TOWN MANAGER HIGHLIGHTS

- Respectfully submitted for your consideration.

- A busy week as I continue to learn the staff and the Town. I have had the opportunity to sit down with each member of the Selectboard and each Department Head. This has been valuable as I gain an understanding of priorities and challenges. I also met with the Executive Director and the President of the Board of CATV. I think there are some opportunities for improved communications to the Town using CATV. I also met with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the TM Search Committee to gain their insights into what they heard during the search process. I met with several members of VLCT, to include the Executive Director. I have already called them and have found them to be a great resource. I also met with the Clerk and the Treasurer to gain their insights into Town Operations. I continue to meet with residents, local community leaders, business leaders as I move forward. I will also meet individually with each staff member over the next several weeks. I have been impressed by them and appreciate what they do daily for the Town.

- This week, I had the pleasure of appointing our Interim Fire Chief Scott Cooney as our permanent Fire Chief. In my career, Scott is the third Fire Chief that I have had the opportunity to select. His level of professionalism, his training and skills compare favorably with both individuals that I previously selected. I do believe Scott is a better leader than either of those selections; this includes my selection of the Army’s Fire Chief. He is talented and the Town is fortunate to have him.

- I have completed my review and scoring of the resumes’ (30) for the Administrative Assistant and expect to begin those interviews shortly. I have reviewed the resumes’ (11) for the Finance Director. Those are a bit more challenging. I spent some time on the phone with VLCT today to gain their input on hiring this position in the state, it is a challenge throughout Vermont. I gained insight into their views on critical skills and where we might be able to accept risk. I will actively move this process forward over the next few days.

- The Town Clerk asked that I pass along that there has been no reply yet from the state on the voting machine. She continues to work with the state and is working with different contacts to spur support. Consensus is that we will be ok for the August voting, but will need a solution by the November election.
- Listed below are those highlights pulled from each Department Head’s report. Further under are the full highlights from each Department.

**STAFF HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Finance Department completed the first in-house payroll. This was complicated by the automatic pay increase on July 1st and the holiday on July 4th. The staff did a great job and everyone was paid. The second in-house payroll is in progress. A great effort by all Departments to make this happen.

- The Assessor’s Office is continuing to refine the 2016 Grand List with corrections and getting ready for upcoming BCA hearings. The appeal period ends this Wednesday, July 20th, so there is no count yet to report.

- Despite several challenges, we were successful in printing and mailing the tax bills on time. We have discovered some minor issues, but work through those without challenges at this point.

- On 7/5 at 16:28 the Fire Dept. responded to an explosion at 68 Old River Rd. The cause of the explosion was cutting torches igniting fuel vapors in an enclosed fuel tank. Three worker were injured. One has been released from the hospital the other two were transported to Mass General Burn Center. Fire Chief has spoken with a member of one of the families involved and both are expected to recover although they have a long road ahead of them.

- Purchased 3 Office365 SharePoint licenses to begin testing as a sharing/collaboration tool. We believe this will gain some efficiencies and accelerate collaboration across the staff and throughout the community.

- The municipal pool is leaking. Measures are being taken to confirm the leak (from gutter or concrete side/bottom) and determine where the leak is specifically located. We conduct a daily risk assessment to ensure usability and public safety. The water department is involved in the effort.

- Following a year of courting, the state has agreed to hold the 2017 Downtown Program and Historic Preservation Conference in Downtown WRJ in June. This is a great opportunity to highlight the village’s revitalization to 250 people from all parts of the state. Various businesses in the downtown have agreed to be involved and make their venues available for the conference.

- The Police Department’s partnership with Riverbank Church in the Watson Park/Maple Street clean-up Saturday was a success that spanned six 6 hours, and removed weeds/brush, trash and graffiti from Barrel Avenue to Elk Street in Hartford.
Village. The Vermont Probation and Parole Inmate Maintenance Crew also assisted.

- We held the preconstruction and contract signing meeting for the Quechee Water Storage Tank and Main. It appears work will start in early August with a NLT completion date of December 21st.

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Assessor:

- 2017 Reappraisal activity continues, we are officially in Quechee working our way thru QLLA properties first, starting with Willard Road and Baker Turn neighborhoods. No issues as of yet.

Finance:

- Continue to work to close out the last FY. Working with Departments to encumber funds. Still a few to go. Anticipate closure in the next 2-3 weeks.
- Sent out preliminary expenditure reports to all departments. There are still a few year-end entries to make.

Fire:

- On 7/5 at 21:53 our swift water rescue team was requested to assist the Plainfield, NH Fire Dept. Our team assisted by Hanover Fire rescued the trapped fisherman from the river. He was not injured.
- The Fire Chief submitted his registration to this year’s Officer Development program at the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) conference in San Antonio, TX August 17-20th.
- The Fire Chief attended interviews for the Woodstock, VT Paramedic/Assistant Fire Chief position. He was invited by the Woodstock Fire Chief and Town Manager to sit on their hiring panel.
- The owner has received funding for the removal of the dilapidated trailer on Maple St adjacent to Watson Park. He has advised he should start the process soon.
- Preliminary construction plans and draft specifications are being reviewed for the new fire engine that was approved for this fiscal year. An RFP is in draft.

- Conducted a recovery operation of a deceased individual from the Quechee Gorge. 10 staff members were required to assist in the recovery, operational time 2 hours.

- Contacted the attorney regarding next step in the enforcement of the Building Safety Order with the dilapidated property on Maple Street.

- RFP development for Station Alerting System continues.

- Attended planning meeting with VA staff regarding upcoming Full Scale exercise in August

- The department attends at fitness program at UVAC every Tuesday and Thursday morning. On Thursday CATV video-taped and conducted interviews with staff on the program.

**Information Technology:**

- Upgraded PubWorks software to latest version. PubWorks is used for tracking work orders, service requests, fuel, and fleet maintenance. Latest version includes a “dashboard” which provides a quick glance view of the information in the system.

- Fairpoint/Sovernet have begun the process of upgrading the internet bandwidth at the Public Works building. Should be complete on the 25th. Going from 5/1mbps to 10/10mbps. Unlike current Internet the new speeds are guaranteed and come with 24/7 support.

**Parks and Recreation:**

- Several successful events over the past week or so including a Family Pool Pizza Party, a concert at Quechee Green and a Movie in the Park at Quechee Green Park.

- Planning and coordination for the Glory Days Festival (Sept. 10 &11) is in full swing.

- The Clifford Park special project by White River Partnership “canoe trail access” construction was begun and completed over the last two weeks. Photos are attached.

- The Department Head supported a meeting with W. Hartford Library Trustees. A major item of concern is: Insufficient operating funds to maintain the level of contracted building cleaning services (Potwin).
- The Department Head Chaired the Town Safety/Wellness. The issue of ADA access through the doors at the Town Hall. This issue will remain active.

- The development of our fall/winter programs have begun, with a program guide to be published mid-August.

- WABA refrigeration PO/Requisition in the amount of $30,000 is requested. Funds are for the repairs to WABA refrigeration system. The funding source is WABA reserves.

- The Town did not receive funding from TransCanada to off-set anticipated engineer design/permitting expenses for the Wright Reservoir Dam project. Project is still on “hold”.

**Planning and Development:**

- Energy Consultant RFP – Began review of draft energy audit implementation plan with the Fire and Police Departments and Executive Director of the Bugbee Senior Center for their respective buildings.

- Community Energy Pilot Project: July 26th is Efficiency Vermont’s first of 10 Community Energy Pilot Project open table days in Town over the next 6 months. Starting in WRJ.

- Co-Working Space: Met with representative of local group interested in developing Co-Working Space in WRJ. The group’s recent survey has 70+ responses.

- Twin Pines Housing Trust Scattered Sites Project – Redevelopment completed for the two residential multi-family properties on South Main St.

- Submitted application to VTrans for additional funds to construct sidewalk along the lower section of Sykes Mountain Avenue.

- Quechee Pocket Park – Received word from the state that it has been forwarded to FEMA headquarters for review.

**Police:**

- Police Officer Dan Solomita and his wife Brittany welcomed the birth of a baby boy, John, Sunday evening. Mother and baby are both doing well.
A result of staffing shortages, the Detective Sergeant, Task Force Detective & Accreditation Coordinator have been temporarily reassigned to the Patrol Section for relief coverage through the end of August.

Patrol officers investigating an unrelated suspicious person complaint on Saturday night located and arrested an individual nearby on a $25,000 warrant for failing to comply with sex offender registry requirements. He is being held at Southern State Correctional Facility.

Major Brad Vail reported to the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia Sunday evening, where he’ll begin the prestigious ten (10) week National Academy on Monday, July 11th.

Patrol personnel identified and arrested a suspect in the theft of copper bus bars from a cell phone tower in Plainfield, NH late Saturday. A known felon, he was located at his residence in Hartford with additional copper bus bars, a handgun and ammunition. The individual was arrested and charged with possession and sale of stolen property. Firearm charges pending.

Selectman Dennis Brown toured the Police Department and Emergency Communications Center Thursday evening, met with staff and was provided with general information on police operations.

The Police Department is making preparations to host the 2nd Annual National Night Out Against Crime at Kilowatt Park - South on August 2nd from 5pm to 9pm.

Public Works:

Following a second water main break last week on South Street, the water department is investigating replacing approximately 330 feet of water main on South Street in advance of the summer paving of South Street.

Water and wastewater staff are trying out a GPS data collector as part of a demo prior to bidding out a unit for the approved mapping project.

The Utility Superintendent is preparing an RFP for the digital base mapping work.

We anticipate offering a vacant wastewater plant position to a potential new hire next week.

The Maxfield turn lane traffic control plan was approved so the contractor can begin excavation work. Excavation work will commence around July 21 once erosion control measures are completed.
- A Maxfield site meeting of July 15 revealed a deficiency in the design plans which will involve additional fill beyond what was shown on the plans. Willey Earthmoving is preparing change order pricing for muck removal and suitable fill for the Town’s consideration.

- Casella has come back with a potential cost savings to the Town to get closer to the Town budgeted amount for the curbside recycling. I am awaiting return of the SME to review the cost savings since they also involve recycled material received at the Transfer Station.

- DPW has contacted DEW to get a schedule for activating traffic and pedestrian signals at the Prospect Street intersection. We hope this can be completed in the next two weeks.

- A third property owner has responded to DPW concerning the requested Wallace Road easements. Staff intends to meet with the attorney to allow him to start preparing easements to send to the property owners.

- Staff is pushing Nott’s Excavation to complete last summer’s Gate Street reconstruction and the Prospect St punchlist.

- Staff will be completing a change order with Nott’s for the Prospect St lights which was negotiated by ITM MacQueen.