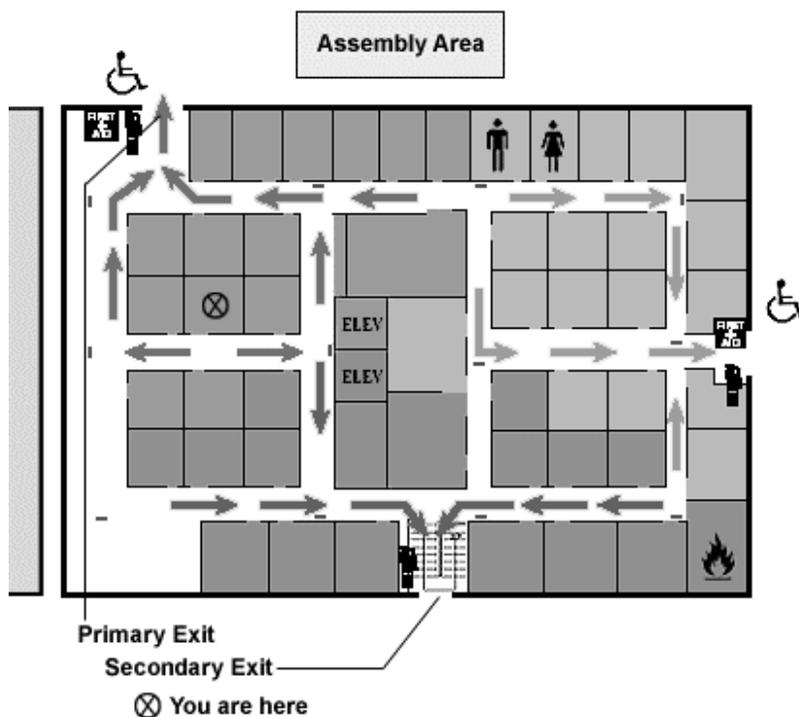
2. Monitor. The monitor's main job is to oversee the evacuation process. Post the monitor's name on the evacuation plan, and update it when necessary. The monitor may also be responsible for taking the headcount of the employees in their department.
3. Employees. Employees are responsible for their area, including any guests. They may also be responsible for shutting down equipment and closing doors and windows.

4. Drill. A plan should also include how and when drills are performed. Evacuation plans should be tested regularly using exit drills. The person responsible for developing the emergency evacuation plan will also schedule and oversee the planning drills. If the fire alarm system needs to be activated as part of the drill, work with the local fire department. When drills are planned, be sure to first get management's approval before running it. VLCT recommends that two emergency evacuation drills be performed a year. The program coordinator and management should meet after a drill to critique the effectiveness of the evacuation plan and the drill.

If your municipality needs guidance in developing emergency evacuation plans for municipal buildings, VLCT's Loss Control staff is here to help. Please contact the Loss Control consultant for your area at (802) 229-9111 or (800) 649-7915. VLCT has trained consultants that travel to all members and provide a variety of services. If you have any other loss control needs, don't hesitate to call us.

*Joe Damiata, Manager, Safety and Health Promotion*

## SAMPLE EMERGENCY EVACUATION MAP



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## COLCHESTER CLERK NAMED “CLERK OF THE YEAR”

Karen Richard, the town clerk in Colchester, was recently selected by her fellow town clerks and treasurers as “Clerk of the Year.”

Richard, who was given the award during the Vermont Municipal Clerk and Treasurer’s Association’s (VMCTA) annual meeting in September, has been the clerk in Colchester for most of the past decade. She was nominated for the award not only for the fine work she does in Colchester, but also for efforts on behalf of clerks and treasurers throughout Vermont as a member of VMCTA’s legislative committee.

“Karen has been instrumental in pulling people and information together,” said Stowe Town Clerk Alison Kaiser, who nominated Richard for the award. “She has always been fair and reasonable when sharing or listening to opinions of others. I have found that her greatest concern is being the most educated she can be on a subject and that practice carries through in every aspect of her job.”

Richard’s participation on the legislative committee has translated into a number of long days and nights managing her office in Colchester while monitoring and speaking about issues such as elections, land records, Act 185 implementation, and education funding.

As if her regular duties and legislative committee participation were not enough, Richard also serves as the president of the Chittenden/Grand Isle County Clerk’s Association and as Colchester’s representative to the Champlain Water District.

Congratulations, Karen!



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## GROWTH CENTERS-

(Continued from Page One)

to apply for designation, Williston and Bennington, have spent approximately \$50,000 and \$60,000, respectively. Colchester has also applied for interim benefits.

Once an application is prepared, the applicant may submit it to the PCG for review and comment. This preliminary review is optional for the municipality, but a town that does not seek it faces a steeper climb when it seeks growth center designation from the state Downtown Board.

The PCG forwards the municipality's application plus any of its own recommendations to the expanded Downtown Board to review and determine if growth center designation should be awarded. Thus the PCG role is advisory in two directions – to the municipality and the expanded Downtown Board. Potential applicants may wish to speak to the planners in Williston or Bennington, but should have no illusions that the PCG conducts a perfunctory review or that its members agree about what constitutes an acceptable growth center.

DHCA received Williston's initial application on May 9th. It responded on May 31st with a list of further items required for the application. Several meetings and innumerable communications later, Williston received interim benefits designation. The PCG is now in the process of refining a list of recommendations and conditions for growth center designation for a significantly smaller and more compact growth center than was initially proposed. It will then forward

those recommendations to the Downtown Board for its consideration in determining a final designation.

To adhere to the legislative mandate for the group, a checklist guides the PCG discussion. It includes rationale for the growth center; size and configuration; appropriateness; development patterns; diversity of development; capital budget and program; public spaces; spatial pattern; transportation and other infrastructure; natural and historic resources; agriculture; and the planning process. In the case of Williston, areas of the application that caused accentuated heartache included transportation plans for the future, particularly how public transit or alternative transportation would be incorporated, what the term "adjacent" really means when used in the legislation, and whether or not the inclusion of box stores and significant conserved open spaces were appropriate to include in the growth center.

Bennington is likely to face similar issues as it pursues its designation. As the program's first applicants, Williston and Bennington might have a more difficult time navigating the PCG process because it was not yet finalized when they started. Municipalities following in their footsteps may find the process smoother, less expensive, and less time consuming because of the initial efforts put in by these two towns. Only time will tell.

PCG members are appointed by the Natural Resources Board chair and the DHCA commissioner. Membership includes the deputy secretary of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development; representatives of the Agencies of Transportation, Natural Resources, and Agriculture; and rep-

resentatives from VLCT, the Natural Resources Board, Vt. Planners' Association, Vt. Association of Regional Planning Commissions, and the Association of Regional Development Directors.

For guidance, municipalities may download the Growth Center Planning Manual at <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/GrowthCenters.htm>, or otherwise acquire it from DHCA. If your town is seeking interim growth centers designation, you may also download from the same site guidelines used to identify agricultural lands. The PCG also developed Growth Center Designation Procedures to guide its actions. Contact Polly McMurtry at DHCA at (802) 828-3211 for a copy.

*Karen Horn, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy*

## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Each month, the *VLCT News* contains display advertisements from a variety of businesses seeking to serve Vermont's municipalities. The revenue from these advertisements helps lower our cost to produce the newsletter. If your municipality is planning a future purchase of products or services offered by our advertisers, please consider contacting them, and don't forget to let them know you saw their advertisement in the *VLCT News*. Thank you.

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# Classifieds

Please visit the VLCT Web site to view more classified ads: <http://www.vlct.org/marketplace/classifiedads/>. You may also submit your ad via an e-mail link on this page of the site.

## HELP WANTED

### Creative Learning Program Instructor.

Town of Stowe. The Creative Learning Program Instructor coordinates and leads children from Kindergarten through 6th grade from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The program is designed to provide constructive use of this time with healthy activities, academic support, stress release and free-time play.

The ideal candidate will have excellent communication skills, computer proficiency, and understand the recreational needs and learning progressions of children. For a copy of the position description, visit Stowe's website, [www.townofstowevt.org](http://www.townofstowevt.org). To apply, send letter of interest and current resume to: Town of Stowe, Susanne Gann, HR Coordinator, PO Box 730, Stowe, VT 05672, or email [recruit@townofstovevermont.org](mailto:recruit@townofstovevermont.org). (10-16)

**Patrol Officer.** The Town of Stowe seeks a full-time Patrol Officer in the Stowe Police Department. Responsibilities include patrol of an assigned area for crime prevention and law enforcement as well as traffic control duties. The ideal candidate will maintain satisfactory public relations and analyze complex police problems and situations. High school diploma or equivalent and a valid Vermont driver's license are required. Preference given to those already full-time certified as patrol officers in the State of Vermont. However, candidates with a background in criminal justice, law enforcement or military service are encouraged to apply. Salary, \$17.37-\$19.92 per hour, dependent upon qualifications and experience; excellent benefits. SPOA union membership required. For a job description and application, visit Stowe's website, [www.townofstowevt.org](http://www.townofstowevt.org). To apply, send letter of interest and resume to: Town of Stowe, Attn: Susanne Gann, HR Coordinator, PO Box 730, Stowe, VT 05672, or email to [recruit@townofstovevermont.org](mailto:recruit@townofstovevermont.org). Position open until filled; interviews begin November 19, 2007. E.O.E. (10-16)

**Village Manager.** The Village of Essex Junction, Vt. (pop. 8,591), seeks an accomplished leader for the position of Village Manager. The village is a pedestrian-friendly community with housing, shopping, excellent schools and is a home for IBM and over 200 other small businesses. The manager reports to a five-member Board of Trustees and supervises all de-

partments. Current operating budget is \$6.7 million with 24 full-time employees. Primary responsibilities include community and intergovernmental relations, financial management, public works oversight, personnel administration and implementation of village policies. More information and a full job description are available at [www.essexjunction.org](http://www.essexjunction.org). Requirements include a degree in appropriate discipline, five years relevant experience and solid evidence of communication skills. Hiring range \$61,500 to \$91,026. To apply, please send cover letter and resume in confidence by November 21, 2007 to: Village of Essex Junction, Attn: Manager Search, 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452-3685. E.O.E. (10-4)

**Police Chief.** The Village of Bellows Falls, Vt. seeks an energetic, dynamic law enforcement professional to fill the position of Police Chief and lead a department of 8 full-time, sworn officers and 5 civilian dispatchers. Bellows Falls Village (pop. 3,200) is located in the desirable Connecticut River Valley in Southeastern Vermont. Requirements include a bachelor's degree in Law Enforcement, Public Administration or a related field; a minimum of ten years of law enforcement experience with at least five years in a supervisory capacity; or any equivalent combination of education, skills and experience. Candidates must be certifiable as a Police Officer, as specified by the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council. The Police Chief must have excellent managerial skills, function as a working law enforcement officer, and possess effective community relations and interpersonal skills. Salary range, \$51,355-\$64,122. Apply by November 2, 2007 to: Jim Mullen, Municipal Manager, Bellows Falls Village Corporation, PO Box 370, Bellows Falls, VT 05101. Equal Opportunity Employer. (10-1)

*(Continued on Page Eighteen)*

## VLCT NEWS CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING POLICY

The *VLCT News* welcomes classified advertisements from municipal entities, public agencies, businesses and individuals. This service is free for VLCT members (regular, contributing and associate); the non-member rate is \$37.00 per ad. Ads are generally limited to 150 words.

The *VLCT News* is published every month and usually reaches readers by the third week of the month. Ads are also placed on the VLCT Web site as soon as they are received.

The copy deadline for advertisements is the first Friday of the month for the next month's issue. However, space is occasionally available for late additions. Please feel free to check with the editor for availability.

For more information on classified and display advertising in the *VLCT News*, please contact Katherine Roe, Editor, *VLCT News*, 89 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602, tel. (800) 649-7915, fax (802) 229-2211, e-mail [kroe@vlct.org](mailto:kroe@vlct.org).



## CLASSIFIEDS -

(Continued from Page Seventeen)

**City Manager.** The City of Auburn, Maine (pop. 23,203) seeks an energetic, innovative City Manager, Assistant City Manager, or individual in a similar executive level position. Strong emphasis on management, interpersonal and consensus-building skills. Proven track record in financial management and budgeting, economic development, business recruitment/retention, and intergovernmental relations a must. BA in public/business administration or related field required; MPA or similar advanced degree desirable. Residency required. Starting salary \$90,000-\$100,000, DOQ. The Manager is appointed by a part-time mayor and council elected to two-year, coterminous terms (five wards, two at-large); \$64.9 million total budget of which \$33.7 million is school fund; 1,194 full-time employees. To apply, send resume and references in confidence to the City's recruitment consultant: The PAR Group, 100 N. Waukegan Road, Suite 211, Lake Bluff, IL 60044-1694, or email to [resume@pargroupltd.com](mailto:resume@pargroupltd.com). The City of Auburn is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and minorities encouraged to apply. (9-28)

**Benefits Program Administrator.** VLCT has an exciting, newly created opportunity for a self-motivated individual to successfully roll out and manage a vital service for our Health Trust members. The Benefits Program Administrator excels at database administration and customer service, serves as liaison to resolve issues between our members and our health carrier concerning premiums payments and participant eligibility, meets deadlines and is detail-oriented yet sees and anticipates the big picture. Training and support from an experienced consultant will be provided to augment your success. Qualifications include Bachelor's degree (or equivalent experience) plus billing, accounting, database management or similar experience. Excellent communication skills, accuracy and strong customer service orientation are required. VLCT's generous total compensation package includes retirement plan options with a total 12.1% employer contribution, choice of three health plans including a 100% employer paid option, flexible spend-

ing account, life and long-term care insurances and more. To apply, submit cover letter, resume, and names/phone numbers of three references in strict confidence to [jobsearch@vlct.org](mailto:jobsearch@vlct.org), with Administrator as subject. Review begins immediately; applications accepted until filled. Equal Opportunity Employer. (9-25)

**Underwriting Manager.** Due to growth and a promotion, VLCT seeks an Underwriting Manager for our self-insured municipal property, casualty and workers' compensation pooled insurance fund. Duties include working directly with our municipal members to service their coverage needs, such as new business and renewal quotations, coverage questions, additions/deletions to property and vehicle schedules, exposure basis analysis, WC audit review and processing, and collaborating with the underwriting team and with Member Relations, Loss Control and Claims. Further duties include education of and promotion to members and the development of new coverages and services. The Manager handles larger members and supervises a staff of three. Some in-state travel and some evening hours are required. Requirements include a bachelor's degree plus insurance or risk management experience. Excellent communication and presentation skills, strong customer service orientation, supervisory experience and CPCU or similar designation are required. VLCT offers a convenient Montpelier location and excellent compensation/benefits package including three health insurance options (including one with no employee contribution), choice of defined benefit or defined contribution plan, 401(a) with a total 12.1% employer contribution, long-term care insurance and more. Please submit cover letter, resume, and names/phone numbers of three references to [jobsearch@vlct.org](mailto:jobsearch@vlct.org) with Underwriting as subject. (9-11)

## FREE

**Used protective fire clothing.** The Winooski Fire Department has a surplus of older protective clothing, including bunker pants and jackets, gloves, nomex hoods and boots. Some gear will need minor repair (Velcro); most was manufactured between 2001-2003. If interested, please call Erika at (802) 655-6410 Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (10-1)

## FEDERAL GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR DISASTER MITIGATION

Two federally declared disasters in Vermont this year are not only allowing communities to rebuild, but to plan for and possibly avoid future disasters. The federal declarations make all Vermont communities eligible for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

Municipalities have until December 14, 2007 to apply for the grant. All cities and towns are eligible and need not have been affected by past disasters to apply. For instance, if a town has a road that is regularly subjected to flood damage, it can apply for funds to install new culverts or implement other solutions.

To qualify, a city or town must have a FEMA-approved and adopted local mitigation plan and must be participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (if a special flood hazard area has been identified in the community).

The federal government will pay for 75% of project expenses while the municipality will need to come up with a 25% match. For the HMGP program, the state will receive 15% of the total FEMA Public Assistance expenditures for the two separately declared disasters in April and July. Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) is currently working with FEMA and the Agency of Transportation to ascertain the precise funding amount to be made available for the program.

When a firm dollar amount for the grant program is determined, the state Hazard Mitigation Project Selection Sub-Committee will begin the review and selection process. All applications will be reviewed and ranked utilizing the Mitigation Project Selection Criteria from the state Hazard Mitigation Plan. Projects not selected for funding under the HMGP program can be submitted for the annual Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive (PDM-C) grant program. The deadline for PDM-C applications will be in late January 2008. Formal announcements and details for this grant program are forthcoming.

Under PDM-C, Congress has allocated \$150 million nationwide, and each state is allocated a \$500,000 "set aside" amount for the program. However, applications must be

(Continued on next page)



## DISASTER MITIGATION -

*(Continued from previous page)*

approved and selected by the PDM-C National Review Panel in Washington, D.C. before these funds are released. Vermont received a total of \$570,000 in federal funds for the program for approved projects and planning in the current year.

If you have any questions about either grant program, please contact Ray Doherty (for PDM-C) or Christine Sawyer (for HMGP) at Vermont Emergency Management at (800) 347-0488.

*Mark Bosma, Public Information Officer,  
Vermont Emergency Management*

## 2008 MUNICIPAL POLICY -

*(Continued from Page One)*

House Ways and Means Committee is considering making such a switch.

The education income tax endorsement comes with a set of specific recommendations dealing with the details, such as what to do with non-residential property (continue to levy a non-homestead education property tax), how to protect renters from the threat of double taxation (paying non-residential property taxes through their rent and the education income tax), and designing a system that does not affect high income Vermonters in a way that creates "tax flight."

Also included is the staunch, perennial position against using Education Fund revenue for anything other than school expenses, and a call not to ignore steadily increasing costs on the education side of the ledger.

For the past year, the billing and collection of the statewide education property tax has been the cause of rather contentious relations between municipalities and the state. With the property tax adjustment privacy question going unanswered for a long time, and the changes enacted in 2007 have education money going directly to schools (depriving municipalities of a chance to earn investment income for the trouble of billing and collecting), the membership voted to shift the responsibilities for billing and collecting to the state should the statewide education property tax continue its existence.

Attendees discussed and voted on a wide-range of policy topics, such as transportation funding, public safety, affordable housing, and land use regulations.

To view the 2008 Municipal Policy as adopted, please go to the Advocacy section of VLCT's Web site ([www.vlct.org](http://www.vlct.org)). For questions or comments, please contact Karen Horn, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, at [khorn@vlct.org](mailto:khorn@vlct.org) or (800) 649-7915.

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# Calendar

*For more information about the following workshops or events, please contact Jessica Hill, VLCT Manager, Administrative Services, tel., (800) 649-7915; e-mail, [jhill@vlct.org](mailto:jhill@vlct.org). Or visit <http://www.vlct.org/eventscalendar/> and select a workshop for more information or to register on-line. (The on-line registration option is available for VLCT workshops and events only.)*

By now you should have received your 2007-2008 VLCT Calendar of Training and Events.

**Municipal Budgeting and Financial Management.** Thursday, November 15, 2007, Montpelier Elks Club. Sponsored by VLCT Municipal Assistance Center. Timed in the heart of budget season, this annual workshop will focus on public budgeting fundamentals, capital budgeting for small towns, and best practices

for financial reporting and segregation of duties.

**VLCT Health Trust Annual Meeting.** Friday, November 16, 2007. Capitol Plaza Hotel, Montpelier. Sponsored by the VLCT Health Trust. Members and directors of the VLCT Health Trust will gather to hear reports on the year past, new rates and trends to watch for in the future.

**VLCT Health Trust Regional Meetings.** Monday, November 26 through Friday, November 30, 2007. Various stops around the state in a location near you. VLCT members and staff, joined by Cigna representatives will present the Health Trust products and services. Staff will help Trust members compare current Cigna plans and other offerings and assist with the paperwork needed to make any changes.

**Town Health Officer's Workshop.** Thursday, December 6, 2007, Montpelier Elks Club. Sponsored by VLCT Municipal Assistance Center. This workshop will provide health officers with guidance on some of the more difficult aspects of the job, including enforcing the rental housing code, dealing with wayward dogs, and residual septic responsibilities.

**Flood Prevention and Management.** Thursday, December 13, 2007. Broadcast from a Vermont Interactive Television site near you. Sponsored by VLCT Municipal Assistance Center and your local Regional Planning Commission. Delivered in the evening, this workshop will focus on short- and long-term strategies for restoring the hydrological balance in our river systems.