

# TALES OF TINMOUTH

February 2020  
Vol. 34 Number 2

Tinmouth  
Vermont

**Editors' Notes:** *The olde timers used to say, "On February 1<sup>st</sup> there should remain, half the hay and half the grain." (And hopefully half the wood pile!!)*

The deadline for submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. Please email your information to *Tales of Tinmouth* (tinmouthtales@vermontel.net) or drop it off at the Town Office.

Many, many thanks for the donations to keep *Tales* in print. They are very much appreciated!

*Pat Psholka, Helen Mango & Gail Fallar*

## ~ Town Meeting 2020 ~

Town Meeting is **Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup>**. Public questions and town budgets will be voted from the floor at the Community Center, meeting starts at **1:00**. You must be present to vote.

Officers will be chosen on **Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>** via Australian balloting, 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

There will also be a **Bond Vote** to finance building a new town garage and a salt/sand shed, not to exceed \$850,000 (*please see page 3 for details*). The **Informational Hearing** will be **Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup> at 1:00; with voting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

And don't forget the **Presidential Primary** will also be on March 3<sup>rd</sup>!!

You may cast an early/absentee ballot for officers, the school budget, the bond vote and the Presidential Primary.

## ~ Absentee Ballots ~

If you wish to request an **Absentee Ballot**, you must do so before **5:00 pm** on **Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**. **Voted ballots must be returned by 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>**. You can also vote **early** at the town office.

The following have filed petitions to run for office; there are no contested races.

Moderator - Stan Wilbur  
Select Board Member - Cathy Reynolds  
Community Center Board Member - Ann Czar  
Town Clerk - Gail Fallar  
Town Treasurer - Gail Fallar  
Lister - Gail Fallar  
Auditor - Nancy Birdsall  
Town Agent - Rick Fallar  
Grand Juror - Glenn D. Merrill  
Tax Collector (Delinquent) - Cat Yoder

## ~ Registering to Vote ~

You do not have to register to vote before the election. Vermont has instituted **same-day voter registration**, meaning that if you have not previously registered to vote and want to do so on town meeting day, you can register then and there.

You do need to be a resident of the town in which you are registering to vote, and proof of that (like a utility bill).

## ~ Town Meeting Lunch ~

Tinmouth Elementary School Grades 4, 5, & 6 will be selling **lunch and baked goodies**. Come early to grab a bite before Town Meeting starts! They will also have a **Bake Sale** on Election Day, Tuesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## ~ Town Reports ~

The town reports will be mailed around the middle of the month. Please read them and bring them with you to Town Meeting on **Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup>**. A HUGE thank you to Nancy Birdsall for doing such a great job putting it together once again!

**The Mill River Unified Union School District  
Annual Meeting will be held on  
Thursday February 27, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.  
at the Mill River High School Library.**

**Voting for the school budget will be on Tuesday,  
March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Tinmouth  
Community Center.**

An Absentee ballot may be requested, but it would be nice to see you!

## ~ TCF Annual Meeting ~

The **Tinmouth Community Fund** will hold its **Annual Meeting at 11:30 am on Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup>** at the Community Center. 2020 Grant awards will be presented as well as reports for the past year, and election of Directors and officers. All are welcome!

Please plan on attending to find out what the Tinmouth Community Fund is all about! How TCF is working to enhance the great sense of community that Tinmouth enjoys.



## February 2020 Calendar of Events



Library OPEN	Saturday	1 <sup>st</sup>	9-12
Fire Dept.	Thursday	6 <sup>th</sup>	7:00
Writers' Group	Sunday	9 <sup>th</sup>	1:30
Select Board	Thursday	13 <sup>th</sup>	7:00
Book Discussion	Sunday	16 <sup>th</sup>	3:00
Conservation Commission	Monday	17 <sup>th</sup>	7:30
Select Board – Special	Tuesday	18 <sup>th</sup>	6:00
<i>Tales of Tinmouth</i> Deadline	Thursday	20 <sup>th</sup>	
Planning Commission	Thursday	20 <sup>st</sup>	7:00
TVFD Pot Luck Game Supper	Saturday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	5:30
THGS	Sunday	23 <sup>rd</sup>	2:00
Community Center Board	Tuesday	25 <sup>th</sup>	5:30
TCF Annual Meeting	Saturday	29 <sup>th</sup>	11:30 AM
Town Meeting (Floor)	Saturday	29 <sup>th</sup>	1:00
Bond Informational Meeting	Saturday	29 <sup>th</sup>	1:00

Library
Fire House
Library
Town Office
Library
Town Office
Town Office
Don't Miss It!
Town Office
Community Center
Town Office
Community Center
Community Center
Community Center
Community Center



## March 2020 Calendar of Events

Town Meeting (Officers)	Tuesday	3 <sup>rd</sup>	8:00 am – 7:00	Community Center
Bond Vote	Tuesday	3 <sup>rd</sup>	8:00 am – 7:00	Community Center
School Budget	Tuesday	3 <sup>rd</sup>	8:00 am – 7:00	Community Center
Presidential Primary	Tuesday	3 <sup>rd</sup>	8:00 am – 7:00	Community Center
Fire Department	Thursday	5 <sup>th</sup>	7:00	Fire House
Library OPEN	Saturday	7 <sup>th</sup>	9-12	Library
Select Board	Thursday	12 <sup>th</sup>	7:00	Town Office
Planning Commission	Thursday	19 <sup>th</sup>	7:00	Town Office
Contra Dance	Friday	20 <sup>th</sup>	8:00	Community Center
<i>Tales of Tinmouth</i> Deadline	Friday	20 <sup>th</sup>		Don't Miss It!

**Sunday Church Service 9:00 AM ~ All are welcome!**

*Transfer Station hours are Wednesday 4:00 - 7:00 pm & Saturday 8:00 am - noon.*

**Library Hours ~ Monday 10:00-noon & 1-5 and Thursday 10:00-noon & 1-5**

*Fun “non-competitive” Volleyball on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm. ~ Community Center*

**Knit, Craft or Chat ~ Mondays 3:00 – 5:00 pm ~ Library**

**Bone Builders ~ Tuesday 10:00-11:00 am & Friday 9:00 – 10:00 am ~ Library**

**Pickle Ball ~ Wednesday and Thursday 6:00 and Some Saturday Mornings ~ Community Center**

### ~ Homestead Declaration ~

This a reminder that you need to file an **annual** Homestead Declaration with the Vermont Department of Taxes, form HS-122. You must file this to qualify for the homestead education tax rate and to request a property tax adjustment if you are eligible. You must also file form HI-144 (household income), **due April 15<sup>th</sup>**. This is required even if you do not have to file or pay state income taxes.

### ~ Transfer Station Fee Increase ~

Effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, the cost of a transfer station dump card increased to \$25 for the 10 punch card. The increase is due to the increase in the cost of recycling processing. \$2.50 per 30 gallon bag. Recycling is still Free!!

### ~ Dog Licenses Due April 1<sup>st</sup> ~

A current rabies certificate is required. You can call the Town Office if you don't know if your dog needs a shot or not. Fees are \$9 for neutered/spayed dogs and \$13 for those that are not. 50% penalty is assessed after April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Town of Wallingford is hosting a **Rabies Clinic on March 7<sup>th</sup> 11:30-1:30** at the Wallingford Town Hall, cost \$15 (dog or cat), then stop by the Tinmouth Town Office to register your dog.



*Below is an excerpt from the Select Board Report in the Town Report that explains the upcoming Bond Vote.*

**~ Report of the Select Board ~**

For the last 5 years, the Select Board has been focused on public works facility upgrade needs – a sand/salt shed and a new town garage. We currently have a salt shed that holds enough salt for one or two storms, depending on the type and duration of the storm. If big storms come one after another all towns and the State vie for salt deliveries. We have come up short, without the product we need to treat the roads. This situation compromises everyone's ability to get around safely; this is why we need a larger salt shed. Our proposed plan is to build a new shed that will hold all the salt we need for a season. We also have a sand pile that is built up before winter. This pile needs to be treated with salt to keep it from freezing. We have a run off problem onto neighboring property from this pile. The State is looking for all sand piles to be under cover. We have determined that a hoop barn is the least expensive approach. The bond includes funds to build this structure large enough to hold a season's worth of salt and sand.

Our current Town Garage is 41 years old. It is a pole barn with two heated bays originally sized for two single axle trucks. The remainder of the building is dirt floored, unheated and has only 14' of head room.

About 10 years ago it was decided that the road crew could be more efficient with tandem trucks which allow for more material to be hauled with each trip, increasing efficiency and reducing trips. The unintended consequence of tandem axle trucks is that they no longer fit in the heated section of the Town Garage. The new trucks are stored in the dirt floored, unheated section of the shed, where they barely fit. Looking forward, operationally we need a heated space to store and work on vehicles.

In 2016 we received an estimate from Wright Construction to put additions on our existing garage to meet our needs. Total cost was estimated at \$480,000. In 2017, we hired an engineer to evaluate the existing garage structurally, considering the potential of upgrading it to meet our needs. The structural engineer investigated the building and prepared a 26-page report which is available for review at the Town Office. Quoting from the report,

*"Of most interest at these load levels is that the existing building is not sufficiently strong to support minimum past or current load levels, let alone a design roof load of 50 psf. This is likely due to enhanced code requirements enacted since 1979. However, a building that is insufficient for its own basis of design is not one that encourages adaptive re-use under a more rigorous loading regime or as the basis for expanded use."*

He went on to say,

*"Since the structure is still in good condition it should certainly continue to be used...it may be worth considering a different storage location of the new high-value Town truck(s) as soon as this winter."*

When your structural engineer encourages a Town to store its high value town trucks outside because of structural concerns about our existing garage, the Town needs to act. The Board voted to work with Jay White of NBF Architects to design a new 4 bay garage. We also hired Craig Jewett of Otter Creek Engineering to develop the site plan and fulfill state permitting requirements.

The Board is finally at a point where we can share the estimated costs of the plan to add a new town garage and salt/sand shed. The total costs are estimated at \$1,050,000. All three Select Board members agree that this amount is more than the Town can support, so we looked for ways to reduce the project cost and present a smaller bond with some supplemental funding options.

The majority of the Board is proposing a building project estimated to cost ~\$850,000. This allows for a smaller town garage of three bays, and a fabric salt and sand shed sized to cover the sand pile and store all the salt we require for a season. We have some funds available to offset the cost of this bond to the Town.

Over the years, the Town has saved \$375,000 in our Highway Building Fund which will reduce the cost.

In addition, we have placed two items on the warning for your consideration to shift existing funds towards the project. We have a low-income housing loan fund of \$30,000 which has not been used in years. We would like you to vote to apply this to the Highway Building Fund to offset the bond. We also have a Town Building Fund which was created to help us maintain the Town Office, Old Firehouse, Town Sheds and the Community Center. It now has a balance of \$108,000. Since the School District is now responsible for maintaining the Community Center, we feel that we can ask for your support to shift \$80,000 out of this fund and into the Highway Building Fund. If approved, these funds will bring the amount needed to borrow (bond for) from \$850,000 down to \$365,000. For a 20-year bond, this amount will add ~\$.035 to the tax rate which is \$35 per year on a \$100,000 home, \$70 per year on a \$200,000 home, etc.

Our Bond Attorney advises us to bond for "up to \$850,000" although we will only borrow the amount we need as offset by the funds described above if the voters approve the transfers.

After many years of diligent work as a Board, the majority of the Board asks for your support for this Bond. On Town Meeting Day Saturday, February 29, you will be asked to vote to move the two funds into the Highway Building Fund as well as voting on both the Town and Highway budgets. February 29 will also be the informational meeting for the Bond Vote.

Then on Tuesday March 3, we will vote on the bond by Australian ballot along with voting for Town officers, the School District Budget, and the Presidential Primary. You can vote by absentee ballot for the March 3 vote but need to be at the Community Center in person for the Feb. 29 votes.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Cathy Reynolds*, Select Board Chair

#### Letters to the Editor:

Should the Town bond?

If you have been reading the Select Board minutes over the last few years, it is probably apparent that the Board has been engaged in lively debate over scope, cost, and the very nature of the town garage and sand/salt shed project. Currently a majority of the Select Board is asking the Town to go out to bond for \$850,000. So far, the Town has spent over \$34,000 on engineering, permits, architect services, as well as cost estimates for the construction of a 4 bay garage and hoop barn salt & sand shed. The total of that being over \$1 million. So the range is from \$884,000 to \$1,234,000. Are these acceptable numbers? Are they not acceptable? (There are some who would say not acceptable).

Balancing between what is needed and what is wanted should be at the forefront of our community's decision making process.

Hopefully you, the voter, will see the error in placing wants over the needs and vote NO on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. And if you vote yes, feel free to complain any time.

Please attend the Informational Hearing on February 29<sup>th</sup> before you vote on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Sincerely,  
*Michael Fallar*

#### Dear Tinnmouth Voters:

The Tinnmouth Pond Milfoil Project requests your support on Town Meeting Day to help us in our continuing battle with Eurasian Milfoil. Once this invasive plant is present, it can't be eradicated-you can only do your best to control it. We currently spend about \$15,000 per year to hire divers to harvest it. State grants are getting smaller (\$3,264 last year), and property owners contribute the balance through dues and donations (over \$8,000).

We are asking the Town for an additional \$650 per year, to bring the total to \$2,500.

We appreciate your consideration and support helping keep Tinnmouth Pond a special place.

**TPMP Executive Board**

#### ~ Fire Department Sponsored Pot Luck ~ Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>

*By Sherry Johnson*

As you are filling out your February Calendar make sure you add the Pot Luck sponsored by the TVFD on **February 22, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.** The event will be held at the Community Center, there is no charge!!

The Fire Department will provide the meat (leftover and frozen) from the Game Supper. We invite you to bring a salad or dessert to share.

There will be BBQ Tofuti Beast for vegetarians.

If you are interested in games, there will be some board games and you are invited to bring your own.

We hope to see you there. All are welcome!

#### ~ THGS ~

The Tinnmouth Historical and Genealogical Society will meet on **Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>** at the town office to continue archiving work - sorting photos, papers and ephemera at the town office - and working on plan for the future of THGS.

**2:00 ~ refreshments provided.**

*All are welcome.*

If you have some old photos or newspaper clippings you would be willing to share, please bring them along. We would like to scan them.

They will be promptly returned.

#### ~ Dog & Cat Rabies Clinic ~

The Wallingford Dog & Cat Rabies Clinic is **Saturday, March 7th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

All dogs must be on leashes. All cats must be in carriers.

Grace Ma-Steenbergen, DVM

\$15 per shot

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wallingford Town Hall 75 School Street

#### ~ Kripalu Flow Yoga and Chair Yoga ~

*By Bess Lewis*

**Chair Yoga** ~ 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm on Sundays at the Tinnmouth Community Center ~ \$10 per class or \$50 for 6 week series. February 9th, 16th, and 23rd, March 1st, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 15th, (and March 22nd if a make up class is needed).

**Kripalu Flow Yoga** ~ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm on Mondays at the TCC \$10 per class or \$50 for 6 week series. February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, and March 2nd, 9th (and March 16th if a make-up class is needed).

Please RSVP [blewriver@gmail.com](mailto:blewriver@gmail.com)



TINMOUTH  
CHURCH

~ Tinmouth Community Church ~

Dear Friends,

February. The bleak mid-winter, though not for snow enthusiasts or for those who admire the awesome beauty of winter landscapes or for writers, readers and artists who like the stillness and interiority of longer nights. And it's a good month for warming up to a woodstove, a hot drink, and someone you love or dream of loving.

Every month is a good month for love, but February highlights that sentiment that is more than sentimental. Yes, the box of candy on Valentine's Day is appreciated, especially by us chocolate lovers. When accompanied by year-round expressions of thoughtfulness and caring, it does not feel like a holiday obligation or an afterthought, and comes just in time to rescue us from our withdrawals from Christmas sweets and goodies.

Ah, love .... so sweet and dreamy - until it sours and reality sets in! It doesn't have to sour, of course. It does need to get real.

Love and becoming a truly loving person in community; the epitome of every religion, the heart of every healthy, life- enhancing spirituality. It is also our greatest challenge.

Seems our hearts and lives cannot function well without the love of others, without loving others, without a healthy self-love, without connection to the source of love. Blowups. Breakdowns. Breakups. Heartbreaks. Broken dreams. Broken lives. They are all over the place, testifying to life's greatest challenge, and to our need to be schooled in love and practiced in loving. Who are our teachers? Who models for us the way?

"Love" may not be the best word for this challenge. "Compassion" – from the Latin "to suffer with" – speaks of the deeper reality and dynamic of the spiritual connection that is faithful, forgiving and wholly committed to the well-being of the beloved ones. Such is the love of One who is All-Loving, as seen in Jesus of Nazareth.

Love can be fun on Valentine's Day or any other day of the month/year. The real deal is also most challenging. But we have resources, teachers who know the values of love and compassionate persons who love us and show us the ways of love. Infusing all is the source of love, our greatest resource, Eternal Love, eternally transforming us into compassionate love.

*Blessings,  
Pastor John*

~ Library News ~  
By Ruth Drachman

The Writing Group (Motleys) will meet on the second **Sunday (February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020)** at 1:30 at the Library.

The Book Discussion Group will meet on the third Sunday of the month (**February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020**) at 3:00 at the Library.

**New Books for Adults**

\* **The Pioneers** by David McCullough, the Pulitzer prize winning historian; it is "the heroic story of the Settlers who brought the American Ideal West."

\* **How Quickly She Disappears** by Raymond Fleischmann, a book of literary suspense.

\* **March, Book 2** by John Lewis, continued from the Vermont Reads, **March, Book 1**.

\* **March, Book 3** by John Lewis, more of the story.

As **Winter keeps on coming**, remember that the library has **Snow Shoes** which can be borrowed just like a book. We have several pair of adult size, and several pair of children's size snow shoes. They can be borrowed for one week!

**Knit and Chat** is held in the library on Mondays from 3 until 5 PM. Come and do whatever handcrafts you prefer, and be prepared to chat as well.

The library is **open** on Monday and Thursday, from 10:00 AM until Noon, and from 1:00 PM until 5:00 PM, as well as the morning of the first Saturday of the month, February 1<sup>st</sup> from 9 until Noon. Rep. Robin Chesnut-Tangerman will be there from 10:30 until 11:30 to answer questions about the legislature.

We also have bags of books all ready to be checked out. The bags are "**Theme Bags**" and have books appropriate for children ages 3 through 8. Each bag contains 6 or 7 books on a specific theme, for instance; colors, arctic animals, dinosaurs, or transportation. Come and check one out! They are all set to go!

**Five generations!**



From right to left, Pauline Munson, Robin Munson Hepburn, Amanda Hepburn Posch, Taylor Posch Morgan and Colt Morgan. Congratulations!!



To the Tinmouth Community,

Snow arrived just as our Winter Sports Program began. The alpine skiers and boarders completed their first lesson at Okemo on January 6<sup>th</sup>. The following Friday, temperatures dipped into the single digits and our activities were confined to indoors. We will make up the missed session at Okemo on March 6<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting. Overall, we hope to complete six weeks of skiing, boarding, or skating.

We are fortunate to have a core volunteer group comprised of parents and teachers from Wallingford and Tinmouth who are experienced instructors as well as expert skiers and snowboarders. Consequently, the first day at Jackson Gore proceeded seamlessly. There were 23 students on the slopes and most were comfortable taking the lift up to more challenging runs!

Jeff Alexander recently donated 30 ski helmets to Tinmouth. We are *very* appreciative!

Twenty-two students chose to skate at the rink at Jackson Gore. What determination and fortitude! Most were novices and this includes a few courageous teachers as well!

Aside from Winter Sports, the students have been completing academic mid-year testing. This includes Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments and Star 360 math and literacy assessments. Both tests are designed to monitor progress and inform instruction going forward.

The Tinmouth Student Council is currently collecting socks, hats, gloves, and toiletries for homeless veterans. Items can be brought to the school or the town office. For more information about this project see the letter to Tinmouth knitters included in this publication, and written by Miles Fallar, our sixth grade student council representative.

Also, included in this presentation is the exceptional artwork of fifth grader, Opal Jones, who did an exceptional job illustrating the *Day of the Kings* in Spanish class.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

**Maureen Fitzgerald-Riker**  
Principal, Tinmouth Mountain School

*Adopt the pace of Nature: her secret is patience.*  
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Tinmouth Mountain School  
573 Route 140  
Tinmouth, Vermont 05773

February 1, 2020

To the Tinmouth Knitters Club,

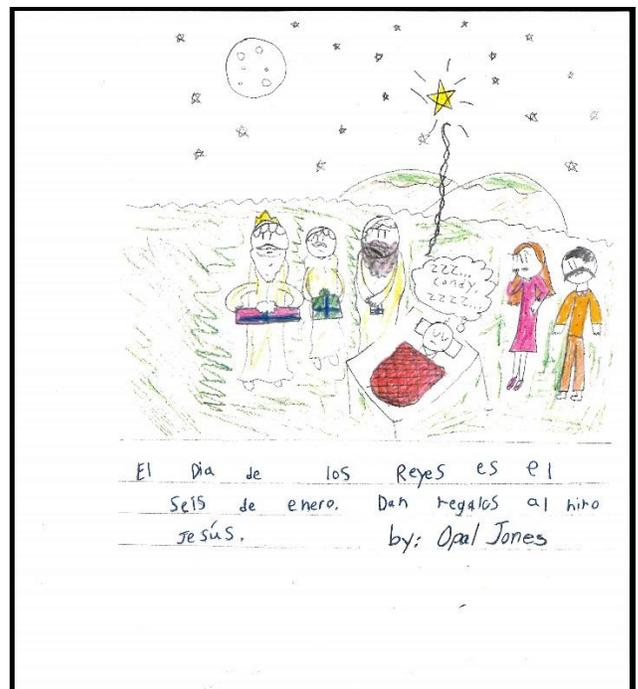
553,742 people are homeless each night. Nationally 11% of these homeless are veterans. The total amount of veterans in Vermont is close to a hundred. 1.4 million veterans are at risk of losing their homes because of poverty.

It is hard for some homeless veterans to get a job. 50% suffer from PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), and 70% have substance abuse problems. In the long run veterans will need training and a job to sustain long term housing. Tinmouth Mountain School (TMS) is collecting hats, mittens, toiletries, scarves to help homeless veterans get through the winter until they get long term housing.

I am writing to you because there are people in need of hats. They are the homeless veterans in Rutland County, who need our help and support, so we are asking you to make some hats, mittens, and scarves. The veterans really need these items, especially in the winter, because the wind chill in Vermont drops temperatures to below zero. TMS is doing a drive for other items as well, and if you make the hats, mittens, and scarves it will really help. The amount of homeless veterans is currently stable state wide and we need to do anything we can to reduce the number of homeless veterans.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,  
**Miles Fallar**



You can see this in color in *Tales* on the Town's website.

~ **Update on Telephone Battery Issue** ~  
*By Shrewsbury resident Jonathan Gibson  
(and Tinmouth property owner)*

Several events have occurred recently that relate to the loss of 911 emergency telephone service during extended power outages that our community has experienced in the past. On December 13, the Public Utility Commission (PUC) sent to the Vermont General Assembly a report that was required by Act 79, the broadband bill enacted in May 2019. This report summarized four PUC workshops held last year which examined whether a) telephone companies are following Federal requirements to provide information and offer backup power to their customers, and b) possible ways to avoid loss of 911 calling capacity during power outages.

The report included in an appendix the requests from residents of Shrewsbury, Mount Holly, and Wallingford and from the Vermont Public Interest Research Group for “best practices” to solve the loss of service problem. The towns of Tinmouth and Andover also participated in the workshops. But the report was highly deficient and disappointing in its three main findings that: a) the telecoms were in full compliance with Federal rules, b) the State should not take action nor does the PUC have authority to require utilities to augment their practices to solve the loss of 911 problem, and c) the Vermont E-911 Board should be given expanded duties to “address the perfect-storm 911 call concern now and to ensure telecommunications resiliency in the future.”

In mid-January, the E-911 Board, also in response to Act 79, took public comment on a proposed rule to require more complete reporting by telecom companies of outages in 911 service that last more than 30 minutes for 25 or more subscribers. Three Shrewsbury residents as well as VTEL subscribers in Wallingford and Danby submitted comments. The telecoms also responded, opposing the reporting requirements, claiming their information is confidential, and contending they have no knowledge of or responsibility for the condition of subscribers’ telephones. The initial rule was positive, but is likely to be changed to accommodate the utilities.

The 911 Board will file a final rule by February 1 with the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR) which must review and approve it before it goes into effect. The LCAR may be receptive to concerns about public safety and information disclosure. In addition, the legislative committees with jurisdiction over telecom matters will review the PUC report, and there will be a chance to point out to lawmakers the weaknesses of the report, especially the PUC recommendation to assign greater responsibility to the E911 Board on the backup battery problem. The 911 Board is ill-equipped in terms of staff, expertise, or consumer orientation and incapable of taking on this task; giving it more authority would be a major mistake. So there are additional opportunities to

affect public policy and ensure 911 service. Contact your state legislators for more information and let them know your opinion on this issue.

~ **Legislative Contact Info** ~

The Vermont General Assembly is back in session. If you wish to contact your State Senators or Representatives, here is the info:

You can call the Sergeant-at-Arms at 1-800-322-5616 and leave a message, or use email addresses below.

*Rutland 2 District –*

Rep. David Potter: [dpotter@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:dpotter@leg.state.vt.us).

Rep. Tom Burditt: [tburditt@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:tburditt@leg.state.vt.us)

*Rutland-Bennington District –*

Rep. Robin Chesnut-Tangerman: [rchesnut-tangerman@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:rchesnut-tangerman@leg.state.vt.us)

*Rutland County Senators-*

Sen. Brian Collamore: [bcollamore@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:bcollamore@leg.state.vt.us)

Sen. Cheryl Hooker: [chooker@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:chooker@leg.state.vt.us)

Sen. Jim McNeil: [jmcneil@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:jmcneil@leg.state.vt.us)

You can also access the Legislature’s website at [www.leg.state.vt.us](http://www.leg.state.vt.us). There you can find who is on which committee, what bills have been introduced, track each bill’s progress, review committee agendas, etc. There is a wealth of information available.

Your input can be important in their decision-making. Let them know your concerns!

~ **Community News** ~

*Get Well Wishes* are sent to **Jo Reynolds, Penny and Scott Buzby, and everyone with colds and flu.**

*Heartfelt Sympathies* are sent to **Helen Mango** and family for the loss of her Dad.

~ **Nature Notes** ~

Days are getting longer, the sun is shining warmer, yeah!!!

January had only four days that the temperature was not above normal!!

Ice on Tinmouth Pond has been quite thin, a number of ice fishermen have been reluctant to venture out!!

Blue birds visited Marion Hambly last week.

**The flu has arrived - keep washing your hands!!  
And please stay home if you are ill.  
Everyone thanks you for that!!**

**~ Meeting Highlights ~**

*(Complete minutes are available at the town office.)*

**Select Board ~ 1/9/20**

Present were members Michael Fallar, Frank Sears, and Cathy Reynolds, as well as Todd Dennis-Energy Committee, Bob Lloyd – Planning Commission, Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh-Planning Commission, Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Jo Reynolds, Grant Reynolds-Planning Commission, Suzanne Dafni, Jeff Ams – Conservation Commission, Harold Hunter, Doug Fontien-Conservation Commission, Hollis Squier, and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant.

**Enhanced Energy Plan Hearing** ~ Michael, as Planning Commission Chair, gave a brief overview of the PC's proposal to delete the current Energy section of the Town Plan and insert the new EEP as an amendment. It will hopefully provide the town some say in an energy project that goes before the Public Utilities Commission. Cathy, as a member of the Energy Committee, spoke to the section the EC worked on including encouraging any new town infrastructure to be as energy efficient as possible. Bob explained that once the Select Board approves, it would then be sent to the Rutland Regional Planning Commission for their review and approval. Board voted to accept and approve the proposed amendment to the Tinmouth Town Plan. Hearing closed.

**Dog Bite** ~ Frank, as Health Officer, updated the Board on the East Road dog bite that happened in December. He noted a complaint had been filed, but then withdrawn as the dog's owner (Suzanne) and the person bitten (Nelson Jaquay) knew each other and were able to find a solution.

Frank felt the Board needed to know that the dog is no longer in Tinmouth and the new owner is aware of the circumstances.

Suzanne advised that they had not been notified about this evening's meeting, saw it on the agenda on Front Porch Forum, advising that it has been hard for everyone.

**Conservation Commission** ~ Jeff, on behalf of the Conservation Commission requested the Board add two articles to the town meeting warning regrading creation of a special fund for Conservation Commission projects and funding for it. Jeff and Doug explained why the CC was interested in creating a new fund to ensure there would be resources available in the future for trail work, conservation programs for the school, speakers, etc. Request for second article is to authorize \$500 per year. After brief discussion, Frank moved and Michael 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve both articles to the town meeting warning. They both voted in favor, Cathy recused as Doug is her husband. Motion passed.

**Eric** – advised that the new one ton had been picked up, he's still working on and cleaning the old one to get it ready to sell.

**Town Garage** ~ Cathy reviewed process of past four years, Board hiring engineers-civil and structural, an architect, larger trucks don't quite fit in the old building, etc. Current salt shed only holds enough salt for a storm or two, would like to build one to hold a whole winter's salt as well as sand as the current sand pile has run-off issues traveling onto a neighbor's property. She presented a spread sheet she prepared with various options for proceeding to a bond vote. An 85' x 120' salt shed is estimated to cost \$181,000; 60' x 85' is \$118,000. 60' x 80' 4 bay town garage is estimated at \$675,000, after speaking with the architect a 3 bay garage would estimate at \$504,000, 2 bay at \$336,000. Site work will add another \$180,000.

Harold inquired what would be stored in the garage – Eric replied two tandem dump trucks, the grader and the loader. Harold wondered if it would be possible to use volunteers similar to how the community center was built. General consensus was some could be volunteer – but not to the scale of the community center – volunteers are getting older. Harold inquired about the time frame – Cathy explained the vote will happen on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, there is a 30 wait period in the event voters want to reconsider the results – design would then need to happen, hope is to start this summer.

Cathy explained the spread sheet contained options for 20 or 30 years borrowing time. Board discussed pros and cons of 20 years - less interest than 30 years. Property tax estimate used 4% interest rate – that won't be determined until bond is actually executed.

**Bond Documents** ~ Board discussed wording for the resolution, declaration of intent and the article for the warning for the vote. Cathy moved and Frank 2<sup>nd</sup>, both voted yes, Michael voted no. Motion passed.

Cathy moved that the Board move forward to a bond vote of \$850,000, for a term of 20 years, subject to resources available to reduce the amount borrowed. Frank 2<sup>nd</sup>, both voted yes, Michael voted no.

**Proposed FY21 Highway Budget** ~ Board reviewed draft #4, made minor adjustments, will finalize at special meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

**McCoy Road Grant Wrap-up** ~ Board voted to ratify action taken by Frank and Michael signing documents for reimbursement for the McCoy Road grants.

**Communications** ~ Board reviewed two letters expressing concern with road conditions during recent storms, one from the post master in Wallingford. Eric advised he was waiting for the snow to stop before starting to plow, is doing the best he can. Cathy noted communicating with the public is important, asked Eric the best way to contact him.

Frank asked Hollis how he used to handle it – Hollis replied that he would plow the paved roads and then go help Ronnie on the back roads, Eric does it differently – one truck for paved roads and one for the back roads. He

noted it is difficult to determine when to plow, timing of the snow, sometimes a driver's experience depends on whether the road is just about to be plowed or was just plowed. Former road commissioner Leo Boule` advised him(Hollis) when he first was elected, that it was a thankless job, and if you could keep half the people happy you were doing a good job. He did note that communication is very important.

Eric noted he had asked Board members to attend training regarding winter road maintenance. Board members offered to ride with the road crew to experience conditions first hand.

**Request for Removal of School Slide** – Cathy read MRUUSD Director of Operations Gary Marcy's email regarding the slide's insurance inspection. Board would like the school district to replace the slide if it is removed. Board tabled until their meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Michael will speak with Amy Martone – Tinmouth's representative on the MRUUSD Board.

**Solid Waste Ordinance** ~ After brief discussion – Gail asked Board to re-adopt as she had not properly notified the public last summer. Board voted to adopt the Solid Waste Ordinance as amended.

**Old Business** –

East Road Right of Way – Cathy advised she recently had to stop as the road was blocked by the Regimbalds working in the road – she took a photo.

**New Business** –

**Redetermination of CLA** ~ Gail, as Lister, requested the Board petition the Director of Property Valuation and Review for a redetermination of the 2020 CLA (Common Level of Appraisal) as Tinmouth's new CLA was 93.5, down over 5% from last year's 99.15. This means that taxes increase 5% before any increase in the budget. The CLA is a state study of recent sales that compares the town's assessed value to the sale value. Board agreed.

**Proposed FY21 General Budget** ~ Board reviewed draft #4, noted salary increases for both highway and general was 3%. Will finalize at the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Service Organization Requests** ~ Gail put on her hat as the Tinmouth Pond Milfoil Project President and asked that the Board include an article to increase the town's annual allotment from \$1,850 to \$2,500. State grants are getting smaller, as there is far more need than the state can cover. Board agreed by consensus.

Rutland Regional Marketing Initiative – no letter has been received requesting further funding – Board agreed it will not be on the warning unless there is a request.

**Personnel Review** ~ Board noted last year's attempt was awkward – required by the Personnel Policy – may try to prep for it at the end of the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Transfer Station Inspection** ~ Gail advised the state had inspected the transfer station in early December, needed to write a response.

**Members Concerns** ~ Frank suggested the Board consider appointing rather than electing the road commissioner – after brief discussion Board added it to the agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> – voters would need to vote at town meeting, if approved would not take effect until the end of the current term (2021).

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.

**Select Board ~ Special Meeting ~ 1/21/20**

Present were members Michael Fallar, Cathy Reynolds, and Frank Sears, as well as Amy Martone, MRUUSD School Board Member, Jo Reynolds, Grant Reynolds, Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Heather McMahon, Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, Doug Fontien, Hollis Squier (briefly at 8:20), and Gail Fallar.

**Amy Martone** ~ Amy wanted to clarify her role as Tinmouth's sole representative to the Mill River Union Unified School District. Issues have arisen regarding removal of the slide, cleaning the Community Center, and the need to develop a clear communication chain for who addresses those concerns.

**School Slide** ~ The Select Board had been asked for permission to remove the slide. Discussion ensued about whether this is an issue for the Select Board or the Community Center Board (or both).

The school district's insurance company had the playground inspected which identified a number of issues, one of which is the slide on the south side of the school. It presents several risk factors for kids using it and it no longer meets compliance standards, so MRUUSD is going to have it removed. As no money was budgeted by MRUUSD to replace it, there are some folks willing to fund raise to do that. It is very much used by students. Cathy advised that the Community Center Board should meet to deal with these issues. The Community Center Board consists of Ann Czar – elected at town meeting; Cathy Reynolds representing the Select Board and Amy Martone representing the School District. Rainbow Squier as Building Manager, Maureen Fitzgerald-Riker, school principal, and Gary Marcy MRUUSD Operations Director also need to be involved.

**Elect or Appoint Road Commissioner** ~ Board discussed pros and cons of electing versus appointing the road commissioner, decided to leave as it is for now and noted that more communication is needed.

**Communications** ~ Eric advised that there is a message now on the town garage answering machine. Folks will be encouraged to call the town garage to report a tree down or road condition concerns.

**Proposed FY21 Highway Budget** ~ Board reviewed draft #5, reduced some items and then decided to reduce the paving budget from \$100,000 to \$75,000. Frank and Michael voted to reduce paving, Cathy voted against. Michael and Frank voted to reduce the overtime budget, Cathy opposed. Final proposed FY21 highway budget of

\$514,250 was approved, all voted in favor. Cathy moved to add an article to the town meeting warning to ask voters if they want to add the \$25,000 for paving back into the budget, all voted in favor. FY20 budget was \$551,950.

**Proposed FY21 General Budget** ~ Board reviewed draft #5, added \$3,000 more to the legal line item (necessary due to Wallingford town line dispute), added \$500 for pay for the Health Officer (Cathy and Michael approved – Frank as H.O. abstained), and deleted \$600 for the Rutland Regional Marketing Program as they did not send a request. Board voted to approve a proposed general budget of \$237,815. FY20 budget was \$236,240.

**Estimated 2020 tax rate**, based on the above two budgets, and the 2019 Grand List, the Board estimated a 2020 tax rate of \$0.7003 – 2019 tax rate was \$0.7586.

**Town Report Select Board Report** ~ Board reviewed and edited Cathy's draft for the town report. Board approved report, would like it to be posted to Front Porch Forum and printed in *Tales of Tinmouth* as well as the town report. While it was deleted from the report, Cathy noted that it has been "a long and frustrating 3 years" for her.

**Personnel Review** ~ Board set date of February 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 (weather permitting) to meet with Eric, Ronnie, and Gail; still need to determine expectations and how to proceed.

**Tinmouth Pond Milfoil Project** ~ TPMP (via Gail as President) requested support to apply for a Watershed Planning Grant for assessing the private roads around the Pond. The Rutland Regional Planning Commission is already scheduled to inventory and assess the Town's roads and are available to also do the work for TPMP. Board granted request.

**Transfer Station Inspection** ~ Gail advised that the state sent a registered letter regarding violations found during their December inspection. Tires (from Green-up), the tarp was not covering the roll-off – keeps the wind from blowing stuff around, and a closure plan was not filed on time.

## **Planning Commission ~ No Meeting in January**

### **Community Center Board ~ 1/29/20**

TCC members present: Amy Martone (school board), Cathy Reynolds (select board), and Ann Czar (elected).

Others present: Rainbow Squier – CC Building Manager, Maureen Fitzgerald-Riker – TMS Principal, Gail Fallar-Treasurer, and Michael Fallar.

The meeting was called to clarify communications. After discussion, the TCC Board decided that complaints or concerns regarding the community center needed to be directed to Rainbow as the building manager who in turn would contact Gary Marcy, MRUUSD Operations Manager. Concerns regarding the school (lack of heat in the class rooms for instance) need to be directed to

Maureen as principal who will contact Gary. It was also determined that TCC Board members-(Cathy, Amy and Ann), Gary, Maureen and Gail should be cc'd on any and all emails so that everyone was aware of concerns or issues. TCC Board will meet if necessary, to address and/or decide a particular concern.

Concerns were raised: with heat, control is at the MRUUSD central office; with cleanliness of the community center; community center not being ready for public use at 5:30 (school has control on all school days until 5:30 per the original agreement between the school district and the town); MRUUSD's difficulty with custodian staff scheduling; removal of the slide on the south side of the school (the school's insurance risk folks have determined it is no longer in compliance with safety regulations and there are several folks who want to make sure a new slide replaces it); and a difference with the MRUUSD's non-smoking policy and the community center's policy (this was tabled for a future discussion).

Maureen suggested that the after-school program might be able to move to the school library at 4:30 to enable the cleaning of the community center. The yoga class may be asked to start at 6:00 rather than 5:30 as a possible resolution as well.

There was a discussion regarding the TCC Board's responsibility – Cathy read from the original agreement, that the TCC's Board has oversight of the community center building. The school and the community center and playgrounds are on the town green, all are owned by the Town. It was suggested that the Select Board and the TCC Board have a joint meeting to discuss responsibilities and oversight.

TCC Board agreed to meet again on February 25<sup>th</sup> – inviting Gary Marcy to provide instruction regarding the new key system (Rainbow will review list of who needs them), discussion about cleaning, the slide, inviting MRUUSD Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair John McKenna, and pending Select Board discussion about authority and responsibilities – whether to have a joint meeting between the SB and the TCC Board.

### **Safety and Wellness Committee ~ 1/29/20**

Present were members Ronnie Crossman, Chris Martone, Frank Sears, Ray Pratt, and Gail Fallar, as well as Wade Mazure VLCT-PACIF (town's insurance company), Sherry Johnson and Kim Harbaugh.

Committee reported no near misses.

Frank, as Health Officer, advised that he had received a call regarding excess garbage and its health implications on Ezra Stone Road, but believed that it was being taken care of in the near future. He is documenting the situation.

Gail advised that Royal Lock and Key has submitted a proposal for fire detection for the town office and fire department for over \$27,000. Everyone thought it was

too high, other vendors were suggested to be contacted – Catamount Security and Countryside Glass.

Gail noted that the slide on the south side of the school no longer meet compliance regulations and would need to be removed in the spring. It does have massive cement feet – it may not be an easy task.

Members discussed possible PACIF safety grant opportunities – fire detection is out for this round. Wade suggested the fire department explore a Ventry Light System – a portable light tower to illuminate flaggers during an emergency situation – but is handy for other uses as well. Has a small generator attached to it. He also suggested back-up cameras for the fire trucks.

Wade advised that the grant program had changed – there used to be two rounds, now it is rolling process with applications accepted until the money set aside by PACIF is all awarded – so the sooner a grant proposal is sent, the better the chances of money still in the kitty. And the turn around time is now only two or three weeks.

Wade advised that there were no workers' comp claims in 2018 or 2019, yeah!

He also noted that VOSHA is visiting more and more municipalities with inspections for town garages and fire houses. The Committee asked Wade for an assessment by him regarding these buildings – he has done them in the past – to help the town and fire department meet the rules and address safety concerns if needed. He agreed.

He also encouraged the use of master kill switches in town equipment – safety grants cover this expense and noted that the Committee had talked about it at their last meeting. Current road commissioner prefers not to use them, more discussion needed. Frank noted the Select Board may discuss.

### **Rutland Regional Planning Commission To Assist State Tactical Basin Planning**

*Rutland, VT* – The Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) is pleased to announce expanded outreach and services to municipalities and the public to improve tactical basin planning efforts for Lake Champlain and overall water quality efforts. The work is provided through a grant provided by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Activities began this fall and will extend through September 2020.

The Tactical Basin Plan (TBP) for Basin 3 (Otter Creek Watershed) was recently updated by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Two years ago, DEC completed a TBP for the South Lake Champlain watersheds, Basins 2 and 4. Tactical Basin Plans help identify and focus efforts needed to protect or restore specific watersheds through the state.

In addition, the RRPC will work with its member municipalities to encourage a variety of efforts to improve water quality. These efforts include suggested bylaw

updates (such as river corridor bylaw considerations), assistance with securing funding for water quality project development and implementation, and helping towns comply with the upcoming Draft General Permit 3-9050, the “3-acre” developed lands permit.

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission is a quasi-governmental non-profit organization which encourages the coordinated development of the Rutland Region, advocates for the needs of its member towns, and strives to build a thriving regional economy while enhancing the area's quality of life.

Vermont's regional planning commissions have been key partners in water quality efforts with state agencies, watershed groups, conservation districts, and municipalities.

### **~ Recipe Corner ~**



#### **Tomato Quiche**

##### **Ingredients**

1 cup chopped onion

2 tablespoons butter

4 large tomatoes, peeled, seeded, chopped and drained

1 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1/4 teaspoon dried thyme

2 cups (8 ounces) Monterey Jack cheese, divided

1 unbaked pastry shell (10 inches)

4 large eggs, room temperature

1-1/2 cups half-and-half cream

##### **Directions**

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, saute onion in butter until tender. Add the tomatoes, salt, pepper and thyme. Cook over medium-high heat until liquid is almost evaporated, about 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Sprinkle 1 cup cheese into bottom of pie shell. Cover with tomato mixture; sprinkle with remaining cheese. In a small bowl, beat eggs until foamy. Beat in cream. Pour into pie shell.

Bake at 425° for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 325°; bake 40 minutes longer or until top begins to brown and a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting.

***Got a favorite recipe you are willing to share? Please send it/them to Shirley Bucceri at [smhb@vermontel.net](mailto:smhb@vermontel.net) or 49 North End Road, Tinmouth, VT 05773. Thanks!***



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The one-week camp program is held at Lake Bomoseen in Castleton and Buck Lake in Woodbury. Campers participate in hands-on learning about fish and wildlife conservation, ecology, forestry, orienteering, safe firearm and archery techniques, swimming, canoeing, fishing and more. Natural resource professionals come to the camp to share information on their programs and take campers out for field activities.

"Whether kids come alone or with friends, they are guaranteed to meet new people and form new bonds while experiencing Vermont's natural resources to the fullest," said Fish and Wildlife Education Coordinator Alison Thomas. "An important take-away message and common theme during the week is that conserving and managing habitat will help ensure Vermont will have fish and wildlife in the future."

Conservation Camps open June 21 and continue until August 14. Tuition is \$250 for the week, including food, lodging and equipment.

Online applications and information are available at [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com).

For more information about Green Mountain Conservation Camps contact:

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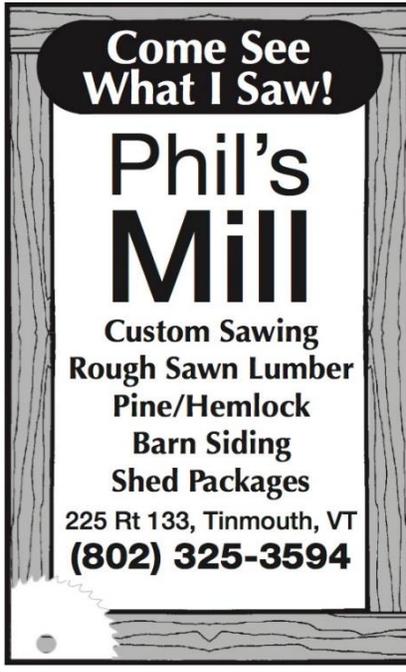
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The MyFreeTaxes Partnership provides free federal and Vermont e-filing for qualified individuals. Are you eligible? Find out at [myfreetaxes.com](http://myfreetaxes.com).



## Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) & Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Programs

Free tax help for those who qualify: 1) lower incomes, 2) disabilities, 3) the elderly, or 4) limited English. TCE focuses on those age 60 years and older. Learn more about VITA/TCE and find a location near you by searching "VITA" or "TCE" at [irs.gov](http://irs.gov).

## AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program

Provides tax assistance sites to taxpayers who qualify, such as those with low and moderate incomes, giving special attention to those age 50 years and older. Learn more about the Tax-Aide Program and find a location near you by searching "tax aide" at [aarp.org](http://aarp.org).

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