

Board Hears About Upcoming Recycling Mandate

by Michael Bielowski

HARDWICK — Five years ago, the Vermont legislature enacted community waste Act 148 to mandate, in increasing increments each year, that municipalities recycle. The final checkpoint comes in 2020 when all organics will be banned from landfill.

At last Thursday's select board meeting, Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) general manager Bruce Westcott joined the board to discuss their budget and plans for the final year of its implementation.

The CVSWMD is a 16-town organization which includes Hardwick and several of its neighbors. The district works to help communities manage waste and recyclables efficiently. Part of Westcott's message was that as the organics ban gets closer, the logistics and costs of its implementation are becoming an increasing concern for both municipalities and the private sector. One issue is who pays for the recycling.

Now, some state transfer stations and private haulers are being required to accept organics, and they are charging a fee," he said. "So, you are bringing to us [the board] a dollar a tonne."

Another issue is enforcement. Westcott said the haulers cannot realistically be expected to become "substantial" and would have to see whether a customer is in violation.

He added that some haulers have threatened to sue the town if enforcement isn't the point of enforcement," Westcott said.

He said this issue is likely to be taken up during the legislative session starting in January and that the CVSWMD will take part in that process.

Another challenge is that one primary location where tires are stored is in Maine, so the whole state and wider region continue to struggle with the processing of discarded tires.

Still another challenge is Vermont has only one active landfill in the state, which is in Covington. Board members noted that trash

continues to accumulate alongside roads and each year residents must use up their free time on Green Up Day to pick up the trash left by those who disregarded the image and safety of the community.

"It's amazing that, after all the education that's been done in the last 30 years, people still throw garbage on the roads," board member Dhany Hale said.

The board was over the budget line-by-line again, reviewing costs such as road work and building maintenance. At the end of the meeting, business manager Brittany Currie said it is still early for the numbers to become more concrete.

During the meeting, board chair Eric Remick reminded everyone that school budgets are projected to go up this year.

"Something that's been on my mind lately are school budgets... all the scuttlebutt is those are going up big time this year, 10 percent," he said.

He noted that the school budgets amount to roughly two-thirds the total local taxes that residents pay, with the other third being the municipalities' share.

"Our budget is not the major driver. I think we need to be sensitive to the fact that property taxes will be driven by the increases in municipal and school budgets."

The board was pleased to hear that the CVSWMD has been completed by the Planning Commission and will be presented to the select board.

Remick expressed his satisfaction that after years of working to get caught up, the efforts have finally paid off.

"We had some issues [because] we weren't compliant with FEMA [regulations]... we had working issues and things that didn't line up on another page and with our charter," he said. "And finally getting that done is really important work."

He said that having the town bylaws and town plan in sync makes rules more enforceable like everything up-to-date with state and federal requirements.

Town manager Jon Jewett
SEE RECYCLING, 5



The Hardwick Police Department has been awarded a \$125,000 grant to pay part of the cost of an additional officer. (Photo by Vanessa Fournier)

Hardwick Awarded \$125,000 COPS Grant for New Police Officer

by Michael Bielowski

HARDWICK — The select board will consider accepting a \$125,000 Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant, which is federal money to help financially-limited municipalities hire more officers.

The office of U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy

has announced Vermont will receive almost \$800,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice's COPS Hiring Program (CHP).

In addition to Hardwick, grants will go to the Orange, Essex, and Franklin County sheriff's departments and the Winotham police department. The money is to pay part of the salary of the newly-hired officer for three years.

The select board authorized the police department to apply for this money this last summer. Now, it will have to determine if it wants to accept the grant and provide the rest of the required money.

Town business manager Brittany Currie said the amount of

the match will depend on a lot of factors, such as if the new hire is single person, or has a family, or if he or she would have to attend the academy.

"We did the application assuming for worst-case scenario," she said.

For years, a recurring topic at select board meetings has been the staffing levels at the police department. The Hardwick Police Department (HPD) covers both Hardwick and Greensboro with a combined population of around 3,700, and is operating below federal guidelines for officer per capita.

During a 2015 select board meeting, **SEE GRANT, 6**

Craftsbury School Budget Looks Bleak for Taxpayers

by June Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY — Orleans School Supervisor Union (OSSU) Superintendent Joanne LeBlanc presented the first round of the Craftsbury School Budget to the school board and the cost of education is escalating. The budget was called a snapshot of bleakness and a snapshot of reality. Preliminary figures show the FY2018 budget of \$3,674,600 jumping to \$3,900,722 for an increase of 6.13 percent.

The projected operating rate may jump 14 cents (3.469), about 10 percent more than the state's rate of 1.7600. Winotham's rate of 1.7600 would increase to 1.9000, a 7.95 percent increase. The projected FY19 budget, equating about \$175,000 a new platform elevator in Minden Hall, \$27,000

a new roof on Minden, \$140,000 and stannard at Craftsbury And any (CA) and repairing one well. \$7,000.

LeBlanc said the budget was very preliminary and she wanted direction. The budget has to account for contractual obligations. It includes a full-time facilities manager to replace a current part-time position coupled with the services received from Jeff LaForte of OSSU. It also includes the district's share of adding an administrative assistant at OSSU.

Addressing the elevator situation at Minden got a lot of attention as the district is out of American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) compliance. The original lift was installed in 1989, when Minden was built. The manufacturer has since gone out of business. When repairs are needed, parts are "not" possible to find, according to LeBlanc. The vendor **SEE BLEAK, 4**

Ambitious Cabot School Development Plan Introduced

by Will Walters

CABOT — Advantage Cabot, the organization founded to assist in the viability of Cabot School has already been incorporated in Vermont as a non-profit corporation. It is applying to be given a 501(c)(3) exemption by the Internal Revenue Service, which will assist in its obtaining grants and assistance as a non-profit organization.

Advantage Cabot is not a "school within a school" organizer. Karen Larsen repeated several times at a public forum last Wednesday. The forum was held to inform the public about the purpose of Advantage Cabot, of the steps being taken to keep the high school viable and to meet the alternate governance structure required under Act 66. In short, Advantage Cabot is working to help Cabot School open in town.

It targeting its efforts on the high school, working to attract needed state as well as out-of-town students, and students would stay at the high school and board with local families.

About 20 people came to hear LeBlanc describe the working group's goal of seeking to develop an independent educational enrichment program. The project so far has gained attention as a "concept and idea that is raising eyebrows," and has been reported on in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

The program's financial purpose is to help pay for the school's

to stabilize and increase the student population of Cabot School and to create long-term support of Cabot School as an additional cost to the taxpayer. It will also deepen the links between Cabot School and the community. Its education goal is to provide an enrichment program of academic and extracurricular activities, including new students and work-study opportunities, that will be available to all students attending Cabot School.

The out-of-state students being sought are suburban and semi-urban students whose families will pay for a quality education, but not possible organizations "willing to

SEE SCHOOL, 4

Local Groups Provide Food for Those Who Need It Most

by Michael Bielowski

HARDWICK — Many families that state, "The government has failed to have a worry a great deal about the grocery bill that takes the most possible. Hardwick is lucky to have multiple organizations "willing to

help gather, prepare and distribute food for those who need it most."

The Hardwick Area Food Pantry and the (CARE) and the Vermont Economy (CAE), led a wider organization effort involving half dozen organizations and businesses in the effort to help up.

Bethany Dunbar, programs manager at the CAE, headed up the "Don't Be Poor" program again. This will be her ninth year running

A fire in Marshfield's village destroyed a garage, mobile home and house on Monday night. Area fire departments responded in 2:25 a.m. and reportedly contained and snuffed out fire in five hours. Smoke alarms sounded and all 10 occupants evacuated safely. See story, Page Two.

It is incredibly rewarding work, because it brings people together at this holiday time to collaborate and celebrate and give thanks," she said. "The community of volunteers who help with this project, and others like them are regular people who just take a few hours out of their day to make sure our neighbors' holiday tables can have that signature pumpkin pie on it for dessert!" **SEE FOOD, 8**

In Sports

Craftsbury Outdoor Center Opens

Division III and IV Basketball Play

Local Youth Finish Regional Championship

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Committee Still Concerned About Marshfield Dam

by Will Walters

PLAINFIELD — The Hazard Mitigation Committee continues to have concerns about the status of Marshfield Dam in Cabot. The dam is owned by Green Mountain Power, which the water behind it, Molly's Lake, is a major concern of the state, and has been newly established as a state park.

Emergency Management Director Michael Bishley attended the recent select board meeting

and reported on the October 25 forum at the Aquatic Public Library in Marshfield, Vt. The forum was attended by officials from Vermont's largest dam. The forum and officials of Green Mountain Power Inc. discussed the construction of the dam, the action plan behind it, Molly's Lake Park, and the actions taken by GMP since tropical storm Irene in 2011.

Bishley provided detailed photographs and maps of the dam and the recent select board meeting **SEE DAM, 8**

Heartbeat Earns New Accreditation

by Michael Bielowski

HARDWICK — Heartbeat Life-sharing executive director Hannah Schwartz announced that the organization has been awarded the three-year Quality Assurance Accreditation by the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL) for their high-level of care for those with special needs.

"This award confirms that the organization embraces person-centered solutions to improve the quality of life for people receiving support and services in their communities," said the accreditation by CQL, the first such accreditation in Vermont.

citizens with disabilities in a cost-effective model that is fully integrated with the larger community. Sixteen residents with developmental disabilities live at the Heartbeat location north of Hardwick Lake. It is essentially a farm and garden community that practices sustainable agriculture, textile production, performing arts, community meals, and more.

Those who live at Heartbeat take an active role in both the Heartbeat, and the wider Hardwick community. Heartbeat provides support and services to the residents in Vermont. The first such accreditation in Vermont. **SEE HEARTBEAT, 4**

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