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Jeudevine Library Expansion Nearing Funding Goal

by Jodi Lew-Smith

HARDWICK – The trustees and staff of the Jeudevine Memorial Library received a \$100,000 grant from the Accessibility Modification category of the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP). The VCDP is administered by the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, with funding supplied by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

With receipt of the grant, the award from the Vermont Arts Council (see photo), fundraising efforts, and bequests received in 2018, the goal of raising \$1.14M in non-taxpayer dollars is close to being met. The remaining \$550,000 needed for the expansion will be requested from taxpayers in a

municipal bond vote on August 11.

While the state of the economy remains uncertain, trustees believe they will receive the best pricing on the project by going out to bid in the fall, when most contractors are scheduling their work for the next calendar year.

Current interest rates are low, and payment of the bond will not commence until 2022, as monies raised to date will be spent ahead of taxpayer dollars. Bond funds will not be spent until late in 2021 when the project nears completion.

The project is large and expected to provide an economic boost and offer work to local residents. The library trustees intend to keep the project close to home by sourcing local materials whenever possible to keep funding dollars in the area.



photo by Vanessa Fournier

Lisa Sammet (left), Jeudevine Memorial Librarian and Director, and Jodi Lew-Smith (right), chair of the Library Board of Trustees, hold a facsimile of a check for \$24,000. The Cultured Facility Grant for Accessibility is from the Vermont Arts Council for the Jeudevine Expansion Fund.



photo by Vanessa Fournier

Josh Brunell of the National Response Corporation of Burlington pours hazardous waste into a barrel at the annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection held at the Hardwick Town Garage July 11. Eighty-six car loads were brought in from 103 households.

Wires Crossed at HED as Four Commissioners' Positions Advertised

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – A posting in an online forum last week advertised for candidates to fill four Hardwick Electric Department (HED) commissioner positions. In total, HED has only five commissioners, and under that organization's founding law (24 App. V.S.A. ch. 123, § 904) "a Board of Electric Utility Commissioners consisting of five persons to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen whose initial terms shall be established by resolution of the Board of Selectmen so as to provide that no more than two of such commissioners shall be appointed annually."

The terms of the five commissioners are staggered, which means their tenures vary from two to three years, in theory avoiding most of the board of commissioners' terms running out at once and potential confusion as a result. One commissioner said, "No mass resignations, [we] just screwed up our terms and expiration dates." The commissioner said they believed that it was a statutory requirement for those positions to be advertised.

Town Manager Shaun Fielder said there was no "mass exodus"

and that this was not a situation where a group of commissioners were "stepping away at one time."

Fielder provided the expiration dates for the five commissioners' terms: Chair Lynne Gedanken of Hardwick (appointed to a three-year term ending June 30, 2020), Vice Chair Gina Campoli of Craftsbury (appointed to a two-year term which ended June 30, 2019), and Commissioners Nat Smith of Greensboro (three-year term, ending on June 30, 2021), David Mitchell of Hardwick (appointed to a three-year term which ended on June 30, 2019), and Roger Prevot of Hardwick (per select board minutes, appointed in 2018 to a two-year term ending June 30, 2020, following a three-year term Fielder said ended in 2018). Fielder added "commissioner assignments are valid beyond appointment end and until such time as Select Board assigns an individual for a given commissioner seat. This does allow for reassignments assuming candidates show interest and submit info to be considered."

Nothing in the organizing statute states that commissioner appointments automatically renew,

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