

Town Fair 2024 – Tracks and Sessions

Town Fair 2024 has something for everyone! Review the tracks and sessions below and sign up today!

Hurry! Early bird pricing is in effect only until August 31.

[Register for Town Fair](#)

Roundtable Topics

All roundtable discussions begin at 8:00 AM

Location: Oscar Wilde

Using Local Option Taxes to Fund Capital Improvements and Move Economic Projects Forward

Nearly three dozen Vermont municipalities have authorized some form of a local option tax, and this year the legislature gave communities the authority to implement a local option tax without legislative approval. Discuss how a local option tax might help your community build more housing, create new economic opportunity, and realize your municipality's plans.

Facilitator: **Michael Gaughan**, Executive Director, Vermont Bond Bank

Michael has been Executive Director and Secretary of the Bond Bank since 2018, represents the Bond Bank on the State of Vermont's Capital Debt Affordability Advisory Committee, and is also the Executive Director of the Vermont Educational and Health Buildings Financing Agency. Previously he served on the National Development Council as a public finance

banker focused on governmental, housing, and community facilities transactions. He is currently on the Executive Committee of the City of Burlington's Planning Commission, a board member of the NESGFOA, and an advisor to the GFOA's Committee on Economic Development and Capital Planning. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Middlebury College and his Master of City Planning degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Navigating Workforce Trends & Compliance

This session will offer valuable insights into emerging workforce patterns, challenges, and opportunities, specifically tailored for Vermont municipalities. We'll explore critical topics like remote work, talent retention/engagement, compliance concerns and providing practical strategies to help you adapt and thrive in this dynamic employment landscape.

Facilitator: **Michelina Covey**, Director of HR Compliance, Acrisure

Michelina is a dynamic, people-centric HR practitioner with over 20 years of HR experience in private industry. As a strategic business partner to senior leaders, she provides expertise to clients in understanding the complexity of constantly changing rules/regulations, legalities of benefits administration and HR best practices. Michelina excels in mitigating legal risks to companies and building relationships and trust within organizations.

Vermont Employee Benefits Trends and Strategies

With major health care costs increasing, it is more important than ever to get a baseline for health care costs and benefits. This session will provide insights to help municipalities understand how their benefits compare, empowering employers to strategically invest in benefits and communicate the competitiveness of their benefit plans to employees and applicants confidently and easily.

Co Facilitators: **Steve May**, Senior Benefits Consultant, Acrisure; and **Sally McKenzie**, Client Advisor/Account Manager, Acrisure

Steve has more than 30 years of experience in the health insurance market as an underwriter and health benefits consultant. His work includes managing RFP processes, budget projections, and strategic plan design analysis. To employer groups he brings additional expertise and consultant strategies & services in the employee benefits arena.

Sally has 25 years with the firm and is active with clients in administering, managing, advising, and installing employer sponsored employee benefits programs. She has experience with strategic oversight, financial modeling, and vendor accountability.

Vermont Open Meeting Law Changes

Significant changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law made in Act 133 took effect on July 1, 2024, and municipalities are adapting and adjusting in real time. Come discuss your efforts, challenges, solutions, and suggested changes with your peers, VLCT Advocacy Staff, and Municipal Assistance Center Attorneys.

Co Facilitators: **Josh Hanford**, VLCT Director of Intergovernmental Relations; VLCT Municipal Assistance Center Attorney

Act Now to Prepare for the Next Flood

In the last 16 months, 88 percent of Vermont's communities suffered significant losses in the course of four separate flooding events. The process of pursuing FEMA aid, whether Public Assistance for municipalities or Individual Assistance for residents, is arduous at best. Learn how your community can proactively avoid or greatly reduce such damage by conducting tough mitigation and buyout projects now with funding and technical assistance from the State of Vermont.

Facilitator: **Stephanie A. Smith**, Hazard Mitigation Section Chief, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Vermont Emergency Management

Good Health = Happy and Productive Workplace

The key to being happy and healthy at work is to have a happy and healthy body and mind! Whether you are looking to improve your own health and wellness or want to create a workplace wellness program for your employees, this roundtable discussion is for you! Topics will include: small changes lead to big results, how to “level up” your food choices, food is medicine, starting a workplace wellness program, and finding a health coach to help you achieve your goals.

Facilitator: **Cynthia Stoddard**, Master Certified Health Coach and Owner, Living Well with Cynthia

Cynthia Stoddard is not only Director of Support and Training at NEMRC: she is also a Master Certified Health Coach and the owner of Living Well with Cynthia. During her personal health and wellness journey she found her passion for helping others achieve their health and wellness goals. As a health coach, she offers one-on-one coaching, workplace wellness presentations and programs, and group sessions. www.livingwellwithcynthia.com Facebook: Living Well with Cynthia

Q&A For Risk Management – Keeping Your Town Out of Court

Give your best shot at stumping two of VLCT’s risk management professionals with insurance/risk management questions that you meant to reach out about, but haven't had the time to do so. The prize for stumping Phil and Joe (and other VLCT staff that decide to join) is bragging rights and VLCT staff getting back to you with an answer after Town Fair. We encourage everyone to attend and learn at this informal discussion even if you do not have a question to ask.

Facilitators: **Joe Damiata**, Director, Risk Management Services, VLCT

Joe has over 22 years of insurance risk management and occupational safety and health experience, with the last 17 years at VLCT. During Joe's tenure at VLCT, he has served as Manager of Loss Control and Underwriting, and has served in the Director role for the past seven years where he oversees VLCT's two insurance trusts.

Phil Woodward, PACIF General Counsel, VLCT

Phil has over thirty years of civil litigation experience, and presently serves as General Counsel for PACIF.

Tackling Equity Issues at the Municipal Level

Join municipal leaders from around Vermont interested in centering diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and belonging work into day-to-day municipal operations.

Facilitator: **Cate Cross**, Shelburne Equity Committee

Cate Cross is a former Shelburne selectboard member and a member of VLCT's Equity Committee.

Finance, Administration and Operations – Track 1

10:30 AM Citizen Engagement: Tips for Informing Voters, Explaining Your Budget, and Being Transparent

Ensuring that citizens have accurate, timely, and useful information before they vote isn't easy. In today's distracted society, simply following Vermont's Open Meeting Law and Public Records Act is not enough to make people aware of how their town is serving them. Hear how Vernon residents learn what's happening in the Town Office. Learn how Duxbury increased

attendance at their Town Meeting Day informational session with one of the best features of Vermont's past – serving pie for breakfast. And find out how Wolcott effectively uses Front Porch Forum to communicate with residents. The CEO of VTDigger will moderate the discussion and explain her perspective on how to effectively share information with the media to further present the facts to the voters before they vote.

Presenter: **Tim Arsenault**, Town Clerk, Vernon

Tim Arsenault, aka Tim Johnson, is a Vernon native and serves as Town Clerk, Town Moderator, and Board of Civil Authority Chair there. He is also a member of the Vermont Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame and has spent over 50 years on the radio in Southern Vermont. He still works part time for 96.7 WTSA FM in Brattleboro.

Presenter: **Maureen Harvey**, Town Clerk and Treasurer, Duxbury

Bio to come

Presenter: **Sky Barsch**, CEO, VTDigger

Schuyler "Sky" Barsch is Chief Executive Officer of VTDigger. A Vermont resident, Barsch joined VTDigger in April 2023 after an extensive career in local and national media, including roles at the Burlington Free Press, the Barre-Montpelier Times Argus, and The Nation magazine. Most recently, she served as Vice President of Sponsorships & Market Strategy for Chalkbeat, one of the largest nonprofit news organizations in the United States. Previously, Barsch served as Associate Publisher of Vermont Life, where she oversaw the digital version of the magazine, social media channels, email newsletters, and digital asset development for Vermont Life's content and e-commerce websites. In addition, she was the owner, editor, and publisher of Vermont Sports, a magazine dedicated to outdoor sports and recreation in northern New England. Before moving into media management, Barsch got her start in journalism as a reporter for the Burlington Free Press and for the Times Argus, where she was named the Vermont Press Association's Rookie of the Year. She has served as incorporator for Northfield Savings Bank and as a board member of the Barton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Montpelier Area Mountain Bike Association. She is an indoor cycling and yoga instructor and an avid mountain biker.

Presenter: **Linda Martin**, Selectboard Member, Wolcott

Linda Martin is a member of the Wolcott Selectboard and has served her community in a

variety of ways, including more than three decades as the Wolcott Town Clerk and Treasurer, six terms in the Vermont Legislature as a member of the House, a volunteer on the Wolcott Village Community Wastewater Project, and a member of the Wolcott School House Revitalization Committee. She helped oversee the acquisition of the Wolcott Community Forest, serves on the Wolcott Ballet Board and the Lamoille County Planning Commission, and has been the treasurer of the Wolcott United Methodist Church.

1:30 PM Leveraging VTBuys for Your Town's Purchases

The State of Vermont will soon launch VTBuys, an e-procurement system that will make it easier for municipalities and other political subdivisions to take advantage of State contract pricing and terms. Learn how you can maximize your purchasing power and budget savings by connecting through VTBuys.

Presenter: **Marcey Hodgdon**, Financial Director II, Vermont Attorney General's Office
Marcey is currently the Fiscal Director at the Office of the Attorney General. Her employment with the State of Vermont since 1995 has included serving on the Bulletin 3.5 (Vermont's Procurement & Contracting Procedures) Revision Committee in 2014-2015 and on the VTBuys Project team since 2017. Her procurement experience includes drafting RFPs and service contracts, sourcing needed items, negotiating contract terms, and supporting the procurement efforts of staff and suppliers.

Presenter: **Diane Irish**, Administrative Services Director, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Diane has worked for the State of Vermont since 2007. In her current position as Administrative Services Director for the Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS), Diane oversees all contracting for the agency as well as procurement and other duties for the AHS Central Office Fiscal Unit. Over the years she has helped in rewriting Vermont's Bulletin 3.5, and she has been a member of the VTBuys project team since it started in 2017. Her procurement experience includes preparing RFPs, negotiating contracts, drafting and executing contracts for services, procuring goods and services, and supporting the agency

overall in all contracting work

1:30 PM Effects of 2024 Legislation on Education Property Tax Administration

In 2024 the Vermont General Assembly made several changes to the calculations behind the statewide education property tax. The one with the largest impact is a change to the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) treatment as it applies to tax rates. Specifically, the legislature has directed the Department of Taxes (DOT) to calculate a “statewide adjustment” based on the town and statewide CLA. Staff from DOT will explain the statutory changes and answer questions.

Presenter: **Jill Remick**, Director, Property Valuation and Review, Vermont Department of Taxes

Jill has worked in Vermont state government for 20 years. She lives in Montpelier with her family and serves on the Montpelier Roxbury School Board.

Presenter: **Jake Feldman**, Senior Fiscal Analyst, Vermont Department of Taxes

Jake has been working at the Vermont Department of Taxes since 2014. He works on all the tax types the department administers, but much of his focus is on education finance and education property taxes. Jake’s education finance contributions include the Commissioner’s annual December 1st letter, policy work with the administration and legislature, and maintaining the statistics behind PVR’s equalization study.

Presenter: **Chloe Wexler**, Senior Fiscal Analyst, Property Valuation and Review, Vermont Department of Taxes

Chloe previously worked at the Legislative Joint Fiscal Office and now works closely with other analysts, municipal officials, and the Agency of Education to set tax rates, in addition to other duties related to tax fiscal data and payments.

2:45 PM Best Hiring Practices for Building a Great Team

This session will equip you with the essential and legally compliant tools and techniques to attract, identify, evaluate, and onboard the best candidates across all municipal departments, from police to highway to administrative.

Presenter: **Julie McKenzie**, Assistant General Counsel, PACIF Labor and Employment, VLCT

Julie has spent 19 years helping employers solve difficult workplace problems, for the vast majority of that time as an attorney advising public sector employers. For about 12 years, she was in private legal practice as external labor and employment counsel to the nine Massachusetts State Universities. From there, she spent about five years as Chief Labor Counsel for the City of Somerville, Massachusetts, and for the two years prior to joining VLCT, she worked in Employee Relations at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. Julie is very pleased to be working in municipal government again and has tremendously enjoyed meeting and working with members on large and small concerns.

Presenter: **Trevor Whipple**, Law Enforcement Risk Management Consultant, VLCT
Trevor is currently Law Enforcement Consultant at VLCT Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF), where he is available as a resource to PACIF member municipalities and their police departments. Trevor previously served as a sworn law enforcement officer for 37 years, including long terms as police chief of Barre City and South Burlington, respectively. Trevor has been an instructor at the Vermont Police Academy since 1985, teaching Juvenile Law, Animal Welfare Investigations, and Police Liability. He currently serves as the VLCT delegate to the Vermont Criminal Justice Council, where he also chairs the Professional Regulation subcommittee.

As a US Senate appointee, Trevor chairs the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board. This board reviews nominations and makes recommendations to the President of the United States for the nation's highest award for valor. Trevor holds undergraduate degrees from Castleton University and Northern Vermont University. He also earned a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Vermont.

Presenter: **Jill Muhr**, Senior Human Resources Consultant, VLCT

Jill Muhr, SHRM-SCP, has worked for several decades in the ever-evolving field of human

resources. As a former HR Director for VLCT's internal operations, Jill rejoined the League in 2015 to provide member-focused consultation services. Her other HR leadership roles include in the fields of higher education, public accounting, web-based HR information services, and at the oldest museum in New York City. Jill received her BS degree in Business Administration from the University of Delaware and earned a certificate in HR practices from New York University. She currently serves on the board of the Vermont Human Resource Association. When not working in her chosen field, Jill enjoys biking, hiking, and working toward creating a sustainable farmstead at home on the back roads of Adamant.

Leadership – Track 2

10:30 AM Avoiding Bias in Municipal Land Use Decisions

Municipal decisions about how land is used and how it is valued have enormous impacts on the lives of Vermonters. Nationwide, some of these decisions have contributed to inequities in our society. For the past two years, the Vermont legislature has made significant changes to municipal land use laws, requiring increased density and pre-empting municipal input on where homeless shelters are located. In 2023, Act 68 created a new required equity training for listers and assessors. Come participate in a discussion with Vermont's Office of Racial Equity on how your community can use these new laws to avoid inequities in land use and land valuation decisions.

Presenter: **Shalini Suryanarayana**, Director, Education and Outreach, Office of Racial Equity, State of Vermont

Shalini serves as the State of Vermont's Racial Equity Education & Outreach Associate. She was appointed to the position in January 2022. Shalini interacts with residents, visitors, press, and other sectors of government. She builds training curricula, liaises with communities around the state, and helps state and local leaders apply an equity lens to their work through education and close communication.

Shalini earned a Master's degree in Business with a minor in Organizational Development/Organizational Behavior and is currently pursuing a graduate certificate in Diversity & Inclusion from Cornell University. She has over 20 years of direct experience leading successful diversity initiatives in Michigan, all of which promoted racial equity in addition to supporting other underrepresented populations.

In 2021 she was appointed to two Governor's Commissions in Vermont - the Governor's Workforce Equity and Diversity Council (GWEDC) where she serves as a Co-Chair and the Governor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities (GCEPD). During the last three years as a member of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Department of Environmental Conservation, she served on the ANR Diversity & Equity Committee and the DEC Environmental Justice Committee. These efforts afforded her the opportunity to learn even more about social justice issues in Vermont and have further solidified her interest in remediating systemic racial disparities. Her work to promote and support underrepresented populations demonstrates her commitment to serving and protecting the most vulnerable members of our communities.

In addition to her relevant professional experiences, as an immigrant and woman of color, she also brings first-hand experiences, insights, and perspectives from multiple marginalized groups. She lives on Abenaki land in Middlesex.

1:30 PM Thriving Through Change: Transforming Your Workplace in Response to Changing Times

This dynamic session provides you with the strategies and tools to lead and manage change effectively. We will discuss how to communicate change initiatives, address change reluctance, and foster a culture of adaptability and resilience. Join us to become a change champion and drive positive evolution in your workplace.

Presenter: **Julie McKenzie**, Assistant General Counsel, PACIF Labor and Employment, VLCT

Julie has spent 19 years helping employers solve difficult workplace problems, for the vast

majority of that time as an attorney advising public sector employers. For about 12 years, she was in private legal practice as external labor and employment counsel to the nine Massachusetts State Universities. From there, she spent about five years as Chief Labor Counsel for the City of Somerville, Massachusetts, and for the two years prior to joining VLCT, she worked in Employee Relations at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. Julie is very pleased to be working in municipal government again and has tremendously enjoyed meeting and working with members on large and small concerns.

2:45 PM Maintaining Professionalism Amid Conflict: Lessons Learned from Slate Ridge

Learn approaches for handling difficult situations and maintaining professionalism while interacting with constituents, attorneys, the press, state actors, and open meeting disturbances. This insider's discussion of the Slate Ridge zoning enforcement case will center on open meeting law challenges, harassment from external sources, managing town business under pressure, and lack of support from those responsible for providing it.

Presenter: **Merrill Bent**, Esq., Woolmington, Campbell, Bent & Stasny, P.C.

Merrill is the Managing Director of a law firm in Manchester, Vermont, which represents and supports over a dozen Vermont municipalities in various aspects of municipal business. Merrill is an experienced practitioner in state and federal court, as well as various state administrative agencies. Merrill lives in the Town of Sunderland with her family. As relevant to this presentation, Merrill represented the Town of Pawlet in its zoning enforcement action against Slate Ridge and its owner Daniel Banyai, which was fraught with unanticipated issues, particularly as the case garnered press attention and escalated through the court system.

Building Safe and Healthy Communities – Track 3

10:30 AM Your Four Key Takeaways from Act 181 to Spur Housing Creation

[Act 181](#) (H.687) of the 2024 session is massive (171 pages) and sweeping legislation that attempts to strike a balance between encouraging development where our state development goals want it and discouraging it where they don't. It affects both housing and environmental conservation, and it is very complicated. Let us help you decode it by giving you just the four high-level, key takeaways that you, as a local leader, should know as your municipality considers spurring housing creation to grow its Grand List and its tax base.

Presenter: **Peter Gill**, Executive Director, Natural Resources Board

Peter is the Executive Director of the Natural Resources Board (NRB) – the State entity that oversees the administration of Act 250- Vermont's state land use law. The statutory changes discussed in this session will transition the Board from the NRB to the Land Use Review Board and usher in a new location-based jurisdiction model. With an able team, Gill is leading that transition. Prior to his work at the Board, Gill served as a law clerk for a superior court judge in Alaska, provided legal representation for the state's Water Resources Panel and the Land Use Panel, and managed legal compliance for Norwich University. Gill lives in East Montpelier with his family, dog and chickens where he skis, bikes and enjoys carpentry.

Presenter: **Charlie Baker**, Executive Director, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Bio - to come

Presenter: **Chip Sawyer**, City of St. Albans Director of Planning & Development

Bio - to come

Presenter: **Jacob Hemmerick**, Community Planning and Policy Manager, Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development

Jacob Hemmerick, AICP, is a community planning & policy manager at the Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development in the Division of Community Planning + Revitalization -- a team that uses a place-based approach to land-use planning and community development to empower state and local leaders to plan for and build vibrant, inclusive, and resilient downtowns, villages and neighborhoods. Jacob's work focuses on the

Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning Act and the Downtown Development Act, administration of planning grants, state smart growth designations, and special projects. His prior work includes service as a park ranger, ICMA management fellow, local planning and economic development director, development review planner, planning commissioner, city councilor, and former mayor; he holds a BA and MPA from the University of Dayton and lives in Barre City.

1:30 PM Civility and Effective Meetings

Municipal boards and committees must meet to conduct their business. But it's not that simple, because they must also balance compliance with the Open Meeting Law and Constitutional requirements with promoting meaningful engagement and participation by fellow board members and the public. To help municipal officials and meeting attendees achieve these goals, panelists will share best practices and templates, including the Town of Strafford's Guideline for Selectboard Conduct and VLCT's Effective and Legal Meetings Toolkit.

Presenter: **Toni Pippy**, Selectboard Chair, Strafford

Bio - to come

Presenter: **Garrett Baxter**, Senior Staff Attorney, VLCT Municipal Assistance Center

Bio - to come

Presenter: **Susan Clark**, Town Moderator, Middlesex Vermont and author, *Slow Democracy* and *All Those In Favor*

Susan is coauthor of *Slow Democracy*, a book about strengthening local decisions, and *All Those In Favor*, a book about Vermont town meetings, and she collaborated on *Freedom & Unity*, a graphic guide to Vermont democracy. Susan consults with communities across the northeast on how to build inclusive, deliberative, and empowered public engagement. She serves as Middlesex town moderator.

2:45 PM Cybersecurity Essentials for Municipalities

In today's increasingly digital landscape, Vermont's municipalities must prioritize cybersecurity to protect sensitive data and ensure the continuity of vital services. This session will equip municipal officials with the essential cybersecurity knowledge and best practices necessary to safeguard their data and infrastructure. Participants will learn about prevalent cybersecurity threats facing organizations, such as ransomware, phishing attacks, and data breaches. The session will also cover practical strategies for enhancing cybersecurity postures, such as implementing robust password policies, conducting regular security audits, and providing staff and officials with comprehensive cybersecurity training. By the end of this session, participants will be empowered to take proactive measures to secure their local government's digital assets, minimize vulnerabilities, and effectively respond to cyber threats. Join us to protect your municipality and build a secure and resilient community for your residents.

Presenter: **Emmanuel Ajanma**, Director of Technology, VLCT

Bio - to come

Presenter: **Shawn Nailor**, Special Programs Director, State of Vermont

Bio - to come

Facilitated Discussions – Track 4

10:30 AM What Does That Official Do? Peer to Peer Learning and Discussion

While Vermont law defines statutory duties for municipal officials, it often doesn't clearly describe how different positions work together to accomplish processes that span different roles. During this session, learn from a panel of seasoned officials about their legal requirements and practical aspects of complying with the law.

Presenter: **Edee Edwards**, Selectboard Chair, Town of Halifax

Presenter: **Diane Judd**, Town of Holland Town Clerk, Treasurer, Lister, Delinquent Tax Collector and President, Vermont Municipal Clerks and Treasurers' Association

Presenter: **Sara Haskins**, Morristown Town Clerk and Treasurer

Sara began working in municipal government in 2005 and was elected Town Clerk & Treasurer for the Town of Morristown in 2017. Sara holds her Master Municipal Clerk designation through the International Institute of Municipal Clerks and is both a Certified Advanced Level 1 Vermont Clerk and Treasurer. She currently serves as the Vermont Municipal Clerks & Treasurers Association 2nd VP and the Chair of the Continuing Education Committee where she spearheaded the First Thursday Trainings for their members. In 2021 she was the recipient of the VMCTA Award of Appreciation for her work in moving the VMCTA forward in technology. She holds a bachelor's degree from Mount Holyoke College and a master's degree in education administration. As is typical in small communities Sara wears many hats and is also the Village Clerk & Treasurer, School District Treasurer & Assistant Clerk, Town & Village Delinquent Tax Collector and Trustee of Public Funds.

Presenter: **Mary Ann Goulette**, Town Manager, West Rutland

Presenter: **Sandi Switzer**, Town Administrator, Wallingford

1:30 PM Young Municipal Leaders

Are you a young municipal leader looking to connect with other young municipal leaders? Then join our facilitated discussion led by one of your peers. This will be a relaxed, informal setting for you to listen to others share their thoughts, ideas, challenges, opportunities, experiences, etc. about serving in local government, and for you to share as well. You're sure to learn something valuable and, we hope, make some new friends who can become trusted confidants in your municipal journey. Everybody needs a buddy. Find yours here!

Presenter: **Alyssa Johnson**, Selectboard Member, Town of Waterbury and Community Visit Program Manager, Vermont Council on Rural Development
Bio - to come

2:45 PM Have Municipal Finance Questions? We Have Answers!

Gone are the days when a municipality's finances were simple and easy to follow. Now, there are different bases for accounting for financial statements vs. budgetary purposes, varying sources of revenue besides just taxes, separate funds and fund types, comingled and segregated cash accounts, annual audits, Single Audits, etc. A municipality's general ledger can feel daunting to manage properly and overwhelming to interpret if you are not well versed in governmental accounting. This session will be facilitated by VLCT's new Government Finance Specialist, who will help you find answers to the questions you have about your municipality's money.

Presenter:
Bio - to come

Elections – Track 5

Presented in cooperation with the Vermont Municipal Clerks' and Treasurers' Association (VMCTA)

10:30 AM Tools to Support Election Administrators

Election officials have a large community of supporters they can turn to for tools, resources, and advice. In this presentation, our experts will showcase free and low-cost resources designed with today's election administrators in mind. The presentation will focus on

communications tools like VoterCast and the Communications Resource Desk, which offer election officials best-in-class materials and guidance.

Presenter: **Tina Barton**, Senior Election Expert, Elections Group

Tina is a Senior Election Expert at The Elections Group. She recently capped a 32-year career as a government employee, serving in various roles at the local and federal levels. The last 16 years of her career have been dedicated to election administration and election safety while appointed as the City Clerk of Rochester Hills, Michigan, and as a Senior Advisor at the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. She is a graduate of Liberty University and holds a Master Municipal Clerk certification from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks.

1:30 PM Preparing for an Emergency: Incident Response, COOP, and Communications

“Expect the unexpected” are words to live by for elections administrators. In this session, you'll gain crucial insights into fortifying your office's resilience and ensuring swift, effective responses to unforeseen challenges. We will explore three key concepts: mastering incident response planning, developing a robust Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), and establishing reliable backup communication protocols. Equip yourself and your team with the tools to confidently navigate and manage any crisis that comes your way.

Presenter: **William Senning**, Election Security Advisor, Region 1 (New England), Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

Will Senning is the Election Security Advisor (ESA) for Region 1 for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) of the Department of Homeland Security. Region 1 covers all of New England, and, as ESA, Will advises state and local election officials across all six states on improving the cyber, physical, and operational security of their elections systems. Prior to working for CISA, Will served as the Director of Elections in Vermont for 11 years from 2013-2024. In that time, he oversaw the administration of 12 statewide elections and the implementation of significant reforms to election law and systems in Vermont. Will was born and raised in Duxbury, Vermont and received his bachelor's degree from Hampshire

College and his JD, *cum laude*, from Vermont Law School. He lives in Duxbury with his wife, Susan, and their two daughters, Stella Grace and Dylan.

Presenter: **Trevor Timmons**, Election Security Expert, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

Trevor serves CISA's Election Security and Resilience team as an Elections Security Expert after serving the Colorado Secretary of State's office for nearly thirty years and as Chief Information Officer from 2007 to 2023. He has also served in several national positions, including chairperson of the EI-ISAC Executive Committee, as a member of DHS's SLTT Government Coordinating Council, and as an Advisory Board member to the Election Security Research Forum. Trevor has been an invited speaker and panelist at multiple conferences including NASS, NASED, RSA, MS-ISAC and EI-ISAC, and DEF CON.

2:45 PM Elections Incident Response Planning

Are you prepared for secure elections in 2024? In this interactive session, election officials, led by qualified personnel, will discuss various scenarios and responses in tabletop exercises to determine the viability of their election continuity. The actual plans and procedures of municipalities with officials attending this session will be considered and evaluated.

Presenter: **Seán Sheehan**, Director of Elections and Campaign Finance, Vermont Office of the Secretary of State

Seán is Director of Elections and Campaign Finance in the Vermont Secretary of State's office. Having worked for the State of Vermont for 12 years, most recently as the Director of Performance Improvement in the Agency of Human Services, Seán oversees a team that administers Vermont's elections, oversees campaign finance reporting and lobbyist disclosure laws, and encourages civic participation. He is a graduate of American University and holds a Master in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.