

Hardwick Pitches Adding a Cop for Greensboro

by June Pichel Cook

GREENSBORO — The Hardwick Police Department (HPD) formed thirty-seven years ago with 5 officers, 2 police cruisers and a military surplus truck. Since the military surplus truck, the HPD currently has 7 officers, 4 police cruisers, and a K9 truck. Greensboro contracted for 4 hours of coverage per week in 1986; that contract was at a cost of \$215,000/year.

HPD Chief Aaron Cochran met with the select board last week to give an overview of the department, incident police calls, and criminal offenses. The HPD is seeking an other officer for the force and is applying for a COP5 Hiring Program grant. The Hardwick Select Board voted to hire a new officer. Cochran's detailed analysis showed the growth of the HPD over the last 37 years, increased incident police calls and criminal

offenses. The last HPD officer hired was in 2011, sixteen years ago. The new officer would serve as a detective. Chief Cochran said bringing a new officer would increase investigations and allow patrol officers more time in the community. Officers currently serve as investigators and patrol officers. Patrol officers handle detection and response to criminal activity; detectives handle the investigation side of the criminal activity.

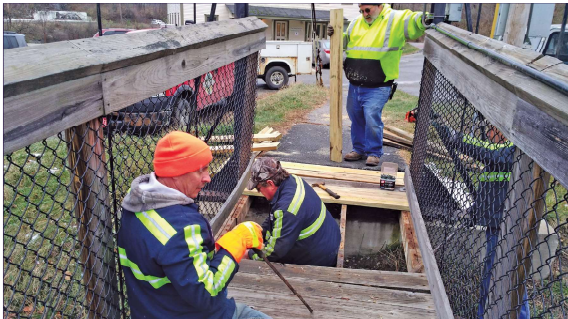
An officer will be doing community policing or patrol during the time that's spent on preparing a case or investigating. Federal recommendations for police officer safety is 2.1 officers per 1,000 of population. The 2010 Hardwick census was 3,010; Greensboro's, 762. However, the population more than doubles in Greensboro during summer. The HPD covers 78 square miles in two counties, Orleans and Caladenia. In 2010, during an 8½-hour

approved, but the decision was reversed in 2011. Police call volume from Greensboro has doubled since 2001, with 407 calls in 2016, of which 44 were criminal. The HPD currently shows a 57.14 percent increase over the past 2 years.

In Hardwick, police incident calls have almost doubled since 2008, going from 1,857 to 3,584 last year, of which were 300 criminal offenses. In the last 5 years, criminal offenses have jumped 212.37 percent. Two years ago, Norwich University, a statistic class studied the crime rate for an additional officer. The conclusion was the statistics justify an additional officer, however, adding the force was not approved.

"We didn't hire an officer," Chief Cochran said, "despite increasing crime rate and feeling it would continue on the rise. The COP5 grant wasn't our first and adding an officer at that point was still in HPD's..."

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The Hardwick Police Works crew replaces decaying on the swinging bridge downtown as light fixtures fall on November 16. Left to right: Peasey Allen, Tom Anderson, Todd Fenwick, and Brent Hodgdon.

Plainfield Gets Results of Speed Study

by Will Walters

PLAINFIELD — The results are in for a recently-completed first step of a speed study in Plainfield. Tom Currier of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, which conducted the study, explained the results to the select board at its recent meeting.

Currier explained that a full speed study involved a number of variables: the speed of each car surveyed, the number of cars, the number and which days of the week were used in the survey; the data collection and the road and its accident

history. The data Currier reviewed at the meeting focused on the speed of the cars. Six separate counts were made in the area over the past two years. Counts were conducted on Brook Road, one on Barre Hill and one on Middle Road. Two more counts were completed on Lower Hill Road the week after the last four were done.

Currier said that the Agency of Transportation uses the 85th percentile speed in setting speed limits for state roads. By definition, 85 percent of the measured traffic travels at the 85th percentile speed, or slower.

The counting was done for a full week at this site. Currier said the two 25 m.p.h. zones are where the majority of drivers were found to be speeding. Board member Alexander "Sasha" Thayer noted that the charts show that in the area below Cameron Road on Brook Road, most people were traveling 15 m.p.h. above the speed limit and the speed for most cars on Barre Hill was 29 m.p.h. at the speed radar sign.

Brian Towbin said the information indicates that the radar sign is having an effect on drivers' speeds. He noted that the hill is steep and he was concerned that if speed

would be higher, if the drivers were not trying to obey the speed limit. Currier said, however, that the drivers were probably braking for the stop sign at the bottom of the hill. Currier discussed study results for a section of Brook Road. He said the approximately 1,200 vehicles that went over the counters, only 4 were above 60 m.p.h. and two were between 60 and 70 m.p.h. Data shows that on Barre Hill, 91 percent of vehicles are traveling in excess of the 25 m.p.h. speed limit, including two clocked vehicles approaching 60 m.p.h.

photo by Doug McCure



As he crosses the U.S.A. in the morning, the Hardwick Works crew replaces decaying on the swinging bridge downtown as light fixtures fall on November 16. Left to right: Peasey Allen, Tom Anderson, Todd Fenwick, and Brent Hodgdon.

War Veterans Spoke to Students About Veterans Day and Service

by Michael Bielowski

HARDWICK — Local Legion War Veterans Sergeant Lt. Class Archie Hodgdon from Hardwick spoke with 12 grade four Lakeview students last Thursday about Veterans Day, the American flag, being away from home in a war, and how Hodgdon has been in the service for 27½ years, including a 14 months in Iraq during 2003 and 2004, where he saw combat on multiple occasions.

Lakeview teacher Dana Slayton

has invited him to speak to her class in the past. "Last year, she had me come out there that was kind of on the fence about whether to believe in the flag or not," Hodgdon said. "She brought me to the school and I explained some things to them about what the flag meant to me and others in our community."

"Today's kids were incredible. Every one of them had at least one question and some had several," he

said. "It was just great to get a feel for how today's young people feel about the military as a whole." He said there were a lot of questions about his current career in the military. He speaks with other soldiers about staying in the military and career opportunities such as Joanne Lefelliane shared 10-year school population projections with the board at its meeting last week and the Craftsbury forest call meeting for students.

The board had planned a community meeting for Wednesday, November 15, to discuss whether or not the town should build a new elementary school. At last week's meeting, the date was changed to Wednesday, November 29, at 6:00 p.m. in the Common Room, Craftsbury Academy.

Lefelliane reported that, ten years from now, the school population is estimated at 194 students, of whom 91 would be PreK-4 students and 103 would be in grades 5-12. Currently, there are 152 students, of whom 64 are PreK-4 and 88 in grades 5-12. The estimated number of home-schooled children is 10. Lefelliane said that parents often school in elementary and middle grades, then enroll their children in high school. Birth rates, family mobility, and the number of students all variables in the projection.

"The community is growing and a lot of people want to come and live here," Lefelliane said. Lefelliane reported that Craftsbury Elementary

Craftsbury Schools Expect 25+% Growth

by June Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY Despite decreasing school populations in other school districts, the Craftsbury School Board faces a different challenge. Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSU) Superintendent Joanne Lefelliane shared 10-year school population projections with the board at its meeting last week and the Craftsbury forest call meeting for students.

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"The community is growing and a lot of people want to come and live here," Lefelliane said. Lefelliane reported that Craftsbury Elementary

school was nearing capacity. A three-term student may be leaving 4th graders to the upper campus. Principal Merril Grosven said the situation could be resolved for next year without leaving 4th graders. The immediate plans are to house one more grade in a single-grade classroom and combine 2, 3 and 4 into different configurations. The teachers are very experienced and it's possible to implement this approach without leaving 4th graders.

What happens following the year-long study will be discussed at the next meeting.

Yes Chair Mary Lou Rylands said the elementary school is not attractive and is very bleak. The building does not have an office area. She added that a design for a new facility should encompass pre-k and other child-care. She explained that the BEACH program does not cover pre-K.

Offering multiple pre-K programs and sharing space with the Craftsbury Savings was suggested as an option to research.

Melissa Jacobs of the Craftsbury Savings said her group has a 2-year contract at the East Craftsbury Preschool Center facility. They have 12 slots for children from 3 months to 5 years. There is a child-care need for children under 3 years of age in the district. The Craftsbury Savings is a private non-profit organization that serves its services in September. Jacobs said they are looking to expand whether to provide a full day of care.

"Child-care is a statewide need," she said.

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Woodbury Backs Out of Water Act Participation

by Michael Bielowski

WOODBURY — The select board, acting on the advice of its legal counsel, decided that participation in Act 490, known as the Clean Water Act, would be an inefficient use of town resources. The law requires communities to construct 4 roads located near waterways to mitigate contamination of water supplies.

The rationale for the law is that Lake Champlain has been getting high levels of contamination over the years and one of the suspected contributors is water runoff from Vermont's extensive network of dirt roads.

Board chair Michael Gray noted that the extra roadway is causing some rumbling among road crews elsewhere in the state. He said he heard on the radio that some environmentalists in the southern portion of the state were having trouble with complying with the Act.

Hardwick Town Manager Jon Jewett has stated during just a few board meetings that there are other suspected culprits for the contamination of Lake Champlain.

such as river-bank erosion, which he noted is considered before town select board meetings.

The roadwork uses federal grant money, which is allocated to communities via the Regional Planning Commission. The process is not moving as efficiently as the town would like.

"My gut feeling is this whole thing has been just confusing from the beginning. I talked with UNH (RISC) geographical information system manager Dan Currier about it. We don't sign the contract. It is going to compromise the project," he said. "Gray said."

Gray said his getting late in the season as far as getting any work done for this year. The deadline to get the work done is by June of next year, which leaves too small of a window to commit at this point. Other communities may still be on board.

"The project which involves two other communities including Calais would still go forward with us," he said. Woodbury's participation," said Gray.

Another consideration is that Woodbury's financial resources may be limited. "My initial reaction is, just looking at the budget, it would be very difficult to fund," member Tom Lindsay said. "And since we didn't ever finish this in fiscal year"

for it, I might stop away from that."

Gray also pointed out that a lot of Class 4 roads haven't seen vehicle traffic since the 1970s, so it may make more sense to reclassify them as utility roads. The town is in other road crew news, there was some truck trouble for an old backhoe six-wheeler in the West Hill area near the Park Park.

suggested it may not pass the next budget. The town is considering an option on the cost for a fix to the water tower, as a source of action cost. The town is considering switching to LED lamps on the current hydro-gas powered ones to LED lamps, as Hardwick did with its 300-plus lights a few years ago.

While the LEDs are cheaper to run and have directional white beams, the LEDs are cheaper due to the gas lights, there are only about a dozen street lights in the whole town, so a source of action cost. The town is considering switching to LED lamps, as Hardwick did with its 300-plus lights a few years ago.

The town is still working on...

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