

Dairy Prices Continue to Hurt Local Farmers

by Michael Bielawski

HAWICK – For three years and counting, dairy farmers have been struggling with low milk prices. Jon Tauster of Hawkick highlighted the impact on local dairy farmers during a recent visit to Hawkick by U.S. Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.).

The problem is that while the price of seed, feed, fertilizer, and gasoline keep going up, the cost of milk stays the same or drops.

“Luisier doesn’t own a farm, but he does buy and sell cows and does other work in the industry. He estimated that low prices are spilling an end for the family dairy operation that was once a cornerstone of Vermont’s economy.”

“So our country is driving them out and they can’t make ends meet,” he said. “They can’t pay their bills, a lot of them are having trouble making their mortgage payments.”

He found a global economics, in which the price of milk is \$1.00 per gallon, but in Vermont, it is \$1.20 per gallon. “So our country is not able to buy their dairy products out of their own market,” he said. “I think you and I half ago our exports went down 20 percent, so our country had to absorb that volume.”

According to the January, 2018, Report and Recommendations of the Vermont Milk Commission, the average price paid to Vermont dairy in 2014 was \$23.63. By 2017, the average price had dropped to \$17.11, a decline of nearly 28 percent.

Luisier also noted that the state’s dairy workforce population is aging, there are very few young people getting in and currently, there is no market among dairy processors for any new product.

“I never thought I’d see the day when somebody calls and they want to sell a herd of cows, or a whole bunch of heifers or anything like that, and I just tell them that I have no market anymore. There’s just no way to move them.”

According to Peter Cebbia of Cabot’s Mapleburn Farm in Greensboro, just recently prices have fallen by another 40 percent (hundred pounds of milk) to around \$15 per hundredweight. To put that in perspective, he said most farmers need somewhere between \$17 to \$20 per hundredweight just to break even.

“That doesn’t mean that people in the U.S. couldn’t be paid more for their milk. For instance, right now we’ve taken a price drop, but you probably won’t see any country had to absorb that volume.”

See DARY 2.

School Safety Plans Under Development

by Doug McClure

MONTEPELIER – With \$8 million on the table for school safety, divergent views on how to maximize that investment to make schools safer have emerged. Several approaches are under discussion.

ALICE Training

ALICE stands for Alert, Lock, Down, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. The proposal is to have Hawkick Elementary School students through books at the shooter, or tangle them, or run zig-zag to evade the threat.

Hawkick Police Chief Cochran endorsed that approach at the April 5 select board meeting.

Critics have said the training might be dangerous and could set students back. If, for example, the students see one shooter and get after him or her, there could be a second shooter they did not see.

The two Columbine shooters acted in tandem.

As a Vietnam combat veteran, Hawkick Chairman (D-Coladenia) Troiano is familiar with aspects of the strategy.

“We called it the serpentine. If you’re running toward five, you’re zig-zagging back and forth as you’re not an easy target. So, some of that makes sense. Shelter-in-place (the current approach) has been thought to be a much more appropriate – just find a classroom and tangle in and take cover. My experience (in Vietnam) is that there are times that you take cover and there are times you run towards the gunfire. I’ve got to tell you from experience, it takes a lot of heart to run toward gunfire,” said Troiano. “I certainly question going on the approach using an armed individual to do that.”

“We’re teaching [students] to

fight for their lives,” Cochran said at the April 5 select board meeting, “because they’re in the fight for their lives.”

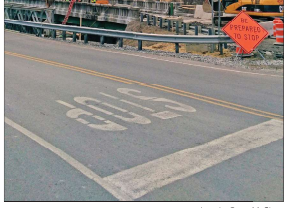
The youngest children, according to reports, are trained to recognize the shooter using puppets. The one wearing a police uniform is not one to worry about.

A criticism of the training is that it could traumatize children by training them for an event that statistically is unlikely. Another is potential liability from injuries caused by the training. An insurance company told Maines’ Portland Press Herald that the drills themselves have resulted in injuries related to running to tangle, being tackled, running into door jams, jumping off furniture.

Troiano said he wanted to see an independent study of ALICE before considering whether the approach is sound and whether it justifies its cost.

“I would have to defer to studies that have been done on this,” Troiano said. “I think that people do things that will guarantee that approach and not looking to make money by training students to be a candidate, or possible perpetrator.”

“We’ve found it difficult to study because you purchase them,” Troiano said. “I think that people do things that will guarantee that approach and not looking to make money by training students to be a candidate, or possible perpetrator.”



A crane assists with disassembling the old House 1 bridge in East Montpelier. (The new bridge just opened)

Cochran said other schools in the area are using this training.

Armed Teachers

This is a proposal that Cochran also has endorsed.

Proponents of this approach say that armed teachers could end a shooting spree much faster. Opponents say that theory is an oversimplification.

There is little data to quantify the effectiveness of this approach. Several shootings have been widely reported: On March 14, for example, there were two accidental firearms discharges at schools, one in California, the other in Virginia.

Troiano noted that “If one kid falls out a teacher’s got to go and the whole school is going to know by the end of the afternoon you don’t want victims hiding in the hallways of our schools.”

Gov. Phil Scott has said there is no appetite for arming teachers in Vermont.

School Resources Officers (SROs)

This option is endorsed by Chief Cochran and many law enforcement agencies across Vermont.

“Costs are high,” Scott said (Oxley/Caledonia) was previously reported.

See SAFETY 7

A Dizzing Week for Gun Legislation

by Doug McClure

HAWICK – Wednesday, April 11, started a prolonged series of votes on gun legislation not just for advocates and opponents of gun laws, but also for students in Hawkick, as well.

As an announcement was made on that day, the entire student body of Hazen had an evacuation drill, walking down North Main Street on mass towards the Memorial Building, albeit herded by Police Chief John Cochran’s cruiser, which was parked at the corner of Church St. and North Main.

Cochran said there was no advancement for the day.

“We didn’t really warn the kids and people in advance,” he said. “For diversion reasons.”

Cochran said the drill went to plan. The students were orderly, if a little sheepish, as they returned to class.

Hours later, Governor Phil Scott unveiled a ceremony on the State House steps to sign two “extreme risk” bills into law: S.55, which increases the purchase age for firearms to 21, requires background checks, bans bump stocks, and bans extended magazines; S.221, which is known as the “extreme risk” measure, preventing those deemed by a judge to be a risk to themselves or others from possessing a firearm; and H.422, which allows police to remove firearms from domestic violence situations.

The event, presiding Gov. Scott was flanked by some holdovers thinking the governor for seeing and others shouting “No!”

“We said many times throughout my political life, public safety is the top priority of government and responsibility I take seriously as Governor,” he said. “I realize only by the grace of God did we avert a horrible outcome. It is imperative to the crowd before signing the bills, that we all stand by the new bills, was visibly shocked by the event when shown it by WAXX, who said he was not involved in the violence Vermont’s lawmakers try to avert.”

“We’ve got to have some terminating his NLR membership. Scott said he was not involved in the violence.”

On the next day, the legislature passed a bill to end the state’s ban on assault weapons. The bill, which was introduced by Rep. Dan Cloutier, was passed by a vote of 14-10.

“What it does not do is take

away your gun, period. Nor does it away your magazines of your gun. You purchased them before October 1, 2015. So, you have those. You’re not going to have those still take part in hurting and recreating shooting, just like you do today.”

Scott said these three bills are the beginning of what he has changed the legislature with on gun laws.

Ninety minutes after the Vermont gun ceremony, Jack Sawyer was his case before the Vermont Superior Court. Sawyer had argued that under ten-year-old Vermont law, Sawyer’s attorney had constituted an “attempt” to sue by that decision.

With Sawyer’s charges wiped out by that decision, Rutland County State’s Attorney Ross Kennedy filed with the Rutland Superior court to have Jack Sawyer sue the state for his wrongful termination under S.221, the “extreme risk” legislation. A judge signed off on the order and Sawyer’s next hearing is on the April 26. Until then, all his weapons are confiscated.

S.221 does not provide for Sawyer’s incarceration. He is still in prison and Governor Scott has vowed to do what he can within the law to keep him from using “time law enforcement agencies.”

The National Rifle Association (NRA) weighed in before the week closed out with a video attack on Governor Scott. Based on our interviews with lawmakers and those conducted by WAXX and VTigger, the NRA’s attorney, Scott was not a single fingered salute to the Constitution. “We’re going to go over well especially after a cadre of Republican legislators took to the air and said ‘No’” in their communications.

“I’m sure, I’m sure, I’m sure,” said the attorney of Glover, who was interviewed by WAXX and VTigger, “I’m sure that if you’re weighing a run against Scott this bill, you’re weighing a run against the bill, was visibly shocked by the event when shown it by WAXX, who said he was not involved in the violence Vermont’s lawmakers try to avert.”

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See WEEK 3

Round Three: Cabot School Board to Meet April 25

by Will Walters

CABOT – The revote of the school budget showed little movement in the percentage of voters who may have changed positions, or at least a difference of what voting ballot showed up. The revote had 449 ballots cast, compared to 581 cast on Town Meeting Day.

On Town Meeting Day, 59 percent of the ballots were cast “no” on the school budget, while on the revote 57 percent were cast “no.”

The second budget of \$1,596,885 had a reduction of \$103,000 from the original proposal.

Superintendent Mark Tucker said the school board will meet April 25 to discuss the budget. Tucker said he will have to be extra cautious because of the spending penalty amount. “That will require some tough choices, because the revote is in the territory of cutting expenses.”

The school is in the excess spending penalty because of what it costs to run the school for the number of students attending, and the only difference is we got under the spending penalty amount.”

At an elementary student support position, \$71,000 was cut.

“I’m not sure how much of that is practical reasons, we will still be above the threshold, but at least that does not do what I think is unnecessary spending,” Phelan said to the board meeting on the 20th and let us know.

American Legion Celebrates Its 99th Anniversary

by Michael Bielawski

HAWICK – The American Legion had its 99th-anniversary celebration last Saturday evening and Hawkick’s own American Legion Post 7 joined in the celebration.

About 90 people attended the evening festivities, despite it being a snowy evening. Either project around the nation had similar events that night.

“We put on an at-meal dinner available to our members. They include legionnaires, they include Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary members, and also American Legion Riders, George Gattuso, commander at American Legion Post 7 said.

This anniversary is to be distinguished from the founding of Post 7, which was chartered in 1946. The national organization was chartered by Congress in 1919, according to the Vermont Planners Association.

The awards will be presented on April 19, at 4 p.m. in the Vermont Statehouse’s Creek Cook Room.

According to the Vermont Planners Association award citation, “Known as the backbone of the Vermont nation of relations, Peg Elmer Hough, ACEP is this year’s recipient of the VPA Career Achievement Award for Excellence in Planning.”

“Throughout her varied and distinguished career as a land use planner, Peg has helped Vermont protect critical land and water resources, energy efficiency and reducing the social networks that binds communities vital and safe.”



Celebrating the 99th Anniversary of the American Legion. (Left to right: Hough, Morrison, Corinne Colwell, George Gattuso, Mark Olapinski). The birthday cakes were made by JoAnne Manning and Jennifer Llopis.

Cabot’s Peg Elmer Hough Wins Vermont Planning Award

by Doug McClure

MONTEPELIER – Peg Elmer Hough of Cabot is one of this year’s planning awards recipients from the Vermont Planners Association. The awards will be presented on April 19, at 4 p.m. in the Vermont Statehouse’s Creek Cook Room.

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Hough is a Planning Director of the Vermont DECA Planning Division and as the Governor’s Chief of the Vermont Center Pilot project.

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