

Road Crew Resignations Force Reckoning

by Doug McClure

WOLCOTT — Nearly two dozen concerned residents showed up to the Wolcott Select Board meeting on October 19 following the unexpected resignations of Road Foreman Skip Paten and Bernard Earle.

The employees' departures, effective within the next week, leave the town with an interim road commissioner and no road crew on the cusp of winter. Residents also reacted to the Lamoille County Sheriff Department's report.

When asked why Paten had resigned, Select Board Chair Furs said "I don't have an answer." Furs said he had received a "two-sentence email from the town office" regarding the situation. Others in attendance were less guarded.

"You guys know why Skip quit... is our resident. Skip has been talking for a while about retiring, and then you go and hire someone to tell him what to do... you don't abuse somebody like that, you don't hire that number."

"It is so hard to have employees and ask them to work," another resident asked. "The person didn't want to do their job."

Earle said the sand has been updated, but VTrans District 8 has not been able to update regarding the salt. "We have enough salt for half a snowstorm," Earle said.

As residents voiced concern about getting little snow to prepare for winter, resident Bill Cohen said he was not sure about "what" and "not a big" in the situation. "This town has a snow problem, and that's what's making us angry by talking about it."

Fire Department Clears Permit for New Station

by Will Walters

CALAIS — The Woodbury Fire Department must obtain a permit from the Development Review Board (DRB) to build a new fire station, potentially causing a delay in the department's plan to begin construction next summer.

At the last select board meeting, chair Denise Wheeler said the DRB permit is required to allow a waiver of setback footings for the proposed new site. The department plans to build on a donated parcel of land in the village on the old country store on Route 14. An existing house on the lot will be torn down to make way for the new construction. In addition to setbacks, the DRB permit includes a sign removal plan to avoid Route 14 and storm water on Route 14.

A detailed drawing of the station is expected to be available in the next few weeks. The next meeting on the fire station



Jenny Adamsman (left) cuts down heria plants as Jennifer Caruchman (center) and Jan Greenes (right) help lead a tractor seat walk at the Heaton Home Farm in Cabot. The 24,000 hoop plans are owned by Jenny and Sara Ackerston of Hardwick. The hoop was planted on 24 acres of Ackerston family land in Cabot. A crew of 21 people harvested the hoop converted to Vermont C&D Labs in Woodstock, who will extract CBD content to produce the isolate.

Cabot Pie Festival Faces Uncertain Future

by Michael Bielawski

CABOT — The 20th Annual Cabot Apple Pie Festival came this past Saturday along with 47 vendors and dozens of pies to eat. The event, a fundraiser for the Cabot Historical Society (CHS), was held at the Cabot School gym.

"These events are a lot of work and it's harder and harder to get younger people to help," Aubrey said. "You get older and your mind is willing, but my body says, you are not gonna get down on that floor all the time."

"The pie festival was a success, people loved the pies and that's what it's about," she said. The winners of the contest, in order, were Sue Busoketti, Tavita Miller, Beth Wade, and Grace Hoffman. For the children's contest, winners were Ty Perrin, Jaydon Whiteaker, Freya



Past and present owners of the Yellow Barn property, right: 2019 owners: Shawn Fallon (row manager) Eric Barock (colored sand crew) and Andrew Meyer (represented the town). Steve Scarpino (Fisher, Bobbie Nisbet and Tim Nisbet are the former owners.

Solar Project Coming to Old Gravel Pit

by Michael Bielawski

HARDWICK — A solar project that has been in development for several years has now entered the permitting stage. Dubbed "H11" for the 11 towers it will serve, the Hardwick Electric Department (HED) solar project, which will be built at the old gravel pit at the end of Billings Road, will produce up to 1.65 megawatts of electricity.

"The project will not use 'net metering,' a set of state rules that require low individuals are billed for solar energy systems. Hardwick Electric General Manager Mike Sullivan has been openly critical of developer-sized net metering projects."

"Unless expensive energy storage systems (such as batteries) are part of the solar project, then the project energy is only available when the sun is shining," Sullivan wrote. "Not everyone agrees that net metering is a bad deal for ratepayers. SunCommon, a solar company that deals extensively with net metering projects, published a third-party study stating that net metering installations have saved ratepayers as much as \$30 million during times of peak energy demand. The estimates include individual home net metering projects such as rooftop installations."

"We've always known that solar contributes in a big way to our region's energy needs on long, hot, sunny summer days," said James Moore, one of SunCommon's founders. "We wanted to put numbers to it... \$30 million in savings in one week is impressive!" Moore said the amount of solar power is "the equivalent of removing 1.37 million homes from the grid."

The HED project is scheduled to begin construction in spring of 2020.

Testing Detects No PFOAs in Hardwick Water

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK — The Hardwick Select Board received progress reports on the Bridgman Hill Reservoir and a status update on village infrastructure proposals at its scheduled meeting on October 17. Business Manager Casey Rowell briefed the board on how spending looked compared to budget, and AT&T had a request for the hours.

Town Manager Shaun Fidler reported that water testing for PFOAs (perfluorinated acids, widely-used industrial surfactants that are an established health concern) was completed and "the important thing for the everyone to know that the test result for these 19 chemicals, every one of them — was 'no detect.'" Fidler said the town would keep people informed of any and all future results.

With winter fast approaching See TESTING, 2



The Granite Trust Bank building on Mill Street. Photo by Vanessa Fournier. 1990s, has a new owner. The transaction was reportedly an all-cash deal for \$103,000 with unannounced buyers from Stowe.

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