



# *The Reading Informer*

## *March 2020*

Published by the Town of Reading

If you wish to receive the Informer by email please send a note to the Town Clerk at [readingvermont@comcast.net](mailto:readingvermont@comcast.net)

### **REMINDER: Reading Annual Town Meeting** **Saturday February 29, 2020**

Location: Reading Elementary School

**The meeting will be called to order at 9:30 AM**  
***Please arrive no later than 9:20 AM***  
*so that you can register with the Town Clerk for voting.*

Town reports are available for pick up at the Reading Town Hall, the Reading Library, the Reading Greenhouse, the Reading Elementary School and Watroba's General Store. The town meeting warning and the Town Report are also posted on the town website at: [www.readingvt.govoffice.com](http://www.readingvt.govoffice.com)

Coffee and pastries will be available, hosted by the Reading Greenspace Committee.



### **Voting by Australian Ballot Tuesday, March 3rd** **Reading Town Hall 7 am to 7 pm**

- Presidential Primary
- Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District
  - Article 1: One School Director
  - Article 2: Merger of Barnard with the WCMUUSD
  - Article 3: Budget Amount if Barnard merges
  - Article 4: Budget amount if Barnard does not merge





Absentee ballots are available in the Town Clerk’s office during regular office hours. These can be requested until March 2, 2020 and must be returned by March 3, 2020 before 7 PM.

These ballots are for voting on the presidential primary and our local WCMUUSD school vote only.

**PLEASE NOTE !!!**

You must declare a political party when voting in the Presidential Primary! V.S.A. Title 17, Chapter 57, section 2704

“A person voting at the Primary shall be required to ask for the ballot of the party in which the voter wishes to vote and an election official shall record the voter’s choice of ballot by marking the entrance checklist with a letter code, as designated by the Secretary of State, to indicate the voter’s party choice.”



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## *Thank YOU!*

The RES PTO would like to extend a very big thank you to all that attended the annual Mama Mia's Bistro. The event brought together and fed around 70 people. We hope that everyone enjoyed the delicious pasta and wonderful company.

Thank you again for all the continued support for the PTO and ultimately the students and families of Reading Elementary School.

Barb, Janet and Wade.

The Reading Green Spaces Committee Presents

## **The 2ND ANNUAL MAPLE COOK-OFF**

*Get your taste buds ready! On Saturday, March 28 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM*

*come to Town Hall for the Maple Cook-Off Event!*

- All dishes will feature maple product in some fashion
- 4 categories include appetizers, salads and side dishes, entrees and desserts. Will it be maple pulled pork sliders, maple glazed ribs or maybe homemade maple creemees?
- Come sample them all and vote for your favorite!
- There will be great prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners



- Admission \$8 dollars per person and \$20 dollars per family
- Or enter with a dish – no entry fee! Maybe win a prize!

To enter, please email [readinggreenspace@gmail.com](mailto:readinggreenspace@gmail.com) OR call/text Heather at (802) 952-9667. We need your full name, email address, phone number and name of your dish.

The Maple Cook-Off is a fundraiser for the Reading Green Spaces Committee and will support our continued efforts to beautify Puddledock Park for all to use and enjoy. This year we plan to complete the grass seeding, add a park sign, perennial beds, a tree and more to complement to our wonderful benches and tables.

Annie Rubright; Chairperson

The Reading Recreation Commission  
**Winter Concert Series**  
Music•Dinner•Community  
presents

**The BlueGrasoles**

“The Most Popular Band in the Western part of Northeast South Reading.”

**Saturday, March 14, 2020**  
**7pm (doors open at 6:30pm)**  
**Reading Town Hall**

\$10 admission for adults  
(free for children 15 and under)

BlueGrasoles is a local trio consisting of Reading residents Susan Damone Balch and John Balch, and Springfield resident Rich Knight.

The band plays Americana, rock, folk, and blues. Their musical influences are Johnny Cash, Rolling Stones, Tom Petty, Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Guy Clark, and John Prine.

**The dinner buffet for March will be provided by the Reading Green Spaces Committee.**

The Reading Winter Concert Series is a benefit for four local organizations: The Reading/West Windsor Food Shelf, the Reading Green Spaces Committee, the Reading Recreation Commission, and the Ottawa-quechee Health Foundation.

**Admission is \$10 (free for children 15 and under), which gives you a night of great music and dinner. Please bring non-perishable food items (that are not beyond their expiration date), which will be donated to the Reading/West Windsor Food Shelf.**

For more information, contact Stephen D’Agostino at [stephen.d.dagostino@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.d.dagostino@gmail.com).



**Time to license your dog (s).....**

**License your dog by April 1st**

**to avoid a late fee.**

**You must have a copy of a current  
rabies vaccination certificate.**

**Dog Fees: Males/Females \$13.00      Neutered/Spayed \$ 9.00**  
**After April 1st: add a late fee of \$2.00 / \$4.00**

**RABIES CLINIC: March 21st**

**Mill Mall in Bridgewater**

**12:30 pm—2 pm \$12.00 per shot**

## Selectboard Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2020

UNAPPROVED

The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm.

Present: Robert Allen, Gordy Eastman, Jim Peplau, Calista Brennan, Gary Vittum, Stephen D'Agostino, Karl Hansen and Heather Evans. Robert started the meeting asking if there were changes to the agenda. No changes.

Minutes of the January 13, 2020 Public Hearing minutes were approved as printed. Minutes of the January 13, 2020 Selectboard minutes were approved as printed.

**Treasurer's Report:** As of 01/31/2020, Expenses were \$72,070.34, Revenue was \$58,693.02, and the balance in Mascoma is \$875,196.89. Delinquent taxes for 2018 and 2019 are \$44,762.67. Jim moved to approve and Gordy seconded. Report is accepted.

### Action Items:

**Local Emergency Management Plan - (LEMP) Adoption:** Robert explained what the plan was and why we have one. Robert has been working with Otis at WSCRPC on this one and it has been approved by the State. This plan is actually for 2019. The plans have to be submitted yearly and are due after Town Meeting. The 2020 plan is due again May 1<sup>st</sup>, however we will have the option of resending the 2019 plan if we do not any updates. Jim made a motion to approve the LEMP, Gordy seconded. The plan was approved.

**VLCT Cannabis Resolution Relating to S.54:** Robert explained what the resolution was and that if the Town indicated they wished to 'opt in' by signing the resolution, that it would give the Town more control over having a commercial recreational cannabis businesses in town. There was discuss on the pro and cons of the whole recreational sale of cannabis. Gordy made a motion to sign the resolution, Jim seconded. The resolution was signed.

**Highways:** Glen was not here so no updates on roads. The Culvert inventory has been finished and sent to SWCRPC. There was discussion on the Western Star truck and Robert will follow up with Glen.

**Liquor License - Watroba's General Store:** The license was signed.

**Listers Certificate of Appeal:** According to State Statute a certificate stating that there are no appeals or suits pending has to be signed by the Selectboard. The board signed off on the certificate.

**Resignation from Green Spaces Committee:** Jane Philpin has resigned. The board accepted her resignation.

**Other:** Stephen would like to have the next Rec Commission concert as a BYOB event. There was some discussion on the requirement of getting additional liability insurance.

Stephen stated that he will be running for Selectboard at Town Meeting.

Gary talked about the 5-year plan on replacing fire truck, which would be FY2022. He also said there has been talk about districting with other area fire depts.

Robert said that there are some school budget cuts that would impact RES. One was cutting the Administrative position to ½ time and cutting the counselor position. There was some discussion on the school budget, the need for a new high school and the status of the Reading Elementary School. Robert also mentioned that the Town had never received a copy of the deed from the Reading School District to the WCMUUSD. Calista is following up on the reason/status.

There is an informational budget meeting for the WCMUUSD on Thursday Feb 27, 2020 at 6 PM in the Woodstock Union Middle School Library.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm

Next Selectboard meeting will be on Monday, March 9, 2020

Respectfully Submitted, Calista N Brennan, Town Clerk

**Law Office of Peter K. Vollers, PLC**

Peter K. Vollers, Esq.

Dana Twigg-Smith, Paralegal

T'Other House  
4 The Green

Woodstock, Vermont 05091

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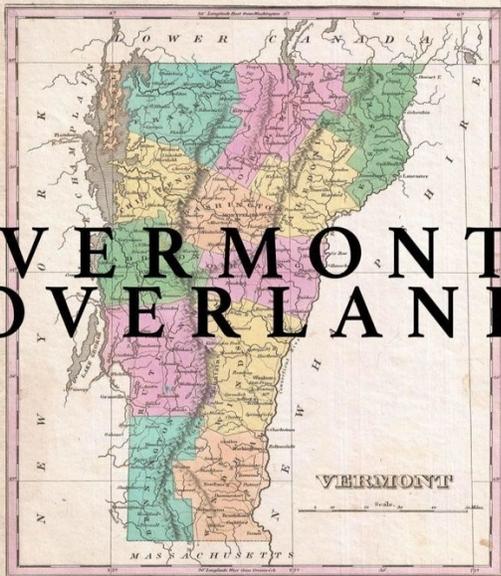
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## Reading Planning Commission Meeting

February 3, 2020 – unapproved minutes

**Present:** Stephen Strait, Kevin Kaija, Kurt Voight, Jason Rasmussen, Kathy Callan-Rondeau, Ken Cox, Jean Goldsborough, Barbara Thaeber, Erin Grogan. **The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.**

**Changes to the Agenda** – Steve suggested we do the latter agenda item to review the survey while public attendees are here so they need not stay for the entire meeting.

**Minutes of the January meeting** – January minutes did not show a result of the motion made by Kevin to investigate alternative forms of recording meetings. It was agreed that after discussion all members voted unanimously to approve the motion. Kevin moved to accept the January minutes with this change, seconded, all were in favor.

### Plan for the March meeting

1. Jason presented some visual slides to review the SWCRPC website and the location of documents related to our Town Plan.
  - a. Review of Project Outline which shows the sequential steps or phases of project work.
  - b. Proposed Project Schedule. Steve has invited some realtors and the Listers to the March meeting. After that work can begin on the chapters as it pertains to what is learned. A second meeting having to do with the more rural part of the Town will guide us in that part of the planning. Education is generally addressed in Chapter 4 and somewhat Chapter 7.
2. Review of survey results with highlights
  - a. Reading Informer ranked high in usage for people staying informed. Calista has said she is willing to distribute the Informer by email if requested so maybe this should be promoted to residents to increase distribution of information, meeting notifications, etc.
  - b. The results of the question on natural resources seem similar to the previous year. Steve suggested we look at that more closely.
  - c. Q#9 - regarding the meaning of “rural character” – these will also guide in the planning. Jason is curious if the survey represents enough of the population. Kurt commented that some people he has spoken to have expressed the school as being an important part of the community. This question using the term “rural character” may be subject to extremely varied interpretations, affecting the answers.
  - d. Energy questions showed a lot of support for energy efficiency including solar energy.
  - e. Housing questions – more than half felt our current housing stock is inadequate. Housing needs opinions were expressed in the survey with more detail. Kurt commented that the current housing stock that has sold recently has been existing dwellings, not new construction. Kathy commented on how the septic systems are rated for use by the number of bedrooms so that some larger homes could serve to be divided into “homes” within one larger house structure. Steve thinks subsidized housing projects are needed to bring more affordable housing to the town. The answers will be challenging.
  - f. Q#33 - respondents seemed to want crosswalks but not sidewalks – this doesn’t jive. The desire for septic systems received the highest responses.
  - g. Childcare and education questions showed this as a major issue. The school continues to be a topic of great interest in the community.
  - h. Q#40 issues of greatest concerns – This was an open question. Kathy had done her own consolidation of the issues data and found the order of concern to be roughly: 1) school issues, 2) attracting new residents and businesses, 3) taxes, and 4) housing. Kevin commented that the school is no longer owned by the Town (it is now the school district’s property). Should we have a separate chapter on Education? Steve thinks it can be addressed wherever it fits in the plan.
    - i. Steve thinks another way to ask this question might be “why are people who have lived in Reading for a while still living here and why did people move here?”
    - ii. Some discussion on broadband access as a problem for staying power or attracting new residents. Many people rely on it in order to work and without enough interest in ECFiber expansion in Reading, improvement is not on the near horizon.
3. Jason asked members if they like the current plan format, length, detail, etc. Ken is pretty happy with the format at least as it relates to the chapters he is responsible for. Steve feels any trimming of unnecessary words, eliminating redundancy and increasing clarity is always a good thing. Ken commented that if it is too vague it leaves room for a lot of interpretation by lawyers. It was agreed the Goals and Action Steps format seems to work. Kevin sees room for some new content as well. [continued page 8]

..... **Planning Commission continued from previous page**

Additional discussion:

- a. Would you be interested in a Health Chapter (not present currently?) The Mt. Ascutney Prevention Partnership is willing to help us with that. Could contain issues such as tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, aging, etc. Steve asked Jason to get more info from that organization to see what would be explored.
4. SWCRPC has been working some on data and maps. Those maps are available on their website. Link is [swcrpc.org/reading-town-plan](http://swcrpc.org/reading-town-plan)
5. All are encouraged to take the Keys to the Valley housing survey that was sent around by Jason. Kathy will post the link again on FPF.

**Reports**

1. Kathy gave a brief update on the RPC
2. Energy Committee (Kevin)– there was a scheduled meeting that was canceled due to lack of quorum. Next meeting Feb 20<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm, at the fire hall.

**Mail and email** - none

**Updates on documenting meeting discussions other than written minutes** - Kevin reported about some of the information from John Malcolm. An example given is a software solution called Zoom that allows up to 100 attendees who dial in; recording meetings, mute, etc. Pricing \$15/month or \$40/mo to save the recordings (\$800 -900/year) could be linked to Town Website. Estimated cost \$1,000. Jean commented on various ways to record and save recordings of meetings “on the cheap.” Members discussed what the purpose or goal of recording meetings. There are many potential benefits and if we started simply with free software, hardware and storage solutions it might serve as a good pilot. Jean meeting with Esther Allen later this week to discuss the Town website which may shed light on whether audio recordings can be stored there or not. The group agreed to use Jean’s smartphone voice recorder to record the remainder of this meeting to see what the audio quality is like. Jean will report back on that on or before the next meeting.

**Other Business** -

1. Steve requested a copy of the new Zoning ordinance from Jason who will get that for us.
2. Kevin asked if the Town gives out paper copies of the Town Plan or Zoning Ordinance. Steve thinks Calista has a copy in the clerk’s office but we should find out. It would be good if there was a hard copy that could be given or loaned out.
3. Ken and Steve got an email from someone connected to Hall Art Foundation requesting info on a pedestrian bridge over the river and across to the museum. Ken says they haven’t applied yet but they have contacted the State for permitting and he expects the Commission would see a copy of that. There needs to be some input especially regarding floodways and zoning ordinance. Kevin expressed concern regarding the cross-sectional area that was impacted by Irene above the State Route 106 bridge. Ken will find out what the schedule for this is and report back. Jason offered SWCRPC as an additional resource for help.
4. Steve - for the next meeting please be thinking about questions needing answers at that meeting with the Listers and Real estate agents attending.

**Next Meeting** – March 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm. Note this is NOT the usual Monday but the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday because Election Day is the next day and the room needs to be set up.

**Adjournment** – adjourned at 8:56 PM. Respectfully submitted, Jean G. Goldsborough, Recorder

**Doing your income taxes!** Don’t forget to file form HS-122 Vermont Homestead Declaration AND Property Tax Credit Claim by April 15, 2020

**Homestead Declaration-** *Reading parcel owners who have their domicile in Reading are required to file a Vermont Homestead Declaration **annually** on or before April 15!*

This is the criteria for determining income sensitivity eligibility for any residential state-wide educational property tax adjustment. Individual circumstances may require filing for an income tax extension. Remind your tax preparer of the annual Vermont Homestead filing requirement and the date for filing. ***There are no extensions for the Homestead Declaration*** Late Filings are subject to late penalties.

**Per the Selectboard there will not be any waiving of penalties!**

**Non-residents-** These parcel owners pay the non- resident state-wide education tax only adjusted for the Local CLA. **Impact of not filing Homestead Declaration-** If you have your domicile in Reading and fail to file a declaration, you are subject to paying any difference between the residential and non-residential education tax plus a substantial penalty.



## Property Transfer/Sales

Mendocino Group, Inc. to Stone Chimney Properties, LLC  
Stone Chimney Road 211.90 Acres \$300,000

Francesco Soddu to Stone Chimney Properties, LLC  
1009 Stone Chimney Road 22.85 Acres \$75,000

Germaine Allen to Kirby Walsh  
51 Baileys Mills Road House & 16.02 Acres Transfer Only

Patrick Maher to Maureen Hennigan  
668 Stone Chimney Road House & 11.48 Acres \$565,000

## Librarian's Note

**Silent Book Club** is a different kind of book group. No assigned reading. No pressure to say something insightful. Participants bring whatever they're currently reading (book, magazine, newspaper, whatever), then relax for an hour of quiet reading time in the company of fellow readers. There are no other rules. Before and after the designated reading time, those who want to can chat about anything they like. Join us on the following **Wednesdays: March 4, 18, and April 1**. The library will open at 6:30 p.m. There will be quiet reading time between 7 and 8. Feel free to show up late or leave early.

The library will also be hosting a Community Sing-Along on Friday, March 27, at 6:30 p.m. We will have some *Rise Up Singing* songbooks on hand, but if you own a copy, please bring it. You may also bring an instrument to accompany the singing (chords for each song are listed in the songbook, but not specific changes). Folks will take turns choosing songs for the group; if you'd rather pass, that's O.K. A facilitator will help guide us. We'll sing some and visit some. Everyone's welcome, even those who just prefer to listen.

Cordially, Tony

*Reading Public Library. Tues. 12-3:30 p.m. & 4-7; Thurs. 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. & 2-5; Sat. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Mail: P.O. Box 7, Reading, VT 05062. Tel. 802-484-5588. E-mail: [reading.public.library@comcast.net](mailto:reading.public.library@comcast.net). Web: [www.readinglibrary.org](http://www.readinglibrary.org). The board meets the last Tues. of each mth. at 6 p.m. Wi-Fi available 24/7.*

## March 5, 2020 ECFiber Meeting 6:30 PM Reading Town Hall

### ECFiber Reading Connectivity Meeting

As some of you may have heard, ECFiber is looking to expand their wicked fast fiber internet service specifically in Reading throughout 2020! An informational meeting will be held at the Reading Town Hall on Thursday, March 5th at 6:30PM with Chris Recchia CEO of ECFiber/ValleyNet and myself. We will be there to specifically discuss what Reading homeowners can do to best prepare for service/connectivity at their location. Additionally, we'll provide a brief overview of ECFiber and what we do, as well as answer any questions you may have.

In the meantime if you are interested in our service, please go ahead and sign-up today (no obligation or contract!) via our website: [www.ecfiber.net](http://www.ecfiber.net) and click the "Sign Up Now" button.

John Malcolm  
ECFiber Delegate for Reading  
[reading@ecfiber.net](mailto:reading@ecfiber.net)

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**The United States Census 2020**  
**An Important Way to Support Your Community**

An accurate count is the goal of every census, the 2020 Census included. The results of the census have real-world impacts-and consequences-for communities across our country. From determining the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives to planning for roads, schools, and hospitals, an accurate count is crucial.

Census takers are being hired. Applicants are encouraged to apply online at [2020census.gov/jobs](http://2020census.gov/jobs) or to call the toll-free number at 1-855-JOB-2020 with questions, or to obtain more information or assistance.

## Meeting Schedule

<b>Cemetery Commission</b> Fourth Wednesday 6:00 PM at Town Office	<b>Library Trustees</b> Last Tuesday 6:00 PM at Library
<b>EC Fiber</b> Second Tuesday at 7pm Oaks Hall 1st floor of Law School In S. Royalton, VT	<b>Parent Teacher Org</b> First Tuesday 5:30 PM at Reading School
<b>Energy Committee</b> Third Thursday 7 PM Fire Station	<b>Planning Commission &amp; Zoning Board</b> First Monday 7:00 PM at Town Hall
<b>Fire &amp; Rescue Dept.</b> First Tuesday 7:00 PM at Fire Station	<b>R.A.T.S</b> 2nd Wednesday 7:00 PM at Fire Station
<b>Fire Dept. Auxiliary</b> First Monday 6:30 PM at Fire Station	<b>Recreation Commission</b> 2nd Wednesday 6:00 PM at Library
<b>Green Space Committee</b> 3rd Thursday 6 PM at Library	<b>Select Board</b> Second Monday 6:00 PM at Town Office
	<b>WCMUUSD School Board</b> Second Monday 6:00 PM Locations Vary

## Reading- West Windsor

### Food Shelf

**Website: [rwwfoodshelf.org](http://rwwfoodshelf.org)  
Monday 2:00 to 4:00 (Food Shelf)**

**Thursday 4:00 to 6:00  
(Thrift Store & Food Shelf)**

Located at 3456 Tyson Road  
in South Reading at the Stone School House  
The Thrift Store is open to anyone, not just food  
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Inquiries please contact  
Sara Norcross 484-5097  
Dana Waters 802-291-3299

To send a donation please mail to:  
**Reading- West Windsor Food Shelf  
PO Box 384 Brownsville, VT 05037**

## Emergency Telephone Numbers

**Fire and Ambulance 911**

**State Police 911**

**Domestic/Sexual Violence Hotline  
866-348-WISE (9473)**

## Town Contact Information

### Town Clerk/Treasure Office

484-7250

Mon, Tues, Wed, 8 am—4 pm

Thursday 7:30 am—3:00 pm

First Saturday of the Month by appointment

Website: [www.readingvt.govoffice.com](http://www.readingvt.govoffice.com)

Email: [readingvermont@comcast.net](mailto:readingvermont@comcast.net)

### Fire Warden - Fire Burning Permits

Nathan Willard 484-0094

Greg Smith 802-384-2101

**Post Office Iiri Makkonen** 484-5994

### Retail Counter

Monday - Friday

9:30 am-12:30 pm, 1:30 pm—4:30 pm

Saturday Retail Counter

9:00 to 12:00

### Lobby

Monday - Friday

8 am to 5 pm

Saturday

8am to 12pm

### Library

484-5588

Tuesday 12:00 to 3:30, 4:00 to 7:00

Thursday 10:00 to 1:30, 2:00 to 5:00

Saturday 10:00 to 2:00

### Listers 484-7258

Office Hours: Monday & Tuesday 8 - 11AM

Email: [rtownhall\\_464@comcast.net](mailto:rtownhall_464@comcast.net)

### Reading Elementary School

484-7230

### Reading Planning Commission

[readingvt.plancomm@gmail.com](mailto:readingvt.plancomm@gmail.com)

**Contribute to The Reading Review** in *The Vermont Standard*. Author Stephen D'Agostino is always looking for newsy items, sweet Reading stories, or tidbits to share with our community.

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# March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 <i>RFDA 6:30 Fire Dept</i>	3 <i>Fire &amp; Rescue 7 pm VOTE TOWN HALL 7 AM—7PM</i>	4	5 <i>ECFiber Mtg. 6:30 Town Hall</i>	6	7
8	9 <i>6pm Select board Mtg. 7 PM Plan Comm. Mtg. Town Hall</i>	10	11 <i>Recreation Commission 6 pm Library</i>	12	13	14 <i>The Blue-Grasoles Concert Town Hall 6:30</i>
15	16	17	18	19 <i>Green Space 6 PM at Library</i>	20	21
22	23	24	25 <i>Cemetery Commission 6 pm Town Hall</i>	26	27	28
29	30	31 <i>Library Board Mtg. 6 pm</i>				