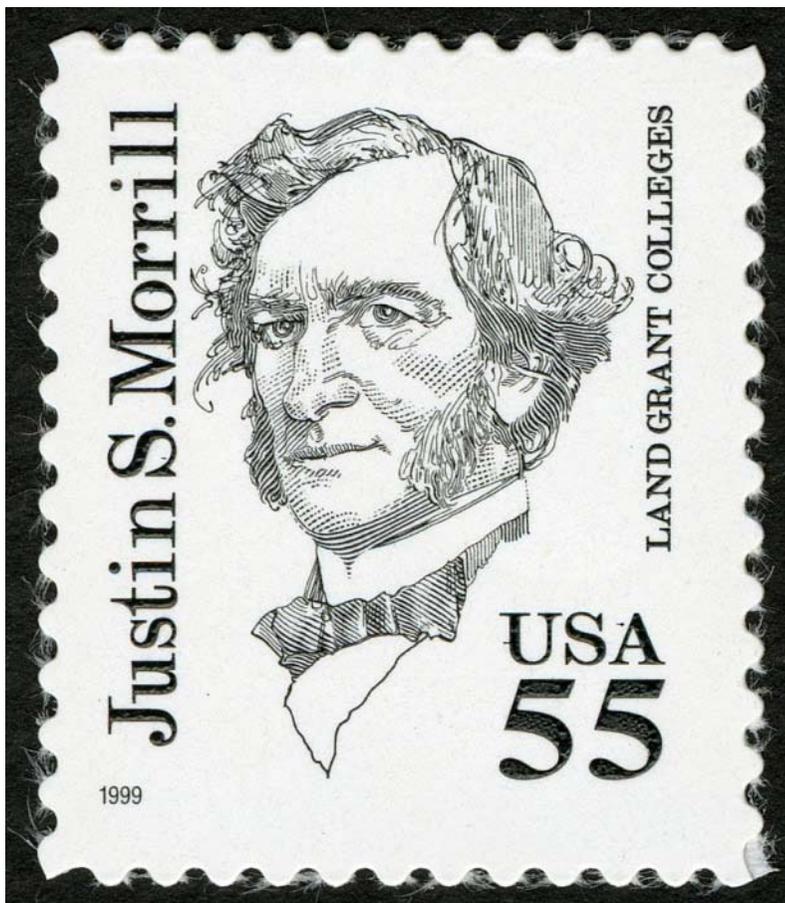


STRAFFORD, VERMONT
TOWN REPORTS



Year ending December 31, 2023

HISTORICAL NOTE

THE MORRILL OF THE STORY:

Why Justin Morrill Got His Stamp

2023 was the year Strafford native son and singer/songwriter Noah Kahan had outstanding success. He received a nomination for a Grammy, the music industry's highest award, and performed on *Saturday Night Live*, the nation's premier entertainment weekly. While achieving considerable fame and admiration worldwide, Kahan still has a way to go to have the impact of an earlier Strafford native son, Justin Morrill.

Morrill, who was born in 1810, the son of a Strafford blacksmith, retired from a career in store-keeping and investing and went on to be elected to Congress in 1852. He served there until his death in 1898. He was one of the most influential political leaders of our nation in the second half of the 19th century, helping to steer the financial course of our nation, shaping our nation's capitol building and grounds, and most of demonstrating his commitment to books and learning. Morrill authored the bill which built the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. and also designed, had built and gifted to our community Strafford's first library, which is now our Town Clerk's Office. His most celebrated accomplishment was the authoring and passing of the Land Grant College Acts, which open up higher education to working people and provided them with the skills needed to

make the most of themselves and our country. Campuses across the nation including the University of Vermont, the University of New Hampshire and Cornell in New York, have Morrill Halls in his honor.

On July 17, 1999 the United States Postal Service issued a Justin Morrill postage stamp.

Efforts, including those of the Strafford Historical Society, had been made since 1955 for a Morrill stamp. The first day issue was held appropriately enough in Morrill's hometown of Strafford with events and celebrations held in the Town House and the Morrill Homestead. Coordinating and helping to arrange the events in Strafford were Friends of the Morrill Homestead President Andersen Thorp and Strafford Historical Society President John Freitag.

The official unveiling of the Justin Morrill stamp took place at the Town House. More than 100 people attended the event at which the Constitutional Bass Quintet provided musical selections. Dignitaries included one current and one former United States Senators from Vermont, two university presidents and a host of state politicians. Andersen Thorp gave the welcome, dedication of the stamp was given by the District Manager of the Postal Service followed

Continued on inside back cover

Front cover: Justin Smith Morrill postage stamp issued in 1999.

Copyright United States Postal Service. All rights reserved.

*(Image from the Smithsonian National Postal Museum website:
postalmuseum.si.edu)*

Continued from inside front cover

by remarks from Senator Jeffords and University of Vermont President Judith Ramaley. A table sized blow-up of the stamp was unveiled which now hangs in the Strafford post office in the Brick Store that was once Morrill's main place of business.

Events in the afternoon moved to the Morrill Homestead. Dartmouth College President James Wright addressed the gathering and presented to the Homestead a plaque from the National Association of Land Grant Colleges along with a personal appreciation for the work of Justin Morrill. Wright's father was a miner in Galena Illinois. Wright himself tried working in the mine as a teenager and decided it was not for him and joined the Marines. After his service, he attended the University of Wisconsin, a Land-Grant institution, on the G.I. bill. He eventually became a professor of history there and then at Dartmouth, before being selected to lead this prestigious college. Wright in his remarks said that Justin Morrill "made it quite possible for millions of Americans—and I count myself in that group—to receive a higher education".

Seated on the veranda at the Homestead were two other United States Senators from Vermont: Robert Stafford and James Jeffords. Senator Stafford was the author of the Stafford loan program which over the years has helped

hundreds of thousands of Americans attend college. Senator Jeffords thumbprint was on landmark education laws including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the No Child Left Behind Act and the Higher Education Act. Both Stafford and Jeffords saw themselves as following in Morrill's footsteps in working to provide educational opportunities for all Americans.

A special touch to the program at the Homestead was the singing of the song "Justin" from the musical "The Morrill of the Story" written by Newton School teachers Joey Hawkins and Frances Wilson. This musical had been performed as part of the United Church of Strafford's Lord's Acre event the previous fall and members of the Strafford chorus gladly gave a reprise of this signature song from that performance. It was a fitting conclusion: while Justin Morrill's accomplishments were far-reaching, and recognition for them (like the United States postage stamp in his honor) still kept coming even 101 years after his passing, Morrill's roots and entire life were deeply centered in Strafford. Of his hometown Morrill said, "Here to me even the stars, the planets and the moon seem to shine more brightly then elsewhere and here to me has been my home." His sentiments are still felt by many in Strafford today.

John Freitag

DEDICATION

Dan Prescott

This town report is dedicated to Danny Prescott. On May 4, 1987, Danny was hired to work on the road crew. For the last 37 years Danny has served on the Town Road Crew which is the longest tenure of any person serving the Town in this capacity. Yet it is not only the length of his service but the qualities and steadfastness that he has brought to the job that make this dedication and thanks of the town so appropriate.



Danny was born in Strafford and his family has long been an important part of our town. He is at least the fourth generation Prescott to work for the highway department. At a very young age, Danny learned how to drive a tractor, helping his family hay. He grew up learning to use and repair all types of machinery. His father, Don Prescott, was a car mechanic and was Danny's first mechanics teacher. Danny began his experience working for the highway department in Burlington a few years before he was hired to work on the Strafford road crew. In those days it was a three-person crew run out of a dilapidated garage where our park and ride is in South Strafford. At that time, they did not have plumbing in the garage and the working conditions were not very pleasant. Work on trucks and equipment often needed to be done in puddles of ice cold water underneath a truck. While working conditions have improved over the years, especially with a new garage, the demands on the crew to get out earlier and more often has made the job in winter considerably more challenging.

Danny is for the most part a quiet man who lets his work speak for him. There is no piece of machinery, from grader to mower, that Danny cannot run and run well. Danny has always enjoyed attending the annual Vermont Municipal Highways Field Day, catching up with friends from other towns, and competing in the backhoe competition. In 2014 Dan placed first in the backhoe competition at the event, which required extreme precision in operating the backhoe. Dan knows every rock, culvert and stump along our 68 miles of roads and his skill at using all of the town equipment, including the mower is astounding given what he has to work around. The town, in recognition of his skills, has offered Dan continued part-time summer work, should he choose to do it.

It is a true pleasure to recognize and honor Danny Prescott by dedicating this year's town report to one of the town's outstanding employees.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOWN OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Town Officers.....	3
Elected State Officials.....	7
Permit Fees	7

TOWN BUSINESS

Warning for Town Meeting 2024	8
Informational Meeting.....	9
Official Proceedings for Town Meeting 2023	10
Australian Ballot Vote, November 16, 2023	13
Selectboard Report	14
Reports of Other Town Officers.....	17
Town Accountings	
Budget.....	36
Other Accounting Information.....	49
Tax Information	55
Delinquent Taxes	57
Animal Licensing	59
Vital Statistics.....	60
Funds and Scholarships	62
Morrill Memorial and Harris Library.....	70

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Strafford Fire and Rescue	72
Other Strafford Organizations	74
Health, Social and Planning Services.....	85
Recycling and Solid Waste	104

STRAFFORD SCHOOLS

Newton School Graduates	107
Warning for School Meeting 2024	108
Proceedings of School Meeting 2023	110
School Directors' Report	115
Superintendent's Report	120
Reports from High Schools	129
School Accountings	
Budget.....	134
Revenue	142
Other Accounting Information.....	144
State Mandated School Funding Report.....	145
White River Valley Supervisory Union Budget	148
Secondary School Enrollment and Tuition	158
Graduates.....	159
Newton School Enrollment.....	159

TOWN OFFICE HOURS AND SERVICE SCHEDULES..... 160

TOWN OFFICERS

Moderator (Town & School):

David Grant Term expires March 2024

Town Clerk and Treasurer:

Lisa Bragg Term expires March 2024

Selectboard:

David Paganelli Term expires March 2025

Jeff Solsaa Term expires March 2025

Brian Johnson Term expires March 2024

John Freitag Term expires March 2024

Hannah Levinger (*appointed*) Term expires March 2024

Listers:

Tim Denny Term expires March 2026

Ross Gortner Term expires March 2025

Tom Jacobs Term expires March 2024

Auditors:

Suzanna Liepmann Term expires March 2026

June Solsaa Term expires March 2025

Nellie Pennington Term expires March 2024

School Directors:

Dustin Ray Term expires March 2026

Eric Lopez Term expires March 2025

Maggie Hooker Term expires March 2025

Sarah Root Term expires March 2024

Jessica Tidman Term expires March 2024

Delinquent Tax Collector:

Jeanne Castro Term expires March 2024

Trustee of Public Funds:

Cindy Stableford Term expires March 2026

Sarah North Term expires March 2025

Therese Linehan Term expires March 2024

Agent to Deed Real Estate:

Lisa Bragg Term expires March 2024

Harris Library Trustees:

Kevin Lynch Term expires March 2025

Carol Wilson (*Selectboard Trustee*)..... Term expires March 2025

Miriam Newman Term expires March 2024

Cemetery Commissioners:

Lauri Berkenkamp Term expires March 2026

Kate Siepmann Term expires March 2026

Sherm Wilson Term expires March 2025

David Harris Term expires March 2024

Andrew Behrens Term expires March 2024

Justices of the Peace (Elected at General Elections)

R. Curtis Albee	Rosalind Finn	Andrew Lane
Sean Lewis	Sarah North	Vincent Robinson
	Shelby Coburn	

APPOINTIVE OFFICERS

Road Foreman and Supervisor of Public Works	Paul Hardy
Assistant Town Clerk & Treasurer	Regina J. Josler
Selectboard Assistant	<i>Vacant</i>
Town Constable	Edwin Eastman
Zoning Administrator	Brian Johnson
Zoning Administrator Alternate	Ed Eastman
Town House Overseer	Paul Kifner
Emergency Management Director	Jason Schumacher
Deputy Emergency Management Director	<i>Vacant</i>
Emergency 9-1-1 Contact	Lisa Bragg
Town Health Officer	Stephen Marx
Dog Officer and Pound Keeper	Courtney Hardy
Tree Warden	Bob Wilson
Town Service Officer	Susan Coburn
Recycling Coordinator	<i>Vacant</i>
Fire Chief, elected by Firemen's Association	Aaron Dotter
Fire Warden, appointed by the State	Calvin Benjamin
Fence Viewers	Greg Lewis, Gary Kendall
South Royalton Area Senior Center Representative	Susan Coburn
Deputy Registrar	Dennis Cilley

Development Review Board:

Bonnie Bergeron (<i>Secretary</i>)	Term expires March 2026
Terrence Garrison (<i>Chair</i>)	Term expires March 2025
Dan Ruml	Term expires March 2025
Martha Walke	Term expires March 2025
Sean Lewis	Term expires March 2024
Kip Lindsay (<i>Alternate</i>)	Term expires March 2024
<i>Vacant (Alternate)</i>	Term expires March 2024

Appointive Officers (continued)

Planning Commission:

Michael Scanlan (<i>Vice Chair</i>)	Term expires March 2026
Stuart Crocker	Term expires March 2026
Donald Graham (<i>Interim Chair</i>)	Term expires March 2025
Greg Colling	Term expires March 2025
Tom Scull	Term expires March 2025
Martha Walke (<i>Secretary</i>)	Term expires March 2024
Chrissy Jamieson	Term expires March 2024
<i>Vacant</i>	Term expires March 2024
<i>Vacant</i>	Term expires March 2024

Conservation Commission:

Steve Faccio	Term expires March 2027
James Erbaugh (<i>Chair</i>)	Term expires March 2027
Micki Colbeck (<i>Recording Secretary</i>)	Term expires March 2026
Courtney Labelle	Term expires March 2026
Erin Yunger	Term expires March 2026
Michael Hebb (<i>Trails Commissioner</i>)	Term expires March 2025
Kate Bass (<i>Vice Chair</i>)	Term expires March 2025
Kitty Mackie	Term expires March 2024
Anne Fayen	Term expires March 2024

Town House Advisory Group:

Rockwell Fuller	Term expires March 2026
Curt Albee	Term expires March 2024
Tim Bergeron	Term expires March 2024
Greg Colling	Term expires March 2024
Donna Hollinger	Term expires March 2024
Steve Handy	Term expires March 2024
Susan Lee	Term expires March 2024
Silas Treadway	Term expires March 2024
<i>Vacant</i>	Term expires March 2024

Recreation Board:

Hilary Linehan (<i>Co-chair</i>)	Term expires March 2026
Edmund Huang	Term expires March 2026
Leslie Berger	Term expires March 2025
Christa Wurm	Term expires March 2025
Jason Loomis (<i>Co-chair</i>)	Term expires March 2025

Historic Preservation Commission:

Ann Thorp (<i>Clerk</i>)	Term expires March 2024
Tim Utt	Term expires March 2024
Zach Mitchell	Term expires March 2024
Silas Treadway (<i>Vice Chair</i>)	Term expires March 2024
David Taplin	Term expires March 2023

Appointive Officers (continued)

Regional Planning Commission:

John Echeverria Term expires March 2024
Vacant (Alternate)..... Term expires March 2024

East Central Vermont Community Fiber Network

Governing Board Representative:

Steve Willbanks Term expires March 2024
 David Webb (*Alternate*)..... Term expires March 2024
 Andrew Behrens (*Alternate*)..... Term expires March 2024

Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator Steering Committee:

David Lutz Term expires March 2024

Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District Representative:

Stephen Willbanks Term expires March 2024
 Michael Scanlan (*Alternate*)..... Term expires March 2024

Upper Valley Ambulance Representative:

Elizabeth Preston Term expires March 2024

Robert Ordway Scholarship Fund Committee:

Danette Harris Term expires March 2026
 Diana Leddy Term expires March 2025
 Joanna Hawkins Term expires March 2024

Community-Building Award Committee:

Roz Finn Term expires March 2025
 Willis Phelps Term expires March 2025
 Brooke Wilkinson Term expires March 2025
 Rebecca Seibel Term expires March 2025
 Lori Mikusa Term expires March 2025

Ruth Wallace Memorial Scholarship Fund Committee:

Rockwell Fuller Term expires March 2024
 Joanna Hawkins..... Term expires March 2024
 Rod Maclay Term expires March 2024
 Maureen Wilson Term expires March 2024

Carrie Sanborn Trust Committee:

Barbara Murray Term expires March 2024
 Susan Coburn..... Term expires March 2024
 Rose Silloway Term expires March 2024

Town Office Committee:

	Curt Albee (Chair)	Shelby Coburn
Rockwell Fuller	David Paganelli	Anni Praetorius

Notaries Public

Lisa Bragg	Susan Coburn	Regina J. Josler
Victoria Lloyd	Roderick Maclay	Sarah North

ELECTED STATE OFFICIALS

Senator Bernard Sanders	800-339-9834
Senator Peter Welch	800-642-3193
Representative Becca Balint	202-225-4115
Governor Phil Scott	802-828-3333
Lt. Governor David Zuckerman	802-828-2226
State Senator Mark MacDonald	802-433-5867
Representative Rebecca Holcombe	802-828-2228
Representative James Masland	802-785-4146

While the Vermont Legislature is in session, you may call the Sergeant-at-Arms and leave a message at 1-800-322-5616.

Permit Fees

Zoning Application	\$100.00 + \$ 15.00 Recording Fee
Zoning Variance/Site Plan Appl.	\$150.00 + \$ 15.00 Recording Fee
Minor Subdivision Application	\$300.00 + \$ 15.00 Recording Fee
Major Subdivision Application	\$500.00 + \$100.00 per lot + \$ 15.00 Recording Fee
Highway Access Application	\$ 50.00 + \$ 15.00 Recording Fee

Regional Environmental Office

For information on Sewage Disposal, Water Supply, Act 250, Act 249, Electrical and Plumbing Inspection and Fire Safety, contact the Regional Environmental Office:

Act 250 Permits Springfield Office 100 Mineral St., Suite 305 Springfield, VT 05156 885-8855	Act 249 Permits Barre Office 5 Perry St., Suite 80 Barre, VT 05641 476-0190
--	---

WARNING FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MARCH 5, 2024

The legal voters of the Town of Strafford are hereby notified and warned to vote by Australian ballot either via mail as provided by the Town Clerk or at the Strafford Town House on March 5, 2024, between the hours of 7:00 o'clock AM (when the polls will open) and 7:00 o'clock PM (when the polls will close) and thereby act on the following questions:

- Article 1:** To elect a Moderator who shall immediately assume office.
- Article 2:** To elect a Town Clerk for a term of three years.
- Article 3:** Shall the town appropriate \$1,848,192 to defray 2024 budget expenses?
- Article 4:** Shall the town authorize the Selectboard to spend unanticipated funds from sources other than the property tax for Town purposes?
- Article 5:** Shall the town collect taxes in two installments, as follows: one half of the total tax bill is due at the Town Office by or before 4:30 PM on Wednesday, September 4, 2024; the balance of the tax bill is due at the Town Office by or before 4:30 PM on Wednesday, December 4, 2024? Mailed payments must bear an official US Postal Service postmark dated prior to the respective due dates. Postage machine dates are not acceptable. Late taxpayers are charged at a rate of 1% per month for the first 3 months, and at a rate of 1.5% per month for each month thereafter. After a 7-day grace period ending December 11, 2024, an additional 8% collection fee will be charged on delinquent taxes.
- Article 6:** To elect the following officers:
For a term of three years:
Selectboard member
Treasurer
Lister
Auditor
Cemetery Commissioner
Cemetery Commissioner
Trustee of Public Funds

For a term of two years to complete a three-year term:

Selectboard member

For a term of two years:

Selectboard member

For a term of one year:

Collector of Delinquent Taxes

Agent to Deed Real Estate

Dated this 31st day January, 2024

By the Selectboard members of the Town of Strafford:

John Freitag

Jeff Solsaa

Brian Johnson

David Paganelli

Hannah Levinger

TOWN OF STRAFFORD INFORMATIONAL MEETING

March 2, 2024

There will be an informational meeting on Saturday, March 2, 2024, at the Strafford Town House, time to be determined. There will be more information on the town website, www.straffordvt.org, and posted at the post offices and Town Office.



*Justin Morrill Stamp First Day Issue
commemorative issue*

Courtesy Strafford Historical Society/John Freitag

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
TOWN OF STRAFFORD
ANNUAL MEETING**

March 7, 2023

Town Moderator David Grant acknowledges the 101st birthday of Hazel Lewis attending the Town Meeting. All were asked to stand to say the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order at 1 PM.

Article 1: To Elect a Moderator who shall immediately assume office.

The first order of business is to elect a Moderator for a term of one year. David Grant is nominated and seconded. No other nominations, all in favor. David Grant was elected.

David asked if no objection to move Article 7 after Article 3 then 4 and Article 5 and then complete the remaining articles.

Article 2: To hear a report of the Auditors.

Article 2 was moved and seconded. Nellie Pennington reported a few corrections but overall, easy in terms of the balancing and Lisa and Regina have really maintained their processes in handling taxes and have done a good solid job. Nellie thanked John Freitag for writing the historical notes for this year's Town Report. Article 2 was moved and seconded to close discussion. Article 2 passes.

Article 3: Shall the town appropriate \$1,353,396.00 to defray 2023 budget expenses?

Article 3 was moved and seconded. Toni Pippy spoke on article 2 starting with 2022 year in review. Toni Pippy explained 2023 will expect an increase in taxes of .7330 or a \$40 increase of \$100,000 value. It was explained that the Clerk/Treasurer and Assistant Clerk/Treasurer amount of \$102,000 is combined into one line item. There is a new line item for a Grant Manager dedicated to writing grants and a budget of \$30,000. John Freitag would like to amend the budget to restore the line item with a 5% increase for the selectboard assistant/town clerk/treasurer. Discussion continued. Moderator David Grant asked to clarify the amendment. Toni Pippy said she doesn't support changing and would amend this adding another \$6,000 for Selectboard Assistant, this was seconded. A motion to move to vote on the second amendment to add \$6,000 to the Selectboard Assistant line item. The amendment did not pass so now it is back to the first amendment. Discussion continued. The question has been moved and to vote on the amendment. The amendment is to restore the line items as Selectboard Assistant, Town Clerk. The motion did not pass.

Tim Denny would like to make an amendment to rename the Grant Manager position to Selectboard Assistant and Grant Manager and seconded. The motion did not pass.

Motion was made to vote on Article 3, Article 3 passes.

Article 7: Shall the Town of Strafford vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$4,000 for the support of the Strafford Community Nurse?

Cindy Stableford spoke on Article 7. Motion to vote on Article 7 and seconded. Article 7 passes.

Article 4: Shall the town authorize the Selectboard to spend unanticipated funds from sources other than the property tax for Town purposes?

Article 4 was moved and seconded. No Discussion, Article 4 was voted on. Article 4 passes.

Article 5: Shall the town collect taxes in two installments, as follows: one half of the total tax bill is due at the Town Office by or before 4:30 PM on Wednesday, September 6, 2023; the balance of the tax bill is due at the Town Office by or before 4:30 PM on Wednesday, December 6, 2023? Mailed payments must bear an official US Postal Service postmark dated prior to the respective due dates. Postage machine dates are not acceptable. Late taxpayers are charged at a rate of 1% per month for the first 3 months, and at a rate of 1.5% per month for each month thereafter. After a 7-day grace period ending December 13, 2023, an additional 8% collection fee will be charged on delinquent taxes.

Article 5 was moved and seconded. No discussion, Article 5 was voted on. Article 5 passes.

Article 6: To elect the following officers:

Article 6 was moved and seconded.

For a term of three years:

Selectboard Member (paper ballot): No nominations.

Lister (paper ballot): Tim Denny is nominated. With no other nominations, Moderator Grant instructed the Town Clerk to cast one ballot in favor of Tim Denny. Tim Denny was elected.

Auditor (paper ballot): Suzanna Liepmann is nominated. With no other nominations, Moderator Grant instructed the Town Clerk to cast one ballot in favor of Suzanna. Suzanna Liepmann was elected.

Cemetery Commissioner: Lauri Berkenkemp is nominated. Lauri Berkenkemp was elected.

Cemetery Commissioner: Kate Siepmann is nominated. Kate Siepmann was elected.

Trustee of Public Funds: Cindy Stableford is nominated. Cindy Stableford was elected.

For a term of 2 years:

Selectboard Member (paper ballot): Jeff Solsaa is nominated. With no other nominations, Moderator Grant instructed the Town Clerk to cast one ballot in favor of Jeff Solsaa. Jeff Solsaa was elected.

Lister (to complete a three-year term) (paper ballot): Ross Gortner is nominated. With no other nominations, Moderator Grant instructed the Town Clerk to cast one ballot in favor of Ross Gortner. Ross Gortner was elected.

Harris Library Trustee: Kevin Lynch is nominated. Kevin Lynch was elected.

For a term of 1 year:

Selectboard Member (to complete three-year term) (paper ballot): John Freitag is nominated. With no other nominations, Moderator Grant instructed the Town Clerk to cast one ballot in favor of John Freitag. John Freitag was elected.

Collector of Delinquent Taxes: Jeanne Castro is nominated. Jeanne Castro was elected.

Agent to Deed Real Estate: Lisa Bragg has been nominated. Lisa Bragg was elected.

Article 8: Shall the Town of Strafford elect its town officers by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2680(b)?

Article 8 was moved and seconded. Discussion on Article 8 from many members at Town Meeting. At 3:33 a motion was made to move the question and seconded to call the question and proceed to voting on Article 8 and to end debate. Motion passed to end debate. A show of seven hands required Article 8 to be voted by paper ballot. Article 8 passes 95 yes, 73 no.

Article 9: Shall the Town of Strafford adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2680(c)?

Article 9 was moved and seconded. Article 9 is open for discussion. Motion to vote to proceed to voting on Article 9 passes. A show of seven hands required Article 9 to be voted for by paper ballot. Article 9 passes 82 yes, 52 no.

Article 10: Shall Town of Strafford vote on all public questions by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2680(d)?

Article 10 was moved and seconded. Article 10 is open for discussion. Motion to vote to proceed to voting on Article 10 passes. A show of seven hands required Article 10 to be voted by paper ballot. Article 10 passes 74 yes, 50 no.

Article 11: To transact any legal business to come before the meeting.

Lisa Bragg thanked Toni Pippy and Mary Linehan for their years of service on the Selectboard. Toni Pippy recognized Lisa Bragg and Regina Josler for all the work they do and the Road Crew for their work. Danny Prescott with special acknowledgement for 36 years of service to the town.

Motion to adjourn the Strafford Town Meeting at 4:43 PM passes.

**WARNING
TOWN OF STRAFFORD
AUSTRALIAN BALLOT VOTE**

November 16, 2023

The legal voters of the Town of Strafford are hereby warned and notified that an Australian ballot vote will be held in the Municipal Building (227 Justin Morrill Memorial Highway, Strafford, VT 05072) in the said Town on Thursday, November 16, 2023 from 10 AM to 7 PM to transact the following business by Australian ballot:

Article 1: Shall the town adopt the Strafford Unified Bylaw as approved by the Selectboard on September 19, 2023?

Article 2: Shall the town adopt the Town of Strafford Flood Hazard Zoning Ordinance as approved by the Selectboard on September 19, 2023?

Polls open November 16, 2023 from 10 AM to 7 PM.

Dated this 14th day of October, 2023

By the Selectboard members of the Town of Strafford

Jeff Solsaa

Hannah Levinger

John Freitag

**OFFICIAL RESULTS
TOWN OF STRAFFORD
AUSTRALIAN BALLOT VOTE**

November 16, 2023

Article 1: Shall the town adopt the Strafford Unified Bylaw as approved by the Selectboard on September 19, 2023?

Yes: 200, No: 36

Article 2: Shall the town adopt the Town of Strafford Flood Hazard Zoning Ordinance as approved by the Selectboard on September 19, 2023?

Yes: 214, No: 20, Blank: 2

SELECTBOARD REPORT

We are living in extraordinary times. In the last six months of 2023 we had two major flooding events and a two week mud season at the end of December. It is clear that the climate is changing and we will need to make adjustments. The Town has been able to recover from these weather events well due to the work of our road crew, town office staff, Selectboard liaison to the highway department, Strafford Emergency Services, our Emergency Management Director, Grant Manager, and many volunteers. We thank them all.

In response to these extraordinary times we are presenting a budget that covers the cost of our share of FEMA expenses and works to give our road crew and town office staff the compensation that they deserve. It also provides the funds needed for our town to function properly in this day and age. Due to an outside audit, the balance forward in the 2023 budget was corrected from \$61,448 to \$20,912. This left a revenue deficit of \$40,536. In this year's general fund budget there is no balance forward to be used as revenue. A \$51,000 transfer from the equipment reserve fund was used as revenue in the highway fund last year to lower the tax rate, but we do not intend to use the equipment fund reserve as revenue in the same manner this year. In addition, the State gave early payments to the towns of their share of gas tax revenue. This meant that we received more in 2023, but will have two fewer gas tax payments to be used as revenue in 2024. Adjusting for these revenue losses is one of the reasons why the budget is going up this year.

While this budget makes the monetary adjustments required to continue to maintain the current level of service, it does not address long term infrastructure needs for the Town. For example, there is no money in the paving budget this year and therefore no paving projects planned despite some pretty desperate need. This year the Town will be creating a 10-year capital budget; a Municipal Planning Grant awarded to Strafford will allow us the professional expertise and guidance needed to create this guiding document for major expenditures. Public participation and input will be key to making the capital budget successful. This process will start in March and we hope that you will get involved.

July Storm Event – Any thought of Hurricane Irene being a one-hundred-year storm event was wiped away along with many of our roads by the July Storm event. Fortunately, we had staff including Lisa Bragg, Town Road Foreman PD Hardy, and Town Crew member Dan Prescott who learned from Irene and things were organized quickly, damage documented, and repair work commenced. The need for a total rebuilding of parts of Route 132 led to a closure of this State highway for months. The work was completed and the road re-opened in September. Due to this being a State designated highway, the roughly one million dollar cost will be 100% funded. This compares to the other roughly \$300,000 worth of work to date covered by FEMA for

which there is a 12.5% local match which has been covered this year by work our road crew did on storm recovery. We will have to pay both the interest on the 1.3 million borrowed until reimbursement and for an audit required by FEMA; \$42,646 has been budgeted for this amount. Temporary culverts for the washed-out bridge on Freeman Road will need to be replaced with a permanent bridge this summer which will also be a FEMA project. We are expecting to use most of the \$200,000 we have budgeted for bridge work to cover the Town's share of FEMA expenses on this project. The Town would also like to thank Toni Pippy who was hired to help and Mary Linehan who volunteered her time and expertise with the process to help with the mountains of FEMA-required paperwork.

Town Road Crew – One of our first priorities this past year was to ensure that the Town retained the employees needed to take care of our roads and bridges and that they are appropriately compensated. After a year and a half of not having a full road crew, we were able to hire a skilled operator, Allen Wight, as the additional member needed for our four-person road crew. To get and keep the staff we have, we needed to adjust pay rates to reflect the very competitive market for road crew members. We were pleased that Dan Prescott agreed to stay on through the winter this year and is interested in working part-time in the summer months after his official retirement. Our dedicated Road Foreman, PD Hardy, has been exceptional in dealing with the flooding events, multiple mud seasons, and storms. We are grateful for his leadership and committed to giving him the tools and resources he needs to continue to do the job successfully. The Board appointed Ryan Kennedy as Assistant Road Foreman to give PD back-up and allow him to take needed time off.

Town Office Staff – 2023 also saw significant changes in our Town Office staff. At Town Meeting voters approved funds to hire a Grant Manager to help acquire and manage grants for the Town. Grant requirements and paperwork have become more complex over the years and grants are more needed than ever to help with the challenges we face. Rod Sloat led a search which ended in the hiring of Stephanie Slayton. She has done a tremendous job on not only getting and managing grants, but also helping our Town Clerk deal with the FEMA requirements after the July storm. At Town Meeting voters also approved the elimination of the Selectboard Assistant position and the combining of the office positions of Town Clerk/Town Treasurer and Assistant Town Clerk/Town Treasurer into one line item in the budget. The Town Clerk is a separate independent elected position that works with, but does not report to, the Selectboard. After Town Meeting, Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Lisa Bragg has continued most of the duties that she previously had as Selectboard Assistant. A Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Town Clerk's support of the Selectboard has since been written and agreed to clarify these duties. As with the road crew, adjustments in compensation for our town office staff have been made that align Strafford with other similar towns. The Town of Strafford does

not have a Town Manager as it has always been felt that it would be too great an expense. Instead the Selectboard, while picking up some of the duties of a Town Manager, relies mostly on the Town Office staff. Their dedication and attention to details is greatly appreciated.

Other Staff – Further strengthening of our town included giving our Constable, Ed Eastman, an expense budget in addition to his stipend, raising the stipend for the Selectboard and Auditors, and increasing the amount paid to the Zoning Officer and Development Review Board Clerk.

Town Office – One of the first orders of business after Town Meeting was dealing with safety concerns raised by the Fire Marshal about the Town Office by the March 23rd deadline for compliance. We were able to fix some of the violations and keep the downstairs open but needed to close off the upstairs. This meant the need to find new space for the Listers, which Lister Ross Gortner graciously offered in his South Strafford home. The Listers did quite a bit of work to make a quick transition. Another transition became necessary in December when and fortunately, the Strafford Firemen's Association offered space in their Upper Village station and a move to the Listers Office was completed there at the beginning of 2024. The Fire Marshall's approval of use for the Town Office is conditional on continued progress and further upgrades to the building. The Town Office Committee has been working on a comprehensive plan to upgrade and expand the Town Office since the Fall of 2022. This year \$79,170, the proceeds from the sale of town properties, were added to the Municipal Building Reserve Fund to help with repair costs.

Town Office Committee – A good deal of Selectboard time was spent working with the Town Office Committee who were appointed by the Selectboard in September of 2022. There was unanimous agreement at a well-attended public meeting that the existing Town Office location needed to be closely examined to see if it would be able to continue to meet our needs. Please see the Town Office Committee Report to get a complete update on this important project.

Unified Bylaw and Flood Hazard Zoning Ordinance – One major accomplishment this year was the revisions to our zoning ordinances that were passed by the voters of the town. This was an over decade-long effort led by the Planning Commission, which aligned our zoning ordinances with the currently approved Town Plan.

Selectboard Members – Rod Sloat was appointed to the Selectboard to fill the position left vacant at Town Meeting. He served for roughly three months until needing to resign to help deal with family. Rod made a major contribution in putting together and heading the search process for hiring a Grant Manager. Hannah Levinger was appointed to take the vacant seat after he resigned. She took over taking minutes and the perspective she has brought to the Board has been appreciated. Elected positions filled

by appointment only last until the next election, thus the three-year seat left unfilled at Town Meeting will be on the ballot this year as a two-year seat. Additionally, Selectboard member Brian Johnson is retiring from the Selectboard in March. Brian has served over three decades in various town positions including multiple terms on the Selectboard and we thank him for all he has done. This will be another two-year seat be up for election this year.

Volunteers – A Governance Committee set up in 2016 to study town government in Strafford found “volunteerism plays an oversized role”. Strafford is what it is because of the many volunteers. Now more than ever, it is important to consider how you might become more involved in our community or to paraphrase President Kennedy: “Ask not what your town can do for you, ask what you can do for your town”. We will be working this upcoming year at publicizing volunteer opportunities on town committees and boards. It is more essential than ever that we find ways to continue to make our town the place that we all care so much about.

We are living in extraordinary times, yet, there is no place other than Strafford that we would want to be, and no people than the community of Strafford we wish rather be with in facing the challenges of the future.

Respectfully submitted,

John Freitag
Hannah Levinger
Brian Johnson
David Paganelli
Jeff Solsaa

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND TREASURER

Each year when I think about writing my town report, I review what I wrote from the prior year. It was great to see that project goals were met. Regina was successful in applying for a VLCT equipment grant in the amount of \$2,500 to replace her old desk with a new Uplift desk that functions standing or sitting down. We upgraded our plat map file for surveys, taking out the small one and logging all the maps in the new file system. We also completed our project to digitize another 20 years of land records that will be available online in the very near future. During our installation of the plat map file we took the opportunity to further clean and organize the vault once again. There is still one more project to complete in arranging the vault I hope to get to this year. Our file cabinets that hold the parcel ID folders for each property in town are stuffed full. We acquired a free large filing cabinet to expand our space to hold the folders but that requires moving some stuff around to get it to fit.

The town office committee continued to meet to acquire the land and permit needed to expand and renovate the current town office. There has been recent conversation about building in the flood zone that still needs to be addressed and then a voter approval to start the project. If all the details are worked out, the project could begin this fall or next year in 2025.

This year in 2024, we will be busy with the Australian ballot voting on March 5th for town meeting and the school district meeting. Everyone will receive a ballot in the mail on or around February 14, for the Town and School District meeting. You can vote this ballot early by dropping it off at the Town Office, use our drop box outside, or by bringing it to the polls. The presidential primary will be held the same day and the polls will be open 7 AM to 7 PM at the town house. The primary election will be held on August 13th and the general election on November 5th at the Town House from 7 AM to 7 PM. The State of Vermont Secretary of State's office will be mailing the ballot to all registered voters for this November election.

There were 374 dogs registered in 2023 and there continue to be unregistered dogs in Strafford. The Animal Control Officer will be strictly enforcing fines and penalties to negligent owners in 2024. To avoid \$20 late fees per dog and fines, please license your dog(s) by March 31st. A vaccination clinic will be held on March 16, 2024 10 AM – noon at the lower fire station. If you need help in any way to meet the deadline, please contact the Animal Control Officer for assistance.

In 2024 we will be making a change in our IT services for the Town. There has been a long-time company that has provided services over the years, but those services received are reactive and we are not always able to get support when we need it most. The new IT company will handle everything our last one has but will be available daily for support services from 8 AM to 5 PM weekly. The services will be proactive, looking into the future needs of the Town and providing cybersecurity training for employees as well. Municipalities are not immune to threats, and I want to be sure we are doing everything we can to protect the town and still receiving the required services when a computer issues arises.

There are no further projects planned for us at the office, only expecting a busy year with voting.

I will be running for my 7th term as Town Clerk and Town Treasurer, completing 18 years working for the Town of Strafford. Does it come with challenges? It sure does, from the ever-changing Selectboards to the flood in July requiring yet another round of working with FEMA to cover the costs, and to the changes the State of Vermont sends down to us. Does it get boring? Not usually, and that's what keeps me going each year. It's also the residents of Strafford and being able to help each of you. It's working with the abundance of volunteers we have in town and the board and committees. I hope that the service and help I give are valuable and make your tasks a

little easier. I still have a lot to look forward to and wish to continue my work for you and the Town of Strafford.

At the end of my report each year, I must appreciate and acknowledge those that have supported my work and have done outstanding work as well. Regina Josler is a valuable team member now in her 18th year working as Assistant Town Clerk/Treasurer. She's probably someone that most often goes unrecognized, but has a very large role in our Town and the work she provides. I want to express my appreciation for all she has done throughout the year and over the last 18 years and on to our next three years together. To Paul, Danny, Ryan and Allan for the excellent highway work from plowing, mud season, grading, and just overall doing an excellent job taking care of our roads. It is impressive to have a great team in place. To all the other boards, committees, and the volunteers for all the unpaid hours of work you do, thank you. I see all the hard work each of you are doing and it's appreciated as well.

I'm here to help, so call, stop in or write and I'll do what I can for you.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Bragg

Town Clerk/Treasurer

LISTERS' REPORT

The Board of Listers maintains Strafford's Grand List, a database with descriptions of real property parcels and their assessed values, which are the basis used in determining the amount of owners' property taxes. Each year the Listers track changes in ownership and mailing addresses, property assessments and reassessments (primarily due to new construction), sales and transfers and Homestead Declaration status. We also assist the State's Division of Property Valuation and Review in annually updating and certifying the records for property enrolled in Vermont's Land Use program (aka Current Use). These responsibilities are performed by one contracted assessor working four hours one day a week and three elected Listers who devote about 500 hundred hours throughout the year. In March, 2023 Ross Gortner was elected to serve the remaining two years of the term that became open when Kerrie Bushway resigned from the board (although she continued as an independent contractor to maintain the official parcel map for the rest of 2023). Fortunately, Kerrie has 'passed the torch' to Ross Gortner, who will now maintain the parcel map in addition to being a Lister.

This year's Grand List had 676 taxable properties assessed for \$213 million (a notable \$4.6 million more than 2022). The town and three churches own 27 properties that are non-taxable by statute, and the properties owned by the Firemen's Association and Barrett Hall are tax-exempt by town vote. There were 166 properties (with 17,425 acres) enrolled Current Use. Despite the enrolled forests and fields accounting for about 61.5% of the total town

area, the property value exempted from taxation represents 8.2% of the total town assessment. Vermont towns receive an annual ‘hold harmless’ payment from the state that is intended to compensate them for the missing tax revenue.

Each year the Department of Taxes statistically examines the value of each property sold during the last three years relative to its assessed value and produces both the ‘Common Level of Appraisal’ (CLA) and ‘Coefficient of Dispersion’ (COD) values. Strafford’s CLA has decreased steadily since 2018, but in the last two years our CLA decreased an unprecedented 12% and reached a record low of 82.76% as of December, 2023. When the CLA is less than 100% it means that the average sale value was more than the average assessed value. The dramatic increase in sale values began in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but this trend as persisted and has maybe even accelerated. Act 68 ‘An Act Relating to Property Valuation and Reappraisals’ enacted in 2023 removed CLA as a trigger for mandatory town-wide reappraisal. But, because our COD increased to 21.4%, which exceeds the 20% trigger point, we assume that Strafford must begin the reappraisal process in 2024. Thus, we join the ranks of most Vermont towns that are currently mandated to reappraise. However, the high demand for reappraisal services means that the actual process of inspections, etc. likely will not begin for several years. The town has about \$71,000 provided by the state to pay for reappraisal, but we expect the final cost will be substantially greater than this, a burden the town must bear.

Property owners whose primary residence is in Strafford are reminded to file a Homestead Declaration (form HS-122) each year on or before the due date for State tax returns. Most residents will also want to file the accompanying Form HI-144 to qualify for a Property Tax Credit, which can substantially reduce the amount of tax owed. Timely submission of these forms avoids taxpayers having to pay a penalty and helps the Listers and Town Clerk reduce the time and expense of sending revised tax bills.

All property owners should remember to notify the Listers if their mailing address changes, because all official Lister correspondence and tax bills are delivered by the US Postal Service. For security reasons, we require a signed change of address form be submitted to the Town Clerk (a phone or email request is not sufficient). A change of address form is available at the Town Office or can be downloaded from the Listers’ webpage.

We encourage town residents who have questions about assessments or other property-related issues to contact the Listers. Check our website (<https://www.straffordvt.org/auditors--listers>) for office hours, when you can likely get immediate assistance. Outside of office hours, the best way to contact us is by email (Listers@straffordvt.org) or you can leave a message on the office phone (765-4360).

Tim Denny (Chair)

Ross Gortner

Tom Jacobs

REPORT OF THE AUDITORS

The auditors have examined the funds, accounts, and balance sheets of the Town of Strafford for 2023. Based upon our experience, and to the best of our knowledge, we feel that the financial statements and other related reports in this Town Report accurately present the financial status of the Town of Strafford. We have found audited accounts to be consistent and well-managed.

We would like to thank Lisa Bragg, Regina Josler, the Selectboard, and other town and school officials for their continued cooperation in the auditing process and in the preparation of the Town Report.

Nellie Pennington
June Solsaa
Suzanna Liepmann

REPORT OF THE FIRE WARDEN

I would like to thank all of you that obtained burn permits over the past year. Although most of the summer, fire danger was very low with all the rain we had this past year, we did have 63 days with fire danger, moderate or greater, including 30 at HIGH and 13 at VERY HIGH, for at least some portion of Vermont.

The number of fires and acreage burned was well below average. In 2023 there were 63 fires reported in 34 towns that burned 58.66 acres.

Fires reported by Fire Wardens: campfire-4 campfires, burned 9.83 acres; debris burning-41 fires burned 27.94 acres; equipment use-1 fire burned 0.5 acre; power lines-7 fires burned 13.95 acres; and 10 undetermined fires, 6.44 acres.

State law requires a permit for open burning within 200 feet of grass, woodlands or buildings, or if there is less than 1 inch of snow on the ground.

Although, there is no permit required with snow cover, it is always a good idea to call the Fire Warden if you are going to have a large fire. If someone happen to see it and reports it, the fire department will not be dispatch unnecessarily.

Burn permits are free of charge. To acquire one or get more information, call your local Fire Warden at 802-765-9920. Please remember you cannot obtain a permit by leaving a message; you need to speak with the Fire Warden, because only the Fire Warden can issue a permit.

Thank you for helping to prevent forest fire.

Calvin Benjamin
Forest Fire Warden
802-765-9920

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

There were only seventeen permit applications in 2023, consisting of six houses, six garages, and a cabin; the rest were porches, decks, additions, etcetera. One accessory dwelling was declined for questions about septic accessibility. The rest were approved. I most likely will not serve as zoning administrator after March of 2024. I have thirty-five consecutive years on one board or another, and it is someone else's turn. As always, feel free to call 765-4514 at considerate hours please. The zoning bylaws and ordinances are available on the town website.

Brian Johnson, Zoning Administrator

REPORT OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSION

This year James Mannix again had the contract to mow and clean up the Evergreen Cemetery. Once again he and his crew did an excellent job.

Gary Kendall had the contract to mow the other cemeteries and they were looking good this fall.

This year, Old City Tree Service removed several trees including a large maple that was falling apart.

We are hoping to finally get to repair the stones in the Robinson cemetery this year.

Please remember to remove all plastic flowers, planters and any other decorations by the 1st of October.

Strafford Cemetery Commissioners

Andy Behrens

Kate Siepmann

David Harris

Laurie Berkenkamp

Sherm Wilson

TOWN OFFICE COMMITTEE

A committee was formed in September 2022 and headed by Curt Albee, to investigate the feasibility of renovating/modernizing the existing town office building. Architect Tom Bachman of the firm gBA in Montpelier was asked to draft an initial design that would meet the basic town office space requirements as determined by a previous committee. That design is simple, provides minimum space requirements and fits the historical character of the existing building.

Since the footprint of the building was expanded in the new design, a question was raised about the location of the boundaries of the existing town office lot. The existing lot is described as 0.5 acres, but it was unclear exactly where the boundaries are. A survey was conducted and determined that the existing lot was actually only 0.04 acres. It was also determined that an additional .05 acres would be needed for the proposed addition, including setbacks from neighboring property lines. At that point, the town approached the neighboring landowner, Morgan Smith, to ask if he would be willing to sell the town a small amount of his lot to facilitate the town office project. He was agreeable to helping with the project, but when the town office committee approached the DRB for permission to adjust the lot lines the DRB explained that this would not work because transfer of a small acreage by Morgan Smith to the town would reduce his lot below the minimum allowable acreage. The DRB suggested the possibility of an easement arrangement and a complicated 3-way land swap with another neighbor. Both of these options were investigated, but did not come to fruition.

Then, the chair of the Planning Commission suggested that Morgan Smith file a subdivision application for his 1 acre lot, requesting an exemption to create a non-conforming lot of .95 acres. This is allowed under the Zoning Ordinance and was approved by the DRB. Morgan Smith donated 0.05 acres of his land to the town and this transaction was finalized in January 2024.

The next question raised was whether the proposed addition would be in the flood plain. Building in a flood plain is possible, but requires expensive mitigation and may not be eligible for federal grant funding. Surveyor, Tom Otterman was asked to add the base flood layer to the survey of the town lot. When he did this, it became apparent that the initial design to expand the town office extended slightly into the flood plain. Discussions are currently underway to determine whether changes can be made to the initial design to keep it just above the flood plain and thus avoid mitigation issues and maintain eligibility for federal grant funding. If a satisfactory design can be finalized, and the town office committee believes the project is feasible, a town vote on the project will be scheduled.

STRAFFORD DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

The Strafford Development Review Board (DRB) is the quasi-judicial body in town that holds hearings for potential approval of land use applications including subdivisions, conditional use permits, variances from zoning ordinances and lot line adjustments. The DRB works with the Zoning Administrator (ZA) when building permits and other administrative decisions are not clear-cut to help clarify issues so that the proposed action supports the interests of the property owner and the Town of Strafford. The DRB also acts as a forum for the appeal of decisions of the ZA. The DRB interprets the Town Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances but does not write the ordinances. That is done by the Town Planning Commission with the Selectboard. In cases where the interpretation or intent is ambiguous, the Selectboard may seek legal counsel.

The volunteer members of the DRB are appointed by the Selectboard, as is the Zoning Administrator. Presently the DRB members are Terry Garrison, Chair, Bonnie Bergeron, Secretary & Clerk, Dan Ruml, Martha Walke and Sean Lewis. The DRB currently does not have any alternate members that could sit in on a board meeting when needed. If there is interest in learning the process and you would like to volunteer to be an alternate please contact Lisa Bragg the Town Clerk at 802-765-4411.

The DRB meets on the third Wednesday of each month, usually at the Town Office Building in Strafford when there is business before the Board. All meetings are open to the public, and the minutes are available to the public in the Town Records.

In 2023, the DRB met nine times and held hearings for (4) subdivision applications, two (2) variance applications, (5) Conditional Use applications and (2) two lot line adjustment applications that are not required to be a warned hearing. With the new Unified Strafford Bylaw approved in November, the DRB's role has some changes in their duties so I would encourage everyone to read the new Bylaw dated November 16, 2023 if you haven't already done so. They are available to review on the town website or at the Town Clerk's office. I have also created new application forms that are also available online.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Bergeron
Clerk of the Strafford Development Review Board

REPORT OF THE STRAFFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

In 2023 the Planning Commission completed its work on the Strafford Unified Bylaw which updates and combines the previous Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The Commission also completed work on the Flood Hazard Area Zoning Ordinance. The Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission (TRORC) provided assistance in preparation of both of these bylaws.

A public hearing was held on January 19, 2023 to receive public comment on the draft Unified Bylaw. Based on comments at the hearing, and at subsequent Planning Commission meetings, numerous amendments were made. The Planning Commission unanimously approved the draft Unified Bylaw on July 17, 2023 and forwarded it to the Selectboard for its review.

A Public Hearing was held on July 18, 2023 to receive comment on the draft Flood Hazard Area Zoning Ordinance. There was no public comment. The Planning Commission unanimously approved the draft Flood Hazard Area Zoning Ordinance on July 18, 2023 and forwarded it to the Selectboard for its review.

The Strafford Unified Bylaw and the Flood Hazard Area Zoning Ordinance were both approved by Town vote on November 12, 2023.

The current members of the Strafford Planning Commission are Donald Graham, Chair; Stuart Crocker, Vice Chair; Martha Walke, Secretary; Greg Colling; Chrissy Jamieson; Michael Scanlan; and Tom Scull. There are two seats available.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Graham, Chair
Martha Walke, Secretary

STRAFFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETINGS: We meet on fourth Tuesdays of the month, 7 PM, at 201 Justin Morrill Memorial Highway, Colbeck house, until the Education Center becomes available again. We can be reached through email: conservation@straffordvt.org. We are also found on the Town's website under Boards and Committees and under Natural Resources. We also maintain a Facebook site where we post upcoming events: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=strafford%20conservation%20commission>.

MEMBERS: Micki Colbeck—Chair; Kate Bass—Vice Chair; Courtney Potter—Recording Secretary; J.T. Erbaugh—Cobb Town Forest manager; Anne Fayen—Pocket Park manager; Steve Faccio—Whitcomb Hill manager; Mike Hebb—Trails Manager; Kitty Mackie; Erin Yunger.

This year we said thank you to Chuck Sherman who had been on the SCC for many years and to Greg McHugo, and we welcomed Erin Yunger and Kitty Mackie to the board.

J.T. Erbaugh stepped down as Chair and Micki Colbeck was elected. Courtney Potter became the Recording Secretary.

HIKES AND EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS:

- To help familiarize the town with our new Town Forest, Dee Gish and Micki Colbeck led a series of “Second Sunday Hikes” at the Ashley Community Forest. Some of our members regularly helped at the monthly barberry pulling at Ashley.
- Steve Faccio led several vernal pool walks around the Upper Valley to help people understand and appreciate those seasonal ponds.
- Chuck Sherman organized a Trail Finder tutorial by Rush Herschler from the Upper Valley Trails Alliance. We then joined the UVTA, and now have access to borrow their tools for trail maintenance and weed pulling.
- Kate Bass and Beth Sekinger led a spring ephemeral hike up the Taylor Valley trail.
- Mike Hebb and Micki Colbeck led two orchid walks, an early one for the yellow lady's slippers, and a later one for the showy lady's slippers.
- Mike Hebb and J.T. Erbaugh led several hikes on our town trails, one that travelled the entire length.
- Anne Fayen hosted an educational celebration at the Pocket Park. A plaque honoring Barb and Wally Smith was created. The SCC covered the cost.
- Along with Gus Speth, and film maker John de Graaf, we organized a showing of a new documentary film about Stu Udall, *The Politics of Beauty*, at Barrett Hall. The hall was packed. Paul Kifner handled the AV.

- Courtney Potter, Anne Fayen, and Kate Bass organized several community invasive species pullings. Kate printed and distributed educational flyers.
- Mike led two apple pruning workshops at the Morrill Homestead.

We had planned on having a fall celebration for all the landowners and trail managers for our trail system, but July's flood closed the Homestead, so we will hopefully do that next year. Chuck and Micki had updated the Parcel Maps to better keep track of our trails and whose land they traverse.

Frequent flooding along our river has reminded us that we need to be thoughtful about our riparian areas. Those meanders through floodplain forests, fields, and wetlands are what slow the river down, keeping us safe. Kate and Anne are organizing a "Healthy Rivers" educational workshop with Rudi Rudell and Eric Donaldson.

We worked out a compromise with the Drift Skippers, our local snowmobile club, over a new connector route to replace a traditional route that had been cut off. The new route that skirts Whitcomb Hill was not exactly what they nor we wanted, but we all decided that we should work together to find a compromise.

We agreed to help support a new trail that will be opening soon, the Manning Farm Trail. It is not in our town trail system currently. A couple of neighbors have agreed to be trail managers and we have agreed to volunteer to help with trail work.

TRAILS REPORT by Mike Hebb: Our 30-mile trail system is well-used. It is only possible because of the forty landowners who allow public access across their property, and our ten-person volunteer team who maintains the trails. We put in no new trails this year but have seen greater use of some of the side-trails. A key intersection could have been lost but for the new property owners who were supportive of the system.

The trails are in excellent condition thanks to the volunteers who clear fallen branches and intruding growth and keep them well-marked. We repainted the trail blazes last summer. No damage from horses, wheeled vehicles, or erosion has been found.

Our trails are appreciated by many outside our borders, such as the Green Mountain Club who schedule group hikes here. Winter use is less, but just as beautiful for those on snowshoes and skis who get to see tracks through the white woods.

The most visited attraction is still the top of Whitcomb Hill. Thanks to Mary Louise Pierson and Shawn Ward for the annual mowing. It is the most visited part of the trail and only a short 1.3 miles to the top from Alger Brook Road to its exceptional views.

Free maps of all 26 miles of trail are now available at Coburn's Store and the Town Office. Special georeferenced PDF map files are available on the website. Using these maps with a cell phone app called Avenza, a hiker can tell where he is while hiking the trail. More details and maps can be found at straffordtrails.yolasite.com.

I want to pass on the appreciation and thanks I hear, to the landowners, without whom there would be no trail system.

Respectfully submitted,
Micki Colbeck

ASHLEY COMMUNITY FOREST

In January 2022, the towns of Strafford and Sharon were given the 256.4-acre Ashley Community Forest by the local non-profit Alliance for Vermont Communities (AVC). In addition, AVC provided \$37,169 to seed a long-term management fund for the forest. The ACF Board consists of two residents from each town who were appointed by each town Selectboard: Rob Stainton and Erik Skarsten from Sharon and Annie Penfield and David Paganelli from Strafford. The fifth member of the Board, Michael Sacca of Tunbridge, was chosen by the appointed members. At inception, the Board focused on development of a comprehensive, 10-year Stewardship Plan for the forest. Once drafted, public input was sought and incorporated. The plan is now under review by the Vermont Land Trust and Vermont Housing Conservation Board. Once approved, we will provide copies to both towns and post it on both town websites.

In 2023, we sponsored several events at the Forest. The weather didn't always cooperate, but the walks were well-attended and uniformly well-received. Events included: five monthly walks with Dee Gish and Micki Colbeck, two full moon walks guided by Michael Sacca, a Solstice Sing hosted by Becky Bailey, Fern and Plant ID with Tii McLane, a fascinating tour through the forest with Emily Boles and Rudi Ruddell who shared thoughts of the forest from an Abenaki perspective, and the ever-popular Paul Kristensen's walk "Stone Walls and the Built Landscape."

We held five invasive plant work days, each consisting of a five-hour Saturday session to pull or dig invasive plants. Most of this work was in the Sharon portion of the forest and attendance varied from 8-15 hearty souls. These work days were strenuous and muddy, but fun and very productive. Strafford and Sharon are wonderful communities, and it was a great social experience to be together working for the good of our forest. As a result, we were able to treat about half of the invasive plants in the forest. Lots of muscle and determination and not a drop of herbicide. Thank you: Chris Behr, Hannah Weisgerber, Donna Isaacs, Michael Sacca, Anne Fayen, Nancy Grant, Dorian Yates, Emma Marks, Jim Schley, Gayle Giovanna, Jill Wilcox, Micki Colbeck, Suzanna Liepmann, Kitty Mackey, JT Horn, Kent

Penfield, Annie Penfield, Erik Skarsten, Rob Stainton, David Paganelli, Dick Ruben, Dan Deneen, Kevin Gish, and the remarkable Susan Hodges. (We are so sorry if we missed your name.)

During August, we mowed the entire Sharon meadow and a trail through the Strafford meadow. All else was left unmowed to benefit pollinators. In 2024, we will reverse the pattern.

Michael Sacca arranged for a grant from the Davis Conservation Foundation to construct a kiosk. The kiosk posts are 10x10 black locust posts cut from the forest by volunteers. The kiosk will be installed in Spring 2024 near the parking area at the end of Nutting Road. This will provide a space for maps, photos, event schedules and other information. Thank you, Michael.

Thank you to the Friends of the Ashley Community Forest, and all the citizens of Strafford and Sharon, for your ongoing support of this wonderful community resource. We can be contacted at:

ashleycommunityforest@gmail.com

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT

In 2023, Strafford experienced substantial flooding, along with much of the state, during the July 9-10 storm event. Although impacts were greater elsewhere, Strafford still experienced significant road and bridge damage as well as damage to residences. Town employees, officers, and volunteers responded quickly, opening up roads as quickly and safely as possible and checking in on vulnerable residents. Much effort was also made assessing and documenting the damage in order to facilitate FEMA claims. This effort was informed by the collective experience gained from Hurricane Irene. The Strafford emergency management director (EMD) coordinated with the state emergency management center during the town's response to these floods.

It is reasonable to expect that flooding will continue to be a challenging aspect of emergency management in our area. Town employees and officers will use the experience gained from this summer's storm event to inform future responses to flooding.

An inventory of town emergency resources began in 2021 and was completed in 2022. Based on this inventory and an assessment of the town's emergency management needs, the EMD requested funds from the selectboard to purchase emergency supplies and equipment. These funds were added to the 2023 town budget by the selectboard and approved by the town. They will be used to purchase emergency shelter supplies.

A scheduled and statutory review of the town Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was completed in 2022 by a committee of town residents with the help of Kyle Katz from the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional

Commission. This plan was adopted by the town and approved by FEMA in February of 2023.

It's important to acknowledge the efforts of Strafford Fire and Rescue, our town clerk's office, our selectboard, our constable, our road crew, and each other in keeping the town of Strafford as safe as possible. Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and care.

Strafford Emergency Management Director
Jason Schumacher



A Strafford chorus sings the song "Justin" from the Joey Hawkins and Frances Wilson musical "The Morrill of the Story." On the veranda are former U.S. Senator from Vermont Robert Stafford (behind the post); James Wright, President of Dartmouth College; Emily Wadhams, Vermont Historic Preservation Officer; and John Freitag, President of the Strafford Historical Society. Singing with the chorus, next to Ned Coffin at left in dark glasses, is United States Senator James Jeffords.

Photo courtesy Strafford Historical Society

STRAFFORD RECREATION BOARD

The Strafford Recreation Board continues to use our mission to guide us in our work: The Strafford Recreation Board believes that recreation is critical to a healthy mind and body and that recreation enriches our community and our connection to one another.

With that in mind, the goal of the Strafford Recreation Board is to ensure we have well-maintained town recreation facilities and encourage outdoor recreation for all ages. The Rec Board itself is made up of volunteers who often don't have the expertise or time to run programs, however we encourage others to make things happen!

The Rec Board sponsored two summer camp programs for youth in 2023. Soccer Camp, highly anticipated and beloved, was held again on Murray Field in June. Children of varying ability levels learned fundamentals in a fun and supportive environment. The program is run by Joshua "JT" Taylor (currently the Head Men's Soccer Coach at South New Hampshire University), along with Erin (Clark) Taylor (currently a coach at Windham High School in NH). Erin grew up playing on Murray Field. We are lucky to host this duo! Soccer Camp was attended by 30 kids from the Strafford area and beyond.

Art Camp was again held at the Rosa B. Tyson Gym in August for its 12th year. Leslie Berger began running this camp for the Newton PTA in 2011 along with art teacher extraordinaire Aurora Berger (then a 16-year-old). In 2023 they were joined by counselors Julia Martin, Casey Yunger, and Ada Breese. The program supports children ages 5-14 of every art ability, offering structured projects along with open studio opportunities. Most of the 34 participants were Strafford residents, but the camp was also attended by children from neighboring communities, and even one from overseas!

The tennis courts continued to see very heavy use this summer for many uses outside of tennis. In September, the tennis courts were repaired and resurfaced, pickleball lines were added to the roadside court, and rolling pickleball nets were added for ease of switching between tennis and pickleball usage. The Rec Board has posted permanent signs at both of the court entrances prohibiting bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and rollerblades, because we believe that some of the damage to the courts was likely caused by some types of wheeled equipment. Pickleball continued to grow in popularity, with organized pickleball lessons during the summer, and frequent play seen at the tennis courts well into November! The skating rink is going again this year at Varney field, managed by a group of parents. The Rec Board provided a new plastic liner for the current season.

The Rec Board manages the Red Barn, the large barn in the lower village used to house donated sporting equipment, medical equipment, and miscellaneous items of town organizations. In 2023 the Rec Board held several "open Red Barn dates" over the course of this year. These dates

gave Strafford residents a chance to look for sporting equipment needed for the current sports season. People also drop off donated equipment that they've outgrown or no longer need. While the Rec Board can't guarantee the accommodation of every need, the Red Barn has a wide selection of cross-country & downhill skis, ski boots, poles, skates, etc. We ask that donations be in usable and functional condition, and that people don't use the drop-off opportunity to dump broken equipment that they'd otherwise have to pay for.

The Rec Board is also the contact point for people needing medical equipment. In the Red Barn there is a small collection of assistive medical devices (wheelchairs, crutches, knee scooters, commodes, etc.) These can be borrowed by community members when the need arises. Once again, there are no guarantees that the equipment sought will exist at the Red Barn, but please contact a board member if you suddenly need to borrow something! The Strafford Community Nurse also has access to the Red Barn and can assist as well.

The Red Barn received much needed repairs this summer. The rotten back window jams were replaced and the siding around them was also replaced. The front sliding door was repaired such that both sides slide and the building can be secured. Many thanks to Jeremy Kendall and crew who did an excellent job.

Visitors to the Pocket Park enjoyed bountiful fruits such as blueberries, gooseberries and raspberries, despite a late hard frost in May, and inundating floodwaters in July. A wooden pergola was constructed in the fall, giving space for fruit-bearing vines and shaded seating. This garden feature was made possible by the Newton Fund. Anne Fayen continued in the role of Lead Gardener.

Respectfully submitted,
Hilary Linehan, Co-Chair
Jason Loomis, Co-Chair
Christa Wurm, member
Leslie Berger, member
Ed Huang, member

THE TOWN HOUSE ADVISORY GROUP

The mission of the Town House Advisory Group is to advise the Selectboard on policies and means of raising revenue for the purpose of using, maintaining, and preserving the historic Strafford Meeting House, and to implement such related procedures as approved by the Selectboard.

The Town House is used for a variety of events including Town Meeting, voting, musical concerts, seminars, weddings, Newton School graduation, memorial services and promotional events for the building itself.

This was the thirteenth year of pursuing our mission as the Town House Advisory Group. We currently have a core group of 7 official members, plus the Overseer Paul Kifner. If you would like to be on our email list to follow our activity, please send me your address to rockwellfuller@gmail.com. Our activities are also posted on the Strafford website: www.straffordvt.org/townhouse. Anyone interested in participating is welcome.

This past year we saw more activity with events but less for scheduled maintenance because contractors were overbooked and unavailable. This was due to the extreme weather, primarily rain and the resulting flooding that caused delays in anticipated schedules.

This coming season we expect to have a fresh coat of paint on the front of the building including the bell tower all the way to the top of the spire. This activity will be interesting to watch because the crew, Robert Morgan Steeplejacks, will be accessing all the high elevation surfaces with traditional rigging (ropes and harnesses). This method will enable the crew to carefully prepare and paint all the surfaces more thoroughly than reaching out of a basket on the end of a boom.

Another project will be the overdue replacement of the bell carriage. This project will use black locust harvested from the Ashley Community Forest. Some of the initial sawing was performed in the Ashley Community Forest and the balance was sawn by Paul Kristensen. Both donated to this task. Over the next season we will be replacing the door sills on three door openings as well as selected deteriorated trim on the front of the building.

We are looking forward to an eventful year of activity starting with Town Meeting.

I would like to thank our town Selectboard and all the people in our community for the support they have provided for us to do our job.

If you have questions about planned maintenance of the Town House or if you would like to help support our efforts with a contribution, please contact Rocky Fuller at rockwellfuller@gmail.com or call the Town Clerk's office at 802-765-4411.

Respectfully submitted,
Rocky Fuller
Town House Advisory Group Chair

STRAFFORD ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE

In March 2020 at Town Meeting, the voters of Strafford resolved to work together to reach net-zero in greenhouse-gas emissions for the whole town by 2030. To meet this commitment, the Strafford Energy and Climate Committee (SECC) serves as an advisor for the citizens and the municipality of Strafford, and we provide ongoing assessment of Strafford's progress in adoption of restorative and renewable policies and practices. As a committee and a town, we must constantly ask: Are we doing what we need to do to reach that goal of net-zero energy use by 2030 or not, and if not, why not?

In keeping with our Town Meeting resolution and Vermont's statewide goal of 90% renewable energy by 2050, the SECC's activities for this past year have included the following activities and actions:

We worked closely with the Strafford Selectboard and the Intramunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator (IREC) at the Two-Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission. See www.trorc.org/programs/energy/; our new Intramunicipal Energy Coordinator is Harry Falconer. David Lutz is our committee's representative on the IREC steering committee.

We coordinated the new 150kW Community Solar Electric project on Alger Brook Road, which went on line in the fall. Dedicated to long-time Strafford resident and renewables advocate and former committee chair Kevin Grady, this array provides renewable solar energy to twenty-one households, twelve of which are in Strafford or South Strafford.

At each of our monthly meetings, we have a legislative and state-government update prepared by committee member Susan Hodges.

We host information tables and demonstrations of non-plastic options for consumer goods and non-polluting yard and garden tools at the Independence Day festivities, the Recycling center, and at Coburn's Store, as well as providing energy and climate education and recommendations to the town and residents via webinars, listserv postings, and consultations.

The Energy and Climate Committee page on the Strafford town website offers helpful information and links to organizations that can provide services and financial assistance for your energy-saving and cash-saving projects. Past webinars on topics including heat pumps, plastic alternatives, electric vehicles, and forest carbon can be viewed via links on our committee's web page: www.straffordvt.org/energy-commission/.

We have undertaken an ongoing assessment of energy and transit use in our town, including electric vehicle (EV) use in Strafford, which has increased from twelve EVs in 2018 to forty-nine in 2023.

We continue to work with the Intramunicipal Energy Coordinator (IREC) to explore potential energy savings for the town garage, identified through

analysis to be the highest priority for among our town buildings for energy-efficiency improvements.

We will continue to review and update the town's Enhanced Energy Plan, as part of the overall Town Plan, to gauge our progress toward our town's goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

We meet (currently remotely by web-video) on the second Tuesday of each month, and we welcome your questions, ideas, and eagerness to volunteer. You can reach us at energy@straffordvt.org

Respectfully submitted,
Dorian Yates, Chair
Jim Schley, Secretary
Doc Bagley
Matt Christie
Susan Hodges
David Lutz
Susan Tiholiz
Jenevra Wetmore



The Constitution Brass Quintet performs during the dedication ceremony on a very hot day in Strafford. U.S. Senator James Jeffords is at right.

Valley News - Jennifer Hauck

TOWN OF STRAFFORD, VERMONT
BUDGET ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
Fiscal Years Ending December 31, 2022, 2023, and Proposed 2024

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
GENERAL FUND Revenue					
Taxes/Fund Balance					
Balances Forward	\$ 70,336	\$ 61,448	\$ 20,912	\$ (40,536)	\$ - ^a
Current Taxes	374,734 *	406,822 ^a	378,712	(28,110)	575,957
Taxes/Fund Balance Total	\$ 445,070	\$ 468,270	\$ 399,624	\$ (68,646)	\$ 575,957
Governmental					
ARPA Revenue	\$ -	\$ 28,250	\$ 28,250	\$ -	\$ -
PILOT/Fish and Game Tax	22,074	22,074	22,868	794	23,000
State of Vermont Hold Harmless	129,235	129,047	122,816	(6,231)	125,000
Governmental Total	\$ 151,309	\$ 179,371	\$ 173,934	\$ (5,437)	\$ 148,000
Interest					
1% Interest on First Payment	\$ 1,888	\$ 1,400	\$ 2,494	\$ 1,094	\$ 2,000
Delinquent Tax Interest	5,925	10,000	2,535	(7,465)	6,000
Interest	374	400	391	(9)	400
Interest Total	\$ 8,187	\$ 11,800	\$ 5,420	\$ (6,380)	\$ 8,400
Penalty					
Delinquent Tax Penalty	\$ 9,051	\$ 9,000	\$ 5,271	\$ (3,729)	\$ 9,000 ^b
Penalty Total	\$ 9,051	\$ 9,000	\$ 5,271	\$ (3,729)	\$ 9,000

* - Figure adjusted per outside auditor

^a - Balance Forward uses a surplus from a prior year to offset taxes and/or represents spending from reserves

^b - Delinquent Tax Penalty represents the 8% delinquent penalty, and is paid to the Delinquent Tax Collector

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
Fees Total					
Dog License Fees	\$ 1,725	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,706	\$ 206	\$ 1,500
Dog Violation Fees	440	200	859	659	200
Liquor License Fees	70	70	70	-	70
Other Fees for Services	3,044	3,650	1,774	(1,876)	2,225
Recording Fees	10,569	12,000	11,371	(629)	11,000
Recording Surcharge	3,906	3,500	4,264	764	3,500
Subdivision Permit Fees	450	1,200	1,800	600	1,200
Zoning Permit Fees	1,240	1,500	3,300	1,800	1,500
Fees Total	\$ 21,444	\$ 23,620	\$ 25,144	\$ 1,524	\$ 21,195
Grants					
Miscellaneous Grants	2,500	-	12,930	12,930	15,228
Parcel Mapping	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ -
Equal Education Grand List	707	-	700	700	-
State of Vermont Reappraisal Fund	6,010	6,010	5,950	(60)	6,000
Grants Total	\$ 9,218	\$ 6,010	\$ 19,581	\$ 13,571	\$ 21,228
Donations					
Donations	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 5,695	\$ 5,695	1,000
Donations - Pocket Park	592	-	1,205	1,205	-
Donations - Town House	140	500	776	276	500
Donations - Dogs	16	-	1,161	1,161	-
Town House Usage	2,750	2,500	2,950	450	2,500
Donations Total	\$ 3,998	\$ 3,000	\$ 11,787	\$ 8,787	\$ 4,000
Miscellaneous					
Evergreen Cemetery	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ -
Miscellaneous Income	3,571	4,000	1,276	(2,724)	2,000
Recycling Revenue	930	3,000	1,937	(1,063)	2,000
Town Property Sale	-	-	79,170	79,170	30,000
Miscellaneous Total	\$ 4,501	\$ 7,000	\$ 82,684	\$ 75,684	\$ 34,000

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
Independent Committees (Revenue & Expenses from Reserve) ^c					
Carrie Sanborn Fund	\$ 28,400	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ -
Conservation Commission	6,000	-	-	-	-
Recreation Revenue	500	1,000	50	(950)	-
Independent Committees Total	34,900	1,000	30,050	29,050	-
GENERAL FUND Total Revenue	\$ 687,678 *	\$ 709,071	\$ 753,493	\$ 44,422	\$ 821,780
GENERAL FUND Expenses					
Deficit Reduction					
Deficit Reduction	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	46,745 ^d
Deficit Reduction Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,745
Administration					
Select Board Salary	\$ 3,750	\$ 3,750	\$ 3,750	\$ -	\$ 7,500
Select Board Expenses	249	515	70	445	500
Select Board Assistant	8,284	-	-	-	-
Grant Manager	-	30,000	13,137	16,863	28,000
Town Clerk/Treasurer	46,941	-	-	-	-
Assistant Town Clerk/Treasurer	39,565	-	-	-	-
Clerk & Treasurer Office	-	102,397	100,244	2,153	113,856
Health/Dental/Vision Insurance	27,699	28,711	28,891	(180)	30,863
Municipal Retirement	4,672	5,113	5,257	(144)	5,932
Social Security Tax	8,591	10,663	10,261	402	12,206
Unemployment Insurance	752	875	720	155	670
Workers' Compensation	1,277	1,521	1,519	2	2,041
Property & Liability Insurance	9,049	11,682	11,680	2	15,445
Financial Services	64	6,300	83	6,217	3,300
Administration Total	\$ 150,893	\$ 201,527	\$ 175,612	\$ 25,915	\$ 220,313

c - These committees function independently and revenues are moved to their respective reserve funds

d - To offset the general fund deficit from 2023

** Figure adjusted per outside auditor*

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
General Services					
Town Office	\$ 24,416	\$ 39,300	\$ 33,419	\$ 5,881	\$ 43,000
Records Restoration	-	-	12,683	(12,683)	- ^e
VLCT Dues	2,459	2,539	2,539	-	2,618
Town Meeting & Elections	2,670	2,000	28	1,972	2,500
Town Report	2,748	3,000	2,707	293	3,300
Auditing	1,200	1,200	1,200	-	2,400
Outside Audit/Professional Services	2,630	4,000	3,400	600	18,000
Delinquent Tax Collector Salary	9,144	9,000	5,538	3,462	9,000
Listers	4,941	6,815	4,673	2,142	5,436
Lister Contract Services	14,599	14,700	15,241	(541)	9,240
Police Services	25,357	25,500	19,601	5,899	30,000
Dog Officer	1,928	2,000	2,174	(174)	2,000
Fire Protection/FAST Squad	61,100	67,105	67,105	-	74,025
Emergency Management	7,532	15,500	8,620	6,880	2,250
Ambulance Service	53,606	55,750	55,794	(44)	59,076
Solid Waste	10,940	10,646	9,933	713	9,846
Recycling	19,701	22,000	25,366	(3,366)	24,500
General Services Total	\$ 244,972	\$ 281,055	\$ 270,021	\$ 11,034	\$ 297,191

e - Records restoration is paid from reserve funds from the recording surcharge

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
Community Services					
Adult Basic Education	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ -	\$ 800
Capstone Community Action	300	300	300	-	300
Clara Martin Center/OCMH	2,700	2,700	2,700	-	2,700
Council on Aging	750	750	750	-	750
Health HUB School Clinic	500	500	500	-	500
Library	34,000	34,000	34,000	-	34,000
Orange County Restorative Justice	350	350	350	-	350
Orange County Special Investigations	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	1,500
Public Health Council	110	110	110	-	110
Red Cross	500	575	575	-	575
Safeline	1,000	1,000	1,000	-	1,000
Senior Citizens Center	3,000	3,000	4,000	(1,000)	10,000
Stratford Historical Society	3,000	3,000	3,000	-	3,000
Community Nurse	-	4,000 *	4,000	-	4,000
Streetlights	1,180	1,600	1,220	380	1,600
Vermont Center for Independent Living	200	200	200	-	200
Visiting Nurse Alliance	3,250	3,250	3,250	-	3,250
Community Services Total	\$ 53,140	\$ 57,635 *	\$ 58,255	\$ (620)	\$ 64,635
Planning					
Development Review Board	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,750	\$ 2,470	\$ (720)	\$ 5,400
Regional Planning	1,729	1,783	1,783	-	1,838
Regional Energy Coordinator	6,300	7,000	7,000	-	7,000
Town Planning	95	-	-	-	-
Zoning	1,000	1,000	1,000	-	5,000
Planning Total	\$ 10,224	\$ 11,533	\$ 12,253	\$ (720)	\$ 19,238

* \$4,000 budget increase approved separately during Town Meeting 2023 in Article 7

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
General Government					
County Tax	\$ 45,830	\$ 42,376	\$ 46,913	\$ (4,537)	\$ 42,028
Leaseland Rent	-	85	-	85	-
Legal Fees & Consultants	708	5,000	5,868	(868)	5,000
General Government Total	\$ 46,538	\$ 47,461	\$ 52,781	\$ (5,320)	\$ 47,028
Municipal Property					
Municipal Building	\$ 17,951	\$ 58,950	\$ 27,522	\$ 31,428	\$ 61,400
Tax Sale Purchase	22,217	-	\$ -	-	-
Town House	18,865	18,600	5,400	13,200	17,800
Town House Restrooms	-	500	35	465	500
Cemeteries	9,200	16,760	15,047	1,713	16,760
Recreation Areas	2,000	6,000	17,507	(11,507)	6,200
Pocket Park	6,332	4,800	6,674	(1,874)	4,800
Municipal Property Total	\$ 76,564	\$ 105,610	\$ 72,184	\$ 33,426	\$ 107,460
Grant Expenditures					
Miscellaneous Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,920
Grant Expenditures Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,920
Miscellaneous					
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 2,480	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,788	\$ 212	\$ 2,000
Miscellaneous Total	\$ 2,480	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,788	\$ 212	\$ 2,000
Independent Committees (Revenue & Expenses from Reserve)					
Carrie Sanborn	\$ 23,189	\$ -	\$ 31,509	\$ (31,509)	\$ -
Conservation Fund	-	-	142	(142)	-
Conservation Trails	-	-	236	(236)	-
Energy Committee	-	250	-	250	250
Independent Committees Total	\$ 23,189	\$ 250	\$ 31,887	\$ (31,637)	\$ 250
GENERAL FUND Total Expenses	\$ 607,999	\$ 709,071	\$ 676,782	\$ 32,289	\$ 821,780
General Fund Grand Total	\$ 79,679	\$ (0)	\$ 76,711	\$ 76,711	\$ -

f - These committees function independently and expenses are moved from their respective reserve funds

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
HIGHWAY FUND Revenue					
Taxes					
Balances Forward	\$ 196,431	\$ 51,606	\$ 51,606	\$ -	\$ 30,983 <i>g</i>
Current Taxes	797,680	950,574	950,574	-	1,272,235
Taxes Total	\$ 994,111	\$ 1,002,180	\$ 1,002,180	\$ -	\$ 1,303,218
Governmental					
FEMA	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 407,600	\$ 407,600	\$ 1,050,000
ARPA	-	290,480	290,480	-	-
Grants	53,137	431,940	430,368	(1,572)	60,000
State of Vermont Emergency Fund	-	-	1,196,567	1,196,567	175,000
Vermont Gas Tax	155,746	155,746	235,020	79,274	86,012
Governmental Total	\$ 208,883	\$ 878,166	\$ 2,560,036	\$ 1,681,870	\$ 1,371,012
Loans					
Loan Proceeds	\$ 218,000 *	\$ -	\$ 194,189	\$ 194,189	\$ - <i>h</i>
Loans Total	\$ 218,000	\$ -	\$ 194,189	\$ 194,189	\$ -
Miscellaneous					
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 6,211	\$ -	\$ 499	\$ 499	\$ -
Miscellaneous Total	\$ 6,211	\$ -	\$ 499	\$ 499	\$ -
HIGHWAY FUND Total Revenue	\$ 1,427,205 *	\$ 1,880,346	\$ 3,756,904	\$ 1,876,558	\$ 2,674,230

* Figure adjusted per outside auditor

g - Balance forward uses a surplus from a prior year and/or represents spending from reserves

h - Loan for equipment, offset by purchase in Capital Expense

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
HIGHWAY FUND Expenses					
Deficit Reduction					
Deficit Reduction	\$ -	\$ 51,606	\$ -	\$ 51,606	\$ -
Deficit Reduction Total	\$ -	\$ 51,606	\$ -	\$ 51,606	\$ -
Labor & Benefits					
Highway Department Labor	\$ 185,870	\$ 249,726	\$ 206,200	\$ 43,526	\$ 300,769
Health/Dental/Vision Insurance	25,142	35,360	28,557	6,803	34,395
Municipal Retirement	8,657	14,008	11,362	2,646	15,882
Social Security Tax	14,177	12,981	17,034	(4,053)	23,009
Workers' Compensation	11,046	13,740	14,336	(596)	15,553
Labor & Benefits Total	\$ 244,893	\$ 325,815	\$ 277,489	\$ 48,326	\$ 389,608
Municipal Property					
Contract Services	\$ 1,558	\$ -	\$ 4,730	\$ (4,730)	\$ 7,500
Materials	7,537	1,500	493	1,007	1,500
Recycling	211	500	196	304	600
Sidewalks	9,175	-	-	-	-
Mowing	16,200	15,400	20,034	(4,634)	20,000
Town Garage	26,526	29,300	24,522	4,778	32,200
Municipal Roads Permit	3,655	2,830	2,190	640	2,500
Municipal Property Total	\$ 64,862	\$ 49,530	\$ 52,167	\$ (2,637)	\$ 64,300

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
Materials					
Chloride	\$ 8,712	\$ 12,000	\$ 10,014	\$ 1,986	\$ 12,000
Gravel	33,843	121,513	142,135	(20,622)	150,000
Miscellaneous Materials	4,588	20,000	11,360	8,640	20,000
Salt	47,186	55,000	47,559	7,441	50,000
Sand	37,947	40,000	43,326	(3,326)	50,000
Spring Maintenance Materials	238,938	-	-	-	-
Spring Maintenance Contract Services	6,674	-	-	-	-
Contract Services	12,700	18,030	45,254	(27,224)	30,000
Contract Services-Hauling	1,573	5,000	9,980	(4,980)	6,000
Materials Total	\$ 392,160	\$ 271,543	\$ 309,629	\$ (38,086)	\$ 318,000
Bridges					
Bridge Grant Expenditures	\$ -	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -
Bridge Contract Services	150,000	294,375	294,375	-	25,000
Materials	8,980	10,000	-	10,000	15,000
Bridges Total	\$ 158,980	\$ 504,375	\$ 494,375	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,000
Paving					
Paving Grant Contract Services	\$ -	\$ 98,000	\$ 49,228	\$ 48,772	\$ -
Paving Grant Expenditures	-	200,000	199,800	200	-
Retreatment	22,000	25,000	24,000	1,000	25,000
Paving Total	\$ 22,000	\$ 323,000	\$ 273,028	\$ 49,972	\$ 25,000
Grants for Public Works					
Highway Misc. Grants	\$ 58,106	\$ 39,824	\$ 38,932	\$ 892	\$ 74,000
Grants for Public Works Total	\$ 58,106	\$ 39,824	\$ 38,932	\$ 892	\$ 74,000

i - Guard rails, culverts, ditching materials, fabric, etc.

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed	
Equipment						
Capital Expense	\$ 218,000 *	\$ 40,584	\$ 234,773	\$ (194,189)	\$ -	j
Interest	17,238	12,488	14,186	(1,698)	23,671	
Debt Service	134,623	108,395	106,612	1,783	146,205	k
Gas & Oil	70,601	65,000	75,186	(10,186)	75,000	
Supplies	38,767	30,000	22,763	7,237	30,000	
Insurance	9,190	11,686	11,685	1	15,300	
Backhoe Repairs	7,152	3,000	3,206	(206)	3,000	
Grader Repairs	7,696	7,500	7,536	(36)	7,500	
Loader Repairs	1,785	3,000	3,198	(198)	10,000	
Mower Repairs	1,935	2,000	1,107	893	3,000	
Truck 1 Repairs - 2017 Ford	3,610	5,000	11,208	(6,208)	10,000	
Truck 2 Repairs - 2014 Western Star	15,196	15,000	4,175	10,825	2,000	
Truck 3 Repairs - 2021 Freightliner	2,994	3,000	5,930	(2,930)	6,000	
Truck 4 Repairs - 2020 Freightliner	2,256	3,000	15,674	(12,674)	5,000	
Tractor Repairs	263	500	-	500	2,000	
Equipment Rental	-	4,500	-	4,500	-	
Equipment Total	\$ 531,308 *	\$ 314,653	\$ 517,237	\$ (202,584)	\$ 338,676	

* Figure adjusted per outside auditor

j - Represents capital purchase + principal of lease payments for equipment; offset by Loan Proceeds when loan is received

k - Principal payments for loans

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
FEMA					
Contract Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,361,138	\$ (1,361,138)	\$ 1,400,000
Interest	-	-	-	-	24,646
Labor	-	-	27,378	(27,378)	-
Materials	-	-	317,425	(317,425)	-
Miscellaneous Expense	-	-	4,199	(4,199)	-
FEMA Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,710,141	\$ (1,710,141)	\$ 1,424,646
Miscellaneous					
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 6,503	-	1,318	\$ (1,318)	\$ -
Miscellaneous Total	\$ 6,503	\$ -	\$ 1,318	\$ (1,318)	\$ -
HIGHWAY FUND Total Expenses	\$ 1,478,811 *	\$ 1,880,346	\$ 3,674,315	\$ (1,793,969)	\$ 2,674,230
Highway Fund Grand Total	\$ (51,606)	\$ -	\$ 82,589	\$ 82,589	\$ -
GARAGE BOND FUND Revenue					
Taxes					
Current Taxes	\$ 41,805	\$ 40,303	\$ 40,303	\$ -	\$ 38,768
Taxes Total	\$ 41,805	\$ 40,303	\$ 40,303	\$ -	\$ 38,768
TOWN GARAGE BOND Total Revenue	\$ 41,805	\$ 40,303	\$ 40,303	\$ -	\$ 38,768
GARAGE BOND FUND Expenses					
Bond					
Debt Service	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ -	\$ 35,000 /
Interest	6,805	5,303	5,304	(1)	3,768
Bond Total	\$ 41,805	\$ 40,303	\$ 40,304	\$ (1)	\$ 38,768
TOWN GARAGE BOND Total Expenses	\$ 41,805	\$ 40,303	\$ 40,304	\$ (1)	\$ 38,768
Town Garage Bond Grand Total	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ (1)	\$ (1)	\$ -

i - Principal payments for bonds; these are now recorded as expenses and borrowing as revenue

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
HIGHWAY RECONSTRUCTION BOND FUND Revenue					
Taxes					
Current Taxes	\$ 124,242	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Taxes Total	\$ 124,242	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
HWY RECON BOND Total Revenue	\$ 124,242	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
HIGHWAY RECONSTRUCTION BOND FUND Expenses					
Contract Services					
Contract Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Contract Services Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Bond					
Debt Service	\$ 122,222	-	\$ -	\$ -	-
Interest	2,020	-	-	-	-
Bond Total	\$ 124,242	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
HWY RECON BOND Total Expenses	\$ 124,242	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Hwy Recon Bond Grand Total	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

l - Principal payments for bonds; these are now recorded as expenses and borrowing as revenue

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	(Unfavorable) Favorable	2024 Proposed
ARPA GRANT FUND Revenue					
Grant					
ARPA Grant Revenue	\$ 159,403	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Grant Total	\$ 159,403	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA GRANT Total Revenue	\$ 159,403	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA GRANT FUND Expenses					
ARPA Grant Expenditures					
ARPA Expenses	\$ -	\$ 318,730	\$ 318,730	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA Grant Expenditures Total	\$ -	\$ 318,730	\$ 318,730	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA GRANT Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ 318,730	\$ 318,730	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA Grant Grand Total	\$ 159,403	\$ (318,730)	\$ (318,730)	\$ -	\$ -
TOTALS					
General Fund Grand Total	\$ 79,679	\$ (0)	\$ 76,711	\$ 76,711	\$ -
Highway Fund Grand Total	\$ (51,606)	\$ -	\$ 82,589	\$ 82,589	\$ -
Town Garage Fund Grand Total	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ (1)	\$ (1)	\$ -
Hwy Reconstr. Fund Grand Total	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA Grant Fund Grand Total	\$ 159,403	\$ (318,730)	\$ (318,730)	\$ -	\$ -
ALL FUNDS Revenue	\$ 2,280,930	\$ 2,629,720	\$ 4,550,700	\$ 1,920,980	\$ 3,534,778
ALL FUNDS Expenses	\$ 2,252,856	\$ 2,629,720	\$ 4,391,402	\$ (1,761,682)	\$ 3,534,778
GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS	\$ 187,477	\$ (318,730)	\$ (159,432)	\$ 159,298	\$ -

TOWN OF STRAFFORD, VERMONT
COMBINED BALANCE SHEET ALL FUNDS & ENDOWMENTS

For Years Ending December 31, 2022 and 2023 (Note 1)

	General	Highway	Town Garage	Hwy Reconstr.	ARPA Grant	Endowments (Note 2)	12/31/2023	12/31/2022
ASSETS								
Cash	\$ 2,186,741	\$ (1,472,383)	\$ 19,781	\$ (452)	\$ 0	\$ 1,759,296	\$ 2,492,983	\$ 3,263,717
Delinquent Tax Receivable	62,545	-	-	-	-	-	62,545	46,420
Int. on Del. Tax Receivable	1,059	-	-	-	-	-	1,059	1,384
Accounts Receivable	-	1,604,767	-	-	-	-	1,604,767	8,877
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,250,345	\$ 132,383	\$ 19,781	\$ (452)	\$ 0	\$ 1,759,296	\$ 4,161,354	\$ 3,320,397
LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE								
LIABILITIES								
Deferred Revenue	\$ 31,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 31,800	\$ 23,890
Accounts Payable	10,770	47,100	-	-	-	-	57,869	1,169,531
Accrued Payroll	2,840	5,312	-	-	-	-	8,152	5,997
Notes Payable	1,754,232	-	-	-	-	-	1,754,232	-
Prepaid Taxes	4,043	-	-	-	-	-	4,043	(0)
Due to School District	34,323	-	-	-	-	-	34,323	-
Due to Tax Collector	2,194	-	-	-	-	-	2,194	3,553
Miscellaneous Liabilities	443	511	-	-	-	-	954	(2,272)
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 1,840,644	\$ 52,922	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,893,566	\$ 1,200,700
FUND BALANCE								
Restricted (Note 3)	\$ 456,446	\$ 48,479	\$ 19,781	\$ (452)	\$ 0	\$ 1,759,296	\$ 2,283,550	\$ 2,109,855
Unrestricted	(46,745)	30,983	-	-	-	-	(15,762)	9,842
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	\$ 409,701	\$ 79,461	\$ 19,781	\$ (452)	\$ 0	\$ 1,759,296	\$ 2,267,787	\$ 2,119,697
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE	\$ 2,250,345	\$ 132,383	\$ 19,781	\$ (452)	\$ 0	\$ 1,759,296	\$ 4,161,354	\$ 3,320,397

The accompanying notes are a necessary part of this financial statement.

TOWN OF STRAFFORD, VERMONT
ANALYSIS OF FUND BALANCES
Fiscal Years Ending December 31, 2022 and 2023

	General Fund	Highway Fund	Town Garage Fund	Highway Recon Fund	ARPA Fund
Fund Balances Dec. 31, 2022	\$ 394,438	\$ 48,479	\$ 19,783	\$ (452)	\$ 318,730
Prior Year Adj (<i>See Note 4</i>)	\$ (40,536)	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Adj. Fund Bal. Dec. 31, 2022	\$ 353,902	\$ 48,479	19,783	\$ (452)	\$ 318,730
Transfers Out (<i>See Note 5</i>)	(20,912)	(51,606)	-	-	-
Revenues	753,493	3,756,904	40,303	-	-
Balances and Additions	\$ 1,086,483	\$ 3,753,776	\$ 60,086	\$ (452)	\$ 318,730
Expenditures:	(676,782)	(3,674,315)	(40,304)	-	(318,730)
Fund Balances Dec. 31, 2023	\$ 409,701	\$ 79,461	\$ 19,781	\$ (452)	\$ 0



The Upper Village post office was once Morrill's main store. Note the sign from when he and Jedidiah Harris built and owned it over the current post office window.

Photo courtesy Strafford Historical Society / John Freitag

TOWN OF STRAFFORD
STATEMENT OF INDEBTEDNESS
Year Ending December 31, 2023

2018 John Deere 6110M Tractor/Mower

Payment Date	Payment	Interest	Principal	Balance
August 8, 2024	\$ 22,845	\$ 1,564	\$ 21,281	\$ 22,051
August 8, 2025	22,845	794	22,051	-

Terms: 3.6% interest. Original amount borrowed \$139,153.

Mascoma Savings Bank

2019 Int'l 4400 SBA 4x2 Fire Truck

Payment Date	Payment	Interest	Principal	Balance
April 11, 2024	\$ 38,143	\$ 6,199	\$ 31,945	\$ 139,769
April 11, 2025	38,143	5,032	33,112	106,657
April 11, 2026	38,143	3,840	34,304	72,353
April 11, 2027	38,143	2,605	35,539	36,815
April 11, 2028	38,143	1,329	36,815	-

Terms: 3.6% interest. Original amount borrowed \$288,806.

Mascoma Savings Bank

2021 Freightliner Model 114SD Dump Truck

Payment Date	Payment	Interest	Principal	Balance
June 30, 2023	\$ 23,760	\$ 1,760	\$ 22,000	\$ 66,000
June 30, 2024	23,320	1,320	22,000	44,000
June 30, 2025	22,880	880	22,000	22,000
June 30, 2026	22,440	440	22,000	-

Terms: 2% interest. Original amount borrowed \$110,000.

State of Vermont

2024 Freightliner Model 114SD Dump Truck

Payment Date	Payment	Interest	Principal	Balance
August 31, 2024	\$ 44,984	\$ 9,915	\$ 35,069	\$ 159,120
August 31, 2025	44,984	8,124	36,860	122,260
August 31, 2026	44,984	6,242	38,742	83,518
August 31, 2027	44,984	4,264	40,720	42,799
August 31, 2028	44,984	2,185	42,799	-

Terms: 5.1% interest. Original amount borrowed \$194,189

Mascoma Savings Bank

For other indebtedness information, please refer to Note 6 in the "Notes to Financial Statements."

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Equipment Inventory

- 2024 Freightliner Model 114SD Dump Truck
- 2021 Freightliner Model 114SD Dump Truck
- 2020 Freightliner Model 108SD Dump Truck
- 2017 Ford Ton Truck with 2-way Everest Plow and MG 4-Season Side Dump 550
- 2015 John Deere 544G Loader
- 2015 John Deere 410 Backhoe
- 2021 772G John Deere Grader
- 2018 John Deere 6110M Tractor
- 1991 Kubota Tractor
- 1989 Ford 8000 Chloride Truck
- 1,000 Gallon Aboveground Fuel Tank with Pump
- 2 –Chloride Tanks – 3000 gallon each
- Chloride Sprayer Tank – 500 gallon
- Chloride Sprayer Tank – 1,000 gallon
 - 1 – Motorola Base Radio
- 10 – Motorola 16 channel Scan Mobile Radio
- 2 – Motorola 2 channel Hand Held Radios
- 1 – 20' x 20' Sand Screen
- 1 – Jonsered Chain Saw
- 4 – Husqvarna Chain Saws
- 2 – Echo Battery-operated Chain Saws
- 1 – 225 Husqvarna Weed Cutter
- 1 – 325 Husqvarna Power Broom
- 1 – 8' Sweepster Power Broom
- 1 – American Culvert Thawer
- 1 – Lincoln Mig Welder
- 1 – Yamaha 4500 Generator
- 1 – Hydraulic Hose Press
- 1 – Culvert Compactor
- 1 – Husqvarna Pole Saw
- 2 – Desktop Computers

Highway Department Buildings

- Town Garage Building
- Rear Storage Shed – Three bays
- Salt Shed
- Fuel Shed

TOWN OF STRAFFORD, VERMONT
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Year Ending December 31, 2023

Note 1: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

FUND ACCOUNTING—The accounts of the Town are organized on the basis of funds, each of which is considered a separate accounting entity. The operation of each fund is accounted for on the modified accrual basis with a separate set of self-balancing accounts that comprise its assets, liabilities, fund balances, revenues and expenditures, as appropriate. Government resources are allocated to and accounted for in individual funds based upon the purpose for which they are to be spent and the means by which spending activities are controlled.

GENERAL FUND: The General Fund is the general operating fund of the town. It is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS: *Highway Fund*—The operating fund for road maintenance and improvements funded by a specific revenue source and restricted for road maintenance use only. *Town Garage Fund*—The Town Garage Fund was established in 2006 to build a new town garage. *Highway Reconstruction Fund*—The Highway Reconstruction Fund was established in 2012 to finance road reconstruction and non-reimbursable expenses from Tropical Storm Irene. *ARPA Fund*—The ARPA Fund was created in 2021 to account for pandemic-related aid for local governments received through the American Rescue Plan Act.

Note 2: ENDOWMENTS—This number represents both principal and interest of all endowments/trust funds for the Town of Strafford. As of 2022, it includes all funds managed by the Trustees of Public Funds, whose reports begin on page 114.

Note 3: RESTRICTED FUNDS

Restricted fund revenue and expenditures are reflected in the General Fund and Highway Fund statements. Net changes to restricted funds in each year will be reported in these notes. In the Highway Fund, restricted funds represent the equipment reserve and any other highway restricted funds; unrestricted funds are still restricted to highway use.

	<i>Ending Balance</i>	<i>Net Change in 2023</i>	<i>Ending Balance</i>
GENERAL FUND:			
Reserve-Town House	\$ 52,521.22	\$ 16,326.00	\$ 68,847.22
Reserve-Town House Clock	338.03		338.03
Reserve-Town House Spec Proj	9,312.66		9,312.66
Reserve-Recording Surcharge	17,085.00	1,580.57	18,665.57
Reserve-Legal Fees	9.90		9.90
Reserve-Listing Reappraisals	64,942.79	6,650.00	71,592.79
Reserve-Tennis Courts	5,000.00		5,000.00
Reserve-Recreation	17,020.22	(11,424.93)	5,595.29
Reserve-Municipal Building	121,284.25	109,738.33	231,022.58
Reserve-Whitcomb Hill	3,765.88		3,765.88
Reserve-Dogs	1,101.00	986.99	2,087.99
Reserve-Evergreen Cemetery	7,379.79	2,012.89	9,392.68
Reserve-Pocket Park	6,624.41	(668.94)	5,955.47
Reserve-Energy Committee	2,147.48		2,147.48
Reserve-Conservation Comm.	11,649.82		11,649.82
Reserve-Conservation Trails	2,432.81	(236.21)	2,196.60
Reserve-Carrie Sanborn	10,374.93	(1,508.80)	8,866.13
Total General Reserve Funds	\$332,990.19	\$123,455.90	\$456,446.09

HIGHWAY FUND:

Reserve-Equipment	\$100,084.63	\$ (51,606.00)	\$ 48,478.63
Total Highway Reserve Funds	\$100,084.63	\$ (51,606.00)	\$ 48,478.63

Note 4: PRIOR YEAR ADJUSTMENTS

GENERAL FUND:

Adjust deferred taxes for 2022	\$ (12,110.00)
Adjust final amount due to school	\$ (28,425.84)

Note 5: TRANSFERS

GENERAL FUND TRANSFER OUT:

Balances Forward	\$ 20,912.00
------------------	--------------

HIGHWAY FUND TRANSFER OUT:

Balances Forward	\$ 51,606.00
------------------	--------------

Note 6: OTHER INDEBTEDNESS AND OBLIGATIONS

Strafford's share of indebtedness due to the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District, as of November 30, 2022 is \$36,456.

TOWN OF STRAFFORD
STATEMENT OF TAXES RAISED
Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2023

Grand List

Real Estate	212,944,500
Plus Equipment	1,000
Less Exemption	(120,000)
Less Current Use	(17,594,700)
Less Local Agreements	(1,576,700)
Total	193,654,100

Total Listed Value	193,654,100
Residential	110,172,100
Special Exemptions	2,550,300
Non-residential	80,931,700

Taxes Billed	Tax rate	
General Fund	1,936,541.00 x 0.2080	402,801
Highway Fund	1,936,541.00 x 0.4909	950,648
Town Garage	1,936,541.00 x 0.0208	40,280
Local Agreements	1,936,541.00 x 0.0005	968
Homestead Educ.	1,101,721.00 x 1.5015	1,654,234
Nonresidential Educ.	809,317.00 x 1.5767	1,276,050
Total		4,324,981

Adjustments to Taxes Due

Lister errors and omissions	(889)
Adjustments due to late filing of Homestead Declaration	(5,832)
Late-filed Homestead Declaration penalties	4,702
Tax bill rounding	(3)
Total Taxes Due	4,322,959

Taxes accounted for as follows:

Collections	4,234,922
Delinquent Taxes to Collector (December, 2023)	86,512
Addition to warrant	1,525
Total Taxes Collectible	4,322,959

REAL ESTATE and PERSONAL PROPERTY**2023 Listed Values**

Category	Municipal Listed Value	Education Listed Value (Homestead)	Education Listed Value (Nonresidential)	Total Education Listed Value
Residential less than 6 acres	49,027,900	37,341,700	11,686,200	49,027,900
Residential more than 6 acres	106,311,100	69,918,100	36,393,000	106,311,100
Mobile home without land	55,800	25,400	30,400	55,800
Mobile home with land	1,459,800	608,800	851,000	1,459,800
Vacation home less than 6 acres	986,400	142,100	844,300	986,400
Vacation home more than 6 acres	10,257,700	1,479,600	8,778,100	10,257,700
Commercial	6,018,900	-	6,018,900	6,018,900
Commercial Apartments	213,900	-	213,900	213,900
Utilities Electric	12,457,600	-	12,457,600	12,457,600
Farm	14,904,900	6,165,600	8,739,300	14,904,900
Woodland	8,198,700	-	8,198,700	8,198,700
Miscellaneous	3,051,800	19,700	3,032,100	3,051,800
TOTAL REAL ESTATE	212,944,500	115,701,000	97,243,500	212,944,500
Cable	1,000		1,000	1,000
TOTAL LISTED VALUE	212,945,500	115,701,000	97,244,500	212,945,500
Veterans' Exemptions	(120,000)	(20,000)	(10,000)	(30,000)
Current Use	(17,594,700)	(5,701,600)	(11,893,100)	(17,594,700)
Special Exemptions			(2,550,300)	(2,550,300)
Local Agreements	(1,576,700)	-	(1,576,700)	(1,576,700)
TOTAL TAXABLE PROPERTY	193,654,100	109,979,400	81,214,400	191,193,800
<i>2022 TOTAL TAXABLE PROPERTY</i>	<i>190,321,960</i>	<i>112,432,100</i>	<i>75,429,560</i>	<i>187,861,660</i>

TOWN OF STRAFFORD, VERMONT

Delinquent Real Estate Taxes Year Ending December 31, 2023

Name	Total	Name	Total
Alsop, Monica	\$ 291.36	* Loring, Jonathan B	4,806.26
Begnoche, Jason	2,470.52	Nutting, Dillon, Rae & Lacey	3,445.34
Bousquet, Carmel Estate	241.16	* Odell, Brian	31.48
Brown, Frank & Jessica	1,600.37	Owen, Kate	3,423.28
Bucchi, Peter & Linda	1,221.94	Phelps, Hugh	80.38
* Chase, Colyn	385.88	* Prescott, Anne	311.55
Coburn, Lisa	1,486.08	* Ransom, Earl & Huyffer, Amy	3,183.91
* Coit, Marnie A Trustee	756.83	* Ransom, Earl	1,367.04
* Davis, Alan	41.00	* Ransom, Earl & Huyffer, Amy	105.42
* Durkee, James C III	1,099.19	* Rockbottom Farm Inc	12,916.07
* Elizabeth Mine Solar	747.11	Frank Savery Estate	3,328.08
Farina, Chris	10,999.86	* Stone, Robert	1,224.67
Hill, Michael	1,688.22	Traudt, Scott	4,456.83
* Kidder, Christine A	783.71	* Zagaeski, Theodore	9.85
* Llorente, Lauren	42.58		

Delinquent total Dec. 31, 2023 \$62,545.97

* *Paid in full by February 1, 2023*

	Total	2023	2022	Prior Years
Total Delinq. Dec. 31, 2023	\$62,545.97	\$62,116.34	\$ 429.63	\$ -
Plus December Collections	<u>25,921.03</u>	<u>25,921.03</u>	-	-
	<u>\$88,467.00</u>	<u>\$88,037.37</u>	\$ 429.63	\$ -
Previously uncollected		\$ 429.63		
2023 Delinq. Tax Warrant		<u>88,037.37</u>		
Total Delinquency		<u><u>\$88,467.00</u></u>		

Please Note: Due to legislative changes and a Supreme Court ruling regarding the confidentiality of tax bill information, individual delinquent tax information by year will no longer be reported.

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN
DELINQUENT PROPERTY TAXES RECEIVABLE**

Year Ending December 31, 2023

	Total	2023	2022	2021 & prior
Balance January 1, 2023	\$ 46,419.64		\$43,398.55	\$ 3,021.09
Delinquent to Collector	88,037.37	88,037.37	-	-
Subtotal	134,457.01	88,037.37	43,398.55	3,021.09
Collections/abatements/discharges	(71,911.04)	(25,921.03)	(42,968.92)	(3,021.09)
Balance December 31, 2023	\$ 62,545.97	\$62,116.34	\$ 429.63	\$ -

**TOTAL DELINQUENT TAXES
COMPARED TO TOTAL TAXES BILLED**

2013 - 2023

	Delinquent Taxes	Tax Year	Total Taxes Billed	% of Taxes Delinquent
January 1, 2014	60,587.42	2013	3,409,992.00	1.78%
January 1, 2015	62,386.58	2014	3,703,651.00	1.68%
January 1, 2016	74,804.44	2015	3,785,861.56	1.98%
January 1, 2017	95,605.35	2016	3,899,828.07	2.45%
January 1, 2018	93,628.92	2017	3,866,892.28	2.42%
January 1, 2019	94,455.71	2018	3,897,401.78	2.42%
January 1, 2020	83,125.63	2019	4,058,332.15	2.05%
January 1, 2021	83,951.66	2020	4,383,855.30	1.92%
January 1, 2022	62,936.23	2021	4,430,342.00	1.42%
January 1, 2023	43,398.55	2022	4,214,958.79	1.03%
January 1, 2024	62,116.34	2023	4,322,959.00	1.44%

ANIMAL LICENSING

30	Male dogs
155	Neutered dogs
28	Female dogs
161	Spayed female dogs

Total receipts for dogs \$1,728.00

All dogs or wolf-hybrids six months of age and older must be licensed annually on or before the first day of April. A late fee of \$20.00 shall be due if a license is obtained after April 1.

Before obtaining a license, a copy of a current rabies vaccination certificate must be presented to the Town Clerk. A dog or wolf-hybrid over three months of age must be vaccinated; the initial vaccination is valid for 12 months. Within 9-12 months of initial vaccination, the animal must receive a booster vaccination. All subsequent vaccinations following the initial vaccination will be valid for 36 months.

License fees are \$9 for a neutered male or spayed female, and \$13 for an unspayed female or unneutered male dog. Dog licenses issued after April 1st will be subject to an increase in the fee.

Proof of spaying or neutering, signed by a veterinarian, must be exhibited to the Town Clerk at the time of licensing.

Dogs should wear tags at all times, because if the dog is lost, it is more likely to be returned. If you should find or lose a dog, report it to the Dog Officer and/or the Town Clerk immediately.

Dog violations: First offense – \$30 penalty; Second offense – \$50 penalty; Third offense – \$100 penalty; Subsequent offenses – Impoundment & impoundment costs, plus \$200 penalty.

VERMONT RABIES HOTLINE: 1-800-4-RABIES (1-800-472-2437)

Hours: 8:00-4:30 Daily

VITAL STATISTICS

Births

NAME OF CHILD	SEX	DATE	PLACE OF BIRTH	PARENT'S NAME	PARENT'S NAME
Daschle Amarante	M	8/6/23	Randolph, VT	Genevieve M. Amarante	Jevon W. Amarante

Civil Marriages

NAME	RESIDENCE	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	PLACE OF MARRIAGE
Katherine Murray	South Strafford, VT	Michael A. Martin	West Lebanon, NH	4/29/23	South Strafford, VT
Emma J. Badams	South Strafford, VT	Taylor D. Brenner	Searsmont, ME	6/3/23	Strafford, VT
Caitlyn E.L. MacLaren	Thetford Center, VT	Zachary J. Josler	Thetford Center, VT	6/24/23	Thetford Center, VT
Cassidy E. Lewis	Strafford, VT	Mason K. Doyle	Strafford, VT	9/9/23	Strafford, VT
William C. Mundel	Hamtramck, MI	Erin A. Dewey	Hamtramck, MI	10/13/23	Strafford, VT
Joshua R. I. Shifrinson	University Park, MD	Caroline B. Ritter	Austin, TX	10/14/23	Sharon, VT
Meredith A.W. Kendall	Strafford, VT	Michael S. Baker	Strafford, VT	11/18/23	Strafford, VT

Deaths

NAME OF DECEASED	SEX	AGE	PLACE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH	RESIDENCE
Jessica-Jo Morehouse	F	34	Hartford, VT	1/17/2023	Strafford, VT
Mathew W. Doyle	M	45	Montpelier, VT	2/13/2023	Montpelier, VT
David T. Lamb	M	70	Strafford, VT	3/17/2023	Strafford, VT
Ricky C. St. Peter	M	68	South Strafford, VT	7/1/2023	South Strafford, VT
Timothy O. Matson	M	80	Strafford, VT	8/6/2023	Strafford, VT
Gertrude J. Gomo	F	98	Strafford, VT	8/24/2023	Strafford, VT
Emily McCormick	F	66	Randolph, VT	9/12/2023	Strafford, VT
Stephen C. Martin	M	53	South Strafford, VT	9/23/2023	South Strafford, VT
George R. Johnson	M	68	South Strafford, VT	11/6/2023	South Strafford, VT
Robert E. Bates Jr.	M	60	Strafford, VT	11/13/2023	Strafford, VT

VITAL STATISTICS (cont.)

Burials					
NAME OF DECEASED	SEX	AGE	PLACE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH	PLACE OF BURIAL
Betty J. Smith	F	90			
Beverly J. Varney	F	91	Vancouver, WA	11/3/2021	Evergreen Cemetery
Gilbert E. Varney Sr.	M	86	Enumclaw, WA	8/16/2014	Evergreen Cemetery
Frederick B. Churchill	M	84	Lebanon, NH	7/22/2017	Evergreen Cemetery
Rufus A. Winsor	M	75	Lebanon, NH	2/26/2023	Strafford Cemetery
Gertrude J. Gomo	F	98	Strafford, VT	8/24/2023	Evergreen Cemetery
Daniel L. Robinson	M	85	Lebanon, NH	8/18/2023	Robinson Cemetery

These vital statistics represent marriages, civil unions, births, deaths and burials recorded in the Strafford Town Office.

Certificates filed elsewhere are not automatically forwarded to the Town Office.

If you would like those statistics to be included in this report, please arrange for copies of the records to be sent.

If you would prefer not to have your vital statistics listed in the Town Report due to privacy concerns or for any other reason, please notify the Town Clerk's office.

TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC FUNDS REPORT

FUND	12/31/2019 Market Value	12/31/2020 Market Value	12/31/2021 Market Value	12/31/2022 Market Value	12/31/2023 Market Value	Total Change	Amount Disbursed	Total Contributions	Change Before Disbursements
Cobb	\$ 106,603.45	\$ 124,881.54	\$ 131,395.62	\$ 104,165.20	\$ 122,291.36	\$ 18,126.16	\$ 4,000.00		\$ 22,126.16
Gilman	11,916.77	14,239.47	15,344.71	12,872.58	15,083.51	2,210.93	0.00		2,210.93
Mix	109,325.32	130,633.94	141,620.11	117,351.36	137,708.57	20,357.21	0.00		20,357.21
Newton	134,345.54	160,530.85	150,074.55	124,559.35	145,423.59	20,864.24	760.00		21,624.24
Ordway	240,514.07	279,892.71	291,468.01	227,691.82	259,177.65	31,485.83	8,000.00		39,485.83
Robinson	10,532.79	12,585.74	13,552.94	11,354.47	13,308.44	1,953.97	0.00		1,953.97
RWW	28,181.95	33,674.90	36,431.82	30,284.57	35,469.61	5,185.04	0.00		5,185.04
SCE	6,726.43	7,787.48	8,386.82	6,991.71	8,087.90	1,096.19	0.00		1,096.19
SAA	4,953.36	5,918.82	6,336.50	5,394.21	6,235.10	840.89	0.00		840.89
ERF	17,522.19	20,937.44	22,591.80	18,871.50	22,071.65	3,200.15	0.00		3,200.15
CST	467,913.60	550,386.49	587,368.07	458,834.85	503,849.38	45,014.53	31,508.80		76,523.33
C-B A	62,226.74	73,355.36	78,507.55	63,875.49	74,935.92	11,060.43	1,000.00		12,060.43
STF *	33,074.53	39,521.09	42,795.77	135,549.13	41,792.23	-93,756.90	100,000.00		6,243.10
DKB					355,445.92	355,445.92	0.00	315,000.00	40,445.92
Cash	-	-	-	20,923.56	18,414.76	-	-	-	-
Total	\$1,233,836.74	\$1,454,345.83	\$1,525,874.27	\$1,338,719.80	\$ 1,759,295.59	\$423,084.59	\$ 145,268.80	\$ 315,000.00	\$ 253,353.39
<i>Disbursed</i>	<i>18,209.87</i>	<i>71,528.44</i>	<i>49,107.58</i>	<i>40,188.87</i>	<i>45,268.80</i>				

* \$100,000 Transferred from STF to DKB

These Town Funds are administered by the Trustees of Public Funds.

Change before disbursements and additions

18.93%

**TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC FUNDS
INVESTMENTS**

<u>Cash</u>	TPF	CST	<u>Market Value</u>
Mascoma Checking (2 accounts)	\$9,549.63	\$8,865.13	\$ 18,414.76
Fidelity Cash Account			-
Fidelity Gov't Cash Reserves (FDRXX)			102,550.56
	Total Cash	6.9%	\$ 120,965.32
<u>Fixed Income</u>			
JP Morgan Ultra-Short ETF (JPST)			\$ 76,103.78
iShares 0-5 Year TIPS Bond ETF (STIP)			154,532.25
	Total Fixed Income	13.1%	\$ 230,636.03
	Total Cash & Fixed Income	20.0%	\$ 351,601.35
<u>US Equities</u>			<u>Market Value</u>
iShares Core S&P 500 ETF (IVV)			\$ 538,766.64
iShares Core Aggressive Allocation ETF (AOA)			13,326.65
iShares Core S&P US Growth ETF (IUSG)			274,303.50
iShares S&P Mid-Cap ETF (IJH)			170,170.10
iShares S&P Small-Cap ETF (IJR)			85,301.00
	Total US Equities	61.5%	\$1,081,867.89
<u>Foreign Equities</u>			<u>Market Value</u>
Vanguard FTSE Developed Markets ETF (VEA)			\$ 246,685.00
SPDR Portfolio Emerging Markets ETF (SPEM)			79,141.35
	Total Foreign Equities	18.5%	\$ 325,826.35
	Total Equity Funds	80.0%	\$1,407,694.24
End of the year total		100.0%	\$1,759,295.59

DAVID K. BROWN FUND

In 2022 the Town of Strafford received a gift of \$300,000 from the David K. Brown Trust “to establish an endowment fund, the income from which shall be used for the preservation, maintenance, or restoration projects which maintain the historical character of the Strafford Town House.” Requests for disbursements are made by the Selectboard.

GARDNER N. COBB CHILD WELFARE FUND

In 1968, the Town of Strafford received under the Will of Gardner N. Cobb \$10,000 to be held in Trust with the Corpus to be invested in direct obligations of the United States, with the net income to be disbursed by the Trustees for “the promotion of child hygiene, the treatment of remediable defects of needy children, including dental, or orthopedic or other medical care, routine immunizations against disease, and detection and elimination of tuberculosis and the dissemination of literature on the subject of Child Welfare.”

COMMUNITY-BUILDING AWARD FUND

This fund is the result of a \$50,000 bequest from the Edmund Coffin estate. It was established on September 1, 2016.

The purpose of the fund is to give an annual award to persons and/or organizations who, in the opinion of the selection committee, have made major contributions to building a sense of community in the town.

A committee, appointed by the Selectboard, recommends recipients annually.

EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

This fund was established in 2013 in concert with the wishes of Marion Slusser, who contributed \$10,000 to the Town of Strafford in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene.

The goal of this fund is to support efforts related to emergency management for the residents of the Town of Strafford. This includes, but is not limited to, maintenance of Town designated shelters, procuring and maintaining communications equipment, and assisting with grant matches when appropriate. The Selectboard shall act as advisors to the Trustees of Public Funds with regard to distributions from this Fund.

ROBERT I. GILMAN AND EVELYN ROBERTS GILMAN TRUST FUND

In 1988 \$2,000 was given by Mr. and Mrs. R. Parker and Mr. and Mrs. Chester Gadzinski to establish the Robert I. Gilman and Evelyn Roberts Gilman Trust Fund to be used to benefit the Municipal Building.

ROBIN MIX MEMORIAL FUND

On September 2, 1987 the Town of Strafford received, under a Trust Agreement, \$5,407.83 establishing the Robin Mix Memorial Fund for Preservation of the Strafford Town House. “The purpose of this Fund is to provide an augmenting source of funding for the accomplishment of extraordinary repairs to, and for major preservation and restoration projects for, the Strafford Town House.”

NEWTON FUND

In 1931 the Town of Strafford received, under the Will of William E. Newton, \$14,200 to be held in trust, the income from which is “to be used first in keeping the two Newton lots in the cemetery at South Strafford in good condition, and then in any public improvement or for any public purpose in the village of South Strafford.”

ROBERT H. ORDWAY FUND

In 1980 the Town of Strafford received a bequest under the Will of Robert H. Ordway of \$56,671.99 in trust, from which the income is “to be used in assisting a deserving high school graduate or graduates who are inhabitants of the Town of Strafford, Vermont in obtaining education above the high school level.” See the Robert H. Ordway Scholarship Committee Report for further information.

WALTER C. ROBINSON FUND

On December 23, 1985 the Town of Strafford received \$1,000 under the Will of Walter C. Robinson “to be held in trust by the Trustees of Public Funds and to use the interest for the care of the Willard Robinson and Daniel Robinson cemetery lots in the Robinson Cemetery.”

CARRIE SANBORN TRUST

In May of 1986 the Carrie Sanborn Trust (CST) began providing assistance to aid Strafford residents in need of assistance. In 2008 authority to manage this trust was transferred from TD Banknorth to the Trustees of Public Funds. The Trustees shall make funds available for distribution by the CST Committee who act on referrals or requests. Please contact Sue Coburn for assistance or the Town Clerk for more information.

SELECTBOARD TRANSFERRED FUND

The Selectboard Transferred Fund (STF) was created when the Trustees of Public Funds accepted a lump sum of \$33,074.53 from the small endowments managed by the Selectboard. The Selectboard will decide how to disburse the funds (except those controlled by the Cemetery Commission).

THE STRAFFORD COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND

This fund was established in December of 1999. The purpose of this fund is to receive and grant money to aid educational programs in the Town of Strafford, Vermont.

STRAFFORD ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION FUND

The SAA Fund was established on October 25, 2004 to provide continued and improved financial support for the enhancement of athletic and recreational facilities for the people of Strafford.

RUTH WAINWRIGHT WALLACE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Ruth Wainwright Wallace Scholarship Fund was established in 1971 and was turned over the Trustees of Public Funds for investment management in 1994. Ruth lived in Strafford and was a student advocate; the Newton School Library is named in her honor.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC FUNDS

Thankfully, 2023 was a much better year than 2022 for the market and investors. Consequently, the funds overseen by the Trustees of Public Funds (TPF) gained 18.93% for the year, a significantly better performance than the prior year, when they lost 17.6%. Over the year, TPF continued and strengthened its relationship with Mascoma Wealth Management, which manages and invests all public monies overseen by the TPF. The TPF manages 14 separate named funds, including a new one added in 2023: the David K. Brown Fund, established by a very generous gift from the David K. Brown Trust for the purpose of maintaining the historical character of the Strafford Town House.

The TPF approved disbursement of a total of \$45,268.80 from the following funds:

The Carrie Sanborn Trust (CST): a total of \$31,508.80 to provide assistance to many individuals in the community.

The Cobb Fund: \$4,000 to the Newton School.

The Ordway Fund: a total of \$8,000 to two recipients for higher education.

The Community Building Award: \$1,000 for the 2023 recipient of the award.

The Newton Fund: \$760 for improvements to the Pocket Park.

The TPF is grateful for the generosity of past and current community members who have provided gifts that support our town and its residents. We encourage individuals and organizations to contact the TPF with specific fund requests.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah North

Therese Linehan

Cindy Stableford

ROBERT H. ORDWAY FUND COMMITTEE REPORT

The Robert H. Ordway Fund Committee establishes guidelines, evaluates applications, and determines award recipients. The awards are funded by proceeds derived from the Trust established by Robert H. Ordway's will.

The Trustees of Public Funds manage the Trust and their financial statement and report appear elsewhere in this report.

The committee has developed criteria based on academic achievement, citizenship and character.

High school students must apply by June 1 of their senior year. Application forms may be picked up at the Town Clerk's office. All graduating seniors wishing to further their education beyond the high school level are encouraged to apply.

2023 Awards: Ben Plottner, Eli Weintraub

Robert H. Ordway Fund Committee:

Joey Hawkins Diana Leddy Danette Harris

RUTH WAINWRIGHT WALLACE SCHOLARSHIP

The Ruth Wainwright Wallace Scholarship Fund was established in 1971. Ruth lived in Strafford and was a student advocate. The Newton School Library is named in her honor.

The award is for Strafford residents recently graduated from High School who are preparing for teaching careers. It will be granted periodically at the discretion of the Ruth Wainwright Wallace Scholarship committee.

Donations to the fund are welcome and can be made through the Trustees of Public Funds. Applications can be picked up at the Strafford Town Clerk's Office, and sent to any member of the committee. Anyone who would like to be on the committee is encouraged to contact any committee member and express his or her interest.

Committee members: Maureen Wilson, Rod Maclay, Rockwell Fuller, and Joanna Hawkins.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING AWARD

The 2023 Community-Building Award, created through a generous bequest by Ned Coffin in 2016, was awarded to Janet Hardy.

For those who may not know, Ned and his wife Vi made their home in Strafford in the early 1970s. They had a deep love for the town and its beauty and a real appreciation for its people and institutions. Ned's contributions to Strafford continue after his death by funding an award to be given annually to an individual or an organization who has made a meaningful contribution to our community.

The Town of Strafford has benefited from Janet's generosity for decades. People know that when she takes on a task, it's done quietly, with no fanfare, and always goes above and beyond what is just needed. She sets an example of what helps keep us together as a community.

Just to mention some of the things Janet has been involved with: running the Little League program for years, and always helping out that organization; support and dedication to the Fire Department and the Auxiliary, including devoting endless time and energy to the 4th of July BBQ; many years of work as town Dog Warden, where her love of animals shined brightly; help coordinating and managing food for countless events.

The continuing work Janet does with elderly goes beyond any paid service to heartfelt care, helping many people maintain the best quality of life right up to the end. In doing so, she has shown the rest of us what it means to take care of each other.

Strafford is a better place because of Janet!

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Mikusa

Roz Finn

Rebecca Seibel

Brooke Wilkinson

Willis Phelps

MORRILL MEMORIAL AND HARRIS LIBRARY

The Library was a busy place in 2023. We hosted some well-attended events, including Spencer Hardy's presentation on bees, Herbert Goertz speaking about growing up in Nazi Germany, several book discussions, and Laura Ogden sharing photos and stories of her work with the indigenous people of Tierra del Fuego. There were also programs for children – singing and dancing on a Saturday morning with folks from Artistree, storyteller Michael Caduto, a kickoff event for the summer program at the Pocket Park with story-walks, a “beading bonanza,” and the always fun Fire Truck Night.

We were fortunate that another successful book sale took place before the flooding in July. While the Library itself only took in a relatively small amount of water in our basement, our collections at the Morrill Homestead, while undamaged, were moved by the State to safer storage while repairs are being completed at the Homestead.

We said goodbye to Children's Librarian, Sarah Rogers, in December, wishing her all the best as she and her husband are expecting their first child. Two long-serving trustees, Curt Albee and Marty Frank, retired from the board in 2023, and we are grateful for their dedication and many years of contributions and service. In their place, we welcome new trustees, Kevin Lynch and Becky Proulx.

We continue to grow our collections of books, periodicals, audio books and DVDs, as well as access to online collections through Palace, Libby, and Kanopy. If you would like to know more about using these services, just ask our helpful librarian, Melissa Strayton.

Finally, we are most appreciative and thankful for the financial support we receive from the Town and individual donors, and for the many volunteers who help out so generously.

The Trustees of the Morrill Memorial and Harris Library

Cindy Binzen
Rachel Kurland
Miriam Newman
Kevin Lynch
Becky Proulx
Carol Wilson

MORRILL MEMORIAL AND HARRIS LIBRARY

January 1 - December 31, 2023

Beginning Balance, January 1, 2023		\$ 32,242
Prior Year Adjustments		(1,016)
Adjusting Beginning Balance		31,226
Income		
Endowed Funds	\$ -	
Town of Strafford	34,000	
Friends of the Library	10,203	
Contributions Income	8,858	
Grants	3,936	
Interest and dividends	-	
Transfer from Fidelity Account	987	
Book Sale	1,085	
Miscellaneous Income	230	
Total Income + Transfers In		\$ 59,297
Expenses		
Memberships	\$ 1,717	
Books, Periodicals, DVDs, Audio Books	4,684	
Programs, Children and Adult	1,402	
Internet Service	1,479	
Interlibrary loan service	1,138	
Electronic Catalog	495	
Personnel Expenses	38,087	
Utilities	3,469	
Building and Grounds Maintenance	5,534	
Administration	5,921	
Miscellaneous	91	
Total Expenses + Transfers Out		\$ 64,016
Net Income		\$ (4,719)
Ending Balance		\$ 26,507
Reserve Account		
Beginning Balance, January 1, 2023		\$ 2,685
Interest		3
Ending Balance, December 31, 2023		\$ 2,687
Fidelity CD, Bequest		
Beginning Balance, January 1, 2023		\$ 125,453
Transfer to Checking		(987)
Earnings		4,343
Ending Balance		\$ 128,810

LIBRARY ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Market Value January 1, 2023	\$ 393,284
Transfers to the Operating Fund from Restricted Funds	\$ -
Subtotal	<u>393,284</u>
Market Value December 31, 2023	\$ 448,125

STRAFFORD FIRE AND RESCUE

The quickest, most reliable way to get help in an emergency is to call 911.

In 2023 our members responded to 105 emergency calls, of which were 69 medical in nature and 36 were fire calls. After the flooding that much of Vermont experienced this past summer, we received a generous donation from the Bio X Cell corporation towards the purchase of a UTV. This grant was matched by a donation from the Byrne Foundation in Hanover. These donations enabled us to purchase a new John Deere XUV 835 that will be invaluable during times when the roads are impassable to trucks and for fighting wildland fires inaccessible to other vehicles.

In 2023 we made much needed repairs to the foundation of the substation in South Strafford and are in the process of installing a generator so that our equipment can be maintained in the event of a prolonged power outage.

We thank you for your continued support whether you attend the 4th of July barbeque, make a donation, or simply thank one of our members; your support is greatly appreciated. We are always happy to welcome new members, too!

The following officers were elected at our annual meeting in January 2024:

President: Mike Ekergren

Vice President: Andrew Lane

Treasurer: Aaron Dotter

Secretary: Cabot Teachout

Fire Chief: Aaron Dotter

EMS Chief: Beth Preston

Board of Directors: Pat Kelly, Willis Phelps, Shawn Harlow, Aaron Dotter, Beth Preston

We would like to thank Shawn Harlow for his service as Fire Chief over the last 6 years.

We remember fondly Capt. Mike Clark, a valued member of the Department and a stalwart of the Fire Service for many years.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron Dotter
Fire Chief

Beth Preston
EMS Chief

STRAFFORD FIRE & RESCUE
January 1 - December 31, 2023

The following is a summary of our spending in 2023.

EXPENSES

<u>Category</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Vehicle Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 8,598
EMS Supplies	2,236
Utilities	8,412
Equipment Purchase & Maintenance	3,830
Insurance	11,629
Hanover Dispatch	14,473
Rescue Truck Financing	10,580
Miscellaneous	1,204
Testing	4,708
Training	400
Gear (PPE, Turnout)	3,725
Dues	520
Building Maintenance	2,359
Total Expenses	\$ 72,675

STRAFFORD COMMUNITY NURSE PROGRAM

With the hiring of Sheila Keating, RN in September 2023, SCNP officially transitioned from the planning stage we presented at last year's Town Meeting to the operation of the program.

With her keen listening style, caring demeanor, depth of healthcare knowledge and flexibility, Sheila has already had a meaningful impact on Strafford residents. During the last four months of 2023 she had 38 encounters (either in person, by phone, or via email) with 16 Strafford residents, where she provided emotional support, assistance (with food, housing or transportation), and referrals to other community or social service agencies. Sheila was also able to offer residents education or assistance with medical equipment, with advanced care planning, with COVID vaccination programs, with tele-health/technology and with symptom management. In one instance she communicated with a resident's healthcare provider, and in another she delivered an essential item to a home.

Sheila writes:

“I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to serve as the community nurse in Strafford. The job has proven to be even more fulfilling than I initially imagined, in the best possible way. In the time I've spent, I've had the privilege of meeting wonderful individuals, and the connections made have been truly heartwarming. I look forward to the ongoing journey of meeting more residents and continuing this meaningful and necessary work. Thank you for entrusting me with this role. Your support is deeply appreciated.”

SCNP is grateful for all of Sheila's work and for all who support our program. We look forward to providing an increasingly beneficial impact on the health and well-being of Strafford residents in 2024.

Margaret Gadon and
Cindy Stableford, Co-chairs

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

As we begin the second year of our biennium, we are working hard to make sure Vermont is a place people can work hard, play, raise their kids and retire safely and not worry about their bills.

In the last session, we extended the Vermont Child Tax Credit, made unprecedented investments in permanently affordable housing, and made zoning changes that should make it easier to build climate friendly and affordable housing where people need it. These investments help less wealthy Vermonters and contribute to our long term affordability as a state. We also took steps to reduce carbon emissions and build Vermont's resilience to climate change. We funded Universal School Meals and navigated the end of the COVID pandemic. We worked hard with the Senate to pass a balanced budget that meets our needs.

However, we still must grapple with some of the same challenges we faced last session. According to Vermont's Joint Fiscal Office, the share of working-age Vermonters, ages 25 to 64, was about 54.5 percent in 2010 but dropped to about 50.5 percent in 2022. We have a growing gap between the number of working age Vermonters and the number of jobs employers seek to fill: currently there are three job openings for every unemployed worker. This is part of why restaurants and stores are offering shorter hours, and you may see longer waiting times to get appointments for health care services. Without more housing that people can afford, these shortages will persist. The pandemic also harmed the mental health of our state's children, leaving them at risk of worse outcomes.

Over the summer and fall, Vermont experienced two catastrophic floods that caused extensive damage to homes, businesses, and municipal operations in several regions. These events have become very expensive and will have major impacts on this year's budget. We in the Upper Valley were spared the worst of this damage. However, planning for long term resilience and helping some of the hardest hit communities get back on their feet has to be part of the plan. As we build back, road by road and house by house, we need to be building back in ways that are more robust to future climate events.

We know how important our schools are to our communities. As the state transitions to the new education funding formula, it is grappling with several unintended consequences of the transition. It will be a difficult transition. Unprecedented increases in statewide education spending are being driven by:

- years of unfunded infrastructure needs,
- uncontrollable increases in health care costs in every budget,
- discovery of PCBs in schools across the state,

- new mandates,
- shrinking student populations and competition amongst schools for students,
- significant mental health challenges amongst our young people, and
- tax abatements to protect flood damaged communities.

We are fighting to make every dollar go farther for our communities and the people who live in them. We will also be pushing for better ways to make our communities welcoming and affordable not just for the people who already live here, but also for following generations, on whom we depend to build a bright future for our towns.

We have been sustained by the hard work, good ideas and civic spirit of so many of you.

Please reach out to us with questions and suggestions at RHolcombe@leg.state.vt.us or jmasland@leg.state.vt.us.

Representative Rebecca Holcombe
PO Box 170
Norwich, VT 05055
RHolcombe@leg.state.vt.us

Representative Jim Masland
714 Pero Hill Rd
Thetford Center, VT 05075
JMasland@leg.state.vt.us

STRAFFORD & AREA LIONS CLUB

The Strafford & Area Lions Club is a member of the largest service organization in the world. Lions Clubs International is a global leader in community and humanitarian service with over 1.4 million members in 49,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographic areas around the world. The Strafford & Area Lions Club has served our community with pride for over 37 years, seeking to improve the health and well-being of the community and to support those of us who may be in need, and this year was named the Vermont Lions Club of the Year.

The Club conducted vision screenings of more than 330 students in the communities of Strafford, Chelsea, and Tunbridge, and continued to operate and maintain the Lions Club Pond, the Rope Tow on Harrington Hill, and downhill and cross-country ski programs for more than 100 Strafford students. This year the Club began a youth swimming program at the Lions pond with over 30 Strafford youth participating. In support of local food shelves, the Club held its annual “Food from The Heart” food drive, collecting over 980 pounds of food and over \$2,300 in cash donations. As part of Strafford’s Fourth of July celebration, the Club again sponsored a wonderful gathering featuring the South Royalton Town Band playing patriotic tunes accompanied by Strafford students reading portions of the Declaration of Independence, and in May honored Strafford’s Randy Coffin as Citizen of the Year. On New Year’s Eve, the Club held its annual midnight run on the common beginning at the stroke of midnight. The Club also supported the Strafford recycling center, the Vermont Lions Charities Vision Fund and Flood Relief Program, Lions Clubs International Foundation, the Lions Twin State Soccer Association, and the Green Mountain Lions Camp for the deaf and hard of hearing, and collected 52 pairs of children’s pajamas in support of WomenSafe Vermont Family Services. Club members and others in the community made lap blankets and stuffed toy animals which were given to local hospitals and nursing homes. The Club collected used eyeglasses, hearing aids, and pill bottles to be recycled and given to those in need, and sponsored the Lions Peace Poster Contest at Newton School.

All funds raised in the community go directly to the Club’s charitable endeavors. The Club’s fundraisers included its annual Rose Sale, Thanksgiving Pie Sale, Memory Tree, Chili Cook-Off and Deer Pool.

The Club has 59 members and holds monthly dinner meetings at Barrett Memorial Hall on the 4th Monday of the month. The meetings include guest speakers on a variety of topics of interest to our community. Please feel free to attend. All are welcome. If you are interested in joining us in service to the Strafford community, please contact our Membership Chair, Sue Coburn.

STRAFFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Where we are: The Strafford Historical Society is looking forward this winter to the next phase of our renovation of the Masonic Hall with the goal of converting it into the Strafford History and Community Center. This winter Blake Spencer will address the interior structural issues from the basement upward, beginning with the installation of a vapor barrier, insulating the basement walls, a concrete floor in the basement to mitigate the dampness and finishing with a structurally sound floor system and an updated electrical service.

We anticipate needing to raise an additional \$200,000 to reach the ‘move-in ready’ stage of our renovations. Through a mixture of timely grants and your generous contributions, we have raised over \$250,000 to date. These additional funds will also finance the finish work inside the building (including a new ADA-compliant bathroom, conference room and small kitchenette) as well as on the outside (including outdoor meeting space with a deck and a planned landscape highlighting native plants). For more detailed information about the landscape plans, please go to our website below.

A permanent home for the SHS has long been a desire of all those who preceded us in the Historical Society, Bob and Stefanie Johnston, Gwenda Smith, and likely as far back as our founders, which 67 years ago included names no longer so familiar to many of us, such as C. William Berghorn, Dr. Wilbur Jordan, Catherine Ruml and many others. We are closer now than ever to making that permanent home a reality and are indebted to all those who have sustained the Strafford Historical Society over so many years.

Your tax-deductible contributions can be sent directly to the Strafford Historical Society, P.O. Box 100, Strafford, Vermont, 05072, or use the Donate button on our website at <straffordvthistory.org> to reach our secure donation site.

The Flood of '23: With the general flooding in Strafford in July and the Morrill Homestead's subsequent closure to the public, we were not immediately aware that some boxes of our archives and photos, which were being stored in the basement there while we renovated the Masonic Hall, had been affected. Fortunately, our curator and archivist, Simone Pyle, was able to dry out and restore all our photographs. Other items in our collection, including manuscripts as well some film footage, are in cold-storage at the Dartmouth Library or in the hands of the State of Vermont's Archives and Collections staff. Cold storage helps dry out damp manuscripts and prevents them from mildewing. Other rescued boxes and archival materials are now safe and dry in the attic of the Masonic Hall. We were lucky not to have lost anything of value.

Pak-van: Regarding our collection, much of it, such as our office furniture, conference table and chairs and many of our artifacts, have been stored in the Pak-van in the Park & Ride in So. Strafford since we vacated the Brick Store. In November, we began the slow process of moving the more portable items up into the Masonic Hall attic with the energetic help of students and faculty from Sharon Academy. Our special thanks to Mary Newman, Andrew Lane and the students who helped with the move by making repeated trips up the steep stairs to the Masonic attic. We intend to complete the clean out of the Pak-van and arrange for its removal this spring.

Village Meet-up: In June, Strafford hosted the Preservation Trust's Village Meet-up, a day-long, state-wide gathering at the Town House for historical preservation professionals and interested individuals. There were presentations describing current and anticipated municipal historical preservation projects around the state and the opportunity to hear case-studies including the proposed renovation of the Strafford Town Office, the Masonic Hall renovation and a replacement proposal for Town House Bridge #30. Those who attended from around the state had an opportunity to admire the Town House and visit Strafford's Upper Village, which is one of the few Vermont villages to have to preserved its original settlement pattern.

Website: If you have not recently visited our website at <straffordvthistory.org>, you may want to catch up on recent news as well as some of the more colorful and memorable episodes from Strafford's history and lore. John Freitag frequently contributes blogs, both historical and anecdotal, from Strafford's past. Also, you may enjoy exploring the extensive collection of Elizabeth Mine resource materials, including photos and videos, from Strafford's 150-years of mining history, and a stunning aerial photographic array documenting the transformation of the Elizabeth Mine site after the 20-year-long Super Fund remediation project.

Finally, my personal gratitude for the dedicated and creative efforts of the Board members and staff of the Strafford Historical Society during these difficult times: Laura Ogden, Secretary; David Webb, Vice President; Roberta Robinson, Treasurer; Simone Pyle, Curator; John Dumville; Jessica Tidman; Susan Cloke; Scott Knoerlein; Jared Jenisch; Carol Wilson, Registrar; John Freitag and Arthur Hanchett, Historians; and, of course, to the memory of Stefanie Johnston and for all she has meant to the preservation of Strafford's history. Our sincere thanks also to Blake Spencer, Melvin Coburn, Greg Colling, Rocky Fuller and Bob Johnston, each of whom has helped us in many and various ways.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Willbanks

THE FRIENDS OF THE MORRILL HOMESTEAD

The Justin Morrill State Historic Site and National Landmark is the homestead of Strafford's famous son, Senator Justin Smith Morrill. The site is owned and operated by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP), with support from the Friends of the Morrill Homestead (Friends).

Last spring the Friends eagerly anticipated a "normal" season full of events and programs at the Homestead. Even before the site was open, programming began with Pruning & Grafting workshops in March, followed by volunteers gathering to Wake Up The Garden in May. After the Homestead officially opened, the Friends hosted an Open House on a sunny June afternoon, perfect for enjoying a puppet show and ice cream in the gardens. It was a joy to welcome so many young families for their first visit to the Homestead. Mid-June was busy with a felting workshop, a Historical Walking Tour of Morrill's Strafford Village, and a fun morning of outdoor Nature Play with Four Winds Nature Institute. June finished off with the Gallery in the Garden celebration to kick off the Minis For Morrill Auction and open the "Art As Voice" exhibit. July started with an informative Tree Walk.

Then...the rains came and washed all our best-laid plans away! The basement of the Education Center experienced significant flooding and the banks of the brook were compromised. Alas, the site closed and the rest of our season was canceled or relocated.

Fortunately, we were able to move our July Drawing & Watercolor Camp to a former artist's studio in South Strafford. And in August, to commemorate the 140th anniversary of Sen. Morrill's gift of a library to the town of Strafford, we used the Town House to host Julius C. Jefferson of the Library of Congress and the American Library Association, presenting "The Morrill Acts and Historically Black Colleges: Libraries and Literacy."

Our event materials, goods, furniture, and equipment stored in the basement of the Ed Center all had to be discarded and will need to be replaced for the upcoming season. Additionally, we had to remove everything from our upstairs office to protect it from the possibility of mold. The building remains closed as the heating system awaits repair, but will reopen for summer programming.

The Homestead's Victorian gardens, historic grounds, and heirloom orchard are well cared for by our Master Gardener and a crew of teenage assistants and community volunteers. Although we were unable to access the grounds for over two months, a herculean effort by volunteers in September and October reclaimed the gardens and readied them for winter. The grounds, gardens, and orchard of the Homestead are open again for you to enjoy anytime.

In 2024, Morrill's historic Gothic Revival home will be open for guided tours from May 24 to Oct. 13. This summer, with the help of local volunteers and businesses, the Friends will be hosting our most popular events including our Open House and Puppet Show (June 9), Gallery In The Garden Gala (July 5), and AppleFest (September 22), along with a full season of workshops, tours, camps, walks, and more! The complete calendar of events with all the details will be found at morrillhomestead.org.

The Friends greatly appreciate VDHP's dedication to preserving the buildings and collections and the financial support from individuals, area businesses, and foundations whose generosity makes possible all of our activities. We look forward to seeing you and your families at the Homestead in 2024. Again, we would like to thank our neighbors and friends for your continued support of our endeavors!

Respectfully Submitted,
Tracey McFadden, Director
Ingrid Webb, Board Chair

THE STRAFFORD CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

The Strafford Cemetery Association is a private burial ground that is governed by the executive board made up of trustees of the association.

Plots are available for purchase by residents, former residents or close relatives of residents.

The association requests that the sexton be informed prior to any burial or monument installation. The cemetery is guided by a set of rules and regulations which the sexton can provide upon inquiry. No solar lights are allowed and all plastic flowers and planting containers must be removed by September 15th.

Our membership is open to anyone who is interested in the cemetery and new members are encouraged to join.

Officers of the association: President Gary Kendall, Vice President Greg Lewis, Treasurer Samantha Potter, Secretary Sherm Wilson, Sexton C. Punka Brown.

Board of Directors: Melvin Coburn, Barbara Murray, Ed Eastman

STRAFFORD ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

The Strafford Athletic Association (SAA) is an independent nonprofit organization, created in 1964. It is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt entity and welcomes contributions from anyone who believes in our mission. Rosa Tyson helped to create the organization and over the years we've had tremendous support. Again this year we want to recognize special memories and thanks to a few of the many: Kendal Mix, Dave Taplin, John Linehan, Peggy Thorp, Fred Schaafsma, John Freitag and of course the many others in our community who have dedicated countless hours and funding over the years. This organization remains relevant and is always looking to support and be helpful. In the past the SAA has been primarily responsible for starting many of the recreational facilities in town, including the tennis courts, the Rosa Tyson Gym, the Town Pond (formerly called the SAA Pond) and the Harrington Hill Rope Tow. Other town organizations, including the Lions Club and the Newton School, have since taken over responsibility for the recreation areas to provide insurance needs, but the SAA remains active to help care for each.

The mission of the Strafford Athletic Association is to provide "athletic" opportunities for residents of Strafford.

The SAA no longer owns anything in Strafford, but we continue to work with other town organizations and the school athletic department to help as necessary, either with funding or volunteer hours. Together, working with the Recreation Board, we continue to strive and fulfill our mission. We are always open to new ideas and again, we can accept tax deductible donations to help with our cause.

The volunteer board meets as needed when projects or events arise. If you would like to make a tax-free donation to the SAA or if you are further interested and just have questions please contact Tom Scull at 802-765-4617.

CABIN FEVER UNIVERSITY

Cabin Fever University, Strafford's institute of random learning, is a nonprofit adult education program based right here in town. Established in 1995 by Eva Behrens, CFU focuses on the wealth of knowledge and experience among local people. Eva observed that craftspeople, artists, seasoned travelers, and tech wizards populate our community. With neighbors as faculty members, CFU provides affordable classes and workshops, offering enrichment and recreational opportunities, while building a stronger community.

2020 was to be CFU's silver anniversary, and we were geared up for a celebratory season to acknowledge twenty-five years of community collaboration. However, like every other organization in our town (and state, and country, and world), our plans were squelched by the onset of COVID, forcing us to cancel the majority of our season. CFU continued to remain dormant in 2021 and 2022. However, we did pull together a fairly robust season in 2023, even though many of our instructors, presenters, and participants came to our events wearing masks. Some of the classes offered included: basket-making; needle-felting; cooking Middle Eastern cuisine; and making homemade pastas. Presentations included: energy efficiency & efficacy in private homes; metal detecting & local discoveries; and a history of town meeting. Travel slideshows included: a visit to Panajachel, Guatemala; an excursion to Morocco; and a mother & son expedition along the Long Trail.

In 2020 we booked and then cancelled a dance party featuring the Party Crashers to acknowledge our silver anniversary. However, we hope to bring the band back to Strafford in the coming months. 25 years is something to celebrate, even if we're celebrating a few years later than planned!

As always, we welcome ideas for new or rerun classes from community members. At our institution, any topic is possible. The workshops are a wonderful chance to meet and learn from our neighbors. We welcome volunteers, as well as ideas for new or rerun classes. Leslie Berger, Therese Linehan, and Barbara Masteller are the current board members. Contact any one of us with your suggestions.

Website: www.cabinfever.org

Contact: info@cabinfever.org

STRAFFORD CREATIVE PRESCHOOL

The Strafford Creative Preschool is located in the heart of the lower village, in the lower level of the Rosa B. Tyson gym and has been part of the Strafford community for over 45 years. The Creative Preschool now aligns with the Newton School calendar, offering valuable curriculum and playful programming to 3-5 year old children Monday - Friday during the school year, with maximum capacity of 18 children/day.

Strafford Creative Preschool collaborates with the Strafford School District within Act 166 which allows every child enrolled at the Creative Preschool to receive 10 hours a week, 35 weeks a year of free instruction, regardless of parental income or circumstance. As an integral part of early childhood education in Strafford, the Creative Preschool works to continuously adapt to the needs of children and families. We appreciate the trust of parents and caregivers doing the hard work of raising young children. We look forward to continuing our mission to help them grow and develop into joyful, curious, and secure individuals who are able to interact positively with the people and world around them.

The Creative Preschool's program is dedicated to providing experiences that are nurturing, playful, and engaging. This program is led by a team of passionate educators: director Jody Lowes and teachers Kate Reimanis, Kiersten Harlow, Beth Randall, helped by classroom aides Alicia Maher and Julia Martin. In addition to the day-to-day enrichment that the staff provides to each child, there are weekly visiting educators for Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, and Early Intervention support as well as Music Together with Brooke Wilkinson. The board is thankful for all of their hard work maintaining an in-person, child-focused, and joyful learning community through the past few years.

There is a new endeavor to announce this year: the Strafford Creative Nursery. Funding has been secured to start this new program that will offer safe, nurturing, engaging childcare for babies and toddlers (birth - 3 years) and we are working diligently for it to open in the first half of 2024. This program, housed in the United Church of Strafford, will be open 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM, all months of the year. This evolving venture seeks to fill a need for high-quality child care in Orange County, while supporting local families within our community.

The Creative Preschool Board is grateful to all of our volunteers and donors. Our success rests in large part on the abundance of time, wisdom, and kindness we receive as well as gifts of financial and material help. We deeply appreciate the support and generosity of the Strafford community. The Preschool remains a valuable educational resource because of your engagement and dedication.

Respectfully,

Creative Preschool Board of Directors

EAST CENTRAL VERMONT COMMUNITY FIBER NETWORK

Strafford is a member of the East Central Vermont Telecommunications District, the state's first communications union district (CUD), whose mission is to provide world-class fiber-optic based internet service to all on-grid homes and businesses in its member towns. The District consists of 31 member towns and owns the business which operates under the trade name ECFiber. The business has added over 800 new customers despite critical labor shortages and now serves over 8,500 customer locations via 1,700 miles of network, which, when fully built out, will bring fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) to about 32,000 premises over more than 2,000 miles of network.

In June, ECFiber celebrated the completion of its original 23-town network when it activated its operation center in White River Junction. In August, the District was awarded a \$13 million construction grant that will support the first three or four stages of its \$30 million, nine stage, network completion plan. In November, its Series 2023A municipal revenue bond received a "BB" rating from Standard & Poor's Global Credit arm, a historic moment in US financial history: the first time a municipal revenue bond, not backed by taxes and not for a regulated utility or exclusive service territory, received a rating. This was extended to the six earlier bonds as well.

The ECFiber network is complete in Strafford. We invite you to visit our website to learn more about ECFiber and encourage you to subscribe. You will not be charged until we actually start service.

The District contracts with Great Works Internet (GWI) of Vermont to operate the business. The biggest challenges we face now are not funding, but rather finding enough folks to construct the networks – people who know how to operate bucket trucks, splice fiber while 40 feet above the ground and who are willing to work outside in difficult weather. ECFiber is actively participating in state and regional workforce development efforts. If you are interested, or know of someone who may be interested, in these well-paid jobs, please contact ECFiber at www.ecfiber.net or call 802-ECFiber to learn more about us.

Strafford is represented on the ECFiber Governing Board by its delegate, Steve Willbanks, and by alternate delegates, David Webb and Andy Behrens. We can be reached at Strafford@ecfiber.net.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Willbanks

VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

For over 44 years, the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) has been teaching people with disabilities and the Deaf how to gain more control over their lives and how to access tools and services to live more independently. VCIL employees (85% of whom have a disability) conduct public education, outreach, individual advocacy, and systems change advocacy to help promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities into community life.

In FY'23 (10/2022-9/2023), VCIL responded to thousands of requests from individuals, agencies, and community groups for information, referral, and assistance, and program services for individuals living with a disability. VCIL Peer Advocate Counselors (PACs) provided one-on-one peer counseling to 140 individuals to help increase their independent living skills and 4 peers were served by the AgrAbility program. VCIL's Home Access Program assisted 178 households with information on technical assistance and/or alternative funding for modifications; 115 of these received financial assistance to make their bathrooms and/or entrances accessible. Our Sue Williams Freedom Fund provided 73 individuals with information on assistive technology; 41 of these individuals received funding to obtain adaptive equipment. 379 individuals had meals delivered through our Meals on Wheels program for individuals with disabilities under the age of 60. Our Vermont Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program which served 17 people and provided 7 peers with adaptive telecommunications enabling low-income Deaf, Deaf-blind, Hard of Hearing and individuals with disabilities to communicate by telephone.

VCIL's central office is located in downtown Montpelier (although we are working from home as our office, along with so many others, was devastated in the July flood) and we have four branch offices in Bennington, Chittenden, Rutland and Windham Counties. Our PACs and services are available to people with disabilities throughout Vermont.

During FY23, 1 resident of Strafford received services from the following program:

- Information, Referral and Assistance

To learn more about VCIL, please call VCIL's toll-free I-Line at: 1-800-639-1522, or, visit our website at www.vcil.org

CENTRAL VERMONT ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, Inc. (CVABE), a community-based nonprofit organization, has served the adult education and literacy needs of Strafford residents for fifty-seven years.

CVABE serves as central Vermont's resource for free, individualized academic tutoring for individuals (ages 16-90+) in:

- Basic skills programs: reading, writing, math, computer and financial literacy
- English Language Learning and preparation for U.S. citizenship
- High school diploma and GED credential programs
- Academic skill readiness for work, career training and/or college

Strafford is served by our learning center in Randolph. The site has welcoming learning rooms with computers, laptops and internet access to support instruction. CVABE staff and volunteers also teach students at the library or other local sites as needed.

On average, 1 Strafford resident enrolls with CVABE a year. Teachers instruct students one-to-one and/or in small groups. Each student has a personalized education plan to address his/her learning goals. These goals might include: getting or improving a job, earning a high school credential, helping one's children with homework, budgeting and paying bills, reading important information, obtaining a driving license, preparing for college, gaining citizenship, and more.

Children of parents with low literacy skills have a 72% chance of being at the lowest reading levels themselves, and 70% of adult welfare recipients have low literacy levels. By helping to end the cycle of poverty, your support changes the lives of Strafford residents for generations to come.

CVABE provided free instruction to 446 people last year in the overall service area of Washington, Orange and Lamoille Counties. It currently costs CVABE \$3,726 per student to provide a full year of instruction. Nearly all students are low income. Over 70 community volunteers work with CVABE's professional staff to meet the large need for these services while keeping overhead low.

We deeply appreciate Strafford's voter-approved past support. This year, your level support is again critical to CVABE's free, local education services. Only a portion of CVABE's budget is comprised of state and federal support. Funding is needed each year from the private sector and from the towns and cities we serve, to ensure we can help the neighbors who need education for a better life.

For more information regarding CVABE's adult education and literacy instruction for students, or volunteer opportunities, contact:

Randolph Learning Center
10 South Main St., Randolph, Vermont 05060
(802) 728-4492 www.cvabe.org

SOUTH ROYALTON AREA SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

The South Royalton Area Senior Citizen Center (SRASCC) serves the towns of Bethel, Royalton, Sharon and Strafford. Seniors from other towns are always welcome. To qualify as a senior, you must be 60 years old or older. Suggested donation is \$5.00 for seniors and \$7.00 for all others.

The Board of Directors is composed of three representatives from each of the four towns. Sue Pirie is the director for both meal sites, one being in South Strafford at Barrett Hall, serving meals on Wednesday at Barrett Hall and the other in Royalton, at the Royalton Academy building, serving meals on Tuesday only for now and on Thursday to prepare curbside and home-delivered meals. We are fortunate to have Ed Eastman as the cook for Strafford and Brandon Hamilton the cook for Royalton. The nutritional program provides one-third of the daily adult nutritional required. We served a total of 14,805 meals for the year 2022-2023. The food cost per meal was \$2.78 and total cost per meal \$9.04.

Since closing for COVID, attendance at the center has begun to get back to normal, curb side and home deliveries have remained high.

There is an established fund that offers aids any senior who may have a need. Any senior needing assistance may contact Sue Pirie, the Senior Director; Karen Eddy, the Senior Advisor, or one of your Senior Board Representatives with their request. Requests are reviewed in a confidential manner.

Fundraising events continue so as to assist in the cost of running the center.

Willing Hands donated approximately 4,300 pounds of fresh produce and eggs to the senior meal sites this year. Panera Bakery donated 100 large boxes of bread, sweets and bagels. Several local farms also donate lots of fresh produce and fruits. We thank them all.

Strafford Senior Representatives are: Debby Richie, Barbara Murray, Sue Coburn.

Submitted by,
SRASCC Board of Directors
Martha Fisk, President
Kay Ingraham, Vice-President
Corrine Ingraham, Secretary
Susan Coburn, Treasurer

CENTRAL VERMONT COUNCIL ON AGING

Central Vermont Council on Aging (CVCOA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the mission of supporting Central Vermonters to age with dignity and choice. For over 40 years, CVCOA has assisted older Vermonters age 60 and up to remain independent and in their homes for as long as possible. CVCOA supports caregivers and families as they help loved ones navigate aging. CVCOA connects aging persons in our communities to the network of benefit programs and services they need to thrive and implements special projects and programs to alleviate social isolation and loneliness. All services are made available to our clients at no charge without regard to health, income, or resources.

Services include:

- CVCOA Helpline - 1-800-642-5119 (toll free) or (802) 477-1364 - has the answers to hundreds of common questions from older Vermonters, their families, and caregivers.
- Information & Assistance staff counsels older Vermonters and families on the many available benefit programs and services, such as 3SquaresVT, seasonal fuel assistance, housing, mental health, legal assistance, support groups, healthy aging resources, and more.
- Case Managers work with clients in their homes to assess needs and develop, implement and coordinate individualized long-term care plans.
- Nutrition Services oversees the menu development and technical assistance for home-delivered, grab and go, and congregate meals, and provides the largest source of funding for the 13 meal sites that prepare and deliver these meals. Nutrition education and counseling services are available for older adults at high risk of malnutrition or in need of managing chronic conditions.
- State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) provides personalized Medicare counseling, Medicare & You workshops (now on Zoom), and enrollment assistance for Medicare Part D plans.
- Family Caregiver Program promotes the well-being of family members serving as caregivers to loved ones, administration respite funding, training to help caregivers manage stress, and social activities including Memorable Times Café/Memorable Times Online.
- Volunteer Programs provide direct service to community members. Volunteers offer companionship, transportation, assistance with technology, organizing, wellness classes, meal delivery, special event support, errands and grocery shopping, yardwork and gardening help, creative guidance, and more.
- Special Projects and Programs are designed to help alleviate social isolation and loneliness, addressing the accessibility gap for homebound

older adults and enhancing social connection through arts and technology opportunities.

The need for aging services continues to increase in Vermont. During the last fiscal year (7/1/22-6/30/23), CVCOA provided one or more services to 18 (unduplicated) Strafford residents. In FY23, CVCOA case manager Karen Eddy worked directly with clients in Strafford.

<u>Data by Type of Service: Strafford</u>	<u># Residents*</u>
Case Management	4
Information and Assistance	3
Nutrition Program ¹	20
Family Caregiver Services	0
Other Services (Wellness, Outreach, Socialization, etc.)	2

* Each unduplicated resident may receive more than one type of service in the categories above

¹ Central Vermont Council on Aging does not directly operate a nutrition site. The CVCOA Nutrition and Wellness Program provides federal funding, technical assistance, and nutrition counseling/education to 13 nutrition sites including Meals on Wheels of Central Vermont (formerly City Cafe) in Barre City. This program supports home-delivered Meals on Wheels, congregate meals, and grab and go meals, a new offering that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past year, CVCOA has continued to develop opportunities to enhance social connection through creating aging opportunities and technology training. CVCOA continues to expand our wellness offerings and develop new initiatives that focus on healthy aging.

All staff, board members, and volunteers at CVCOA extend our gratitude to the residents of Strafford for their ongoing commitment to the health, independence, and dignity of older adults in Central Vermont.

VISITING NURSE AND HOSPICE FOR VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE

Home Health, Hospice, and Pediatric Services

Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire (VNH) is one of the oldest and largest non-profit providers of in-home healthcare services in the region. VNH is committed to providing the highest quality care throughout all stages of life, from maternal child care to end of life hospice care, and everything in between. Providing individuals and families with the care they need within the comfort of their own home allows them to maintain comfort and dignity throughout their time of care.

VNH services reduce cost associated with town programs for emergency response and elder care. With quality care provided at home, there is less need for costly hospital and emergency room trips. And with VNH support, residents can age in place rather than relocating to a state or local nursing home.

Between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, VNH made 205 in-home visits.

- Home Health Care: 13 residents with short-term medical or physical needs.
- Hospice Services: 4 residents who were in the final stages of their lives.

VNH serves many of Strafford's most vulnerable citizens – the frail elderly and disabled, at-risk families, people with terminal illnesses, children with chronic medical needs and the uninsured and underinsured. We are dedicated to delivering outstanding home health and hospice services that enrich the lives of the people we serve.

It is with your help that we are able to provide services like this to those in need. Strafford's annual appropriation to VNH helps to ensure that all have access to quality care when and where it is needed most. On behalf of the people we serve, we thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Anthony Knox

Community Relations Manager

VSNIIP

The Vermont Spay Neuter Incentive Program (VSNIIP), under Vermont Economic Services is administered by Vermont Volunteer Services for Animals Humane Society (VVSA). Funded by a \$4.00 fee added to the licensing of dogs, resources are limited by the number of dogs licensed as required by law by 6 months of age. A rabies vaccination is required to license. The first vaccination can be given at 12 weeks of age. If unable to schedule an appointment with a vet office, Community Animal Aid (free to those on public assistance: 734-0259 at the E. Barre Fire Station) & Tractor Supply host monthly clinics. After vaccinating, contact your Town Clerk to license your dog. By statute, unlicensed dogs can be seized. Rabies is in Vermont and it is deadly.

Licensing identifies your dog and is proof the dog is protected in the event it is bitten by an animal but would still need immediate medical attention. Vaccinations and licensing protect if they bite another animal or person, which could result in the animal being quarantined or euthanized. If not proven by being licensed to be currently vaccinated, testing for rabies requires the brain to be examined.

For an application for VSNIIP send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: VSNIIP, PO Box 104, Bridgewater, VT 05034. Note if it is for a cat, dog, or both. To print out, go to: VSNIIP.Vermont.Gov. VSNIIP helps income challenged Vermonters with neutering and vaccinations. If approved, you'll receive a Voucher and instructions. If not, a list of low-cost resources will be sent. Several humane societies host spay/neuter clinics open to the public. Your cost for a VSNIIP surgery is \$27.00, if without complications. The balance is paid by fellow Vermonters with their \$4.00 fee collected at licensing. Veterinarians and their staff are the backbone of this important program. Thanks to their generosity and altruistic vision, Vermont no longer uses routine euthanasia as a means of population control. Sincerely thank your veterinarian for their participation in VSNIIP. If not currently a participating office, please ask them to join and help make a difference in your community. They are very needed.

Facts: Female cats as young as 4 months can become pregnant. The “mom” cat can/will become pregnant when nursing is finished. Males travel for miles to find a female in heat, often not returning. Cats and dogs (naturally) mark their territory if not neutered. Resolve Carpet Cleaner and a single moth ball in its place will help deter from repeat markings. (Do not use moth balls with young children in the house.) 70% of cats and 15% of dogs using VSNIIP are reported as strays or abandoned, which is cruel and illegal. Please do promote VSNIIP, helping those that cannot afford to neuter, that will otherwise reproduce over and over. Repeat litters can cause uterine infection, mammary tumors, kidney failure, etc., leading to death. “Farm” cats are especially at risk. Be wary of any seller of animals that won't allow you to see how they are kept before acquiring and want to meet in a parking

lot. Animals are often used as a means of making money, and their life may be the inside a room or cage. Please be the voice for those that cannot speak. Purchasing does not ‘save’ one, it ‘enables’ those to continue to misuse animals for money. Thank you for promoting this time proven program.

Thanks to now retired Lynn Murrell, DVM, who first agreed to extend reduced rates for animals in need, and all the veterinarians and clinics that served for the last forty years plus. A sincere thank you to Bernard “Snook” Downing for helping support many animals in need over the years with his hard work and contributions, and to the donors we are unable to thank in print – but you know who you are! Together we truly do make a difference!
800 HI VSNIP (1-800-448-7647)

Sue Skaskiw, Administrator
Executive Director, VVSA

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Twelve Local Health Offices around the state are your community connection with the Vermont Department of Health. The White River Junction Local Health Office provides essential services and resources to towns in Northern Windsor and Southern Orange Counties. Some highlights of our work in 2023 are below. For more information, visit HealthVermont.gov/local/white-river-junction.

Collaboration with Partners: The White River Junction staff works with over 30 diverse health care and social service organizations in the Greater Upper Valley Integrated Services Team (GUVIST). GUVIST is making services and support for community members of all ages more efficient, effective, responsive, and appropriate to the desires of those in need. To learn more about this initiative, visit uvpublichealth.org/guvist.

Addressing Health Equity: Our Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program helps pregnant people and families with children under age 5. We provide healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to community resources. Our office understands that not having transportation can make it difficult to get services. Our office has the most access points in the state with our nutritionists hosting clinics at seven satellite sites. If you would like to learn more, visit www.healthvermont.gov/local/white-river-junction/wic-white-river-junction.

Planning For and Responding to Emergencies: Our Emergency Preparedness Specialist, Immunization Nurse, Epidemiologist and other staff have worked with the Upper Valley Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to help our communities. They have spent hundreds of hours conducting COVID testing, administering COVID and Mpox vaccinations, investigating over 210 infectious disease cases and collecting

kits for water testing during flood recovery. Learn more about MRC at uvpublichealth.org/featured-partner-upper-valley-medical-reserve-corps/.

White River Junction Local Health Office
Toll-free: 888-253-8799 Main line: 802-295-8820
Email: AHS.VDHOLHWhiteRiverJunction@vermont.gov

PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL OF THE UPPER VALLEY

The Public Health Council of the Upper Valley (PHC) is our region's trusted leader in public health, supporting the people, professionals, and organizations who, together, make our communities healthier places to live, work, and play. Our mission is to improve the health of all Upper Valley residents. We do this in four key ways:

- 1) Unify the public health priorities of the region to promote collaboration and progress towards shared goals.
- 2) Work alongside health and human services organizations and policy makers to develop actionable plans and best practices to address the community's priorities.
- 3) Aggregate and disseminate important public health information across the region and bring people together to share ideas, experiences, and expertise.
- 4) Function as a backbone of support for underserved members of the community by serving as fiscal sponsor for program development, providing technical assistance, and advocating for health equity.

PHC is recognized by the State of New Hampshire as one of its regional public health networks and collaborates closely with White River Junction District Office of the Vermont Department of Health.

Our work in 2023 included:

- Released a new Community Health Improvement Plan that describes the collaborative strategies partners will use to address community health priorities.
- Hosted regular meetings for PHC partners to share information and provide opportunities for problem-solving.
- Distributed COVID test kits to social service organizations for vulnerable residents.
- Provided staff support to Upper Valley Strong as the coalition responded to the flooding.
- Hosted six flu clinics in rural communities with support from Dartmouth Health, Geisel School of Medicine, and local partners, providing over 1,500 free vaccines.

- Served as host for the Upper Valley Community Health Equity Partnership, a program funded through a grant from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Collaborated with local school districts and the Hartford Community Coalition to provide summer meals for children in the region.

PHC appreciates the opportunity to serve the residents of Strafford and will continue to work hard to meet your needs in 2024. For more information about PHC, visit us at www.uvpublichealth.org.

SAFELINE

Safeline, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides free and confidential services for victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse and stalking in Orange County and northern Windsor County.

In FY 2023, Safeline provided 2,324 services for 262 victims of domestic violence, stalking and sexual abuse.

40 services were provided for 5 (4 females, 1 male; 4 adults, 1 child) victims who identified themselves as residents of Strafford. It is likely that these statistics are understated, as victims often choose not to give any identifying information out of fear for their own safety.

These services included assistance with 5 Relief from Abuse protection orders, 1 elder abuse, 1 domestic violence situation, 1 child abuse and 2 stalking situations. Services also included crisis intervention (5), safety planning (3), emotional support (7), information/referral (4), and other services.

In addition to providing direct services, Safeline is a resource to the community at large and is committed to changing the culture of violence in our society. As part of this work, Safeline offers a full-range of prevention education activities for community organizations, faith communities, youth groups and other groups seeking information about domestic and sexual violence. Safeline gave a presentation to the Strafford Lions and the Strafford Senior Center.

A trained advocate is always available to provide crisis support, safety planning, resources, information and referrals through Safeline's 24 hours a day/7 days a week Hotline (1-800-639-7233). Survivors can also choose from a wide array of additional services including legal advocacy, day shelter services, job readiness skills development, and financial management education.

We thank the voters for your support as we work to end domestic violence and sexual abuse in Strafford.

CLARA MARTIN CENTER

Clara Martin Center provides a multitude of services throughout greater Orange County to best meet the needs of community members in a holistic approach. These include individual, couples, and group therapy and services for co-occurring mental health and substance use. We also offer psychiatric consultations and evaluations and medication management services. Services are confidential and include:

- Outpatient Counseling
- Hospital Diversion
- Psychiatric Services
- Walk-in Clinic
- Short-term crisis intervention
- Vocational Services
- School- and Home-based services
- Alcohol and other drug treatment
- Education for families
- Respite Care
- Community resource assistance
- 24-hour emergency system

Clara Martin Center is your local community mental health agency, providing behavioral health and substance use services to the greater Orange County and the greater Upper Valley area for the last 57 years.

Clara Martin Center’s broad range of programs serve children, families, couples, and individuals. Services are confidential and include counseling, psychiatric services, consultations, short term crisis intervention, school- and home-based services, education for families related to emotional and behavioral challenges, community resource assistance, alternatives to hospital care, respite care, housing, vocational services, substance use treatment, a walk-in clinic, and 24-hour emergency services. We strive to meet the care needs of the communities we serve, and provide services that meet the needs of the individuals that have entrusted their care to us.

<u>FY2023</u>	<u>Total Served</u>	<u>Strafford Clients</u>
Children & Family Services	463	6
School Services	102	0
JOBS	71	1
Adult Services	677	3
CSP Services	160	2
Supportive and Transitional Housing	15	0
Substance Abuse Services	284	5
Corrections Services	94	0
Emergency Contacts/Walk-in Clinic	293	3
Access	662	13
CCBHC Services	1,081	1
Total Served by Program (unduplicated)	2,191	20
CVSAS	258	0

UPPER VALLEY AMBULANCE, INC.

2023 has been a busy year for Upper Valley Ambulance. We are on track to respond to more calls than ever before. Ambulance services across the country are seeing this same trend. Some folks have asked for my opinion on this. Honestly, some of it has to do with our healthcare system and most of it has to do with our growing population that is aging.

The mission statement of Upper Valley Ambulance continues to be:

MISSION STATEMENT

Upper Valley Ambulance is a pre-hospital service whose primary focus is to provide high quality emergency care to our nine member towns. Our organization is committed to providing efficient, prompt and creative transportation systems both on a local and regional basis. We will meet the ongoing healthcare needs of the communities that we serve, and strive to provide total customer satisfaction. We will be proactive in seeking new opportunities to fulfill this mission.

To fulfill this, we have built a plan to replace equipment on a regular basis while keeping cost as low as possible. We have had to increase our staffing to accommodate the increase in calls over the past several years. We have seen a 49% increase in 911 calls since 2015. This increase affects equipment and personnel.

Our overall insurance budget for 2024 will be 21% higher than 2023. Our well-trained personnel need to be able to pay for their rent, food, groceries and fuel to have fulfilling lives. We believe that happy employees make better employees and thus better providers for all that call us in a time of need.

The per capita rate that we receive from the nine towns that we serve covers 40% of our total operating budget. We cover the remainder of our budget by billing for services provided. On average, it costs \$822.00 to provide one ambulance transport. Insurance carriers reimburse us a fraction of this cost. We take on extra work such as doing interfacility transfers, covering races and other events to help offset these deficits.

We currently have eleven full-time providers (including two administrative staff) and about 24 part-time providers. We have six providers certified at the Paramedic level, twelve at the Advanced EMT level, and seventeen at the EMT level. We have three ambulances, two of which are 4-wheel drive to accommodate the winter road conditions. We are slated to replace our oldest ambulance (2017) in early 2024 with another 4-wheel drive ambulance. We continually keep our providers well-trained and up to date on new equipment, procedures and protocols.

Our providers are extremely proud of the work that they do, and they should be. Upper Valley Ambulance has become highly respected in the EMS

community for their professionalism, skill and compassion. I am proud to be the Director of this fine organization.

If you ever have questions, please feel free to contact me. I love to brag about who we are and what we do!

Very Sincerely,
Alan Beebe, Executive Director

RED CROSS

As we look ahead to the new year, we take a moment to reflect on our profound gratitude to the municipal partners who help us deliver our lifesaving mission in our community. With your support, we are able to ensure the health, safety, and preparedness of our friends and neighbors throughout Northern New England.

Last year, our staff and volunteer workforce provided an array of services throughout the Northern New England region:

- We made 700 homes safer by installing 2,177 smoke detectors and educating 897 families about fire safety and prevention through our Home Fire Campaign.
- Trained 42,950 people in first aid, CPR, and water safety skills (training data for county level).
- We collected over 133,100 units of blood. Hospitals throughout Northern New England depend on the American Red Cross for these collections.
- In our region, over 3,400 service members, veterans, and their families received supportive services through our Service to the Armed Forces department.

In the past year, the American Red Cross has responded to 9 disaster cases in Orange County, providing assistance to 34 individuals. Most commonly, these incidents were home fires. Red Cross workers were on the scene to provide food, clothing, lodging, emotional support, and more to families during their hours of greatest need. Our teams also provide Mass Care to first responders. Things like food, water, and warm drinks strengthen the brave people of your local Fire and Police Departments as they answer the call to keep your residents safe.

Last year, Red Cross staff and volunteers worked throughout Orange County to educate residents on fire, safety, and preparedness. We made 3 homes safer by helping families develop emergency evacuation plans.

We collected 902 pints of lifesaving blood at 28 drives in Orange County.

Last year, 526 Orange County residents were taught a variety of important lifesaving skills such as First Aid, CPR, Babysitting Skills, and Water Safety.

We proudly assisted 11 of Orange County's service members, veterans, and their families by providing emergency communications and other services, including counseling and financial assistance.

Orange County is home to 3 American Red Cross volunteers. We have volunteers from all walks of life, who are trained and empowered to respond to disasters in the middle of the night, to teach safety courses, to help at our many blood drives, and so much more. The American Red Cross is proud that 90% of its staff is made up of volunteers; they are truly the heart and soul of our organization.



MUSICAL PRELUDE
CONSTITUTION BRASS QUINTET

PRESIDING
BRENDA HOSMER
Postmaster of North Hartland and
Former Officer in Charge in
Strafford

NATIONAL ANTHEM
CONSTITUTION BRASS QUINTET

WELCOME
ANDERSEN THORP
President
The Friends of the
Morrill Homestead

INTRODUCTION OF
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS
EMILY E. WADHAMS
State Historic Preservation Officer
for the State of Vermont and the
Division for Historic Preservation

DEDICATION OF THE STAMP
PHILIP C. DENNIS
Springfield District Manager
Customer Service and Sales
U.S. Postal Service

MUSICAL SELECTION
CONSTITUTION BRASS QUINTET

REMARKS
THE HONORABLE JAMES M. JEFFORDS
United States Senate

JUDITH RAMALEY
President
University of Vermont and State
Agricultural College

HONORED GUEST
THE HONORABLE ROBERT T. STAFFORD
Former United States Senator

Program from the Justin Morrill Stamp event at the Town House

Courtesy Strafford Historical Society

ORANGE COUNTY RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CENTER

Orange County Restorative Justice Center (OCRJC) is a community-based restorative justice agency, offering cost-effective alternatives to the Family, Criminal, and Civil Courts and the State Corrections system. We remain committed to our mission and vision—building and advocating for just communities by providing restorative programs to address legal issues, wrongdoing, conflict and the needs of harmed parties; and connecting participants to services that improve the health, well-being and positive behavior of individuals and the community. We want the everyday life in Orange County communities to be safe, just and provide opportunities for all people to thrive.

We offer 11 programs to Orange County residents: Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA), Community Restorative Practices training, Court Diversion, Driver’s License Reinstatement, Pre-Trial Services, Reparative Panels, Restorative Re-entry after Incarceration, Safe Driver Education, Transitional Housing, Victim Assistance and the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program.

During the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, 289 people were referred to us for services. Local volunteers provided 1,203 hours of their time to support 272 Restorative Meetings. We served 62 harmed parties (victims) and distributed \$9,107 in restitution to those who experienced losses due to crime. OCRJC helped: 53 people connect with counseling services, 17 people access our emergency support fund, and 22 people reinstate their driver’s license. We secured 4 apartments for transitional housing and had 70 people in our Safe Driver program.

In FY23, OCRJC worked with 2 people who live in or whose incidents took place in Strafford. For each incident referred to OCRJC, the person responsible and the individuals impacted by the crime are offered services.

OCRJC’s FY23 operating budget was \$534,247. We are proud to be supported by appropriations from every town in Orange County. The Town of Strafford appropriated \$350 for FY23 to support our work. OCRJC requests \$350 in 2024 to support ongoing programs.

Thank you for your support! For additional information, find our website at <https://ocrjvt.org> or contact Jessica Schmidt, Executive Director, at 802-685-3172 or info@ocrjvt.org.

VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, owned by its member municipalities, with a mission to serve and strengthen Vermont local government. It is directed by a 13-member Board of Directors elected by the membership and comprising municipal officials from across the state.

Member Benefits - All 247 Vermont cities and towns are members of VLCT, as are 142 other municipal entities that include villages, solid waste districts, regional planning commissions, and fire districts. Members have exclusive access to a wide range of specialized benefits, expertise, and services, including:

- Legal and technical assistance, including prompt responses to member questions that often involve how to comply with state and federal requirements. Staff responds to thousands of member questions and publishes guidance, templates, research reports, and FAQs. In 2023, VLCT specialists provided government-specific finance training as well as resources and consultation that help Vermont's cities and towns comply with federal rules for receiving federal ARPA and infrastructure funding. Staff also provides input to state leaders on designing and implementing grant programs for municipalities.
- Trainings and timely communications on topics of specific concern to local officials. The League provides training via webinars, classes at members' locations, and its annual member conference, the largest gathering of municipal officials in the state. In the wake of the 2023 floods, VLCT became a crucial information hub for local officials. VLCT's Equity Committee assists local officials in centering the work of justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in their municipalities' decision making, policies, practices, and programs.
- Representation before the state legislature, state agencies, and the federal government, ensuring that municipal concerns are heard collectively and as a single, united voice. VLCT's recent legislative efforts have helped cities and towns access additional resources to respond to the pandemic, repair roads and bridges, enact cybersecurity, improve housing and economic growth, promote renewable energy, provide emergency medical services, address equity and inclusion, and ensure the quality of our drinking water. Specific success in 2023 includes securing \$3 million for towns to expand their capacity to access state and federal grants through the Municipal Technical Assistance Program, fighting to balance changes to local zoning laws with state land use laws to facilitate housing construction, elevating awareness of the financial difficulties rural emergency medical services face, amplifying municipal concerns as the Legislature contemplates moving toward a state-led reappraisal system, and increasing municipal authorities in statute. Members are also

represented at the federal level to Vermont’s Congressional delegation and through our partner, the National League of Cities.

- Access to insurance programs. The Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF) provides comprehensive and cost-effective property, liability, and workers’ compensation insurance coverage, programs, and services that protect the assets of your community. The VLCT Unemployment Insurance Trust provides unemployment insurance at stable pricing. VLCT also offers members group rates on important benefits for municipal employees: life, disability, dental, and vision insurance. All the programs offer coverage and products that members need and ask for, help Vermont municipalities stretch their budgets, and are only available to VLCT members.

Members are welcome to contact VLCT anytime to ask questions and to access resources to help them carry out the important work of local government. To learn more about the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, visit vlct.org. Recent audited financial statements are available at vlct.org/AuditReports.

TWO RIVERS-OTTAUQUECHEE REGIONAL COMMISSION

The Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission is your regional planning commission. We are governed by a Board of Representatives appointed by each of our 30 member towns. We work to make the area better today, and to articulate a vision for a thriving regional economy that enhances the Region’s outstanding quality of life. The following are highlights from our work in 2023.

Technical Assistance on Planning Issues: Our staff support your local officials by being a wealth of information on many subjects, enabling them to serve you better. We provide advice on zoning, capital budgeting, and preventing flood damage; review solar and cell tower projects; stay abreast of state and federal initiatives so that local government can take advantage of these; and have worked hard to address the region’s housing crisis. The Municipal Technical Assistance Program has supported eligible towns in identifying project opportunities and funding sources to undertake those projects. TRORC staff have also assisted numerous towns with revisions to municipal plans, bylaws and studies.

Economy and Public Health: This year, TRORC supported the Region’s talented artists, food producers, and other parts of the creative economy sector through training and networking events. We also were able to provide many small businesses with grant funds to weather COVID-19, as well as guidance to towns on using their federal recovery funds. TRORC also helps identify and clean contaminated parcels of land for reuse.

Emergency Management and Preparedness: TRORC staff continued to serve as liaisons between Vermont Emergency Management and local emergency responders, organizations, and town officials on emergency planning. TRORC assisted several communities with updating their Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, helping to reduce future damages from disasters and enable greater state and federal funding when they do happen. When disasters happen, we actively become part of the state and local long-term recovery process and have done so most recently with the July floods.

Energy/Climate Change: TRORC assisted towns on Enhanced Energy Plans to save money for communities and further the State energy goal of meeting 90% of energy needs from renewable sources by 2050. TRORC has continued working to support member towns through assessing town buildings for energy conservation upgrades. We also work on state-level climate policy and local adaptation measures.

Transportation: TRORC also worked with towns to get funding to implement road improvement projects. We also work to support our transit agencies, build park and ride lots, and help towns with traffic counts and speed studies.

Specifically in Strafford this past year, TRORC helped complete the Local Emergency Management Plan and assisted the Planning Commission with updating its zoning and flood regulations. Staff also worked with the town on a municipal planning grant application to develop a capital budget and program. TRORC also assisted the town in a successful grant application to complete road safety markings and edge line striping on Justin Morrill Highway. Staff supported the development of a 150 kW community solar array which was commissioned and became operational in October, 2023

We are committed to serving you, and welcome opportunities to assist you in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director
Jerry Fredrickson, Chairperson, Barnard

STRAFFORD RECYCLING

In 2023, people in Strafford left at the Recycling Center 56.42 tons of Mixed Paper, 18.36 tons of Corrugated Cardboard, and 29.61 tons of Commingled plastic containers, glass bottles and jars, and metal cans. There were also 16 tons of Scrap Metal. Vince Robinson took 10 tons of deposit bottles and cans for redemption. These funds go to the Lions Club for various good works and partially to support the Recycling Center. The collection of plastic bags and other #2 and #4 film material amounted to 3/4 ton. Food scraps sent for composting in Corinth came to 4.73 tons. All of this cost right around the \$22,000 for recycling in the 2023 town budget. This coming year we are guesstimating the cost for recycling will be \$24,500. This increase is due to a large increase in hauling costs by Casella. Since they are the only company in the area which has the capacity to haul and process this material the town is in a similar position as they are with much else, where there is a limited choice of companies that can supply needed material and equipment.

If sometimes you come and one of our bins is full and you can't drop your stuff that Saturday, it is because we are reluctant to have a bin hauled that still has some space in it. It costs the town about \$375 every time Casella picks up one of our 30 yard roll-offs. Unfortunately, as with much else, the reality is not what was envisaged in the 1970s when people theorized that municipal recycling would pay for itself, because of the industrial value of the material collected.

Strafford is fortunate in that we have a lot of people who volunteer their time to keep the recycling center running while keeping costs down for the town. It was nice this year to see a lot of new people stepping up to volunteer. They work one Saturday morning each quarter to guide confused new people and keep the bins packed down. Thank you to them, and also to our long-time volunteers, some of whom have been doing this for more than 30 years. A special thanks to Roz Finn, who retired this year after helping Strafford Recycling in various ways over an unimaginably long time. Also, thanks to the members of the Recycling committee: Vince Robinson (ex officio), David Harris, Scott Moore, who make sure the Center is properly opened on Saturday mornings, move that pesky snow, clean up in various ways, etc. Anybody with interest can be on this committee.

Finally, if you have questions, suggestions or complaints, you might get a satisfactory response by contacting me.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Scanlan
765-9625
scanlan07@gmail.com

GREATER UPPER VALLEY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The GUVSWMD comprises 10 Upper Valley towns, overseeing a system for proper management of solid and hazardous waste, recyclables, and food scraps. GUV also provides special collection events for bulky and household hazardous waste, paint, electronics, tires, metal, and fluorescent bulbs as well as offering technical assistance, outreach, and education programs to area residents, businesses, schools, and municipalities.

- GUV held three special collections in 2023 in West Fairlee, Strafford and Thetford. We collected 7.25 tons of tires, 7 tons of electronics, and approximately 10 tons of “big” trash. Collection events are open to any resident or business within the district.
- As of November 1, members of the district recycled 1.7 tons of batteries. Batteries and fluorescent bulbs may be dropped off at the recycling center.
- Vermonters saved 103,166 gallons of paint from the landfill in 2022. Check here for paint drop-off locations: <https://www.paintcare.org/drop-off-sites/>
- 408 GUV residents (19 from Strafford) participated in two household hazardous waste events.
- 148 GUV residents participated in two Styrofoam collection events sponsored by Sustainable Lebanon and Lebanon Rotary.
- 2024 GUV collection event dates and recycling updates will be posted on our website, Facebook page, town listservs, and in local newspapers.
- In FY2023, Steve Willbanks once again represented Strafford on the GUVSWMD Board of Supervisors. We thank him for his dedication and ongoing support. We also thank all of the recycling volunteers for their continuing support.

For information, call Ham Gillett at 802-674-4474, email hgillett@marcvt.org, or visit www.guvswwmd.org

GREEN UP VERMONT

Green Up Day, continued to grow with 23,500 volunteers statewide who cleaned up nearly 348 tons of litter and 15,000 tires. We saw 23% more volunteers lend a hand and heard in many cases there was less litter (30%) to be cleaned up. Tire collection saw a 4.8% increase. The statistics show that the hard work to beautify Vermont is still needed but also that our efforts for awareness are paying off. As one of Vermont's favorite traditions, it is imperative for today and for future generations to keep building pride, awareness, and stewardship for a clean Vermont, as well as keep residents civically engaged.

Support from your municipality is essential to our program. Funds help pay for Green Up Day supplies, promotional outreach, and educational resources including activity books, contests for kids, and a \$1,000 scholarship. We are requesting level funding for 2024.

Green Up initiatives are year-round and further our environmental impact with waste reduction programs, additional clean-up efforts, and educational initiatives.

Green Up Vermont is a private nonprofit organization that relies on your support to execute the tradition of cleaning up our roads and waterways, while promoting civic pride, and community engagement. Thank you for supporting this crucial program that takes care of all our cities and towns.

Your donations make a huge impact and can be made on Line 23 of the Vermont State Income Tax Form or online at www.greenupvermont.org.

Visit our website, like us on Facebook (@greenupvermont), and follow on Instagram (greenupvermont). greenup@greenupvermont.org 802-522-7245

STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORTS



Newton School Class of 2023

*Kody Merchand, Tanner Hardy, Kai Slayton, Levi Smith,
Ada Breese, Elenore Mullins, Annelies Currier, Jesse Martin,
Leif Hanchett, Hailey Race, Reagan Ekegren*

**TOWN OF STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
WARNING OF ANNUAL MEETING**

March 5, 2024

The legal voters of the Town of Strafford School District are hereby NOTIFIED and WARNED to VOTE BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT either via mail as provided by the Town Clerk or at the **Strafford Town House on March 5, 2024 between the hours of 7:00 o'clock AM (when the polls will open) and 7:00 o'clock PM (when the polls will close)** and thereby act on the following questions:

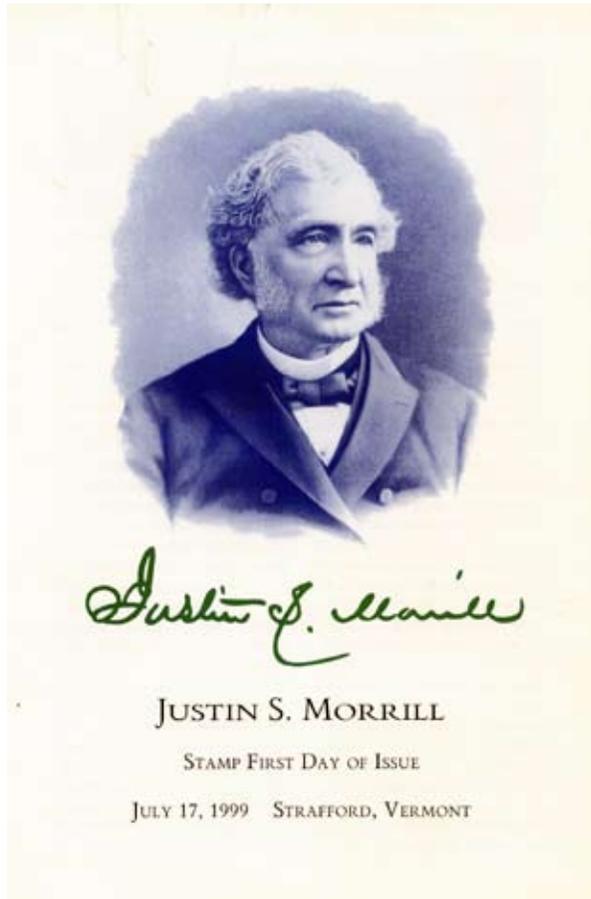
- Article 1.** To elect a Moderator who shall immediately assume office and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.
- Article 2.** To fix the salaries in the amount of \$500 for the School District Officers for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Article 3.** Shall the legal voters authorize the School Board of Directors to borrow money by issuance of notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025?
- Article 4.** Shall the legal voters of the school district authorize the School Board of Directors to expend \$4,151,186 which is the amount the School Board of Directors has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year. It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$14,161.23 per equalized pupil.
- Article 5.** To elect one (1) School Director for a term of three (3) years, one (1) School Director for a term of two (2) years.
- Article 7.** Shall the legal voters of the School District authorize the School Board of Directors to transfer to the Tuition Reserve Fund in an amount not to exceed \$180,000 from the estimated fund balance of \$419,787 existing as of June 30, 2023?
- Article 8.** Shall the legal voters of the School District authorize the School Board of Directors to transfer to the Capital Improvement Fund in an amount not to exceed \$220,000 from the estimated fund balance of \$419,787 existing as of June 30, 2023?

The legal voters of the Strafford Town School District are further notified that voter qualification and registration relative to said meeting shall be as provided in Section 706(u) of Title 16, and Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Dated: 15 January, 2024

Strafford Town School District Board of School Directors

Sarah Root, Chair
Eric Lopez, Vice Chair
Jessica Tidman, Clerk
Maggie Hooker, Member
Dustin Ray, Member



*Cover of the program for the Town House ceremony
for the First Day Issue of the Justin Morrill postage stamp*

Courtesy Strafford Historical Society/John Freitag

**TOWN OF STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING
March 7, 2023**

David Grant called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM to discuss the articles in the annual meeting warning for the Strafford School Board.

Article 1. To elect a Moderator who shall immediately assume office and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.

Toni Pippy nominated David Grant as moderator. No other nominations. David Grant has been elected as moderator for the coming year.

David introduced the warnings and let the body know that we're going to take a little extra time on Article 2. David reminded everyone of Robert's Rules.

Article 2. To hear the reports of the District, including the reports of the Board of Directors, the Treasurer, the Auditor, and the Superintendent, and to take action with reference thereto.

Christa Wurm motioned to hear the reports of the District. Nellie Pennington seconded the motion. Ayes appear to accept the reports as written. Motion is passed. We will now hear the reports of the district.

Sarah Root, School Board Chair introduced professional staff of Newton and the WRVSU; Tracy Thompson, Newton Principal; Jamie Kinnarney, Superintendent; Tara Weatherell, Business Manager; and Anda Adams, Chief Academic Officer of MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support).

Sarah Root shared with the body that the entire school board stands behind the budget.

Jamie Kinnarney reported that he is proud of what's happening at Newton. There is a continued focus on strengthening mathematics at Newton. There is an updated WRVSU strategic plan. Jamie reminded the body that his door is always open. The Supervisory Union is revising curriculum documents so everyone knows what is expected of students at each learning level. Newton is attempting to increase their visibility in the community. There are bimonthly community dinners with childcare and conversation about what's going on at Newton. As a district, the WRVSU is starting to tackle deferred maintenance. Historically our town has done a good job of taking care of The Newton School. This summer we're doing a lighting upgrade at Newton which will include LED lighting throughout the school building.

Tara Weatherell - Business Manager. Moderator David Grant explained that Tara will read each article and will provide information on what the article means.

Article 3. To fix the salaries in the amount of \$500 for the School District Officers for the 2023-2024 school year.

This is the stipend for Board members. Toni made a motion to accept the article as written. June Solsaa seconded the motion.

Eric Goodling made a motion and Hilary Linehan seconded the motion to amend the article and increase the annual stipend for school board members to \$550.00. Discussion ensued. Eric Lopez appreciates the gesture but wishes to keep the stipend as is. Jessica Tidman seconded Eric Lopez' thoughts. The amendment was defeated.

Vote on Article 3 as written. With no objection, we will vote on article 3. Ayes appear to have it. Article 3 is passed.

Article 4. Shall the legal voters authorize the School Board of Directors to borrow money by issuance of notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024?

This is our tax anticipation note. While we are waiting for money to come in, we need to have money available to cover expenses until we receive money from the education fund.

Christa Wurm motioned to accept the article as written, Jonathan Stableford seconded the motion. Vote. Ayes appear to have it. Article 4 is passed.

Article 5. Shall the legal voters of the school district authorize the School Board of Directors to expend \$3,728,296 which is the amount the School Board of Directors has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year. It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$20,455.88 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 4.51% higher than spending for the current Year.

Mary Linehan motioned to accept Article 5. Nellie Pennington seconded. Sarah Root noted again that this budget is unanimously supported by the school board. Under our new leadership, we use zero-based budgeting. We don't take what we did last year and modify it. We start from scratch and we build a budget based on what we need to make our school operate. The budget does reflect a decrease in our school tax portion. The budget takes into consideration the needs of our students so that they will receive a proper education. This budget allows for the flexibility to deploy interventionists to further educate our students based on the data. There are no staff increases in this budget. Our Common Level of Appraisal won't change for this year.

Moved to vote. Ayes appear to have it. Article 5 is passed.

Article 6. To elect one (1) School Director for a term of three (3) years, one (1) School Director for a term of two (2) years and one (1) School Director for the remaining one (1) year of a three (3) year term.

One year term: Glenn Wylie's position that Eric Lopez took over. Jessica Tidman is running for that position. Eric is running for the 2 year position and the 3 year position is open.

One year term for School Director nominations: Sarah nominated Jessica Tidman. Sarah moved to close nominations. Clerk casts 1 ballot for Jessica Tidman for 1 year of the remaining 3 year term. Ayes appear to have it. Jessica Tidman is elected School Board Director for a one year term.

Two year term for School Director nominations: Meg Teachout nominated Eric Lopez. Nominations closed. Clerk casts 1 ballot for Eric. Eric Lopez is elected School Board Director for a 2 year term.

Three year term for School Director nominations: Dustin Ray nominates himself. His children attended Newton and he would like to get re-involved in school and help make Newton better. Gigi Graner spoke in support of Dustin's nomination. Clerk casts 1 ballot for Dustin Ray for school director for a term of 3 years. Dustin Ray is elected to a 3 year term as school director.

Article 7. Shall the legal voters of the School District authorize the School Board of Directors to transfer to the Tuition Reserve Fund in an amount not to exceed \$92,000 from the estimated fund balance of \$217,561 existing as of June 30, 2022?

Toni Pippy motioned to accept Article 7 as written. Nellie Pennington seconded the motion. It was explained that this is a rainy day fund especially since we don't know what is going to happen with high school tuition rates in the future. Vote on article 7 - Ayes appear to have it. Ayes do have it. Article 7 is passed.

Article 8. Shall the legal voters of the School District authorize the School Board of Directors to transfer to the Capital Improvement Fund in an amount not to exceed \$125,561 from the estimated fund balance of \$217,561 existing as of June 30, 2022?

Toni Pippy motioned to accept Article 8 as written. Mary Linehan seconded the motion. We have an aging building that will require improvements. The purpose of this motion is to help defray those costs.

Christa Wurm took the floor and asked to make an amendment. Christa motioned that we take \$10,000 of the total and put it toward a bonus to the teachers and staff at The Newton School. Christa feels it's worthwhile to demonstrate our gratitude and support of everything they did to get our school through the pandemic. Moderator David Grant clarified that this request should not be an amendment to this Article but directed as a request to the school directors. Sarah Root asked if Christa could amend the Article to remove \$10,000 from it. Superintendent Kinnarney reminded everyone that the bargaining unit (union) runs across the district. If we don't decide to put surplus funds into reserve funds, by statute they go back to offset

taxes. No germinating amendment from the floor. But thank you Christa for the generous sentiment. The school board is very thankful for the staff at Newton and the amazing job they have done throughout and after the pandemic. The question is - how do we show our teachers and staff how appreciative we are.

Moved to vote for Article 8 as written - Ayes appear to have it. The ayes have it. Article 8 is passed.

Article 9. Shall the Town of Strafford elect its school district officers by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A § 2680(b) and adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2680(c), and vote on all public questions by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2680(d)?

Toni Pippy motioned to accept Article 9 as written. Nellie Pennington seconded the motion. Maggie Hooker shared with the body that we were not unanimous as a school board. Members will speak on the floor. New resident asked a clarifying question. By law, we're required to have this meeting. What changes is the matter of voting. Through Australian ballot, everything we see is in front of us, but we will vote over the day. There will be an informational meeting like we did today. There will no longer be an ability to amend from the floor. Any concern about making amendments. The final pieces we would vote on, there would be discussion and discourse on the Saturday beforehand.

John Freitag made a motion to divide the question. John Echeverria seconds the motion. This would mean we can consider 3 different parts on the warning. This would require a majority to want to divide the question. We're voting on whether to divide the question and proceed with 3 votes. Voice vote did not get an outcome. Now we're voting by show of hands, dividing the house. David will call for ayes and nays and ask us to stand. 46 votes in favor of dividing the question. 53 voted no to dividing the question. We will proceed with Article 9 as written.

A lengthy discussion ensued about Australian ballot with members of the body expressing their pros and cons of the Article.

John Echeverria moves to amend the article: rescind half of what was in the proposed article. Proposing to make all of the business of the school board not subject to Australian ballot, which is a form of dividing the question. We have to have an up or down vote of Article 9. Shall the Town of Strafford adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot. David Grant informed the body that you can't divide the Article because it's already been voted on. Toni Pippy stated that the law says that voting has to happen on Tuesday.

Toni motioned to move the question. Vote to move the question is put before the body. The ayes appear to have it. The ayes have it.

We will vote on Article 9 in it's entirety. The ayes appear to have it. Article 9 is passed.

Article 10. To transact any other lawful business to properly come before the voters.

Joey Hawkins thanked the school board for being so thoughtful. She also asked the body to think about Mr. Bob Murray who died before Christmas. He was in our school for many, many years. Coming to this meeting and not seeing him feels very weird. He was a remarkable man who served his community so incredibly well and this seems like a good time to thank him. Thank you, Bob.

Andrew Lane discussed Senate Act 66 and H 258 bills. It will eliminate the ability for towns like Strafford to send tuition to any independent schools except Thetford Academy. There are lots of solutions for how we might examine the question of not funding religious education with our tax dollars. Please express your opposition to these bills. It would be problematic for our town and raise our taxes.

Becky Proulx welcomed new board members and thank you to Meg Teachout who served on the board. Becky watched active debate at the school board level and Meg brought great energy to the debate.

Charlotte Faccio thanked the school board for all they do. As a representative of the Justin Morrill Homestead was sharing a flyer.

Jessica Tidman: Strafford Historical Society and plans for the building. There is a plan to have a community center. Please discuss with Jessica and Laura Ogden.

Meg Teachout: thank you to everyone who dropped food for the lunch.

Sarah Root spoke about Meg who is leaving the board. If you've been to the meetings, Meg and Sarah don't always see eye to eye but she has taught Sarah to listen better and come with an open heart. We will miss her on the Board. She will still help with community engagement meetings. Has been invaluable on the school board and thanked her for her time and effort and she's sorry to see her go.

Motion to adjourn. Sarah moved, Toni seconded. Meeting adjourned.

SCHOOL DIRECTORS' REPORT

The Strafford School District and Newton School appreciate the support the citizens of Strafford give to our students and school. Spending time at the Newton School is always a pleasure. Students and staff sing as they walk through the hallways. Most faces have smiles on them and there is a skip in their step. Please come in and volunteer. You will not only enjoy yourself, but we believe you will find it rewarding

Newton School's leadership team is strong and our staff is outstanding and clearly committed to the education of Strafford students. The middle school program continues to grow as we implement new programs and new spaces in the building for all kinds of growth. We are very fortunate to have such creative and dedicated staff. The budget continues to support four middle school teachers who deliver content-based instruction and one teacher per grade level in kindergarten through fourth grade.

In partnership with the WRVSU, Energy Efficient Investments (EEI) has been working with Newton School to assess and recommend ways to move the facilities forward in energy efficient ways. EEI has conducted audits of our buildings and energy systems and has and will continue to provide cost effective recommendations to improve the energy footprint of our building. With their recommendations we have equipped all of our campus with new energy efficient lights.

We continue to look for meaningful ways to engage with the community. This past December, the district held a community conversation hosted by Newton School focused on Healthy School Communities. We will hold more of these facilitated conversations in the future.

The board is also engaging in our own development. This development has been critical to understanding the sometimes not so clear role of a board and how we can work together more effectively.

This year's budget is complicated by several factors that are not in control of the board. We are asking our community to adopt a budget that is 11% higher than last year. That budget is driven in large measure by costs that are beyond the control of the budgetary process. The cost of healthcare has increased by about \$140,000 or 16%. As we've explained before 92% of our budget is set and we do not have the ability to cut or change it. This includes tuition for our high school students which has increased this year by \$60,637. If there is a cut to be made it will only come out of the Newton School. To bring the budget low enough to not have a tax impact would mean taking over \$750,000. out of the budget. The impact of that on Newton School would be devastating.

What is not as clear about the budget before you is how the budget increases impact the bottom line – how much are my taxes going up? Our community benefits and at the same time is adversely impacted by Act 127. Act 127 allows for a pre-Common Level of Appraisal tax cap of 5% (so long as the per pupil spending does not exceed 10% which, in Strafford’s case, we have not.) Unfortunately, there are many other school districts which are similarly situated and there has been a diminishment of federal funds rolling into our State educational fund. This has had a significant effect on the education fund which has resulted in a lowering of the yield (what we can expect to see from the education fund per student and which was in our favor last year) from \$15,433 to \$9,171 per student. This lowering of the yield is exacerbated by a post cap property assessment (or the Common Level of Assessment) that has dropped from 88.22 to 82.76. Both, together, work to drive up our tax rate and the real cost to the taxpayer independent of the budget increases.

What does all this mean? It means that, given the current funding formulas, even if we were to level fund the budget (propose a budget that is the same amount as last year – which is not possible given the increases mentioned above) we would be left with the same tax increase. The only way to get to substantial lowering of the tax rate given the funding formulas is to engage in deep and substantive cuts to Newton School – the only budget within Strafford’s control.

Lastly, as part of the creation of the budget, the board gave serious consideration to what to do with the projected \$420,000 surplus from the previous year expenditures. We came to the realization that, because of the funding challenges previously discussed, returning those monies to the taxpayer yielded only about a 1¢ decrease to the tax rate and would have the district start the budgetary process next year at a deficit.

All the hard work by faculty and staff over the pandemic and post-pandemic years would be gutted by the need to reduce the budget as drastically as would be needed in order to yield a lower tax burden on the individual taxpayer. It would likely result in significant staff reductions as well as substantive cuts to programming. The Board does not favor this approach and asks our community for their support in these incredibly challenging and complex financial times. Said differently, the Board urges taxpayers to vote yes on the budget and yes on the articles which create and bolster reserves so that we can lessen the impact on future budgets.

We hope you consider adding your voice and run for a position on the school board either this year or in the future. The voice, time and dedication of the citizen members of the School Board of Directors as well as the many volunteers in other school related activities are critical to the continued success and improvement of educational offerings and opportunities for our Strafford students.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Root
Chair

Eric Lopez
Vice Chair

Jessica Tidman
Clerk

Maggie Hooker
Member

Dustin Ray
Member



Former U.S. Senator Robert Stafford, left, speaks with Roderick Maclay, Strafford Selectboard Chair, before the start of the ceremony marking the release of the new Morrill Stamp

Valley News - Jennifer Hauck

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT THE NEWTON SCHOOL

Newton School Mission Statement

“To develop each child’s potential for academic success, engagement and overall well-being. Through this process, we will enrich each child’s education with community involvement, collaboration and outreach.”

This year we opened the doors of the Newton School on August 30, 2023. The rainy weather certainly dampened the traditional first-day breakfast but not the excitement of the students as they reconnected with classmates and met students new to Newton. The 23-24 school year started with a student enrollment of one-hundred-ten students in kindergarten through eighth grade. We welcomed thirteen new kindergarten students and their families to the Newton learning community. The excitement and freshness of a new school year was shared by the teachers and staff at Newton as well. The vast majority of our teaching teams returned to Newton and we welcomed new teachers to our elementary, middle and Encore teams. In-service days scheduled prior to the students’ arrival are a time for staff to meet and plan for the arrival of students. These in-service days not only allow time for sharing updated information and summer planning; it is also a refreshing time for staff to reconnect with their teams which allows for a positive and strong start to the school year.

Summer is also a time when our custodial and maintenance staff are extremely busy. This summer we continued creating spaces for small group instruction and began the work of creating another single occupancy bathroom downstairs on the middle school level. This work became a more extensive project that we are still working through at this time. We are projecting the completion of this work before the end of the school year. All of this work is funded in the 23-24 local budget.

The academic success and continuous growth of all Newton students remains a priority of the Newton School. The academic performance of our students is assessed and measured regularly through local and statewide assessments. The results of these assessments drive instruction, and develop intervention groups. Newton’s intervention program is strong and meets the needs of many students. The goal of this work is to fill gaps in understanding, strengthen student skills and support their re-entry into full classroom participation. Newton currently has staffing for a half-time reading interventionist and full-time math interventionist. These positions are critical for continued student growth and support. Assessments used to identify the need for intervention include Track My Progress, Primary Number and Operations Assessment (PNOA), DIBELS (assessment of phonics and phonemic awareness), and the new VTCAP, which replaces the SBAC assessment, will be administered in the spring. The results of

these assessments are not stand-alone measures. The cumulative picture they create helps identify and support our student's needs.

Baseline results from September of 2023 show 54% of Newton's English Language Arts assessments show students meeting or exceeding the standards. In mathematics, 59% of our students grades two through eight meet or exceed the standard. These results are not typical of our students and show a slide in data from the previous year. With our new programming and continued professional development and intervention, we anticipate strong rates of growth when the January assessments are administered. In addition to the regular school day, Newton now offers Spanish classes to all of our K-8 students, Pathways and Media classes to our middle school and Outdoor Education to kindergarten through fourth grade. This year, with the support of the Community Schools Grant, we reinstated instrument lessons for our middle school students. Fifteen families are taking advantage of these lessons which are being offered at no cost to our community.

Grade level configurations at Newton are unchanged from last year. We currently support a four person teaching team in the middle school where content level instruction is shared with forty-two students grades five through eight. Our elementary teachers support one section of each grade level with an average class size of fourteen students. We continue to focus our culture under the guidelines of Responsive Classroom with morning meetings and advisory being the foundation of our community. This summer a team of nine teachers participated in the BEST Institute at Killington. During this time there was extensive time set aside for learning while also planning for our social emotional curriculum needs. Additionally, two curriculums were adopted by the Newton Staff. All students kindergarten through fourth grade receive reading instruction through the EL program while our middle school students use the Amplify Program for science instruction. These new additions build on the Bridges and Connected Math curriculum currently in place.

This fall we held the grand opening of the new outdoor learning space. Newton is grateful to Hunter Grossman and his team for this new space. Students access this at all times of the day for classroom work and outdoor education. This space will provide an alternative work space for our students, and is often where many of them learn best.

Finding balance is always the challenge and priority when building the budget for the Newton School. The impact the budget has on our local community is continually considered when building for the needs of the students of Strafford. The budget presented to you supports the work outlined above and allows for the staffing needed to support a highly achieving elementary and middle school program. It further begins to address the needs expressed during community conversations this fall and winter.

I always find myself grateful for the staff, students and community of Strafford. We regularly hear of the struggles from surrounding area schools and the situations and events that impact student learning. Although all schools have their challenges, Newton maintains a positive school climate where students are the foundation of all of our work. The community of Strafford has a long-standing history of supporting our school and I want to express gratitude for this support and share the seriousness and consideration that is taken when making decisions for the school. I am grateful for the partnership we share with the supervisory union, PTA, Creative Preschool, Strafford community organizations, and the town of Strafford. It is this partnership that allows us to care for and educate the students of the Newton School.

Tracy L. Thomspson
Principal

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT & CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

We want to begin by thanking the Strafford community for their continued support and commitment to all of the students and faculty/staff of The Newton School. The fiscal year 2025 budget was developed with a focus on addressing continued expansion of programming at The Newton School in response to feedback received from our Newton School stakeholders, while also navigating a new funding formula due to the implementation of Act 127. This programming expansion will allow for increased opportunities for personalized learning and flexible pathways in the middle school, along with more world language throughout the school. In addition, the budget also continues our commitment to provide outdoor education and experiential learning throughout all grades at Newton. We are also looking to further expand after-school activities for all of our students via clubs, athletics, drama, and other co-curricular opportunities.

The Newton School has worked diligently to ensure great teaching and learning for every student in every classroom every day. New research-backed curricular materials paired with intentional planning and high-quality instructional approaches have led to high levels of academic and social-emotional growth throughout the school. Teams of educators meet regularly to ensure that all students have the right support to make progress toward and meet grade-level expectations and opportunities to explore concepts deeply through integrated, hands-on, and real-world applications. This commitment to student-centered learning and growth aligns with our Supervisory Union's work to develop K-12 content area proficiencies and a WRVSU Portrait of Learner that clearly outlines our collective vision for what our students should know and be able to do as they attend our schools.

We are confident that this budget provides the resources necessary to provide a high-quality and responsive education for all students of The Newton School, while also making certain that it happens in a fiscally responsible manner. We continue to work diligently to curb spending at the Supervisory Union, while also leveraging Federal and State dollars to support our local districts via added revenue. We are proud that we have once again been able to realize a projected surplus in the 2022-23 fiscal year. These surplus dollars enable us to ask your permission to continue our work in proactively funding maintenance/operations and tuition reserve funds. This will allow us to continue our work in making certain that we have solid financial footing as we move forward in addressing several of the items identified as deferred maintenance needs in our Preventative and Capital Facility plans. We will continue to do everything in our power to analyze our system and ensure efficiencies have been identified while making certain that opportunities for students are enhanced.

This year's tax rate has been impacted greatly by significant drops in the education fund yield and to Strafford's common level of appraisal (CLA), both of which are out of our local control. This has resulted in Strafford School District's utilization of a provision provided under Act 127 that allows for school districts that keep the change in their per-pupil spending between FY24 and FY25 budgets to under 10% (Strafford's per pupil difference is 7.40%) to be provided a 5% tax cap on the equalized tax rate.

What does this mean? It means that the equalized tax rate prior to the CLA has increased .0662, or the equivalent of \$66.20 on a \$100,000 of assessed property value. The problem that almost all towns throughout the state have inherited this budget season is a significant drop in their CLA. Strafford's CLA dropped to 82.76%, which is a decrease of 5.46% from FY24. Therefore, the final homestead tax rate for Strafford is up .1791, or \$179.06 on a \$100,000 of assessed property value. We understand that the changes to education funding due to Act 127 and the corresponding impact on the education fund yield, the provided cap on the equalized tax rate, and the 10% ceiling can be very difficult to navigate. Therefore, we invite you to review this informational video that we've created in an attempt to provide further guidance on how we reach your finalized tax rate.



SCAN ME

In closing, we would like to thank you all for supporting your school and students. Your support and involvement are critical in moving the school system forward with the vision of creating Schools of Excellence. We have the opportunity to create an educational system throughout the ten towns of the WRVSU that is a destination for young families. This budget supports the work necessary for us to continue our work to deliver on these important goals.

With great appreciation and optimism,
Jamie Kinnarney
Superintendent of Schools
White River Valley Supervisory Union

Anda Adams
Chief Academic Officer, MTSS
White River Valley Supervisory Union

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES REPORT

The WRVSU Special Services Department continues to ensure that all students are receiving quality academic intervention, social/emotional learning, and behavioral support. The WRVSU Special Services Department continues to provide quality academic instruction, social/emotional learning, and behavioral support to approximately 265 White River Valley Supervisory Union students who receive specialized instruction within our eight school buildings, but also within the fifteen receiving schools through the school choice option in our region.

Our communities have much to celebrate. First, the WRVSU has had a 48.7% decrease in the need for initial special education evaluations from FY22 to FY23. This is a positive indicator of the increased efficiency in the SU's universal and targeted system. Appropriate high quality universal instruction is being used with fidelity, as well as, targeted, goal oriented interventions are being identified through data teams.

Second, the number of students accessing out of district educational placements has decreased by 53% over the past two years. The number of students accessing the SU's alternative classrooms at the elementary and middle school level have decreased to one referral a year. The high school personalized learning classroom has been able to expand to encompass more students with a variety of learner profiles to support not just social emotional learning, but also transitional and executive functioning skills for more success after high school. This speaks closely to our ability to effectively support students through student support teams while also working closely with the area's designated mental health agency.

The FY25 budget contains two new positions to escalate our social emotional and behavioral support teams for the supervisory union. These

additions are a full-time school psychologist and behavioral analyst. Without increasing the number of the FTEs, we are looking to restructure the use of special educators to assist with the efficiency and effectiveness of case management. Traditionally, special educators have different roles. One is case management, facilitating meetings, speaking with families, working with classroom teachers to provide appropriate instruction and accommodations and the other is to provide services/interventions directly to students per IEPs. The new structure will include Special Service Case Managers and Special Service Educators. This will allow professionals to narrow their focus and provide more robust services, as well as, be more available to work with families, classroom teachers, and students. This restructuring will, in hopes, allow for great progress for students, while helping with special services teacher retainment.

The overall FY25 WRVSU Special Education budget is \$8,031,312, which is an increase of 3.18% from FY24. From the positions added above the rest of the increase is based on the Collective Bargaining Agreement increase in salaries and the increase in cost for employee benefits. We have been very vigilant and efficient in our use of funds. We are taking a creative yet thoughtful approach to student programming and professional development opportunities so we can continue to bolster a rich Multi-Tiered System of Supports for all students at a reasonable cost.

With Much Appreciation,
Annette Rhoades
Director of Special Services

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

White River Valley Supervisory Union's Business office handles the financial management of the Supervisory Union and our six-member districts: First Branch Unified District, Granville Hancock Unified District, Rochester Stockbridge Unified District, Sharon School District, Strafford School District and White River Unified District. We currently have a four-member team: Tara Weatherell, Business Manager, Ellen Blanchard, Accountant, Lisa Blair, Human Resources/Administrative Assistant to the Business Office, Johanna Snelling, Accounts Payable and Jacob Hinton, Payroll/Accounting Clerk.

One of my roles as the Business Manager is to assist Superintendent Kinnarney and our Building Administration to develop budgets that align with the WRVSU's Road Map to Success and maintain those budgets throughout the fiscal year.

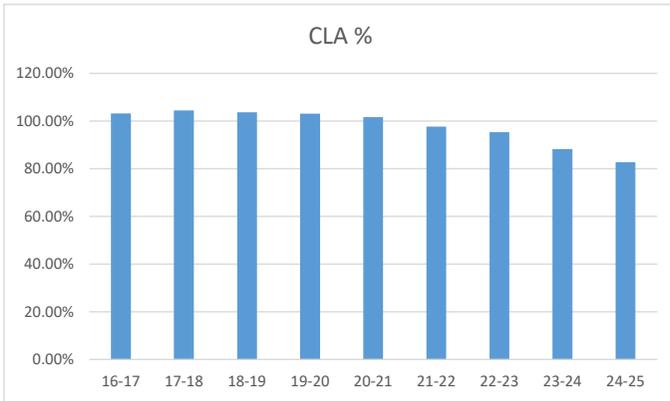
Developing the budgets for the 2024-2025 fiscal year had a couple of variables that were not within the Districts' local control. The State of Vermont's significant surplus in the Education Fund is no longer available resulting in a significant projected decrease in the property yield. The December 1st property yield projection was \$9,452, a reduction from the current yield of \$15,443. On January 12th, 2024 we received notification that the yield was dropped again to the current \$9,171.

The Property Yield is determined by the State of Vermont Tax Commissioner using a statutory calculation and assumptions provided by the Agency of Education, Department of Taxes, Department of Finance and Management and the Joint Fiscal Office.

The Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) is another variable that the School District does not have local control over. In the majority of our 10 towns, the CLA decreased, resulting in an increase to each Town's Tax Rate.

The Common Level of Appraisal is used to make sure each town is paying their equitable share of education property taxes. The CLA is based on each Town's property value grand list as it compares to property sales over a three-year period. If the grand list value is less than real estate sale prices the town will have a CLA of less than 100%; if the grand list value is more than the real estate sale prices the CLA will be more than 100%. The CLA doesn't change the property value, it impacts the education tax rate to be paid by the town. The CLA is also used to determine when a Town needs to be reappraised. When the CLA is below 85% or above 115%, the Town must reappraise.

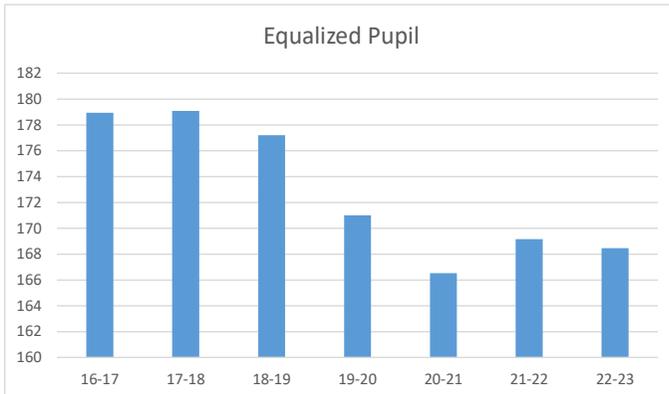
For fiscal year 2024-2025 Strafford CLA decreased from 88.22% to 82.76%. The following is a historical review of Strafford's Common Level of Appraisal:



The Secondary Tuition is another factor that the District Administration cannot control due to Strafford being a choice district for grades nine through twelve. The following is a comparison of the Secondary Tuition cost for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years that we have available as of the writing of this report:

Secondary Tuition	2023-2024	2024-2025	Difference
The Sharon Academy	\$19,425	\$20,900	\$1,475
Hartford Middle & HS	\$20,800	\$22,000	\$1,200
Woodstock High School	\$19,649	\$20,273	\$624
White River Valley HS	\$18,500	\$19,900	\$1,400
The Thetford Academy	\$22,430	\$23,890	\$1,460
Hanover High School	\$23,568	\$23,944	\$376
Approved Independent or Private	\$18,266	unknown	

Each of the above-reviewed variables has a direct impact on the educational tax rate. In addition to these variables, we have the new weighting formula as provided by Act 127. Please refer to the Act 127 Frequently Asked Questions included in this mailer for more information on the new weighting.



The following is an overview of the Strafford School District’s 2024-2025 projected budget as compared to 2023-2024:

NEWTON SCHOOL	2023-2024	2024-2025	DIFFERENCE
EXPENDITURE BUDGET	\$3,728,296	\$4,151,186	\$422,890
LOCAL REVENUE	-\$257,956	-\$139,591	\$118,365
EDUCATION SPENDING	\$3,470,339	\$4,011,594	\$541,255
EQUALIZED PUPIL -			
Now Long-Term Weighted Average	263.2	283.28	20.08
PER PUPIL SPENDING	\$13,185.18	\$14,161.23	\$976
PRELIMINARY TAX RATE	1.3246	1.391	0.066
NON-RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE BEFORE CLA	1.391	1.442	0.051
PROPERTY YIELD (MAY CHANGE)	\$15,443	\$9,171	-\$6,272
COMMON LEVEL OF APPRAISAL (CLA)	88.22%	82.76%	-5.46%
RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE AFTER CLA	1.5015	1.6806	0.1791
NON-RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE AFTER CLA	1.5767	1.6005	0.0238

The following shows how we calculate the tax rate:

- 1) Take the ACT 68 Education Spending of \$4,011,594 divide it by the 283.28 Long Term Weighted Average; this results in the Per Pupil Spending of \$14,161.23
- 2) Divide the Per Pupil Spending of \$14,161.23 by the \$9,171 Yield; this gives you the Preliminary Residential Tax Rate of 1.3908 (utilizing the 5% cap)
- 3) Take the Equalized Tax Rate of 1.3908 and divide by the CLA of 82.76%; 1.6806; this is the Residential Tax Rate after the CLA. This is the tax rate projected to be on your homestead property tax bill.

Superintendent Kinnarney, Principal Thompson, the Strafford School Board and I all feel that this budget supports what is necessary to provide high-quality education to all students at The Newton School.

Sincerely,
Tara Weatherell
Business Manager

ONE PLANET PROGRAMS

Once again, I would like to start by thanking the entire WRVSU community. It is with the great support of our eight schools and communities that One Planet has provided another fun and enriching year of afterschool and summer programming to our youth. We could not have done it without you!

SUMMER 2023: Last summer saw a repeat in numbers with over 300 WRVSU students attending our 6 summer camps. One Planet offered 5 weeks of programming at 5 of our sites and a 6th week of programming at our South Royalton site, a change made in response to community need. Across all of our sites, our weekly themes included: Circus Week, Fairy & Fantasy, Under the Sea, Rocks Rock!, Camping Week, The Night Sky, Let's Create, and Top Chef. Students engaged in a huge range of activities from learning about, creating, and performing their own circus to experimenting and perfecting recipes to challenge one another in an all-out Top Chef competition.

In conjunction with thematic programming, One Planet campers traveled to many high interest locations in our region on a series of exciting field trips. Field trips included but were not limited to: Circus Smirkus, Rock of Ages Quarry, The Polar Caves, The Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, The Montshire Museum, Tip Top Pottery, Artistree, Union Arena, Silver Lake State Park, Lake Pinneo, Storrs Pond, The Bethel Pool, UVAC, Get Air, and The Ben & Jerry's Factory. We would also be remiss not to mention our continued partnership with The Arts Bus, which traveled to each of our sites for a full week last summer providing our campers with highly creative arts enrichment. We feel privileged to visit and partner with such great organizations in our summer camps!

Summer programming also once again included the WRVSU and One Planet intervention program. Students in need of targeted intervention services in math and/or literacy were identified in our 8 elementary schools. Tutoring services were offered within the camp day allowing students to receive services and participate in the camp activities each day.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the amazing WRVSU high school summer staff members who are an integral part of our summer camp staff each year. Last summer 16 high school students joined the staff across our 6 sites. Many of our high school staff members are "alumni" of the One Planet program themselves. They are a high energy group of young adults that our campers look up to as role models. It is wonderful to see the full spectrum of WRVSU students represented in our program.

We look forward to another successful summer camp in 2024!

FALL 2023: This year we had a few new hires in our site coordinator group. We welcomed Shane Murray-Smith to Tunbridge, Kristiana Manole

to South Royalton, Lindsey LaPerle to Rochester, and Maegan Winters to Chelsea. While new to their site coordinator positions, Shane, Krisi, Lindsey, and Maegan were already familiar faces in their schools making smooth transitions to their added roles. I cannot thank our site coordinators, new and old, enough for the creativity, commitment, and enthusiasm they bring to their programs each and every day!

Bethel: Amy Gray, 9 yrs with OP

Chelsea: Maegan Winters, New!

Newton: Erin Yunger, 2 yrs with OP

Rochester: Lindsey LaPerle, New!

Sharon: Stephanie Jarrait. 4 years with OP

South Royalton: Kristiana Manole, New!

Stockbridge: Blythe Bates, 6 yrs with OP

Tunbridge: Shane Murray-Smith, New!

Session I and our GAP holiday programming were a great success this fall. A few Session I enrichment programs included: gymnastics, mountain biking, Arts Bus, cooking club, Go2Science, outdoor education, homework club, archery, Dungeons & Dragons, and more! Our GAP holiday programming (Thanksgiving-Winter Vacation) is a time when more than ever our students vote, choose, and design some of their own activities. Some sites prefer to have a different enrichment activity each day while others opted for weekly themes, more similar to summer camp. Crafting, baking, gaming, performing, and outdoor exploration were common at all of our sites.

WHAT'S AHEAD

Over the next few months our tasks and goals will include:

- One Planet Director and WRVSU administrators will complete the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant application due to the VT AOE by early February.
- One Planet Director and WRVSU administrators will propose grant funding for grades 7 and 8 in our WRUD and FBUD districts.
- One Planet Director and WRVSU administrators will work to align the summer and afterschool goals more closely with the WRVSU strategic plan and goals.
- One Planet Director, Site Coordinators, staff, and students will put our heads together to create new enrichment themes and field trip locations for our 2024 summer camps.

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF SCHOOL THETFORD ACADEMY

As I write this annual update for the community of Strafford, a group of my colleagues are preparing to host Newton School 8th graders for a TA visit in a few days. The students will spend their time on campus attending demo classes with faculty, touring the school, meeting counselors, connecting with a panel of high school students, and learning about all of TA's extra-curricular offerings – from athletics to arts, robotics to outdoor learning, and more. We welcome the opportunity each year to share the Thetford Academy experience with Strafford middle-schoolers as they explore the next chapter of their education journey.

So much growth and learning and engagement can happen during the high school years – and there are no better examples of this than our Strafford graduates last spring. Strafford had a small but mighty representation amongst Thetford Academy's Class of 2023. Congratulations to Finn Thorin Linehan, Harland Paul Ransom, and Charlotte Boggs Reimanis!

These students achieved at the highest levels in a variety of arenas at TA. Each was a top-notch scholar, leader, and athlete. Their names appeared multiple times on the roster of senior award honorees and scholarship recipients, with special recognition for Charlotte who received the 2023 Frederick Torrey Headmaster Award. All three were three-season athletes and served as captains of their teams during their senior year. In their roles as co-captains, Finn and Harland helped lead the boys track team to another state championship in 2023.

Among their many accomplishments and activities, Charlotte led the Operation Day's Work service club at TA, Harland served as president of his senior class, and Finn participated in the STEM internship and TOP environmental studies program. Charlotte and Harland both embraced the role of graduation speaker, addressing the large crowd of classmates, families, teachers, and friends with thoughtful reflections, humorous anecdotes, and inspiration.

These Newton grads pursued opportunity with gusto and grace during their years at Thetford Academy and made a big impact on the school community.

Currently, there are two dozen Strafford students enrolled at TA, making up nearly 10% of our high school population. We welcomed nine energetic ninth graders from Strafford this fall, and they've jumped into the TA experience – already playing key roles on the robotics team, the alpine team, the drama program, and more. We look forward to seeing how they make their mark on Thetford Academy in the coming years.

The relationship between the Strafford community and Thetford Academy runs deep, and we are committed to keeping it vibrant now and into the

future. We appreciate the multi-generational connections so many families have to TA, and also invite new families to experience all that Thetford Academy has to offer. Our middle grades counselor Molly Dugan-Sullivan works with the Newton School to provide students and families information about TA's program and support the transition to high school. As head of school, I am also a resource for those who want to learn more about Thetford Academy.

If it has been a while since you have ventured over to Thetford Hill and been on the TA campus, I encourage you to come for a visit, like the Newton 8th graders will do this week. Come for a musical concert, get tickets to the 'Mamma Mia!' musical in May, watch a game on the fields, volunteer at the Woods Trail cross-country meet in October, ski or walk on the trails, attend a film, or just come for the drive and enjoy the views.

Thetford Academy is a community resource in all seasons – and an inspiring place to learn and teach for those of us who spend our days here, students and educators alike.

Today is a particularly stunning winter day. I am looking out at a white expanse of snow and blue sky, with a view of the New Hampshire mountains to the east and fields and forest to the west; and in the foreground, I see students on the quad, busily passing between classes and moving to their next TA experience of the day.

Respectfully submitted,
Carrie Brennan, Head of School
Thetford Academy

THE SHARON ACADEMY

The mission of The Sharon Academy is to nurture intelligent, independent and creative thinking in a small school community, awakening students to their immense potential and the difference they can make in the world.

A few highlights of the 2023-2024 school year at The Sharon Academy are:

- “Freaky Friday” - this year’s High School Musical Interim production, performed in November at Chandler Center for the Arts in Randolph, VT was marked by exceptional student leadership and was thoroughly successful as the community-building adventure it was designed to be.
- The creation of a Director of Teaching and Learning position, designed to support teaching staff through collaborative professional development, classroom observations and a comprehensive evaluation and reflection process. We are thrilled to have Jarod “W” Wunneburger in the position this year and are already experiencing the benefits of his expertise.

- TSA’s very own Finland Exchange Program, created and led by TSA Faculty member and Fulbright Scholar Fallon Abel. A group of TSA students are teaming up with a partner class in Helsinki, Finland to address one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals within our school and/or local community. Examples of chosen topic areas include: Climate Action, poverty, hunger, education, health & wellbeing, peace & justice, responsible production & consumption and reducing inequalities. Students will travel to Finland for two weeks in late February / early March to visit our partner school, participate in homestays with Finnish teammates, and present their project at a youth-led symposium. TSA students will also be hosting Finnish students in May.
- A new, school-wide, multi-year commitment to professional learning in the area of trauma-transformation with Dave Melnick, LICSW at NFI Vermont. All staff members have attended three intensive workshops so far, learning the neuroscience of trauma and how to respond to our most vulnerable students using informed, compassionate and restorative practices.
- We look forward to our annual Spring events: the Middle School Circus Interim—on Friday, March 22 (6 PM Carnival, 7 PM show) and 23 (3 PM Carnival, 4 PM show), on the High School campus, our free family Arts Day (date TBD - stay tuned for a Sunday in late March!), our third annual Phoenix Phest (Saturday, June 1) and our graduation ceremonies (Middle School on 6/14, High School on 6/15).
- We welcome you to join us at the ground-breaking for our new STEAM wing addition in early April. Details will be in local listservs, social media, and newspapers when we have a specific date.

Thank you to all of you who have donated time, expertise, and financial support to TSA and our students. Your support helps us to fulfill our mission of knowing, valuing, and challenging each student so that they may become the thinkers, creators, problem-solvers, and leaders our world needs.

Please consider coming by for a visit or attending one of the events mentioned above. TSA considers itself to be a part of the local community – you are always welcome.

Mary Newman
 Head of School
 The Sharon Academy

NEWTON SCHOOL PTA

The Newton School Parent Teacher Association is an organization dedicated to supporting Strafford's school and community. The PTA, which is composed of parents, school personnel, and community members, works to provide and support programs which benefit the entire student body and school community. The PTA typically coordinates and supports a number of events throughout the year, including Winter Carnival, Bike and Walk to School Day, the Fourth of July Fair, Halloween events, Artists In Residence, Staff Appreciation, field trips, and after-school workshops. The PTA also grants teacher and staff requests for classroom enrichment materials.

Winter Carnival occurred on a very snowy Saturday in March, which was a lot different than the sunny and warm year before... Kids and adults alike both embraced the weather and the very wintry fun! As always, there was sledding, ski racing, ski jumping, snow sculptures, an obstacle course and some nordic skiing!

Bike and Walk to School Day was also able to happen again. The weather cooperated and it was a fun morning with a high percentage of students participating! Not only did students enjoy the commute, but they were treated to a community breakfast once they arrived at school!

The Fourth of July Fair made another appearance this year, met with better weather than in 2021 and 2022. Kids were wandering around the common, figuring out which game to play next, eating sno-cones and cotton candy, and drinking lemonade. Adults and kids alike enjoyed the Tug-of-War rope as well and helped to serenade Roz Finn with a heartfelt singing of "Happy Birthday" for her 84th birthday!

One change that COVID had on our Halloween activities has stuck around as a new tradition: When trick or treating was not possible, the PTA purchased enough pumpkins so that, with the support of the staff at Newton, each child was able to carve a pumpkin at school. These pumpkins were then transported to the Common for a Halloween night display of well over 100 pumpkins. This activity and display was extremely popular amongst students and the community that first COVID year and it made another re-appearance last year and again this year, with pumpkins being displayed along the sidewalk in front of the school.

Once kids got their fill of trick-or-treating in the villages on a rather chilly evening, families gathered in Barrett Hall to enjoy a potluck dinner as well as the Haunted House!

The PTA has also branched out a bit in our sponsorship as parents and community members have come to us with ideas for the students. "Community Move Night" was one of these ideas spearheaded by a couple of parents in town and partially sponsored by the PTA. Though we certainly cannot take credit for the efforts of these awesome parents, we

can encourage other parents to come to us with their ideas that need a bit of financial backing.

As always, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to Strafford. The PTA would not be able to meet our goals without the continued generosity and volunteer efforts of the Strafford community! Your contributions of time, talent, and funds support great programming for the children of Strafford. The PTA always welcomes new members and ideas. Anyone interested in participating in the PTA is invited to our monthly meetings, which usually occur on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 PM. You may also reach out to a board member regarding ideas or concerns.

Sincerely,

Newton School PTA

Kira Campbell, Co-President

Lauren Phelps, Co-President

Hillary Miner, Secretary

Kiersten Harlow, Treasurer

**STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
2024-2025 EXPENDITURE BUDGET**

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY25	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUALS	PROPOSED	BUDGET		
1101 REGULAR ED INSTRUCTION	\$2,041,627	\$1,783,377	\$2,067,312	\$2,344,414	\$ 277,102	
111 TEACHER SALARY	614,639	579,062	631,216	685,758	54,542	11.4 FTE (ADDS OUTDOOR ED .4)
121 PARA SALARY	21,500	26,760	27,675	53,688	26,013	2.0 FTE (INCREASE OF 1.0)
131 SALARY SUB	10,000	19,774	30,000	30,000	-	
181 SALARY- GENERAL	-	-	-	-	-	
191 OTHER SALARY	4,000	4,100	4,000	7,000	3,000	
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	133,414	98,025	127,759	227,367	99,608	
219 HRA	29,800	10,994	25,200	38,500	13,300	
220 FICA	48,665	46,285	50,405	59,821	9,416	
232 OPEB RETIREMENT	2,700	5,608	5,800	9,000	3,200	
233 VSTRS	-	92	-	-	-	
234 RETIREMENT-VMERS	1,183	(23)	1,453	2,756	1,303	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	54	51	58	348	290	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	1,654	-	6,295	5,102	(1,193)	
281 DENTAL INS	4,640	2,632	4,607	4,918	311	
292 LIFE	634	779	760	756	(4)	
294 LTD	1,654	1,633	1,732	3,405	1,673	
321 CONTRACTED INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES	12,000	3,085	20,000	20,000	-	
332 PURCHASED SERVICE	8,000	2,674	8,000	8,000	-	
349 OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	12,000	2,267	12,000	12,000	-	
561 TUITION TO VT LEA	424,226	92,400	20,800	22,880	2,080	
562 TUITION TO PRIVATE SOURCES	420,801	773,234	607,340	742,620	135,280	
563 TUITION TO NON-VT LEA	261,690	90,220	375,315	311,272	(64,043)	
564 TUITION - SEC OUT OF STATE PRIVATE	-	-	35,938	40,185	4,247	
567 TUITION TO VOC SCHOOLS	9,672	12,560	10,059	11,065	1,006	
568 TUITION TO PUBLIC W/IN SU	-	-	37,000	20,073	(16,927)	
569 TUITION-OTHER	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	8,400	7,929	8,400	8,400	-	
641 BOOKS & PERIODICALS	5,300	3,235	10,500	14,500	4,000	
739 EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	-	-	
811 DUES & FEES	-	-	-	-	-	

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23 APPROVED	FY23 ACTUALS	FY24 PROPOSED	FY25 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
1102 ART	\$ 31,352	\$ 19,235	\$ 29,750	\$ 39,004	\$ 9,254	
111 TEACHER SALARY	23,872	12,752	25,666	26,155	489	.5 FTE
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	2,477	-	188	5,290	5,102	
219 HRA	-	1,040	-	1,900	1,900	
220 FICA	1,826	1,774	1,964	2,116	152	
232 OPEB RETIREMENT	1,350	1,402	-	1,500	1,500	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	5	4	10	23	13	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	62	-	256	180	(76)	
281 DENTAL INS	210	219	116	235	119	
292 LIFE	-	39	-	54	54	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	1,550	2,005	1,550	1,550	-	
1103 PRESCHOOL	\$ 65,808	\$ 72,807	\$ 79,044	\$ 81,564	\$ 2,520	
561 TUITION TO VT LEA	-	3,134	7,528	7,768	240	
562 TUITION TO PRIVATE SOURCES	65,808	69,673	71,516	73,796	2,280	FY24 ENROLLMENT @ FY25 RATE
1106 FOREIGN LANGUAGE	\$ 14,628	\$ 14,634	\$ 38,728	\$ 40,883	\$ 2,155	
111 TEACHER SALARY	13,469	13,613	35,576	23,825	(11,752)	.5 FTE
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	-	-	-	14,654	14,654	
220 FICA	1,030	1,016	2,722	1,927	(795)	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	5	4	10	23	13	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	63	-	356	164	(192)	
281 DENTAL INS	-	-	-	235	235	
292 LIFE	61	-	64	54	(10)	
1106 WORLD LANGUAGE	\$ 500	\$ 384	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	500	384	500	500	-	
641 BOOKS & PERIODICALS	-	-	-	-	-	

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23 APPROVED	FY23 ACTUALS	FY24 PROPOSED	FY25 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
1108 PE	\$ 39,076	\$ 37,257	\$ 42,681	\$ 41,212	\$ (1,469)	
111 TEACHER SALARY	34,074	35,030	36,288	27,657	(8,631)	.6 FTE
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	900	-	900	6,348	5,448	
219 HRA	-	-	-	1,900	1,900	
220 FICA	2,607	1,878	2,776	2,237	(539)	
232 OPEB RETIREMENT	-	-	725	1,500	775	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	3	2	10	23	13	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	89	-	364	191	(173)	
281 DENTAL INS	253	-	460	235	(225)	
292 LIFE	61	-	64	54	(10)	
294 LTD	89	88	94	66	(28)	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	1,000	259	1,000	1,000	-	
739 EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	-	-	
1112 MUSIC	\$ 29,849	\$ 17,811	\$ 31,007	\$ 37,183	\$ 6,176	
111 TEACHER SALARY	24,626	15,054	26,428	26,500	72	.5 FTE
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	1,500	-	-	5,290	5,290	
220 FICA	1,884	1,152	2,022	2,144	122	
232 OPEB RETIREMENT	-	1,402	725	1,500	775	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	5	5	10	23	13	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	64	-	264	183	(81)	
292 LIFE	63	18	64	54	(10)	
294 LTD	32	32	69	64	(5)	
431 REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICES	425	-	425	425	-	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	1,250	149	1,000	1,000	-	
739 EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	-	-	
1201 SPECIAL ED INSTRUCTION	\$ 245,842	\$ 245,842	\$ 246,621	\$ 270,867	\$ 24,246	
593 SU-ASSESSMENT	245,842	245,842	246,621	270,867	24,246	
1301 VOC TECH TUITION	\$ 13,993	\$ 17,026	\$ 18,924	\$ 24,321	\$ 5,397	
566 VOC TECH ON BEHALF	13,993	17,026	18,924	24,321	5,397	FY24 AVERAGE @ FY25 RATE
1401 ATHLETICS & COCRRICULAR	\$ 18,932	\$ 5,080	\$ 19,032	\$ 23,102	\$ 4,070	
191 OTHER SALARY	16,100	4,250	16,100	16,100	-	
220 FICA	1,232	306	1,232	1,302	70	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	900	524	1,000	5,000	4,000	
811 DUES & FEES	700	-	700	700	-	

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY25	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUALS	PROPOSED	BUDGET		
2120 GUIDANCE	\$ 53,751	\$ 30,470	\$ 83,592	\$ 57,367	\$ (26,225)	
111 TEACHER SALARY	46,236	26,721	46,350	49,203	2,853	1.0 FTE INCREASE FROM .6
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	1,500	-	23,879	1,500	(22,379)	
219 HRA	-	-	4,200	-	(4,200)	
220 FICA	3,537	2,102	5,910	3,981	(1,929)	
232 OPEB RETIREMENT	1,350	1,402	1,350	1,500	150	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	5	5	5	23	18	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	120	-	773	118	(655)	
281 DENTAL INS	422	-	461	470	9	
292 LIFE	61	26	63	54	(9)	
294 LTD	120	118	201	118	(83)	
321 CONTRACTED INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES	-	-	-	-	-	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	150	95	150	150	-	
641 BOOKS & PERIODICALS	250	-	250	250	-	
2132 HEALTH SERVICES	\$ 75,168	\$ 77,604	\$ 80,188	\$ 84,500	\$ 4,312	
111 TEACHER SALARY	53,774	57,439	57,429	60,079	2,650	1.0 FTE
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	8,562	8,043	9,064	10,581	1,517	
219 HRA	2,100	3,757	2,100	1,900	(200)	
220 FICA	4,114	4,240	4,393	4,860	467	
232 OPEB RETIREMENT	1,350	1,407	1,450	1,500	50	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	5	5	5	23	18	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	140	-	574	415	(159)	
281 DENTAL INS	422	475	461	470	9	
292 LIFE	61	60	63	54	(9)	
294 LTD	140	138	149	118	(31)	
321 CONTRACTED INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	-	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	2,500	1,429	2,500	2,500	-	
641 BOOKS & PERIODICALS	-	-	-	-	-	
651 SUPPLIES TECHNOLOGY	500	525	500	500	-	
739 EQUIPMENT	-	86	-	-	-	
2212 CURRICULUM INSTRUCTION	\$ 23,253	\$ 23,254	\$ 33,735	\$ 41,354	\$ 7,619	
593 SU-ASSESSMENT	23,253	23,254	33,735	41,354	7,619	

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23 APPROVED	FY23 ACTUALS	FY24 PROPOSED	FY25 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
2213 STAFF TRAINING	\$ 26,000	\$ 10,647	\$ 26,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 6,000	
251 TUITION BENEFIT	14,000	9,110	14,000	20,000	6,000	
331 INSERVICES & TRAINING	11,000	1,464	11,000	11,000	-	
581 TRAVEL	1,000	73	1,000	1,000	-	
2220 LIBRARY/MEDIA SERVICES	\$ 59,122	\$ 59,187	\$ 63,329	\$ 80,271	\$ 16,942	
111 TEACHER SALARY	47,844	50,491	50,822	66,294	15,472	1.0 FTE
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	1,200	-	1,200	1,200	-	
219 HRA	-	-	-	-	-	
220 FICA	3,660	3,954	3,888	5,363	1,475	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	5	5	5	23	18	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	124	-	508	457	(51)	
281 DENTAL INS	422	-	461	470	9	
292 LIFE	63	60	63	54	(9)	
294 LTD	124	122	132	159	27	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	180	190	250	250	-	
641 BOOKS & PERIODICALS	2,400	2,370	2,400	2,400	-	
651 SUPPLIES TECHNOLOGY	2,000	1,745	2,500	2,500	-	
811 DUES & FEES	1,100	250	1,100	1,100	-	
2311 BOARD OF EDUCATION	\$ 8,774	\$ 25,178	\$ 11,497	\$ 11,670	\$ 173	
141 ADMIN SALARY	2,500	2,000	2,500	2,500	-	
161 CLERICAL SALARY	1,000	1,400	100	100	-	
220 FICA	191	251	191	210	19	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	-	13,855	-	-	-	
311 SECTION 125 ADMINISTRATION SERVICES	660	804	660	660	-	
349 OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	100	-	100	100	-	
520 INSURANCE	2,923	3,734	3,846	4,000	154	
541 ADVERTISING	800	1,663	1,800	1,800	-	
581 TRAVEL	-	259	-	-	-	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	100	232	100	100	-	
811 DUES & FEES	500	980	2,200	2,200	-	

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY25	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUALS	PROPOSED	BUDGET		
2313 BOARD TREASURER	\$ 2,918	\$ 2,654	\$ 3,168	\$ 3,178	\$ 10	
141 ADMIN SALARY	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	-	
220 FICA	168	168	168	178	10	
533 POSTAGE	350	196	600	600	-	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	100	90	100	100	-	
811 DUES & FEES	100	-	100	100	-	
2315 LEGAL SERVICES	\$ 2,500	\$ 860	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ -	
342 LEGAL SERVICES	2,500	860	2,500	2,500	-	
2320 EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION	\$ 50,084	\$ 50,084	\$ 44,979	\$ 39,410	\$ (5,569)	
593 SU-ASSESSMENT	50,084	50,084	44,979	39,410	(5,569)	
2410 OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL	\$ 241,408	\$ 217,386	\$ 261,724	\$ 280,093	\$ 18,369	
141 ADMIN SALARY	95,500	82,077	99,910	105,000	5,090	
161 CLERICAL SALARY	43,336	48,183	48,729	51,062	2,333	
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	47,434	44,557	50,215	58,617	8,402	
219 HRA	8,600	5,865	8,600	8,400	(200)	
220 FICA	10,621	8,827	11,371	12,625	1,254	
234 RETIREMENT-VMERS	2,384	2,847	2,558	2,681	123	
235 - RETIREMENT/ANNUITY	-	-	1,500	1,500	-	
251 TUITION BENEFIT	2,200	-	2,200	2,200	-	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	-	-	10	46	36	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	361	-	1,499	1,077	(422)	
281 DENTAL INS	844	877	878	940	62	
292 LIFE	267	301	317	270	(47)	
294 LTD	361	356	387	375	(12)	
331 INSERVICES & TRAINING	-	163	3,000	3,000	-	
443 RENTALS OF COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY	6,000	6,382	6,000	6,000	-	
531 TELEPHONE SERVICES	6,000	4,137	6,000	6,000	-	
533 POSTAGE	700	1,093	1,000	1,000	-	
551 PRINTING & BINDING	250	117	250	250	-	
581 TRAVEL	1,000	433	1,000	1,000	-	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	6,500	5,054	7,250	9,000	1,750	
739 EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	-	-	
811 DUES & FEES	9,050	6,119	9,050	9,050	-	

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY25	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUALS	PROPOSED	BUDGET		
2510 FISCAL SERVICES	\$ 77,606	\$ 73,641	\$ 78,721	\$ 96,767	\$ 18,046	
593 SU-ASSESSMENT	62,606	63,086	63,721	81,767	18,046	
835 INTEREST ON SHORT TERM DEBT	15,000	10,555	15,000	15,000	-	
2570 PERSONNEL SERVICES	\$ 660	\$ 693	\$ 660	\$ 700	\$ 40	
311 SECTION 125 ADMINISTRATION SERVICES	660	693	660	700	40	
2580 ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNOLOGY	\$ 78,321	\$ 51,325	\$ 83,207	\$ 88,179	\$ 4,972	
352 OTHER TECHNICAL SERVICES	2,500	-	2,500	2,500	-	
432 REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY	500	29	500	500	-	
593 SU-ASSESSMENT	42,930	42,930	44,979	45,456	477	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	-	1,033	-	-	-	
651 SUPPLIES TECHNOLOGY	32,391	7,334	35,228	39,723	4,495	
734 TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE	-	-	-	-	-	
735 TECHNOLOGY SOFTWARE	-	-	-	-	-	
2610 OPERATION OF BUILDING	\$ 150,838	\$ 151,268	\$ 161,977	\$ 162,171	\$ 194	
151 SUPERVISOR SALARY	49,608	42,777	51,168	44,928	(6,240)	
181 SALARY- GENERAL	20,779	1,948	17,940	19,864	1,924	
211 HEALTH INSURANCE	2,250	-	2,250	2,000	(250)	
220 FICA	5,385	3,405	5,287	5,242	(45)	
234 RETIREMENT-VMERS	3,871	3,226	3,628	4,373	745	
251 TUITION BENEFIT	200	-	-	-	-	
261 UNEMPLOYMENT	10	9	10	46	36	
271 WORKERS COMPENSATION	3,660	-	3,843	3,369	(474)	
281 DENTAL INS	844	439	844	462	(382)	
292 LIFE	48	60	128	108	(20)	
294 LTD	183	181	180	156	(24)	
341 OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	4,000	5,713	4,000	6,000	2,000	
411 UTILITY SERVICES	-	1,198	-	1,200	1,200	
425 WASTE REMOVAL	3,000	3,674	4,000	4,000	-	
431 REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICES	-	16,079	10,000	10,000	-	
441 RENTALS OF LAND & BUILDINGS	-	-	-	-	-	
520 INSURANCE	7,000	7,862	8,099	8,423	324	
611 SUPPLIES GENERAL	13,500	9,422	14,200	15,000	800	
622 ENERGY ELECTRICITY	18,000	22,287	15,400	16,000	600	
624 ENERGY FUEL OIL	15,000	22,893	17,500	17,500	-	
733 FURNITURE & FIXTURES	3,500	10,096	3,500	3,500	-	
811 DUES & FEES	-	-	-	-	-	

FUNCTION AND OBJECT DESCRIPTION	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY25	DIFFERENCE	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUALS	PROPOSED	BUDGET		
2620 MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING	\$ 44,600	\$ 25,262	\$ 54,600	\$ 54,600	\$ -	
411 UTILITY SERVICES	-	-	-	-	-	
431 REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICES	40,000	25,262	50,000	50,000	-	
441 RENTALS OF LAND & BUILDINGS	4,600	-	4,600	4,600	-	
2630 GROUNDS	\$ 11,000	\$ 16,093	\$ 15,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 3,000	
422 SNOW REMOVAL	11,000	16,093	15,000	18,000	3,000	
431 REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICES	-	-	-	-	-	
733 FURNITURE & FIXTURES	-	-	-	-	-	
2711 TRANSPORTATION-RESIDENT	\$ 103,209	\$ 105,504	\$ 108,369	\$ 151,513	\$ 43,144	
593 SU-ASSESSMENT	103,209	105,504	108,369	151,513	43,144	1 BUS & 1 SUBURBAN
2713 TECH TRANSPORTATION	-	-	-	-	-	
519 STUDENT TRANSPORT	-	-	-	-	-	
2715 TRANSPORTION-FIELD TRIPS	\$ 9,000	\$ 3,985	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000	\$ -	
519 STUDENT TRANSPORT	9,000	3,985	9,000	9,000	-	
2790 OTHER TRANSPORTATION	-	-	-	-	-	
519 STUDENT TRANSPORT	-	-	-	-	-	
3100 FOOD SERVICES	\$ 18,180	\$ 18,305	\$ 18,450	\$ 20,863	\$ 2,413	
593 SU-ASSESSMENT	18,180	18,305	18,450	20,863	2,413	
5020 DEBT SERVICE-LONG TERM	-	-	6,000	6,000	-	
831 REDEMPTION OF PRINCIPAL	-	-	3,000	3,000	-	
832 INTEREST ON LONG TERM DEBT	-	-	3,000	3,000	-	
5390 INTERFUND TRANSFER	\$ 8,000	\$ -	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ -	
910 TRANSFER TO OTHER FUNDS	8,000	-	8,000	8,000	-	
Grand Total	\$3,545,998	\$3,157,934	\$3,728,296	\$4,151,186	\$ 422,890	11.34%

**STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
FY24-25 REVENUE BUDGET**

Description	STRAFFORD Budget 2022-2023	STRAFFORD Budget 2023-2024	STRAFFORD Budget 2024-2025	Notes
BAL. CARRYOVER FROM PRIOR YRS	-	-	-	
<u>REVENUES FROM LOCAL SOURCES</u>				
Interest	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	
Tuition	-	-	-	
TuitionPK	-	-	-	
Miscellaneous/RENTALS	5,000	5,000	5,000	
Prior Year Adjustments	-	-	-	
Transfer from Tuition Reserve Fund	-	-	-	
Donations	-	-	-	
Total Local Source Revenues	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	
<u>REV. FROM STATE/FED. SOURCES</u>				
Education Spending Revenue (ACT 68)	\$ 3,283,568	\$ 3,451,415	\$ 3,987,273	
ACT 60 Related Transportation	45,091	45,091	45,091	FY22 Contract @ 45% Reimbursement
Vocational Transportation Reimbursement	-	-	-	
SMALL SCHOOLS	122,677	122,677	-	Removed with Act 127
Medicaid Reimbursement (IEP & EPSDT)	70,668	80,188	84,500	Cover Nurse Salary & Benefits
Total Rev. From State/Fed. Sources	\$ 3,522,004	\$ 3,699,371	\$ 4,116,864	
<u>OTHER FEDERAL GRANTS</u>				
School Wide CFP/previously Title I/other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Other FEDERAL Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<u>Vocational Education</u>				
Tech Ctr from State to the Tech Ctr	\$ 13,993	\$ 18,924	\$ 24,321	10% increase over FY24
Grand Total All Revenues	\$ 3,545,997	\$ 3,728,295	\$ 4,151,186	

**STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
2024-2025**

TAX RATE EXPLANATION

						CHG %
		PRIOR YR BUDGET	\$ 3,728,296			11.34%
		PRIOR YR ED FUND	3,470,339			15.60%
		PRIOR YR PER PUPIL	13,185.18			7.40%
		PRIOR YR TAX RATE BEFORE CLA	1.3246			16.57%
Act 68 Tax Factors						
Budget	4,151,186	Property Yield	\$ 9,171	15,443	Updated 1/12/24	
Changes	0	Common Level of Appraisal	82.76%	88.22%	-5.46%	
Total	4,151,186	Base rate fixed	1.0000			
- Local Revenue	(139,591)	VT Non-Residential rate	1.4520	1.3910	Updated 1/12/24	
Education Spending	4,011,594					
		FY24 EQP 169.65	Adjustment for CLA using the 5% Cap	1.3908	Tax Rate	
LONG TERM WEIGHTED AVERAGE	283.28	FY24 LTWA 263.20	Estimated Actual Residential FY25 Tax Rate	1.6806	AFTER CLA	
Education Spending Per Pupil	\$ 14,161.23	\$ 22,204.00	Estimate Actual Non-Residential FY25 Rate	1.6005	AFTER CLA	
Less Exclusions	\$ -					
PP over cap amount	\$ -	0	Actual Residential Tax Rate FY24	1.5015	AS OF 6/27/23	
Revised PP spending	\$ 14,161.23		Actual Non-Residential Rate FY24	1.5767	AS OF 6/27/23	
Equalized Residential Tax Rate BEFORE CLA	1.5441	PRIOR TO 5% TAX				
Equalized Non-Residential Rate BEFORE CLA	1.4520	RATE CAP	Change in Tax Rates from FY24 to FY25			
			Actual Residential Tax Rate	0.1791		
FY24 PER PUPIL SPENDING W/LTW	\$ 13,185.18		Actual Non-Residential Rate	0.0238		
DIFFERENCE IN FY25 VS. FY24 PER PUPIL	7.40%					
ACT 127 5% Tax Rate Cap	1.3908		Increase per \$100,000 of property value	\$ 179.06		
	\$ 25,979.61	amount to cut .01 cent of tax rate				

INCOME SENSITIVITY CALCULATION
 PER PUPIL SPENDING
 / INCOME YIELD
 X INCOME PERCENTAGE
 = TAX AMOUNT INCOME SENSITIVITY

STRAFFORD/NEWTON
 \$ 14,161.23 PER PUPIL SPENDING
 \$ 10,227.00 INCOME YIELD Updated 1/12/24 (FY24 WAS \$17,537)
 2.00% INCOME PERCENT
 2.77% INCOME SENSITIVITY

**STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
AUDITED FUND BALANCE REPORT OF MAJOR FUNDS
FYE June 30, 2023**

General Fund	\$419,787
Tyson Gym Reserve	\$ 38,898
Capital Improvement Fund	\$182,803
Tuition Reserve	\$164,250

**STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
AUDITED STATEMENT OF INDEBTEDNESS
FYE June 30, 2023**

The Strafford School District had no outstanding long-term debt at the end of the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year. Short term debt included a tax-anticipation note in the amount of \$572,780 that was paid in full in fiscal year 2023.

**STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
AUDIT REPORT
FYE June 30, 2023**

The Strafford School District has hired Telling & Hillman P.C., a professional audit firm, to review the district's finances. A copy of the audit will be available upon completion for review at the White River Valley Supervisory Union Business Office located at 461 Waterman Road Royalton, Vermont and online at <https://wrvsu.org/approved-budgets-and-audits>

PRELIMINARY

Three Prior Years Comparisons - Format as Provided by AOE

ESTIMATES ONLY

District: Stratford SU: White River Valley		FY25 is the first year of Act 127 Long Term Weighted Average Daily Membership for pupil counts. Equalized pupils are shown for FY22 - FY24. LTWADM is required to be			T199			Homestead tax rate per \$9,171 of spending per LTWADM
					Orange County	9,171	10,227	
Expenditures		FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Income dollar equivalent yield per 2.0% of household income		
1.	Budget (local budget, including special programs, and full technical center expenditures)	\$3,354,119	\$3,545,997	\$3,728,296	\$4,151,186	1.		
2.	plus Sum of separately warned articles passed at town meeting	-	-	-		2.		
3.	Locally adopted or warned budget	\$3,354,119	\$3,545,997	\$3,728,296	\$4,151,186	3.		
4.	plus Obligation to a Regional Technical Center School District if any	-	-	-		4.		
5.	plus Prior year deficit repayment of deficit	-	-	-		5.		
6.	Total Expenditures	\$3,354,119	\$3,545,997	\$3,728,296	\$4,151,186	6.		
7.	S.U. assessment (included in local budget) - informational data	-	-	-		7.		
8.	Prior year deficit reduction (included in expenditure budget) - informational data	-	-	-		8.		
Revenues								
9.	Offsetting revenues (categorical grants, donations, tuitions, surplus, etc.)	\$243,278	\$248,436	\$257,956	\$139,591	9.		
10.	Offsetting revenues	\$243,278	\$248,436	\$257,956	\$139,591	10.		
11.	Education Spending	\$3,110,841	\$3,297,561	\$3,470,340	\$4,011,595	11.		
12.	Pupils (equip FY22 - FY24, LTWADM FY25)	169.16	168.47	169.65	283.28	12.		

		\$18,389.93	\$19,573.58	\$20,455.88	\$14,161.24
13.	Education Spending per Pupil				
14.	minus Less ALL net eligible construction costs (or P&I) per Pupil pupil	-	-	-	-
15.	minus Less share of SpEd costs in excess of \$66,446 for an individual (per pupil)	\$8.31 <small>based on \$60,000</small>	\$14.30 <small>based on \$60,000</small>	\$21.06 <small>based on \$66,206</small>	\$21.06 <small>based on \$66,446</small>
16.	minus Less amount of deficit if deficit is SOLELY attributable to tuitions paid to public schools for grades the district does not operate for new students who moved to the district after the budget was passed (per eqpup)	-	-	-	-
17.	minus Less SpEd costs if excess is solely attributable to new SpEd spending if district has 20 or fewer pupils	-	-	-	-
18.	minus Estimated costs of new students after census period (per pupil)	-	-	-	-
19.	minus Total tuitions if tuitioning ALL K-12 unless electorate has approved tuitions greater than average announced tuition (per pupil)	-	-	-	-
20.	minus Less planning costs for merger of small schools (per pupil)	-	-	-	-
21.	minus Teacher retirement assessment for new members of Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System on or after July 1, 2015 (per pupil)	\$39.28	\$40.07	\$59.24	\$59.24
22.	minus Costs incurred when sampling drinking water outlets, implementing lead remediation, or retesting.	\$39.28	\$40.07	\$59.24	\$59.24
23.	Excess spending threshold	threshold = \$18,789	threshold = \$19,997	threshold = \$22,204	threshold = \$23,193
24.	plus Excess Spending per Pupil over threshold (if any)	\$18,789.00 <small>Suspended thru FY29</small>	\$19,997.00 <small>Suspended thru FY29</small>	\$22,204.00 <small>Suspended thru FY29</small>	\$23,193.00 <small>Suspended thru FY29</small>
25.	Per pupil figure used for calculating District Equalized Tax Rate	\$18,390	\$19,574	\$20,456	\$14,161.24
26.	District spending adjustment (minimum of 100%)	162.498% <small>based on yield \$11,317</small>	147.015% <small>based on yield \$13,314</small>	132.461% <small>based on \$15,443</small>	154.413% <small>based on \$9,171</small>
Prorating the local tax rate					
27.	Anticipated district equalized homestead tax rate (to be prorated by line 30) [\$14,161.24 ÷ (\$9,171 ÷ \$1.00)]	\$1.6250 <small>based on \$1.00</small>	\$1.4702 <small>based on \$1.00</small>	\$1.3246 <small>based on \$1.00</small>	\$1.5441 <small>based on \$1.00</small>
28.	Act 127 tax cap (FY25 - FY29 eligible)				\$1.3908
29.	Percent of Stratford pupils not in a union school district	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
30.	Portion of district eq homestead rate to be assessed by town (100.00% x \$1.54)	\$1.6250	\$1.4702	\$1.3246	\$1.3908
31.	Common Level of Appraisal (CLA)	97.67%	95.36%	88.22%	82.76%
32.	Portion of actual district homestead rate to be assessed by town (\$1.3908 / 82.76%)	\$1.6638 <small>based on \$1.00</small>	\$1.5417 <small>based on \$1.00</small>	\$1.5015 <small>based on \$1.00</small>	\$1.6805 <small>based on \$1.00</small>

If the district belongs to a union school district, this is only a **PARTIAL** homestead tax rate. The tax rate shown represents the estimated portion of the final homestead tax rate due to spending for students who do not belong to a union school district. The same holds true for the income cap percentage.

33.	Anticipated income cap percent (to be prorated by line 30) [((\$14,161.24 ÷ \$10,227) x 2.00%]	2.67% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	2.45% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	2.33% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	2.77% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	33.
34.	Portion of district income cap percent applied by State (100.00% x 2.77%)	2.67% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	2.45% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	2.33% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	2.77% <small>based on 2.00%</small>	34.
35.		-	-	-	-	35.
36.		-	-	-	-	36.

- Using the revised January 9th, 2024 Education Fund Outlook FY25 forecast, the FY25 education fund need results in a property yield of \$9,171 for every \$1.00 of homestead tax per \$100 of equalized property value, an income yield of \$10,227 for a base income percent of 2.0%, and a non-residential tax rate of \$1.452. These figures use the estimated \$13,000,000 surplus from the Education Fund. **New and updated data will likely change the proposed property and income yields and perhaps the non-residential rate.**

- Final figures will be set by the Legislature during the legislative session and approved by the Governor.

- The base income percentage cap is 2.0%.

WHITE RIVER VALLEY SUPERVISORY UNION

FY24-25 BUDGET

Description	FY23 APPROVED	FY23 ACTUAL	FY24 BUDGET	FY25 PROPOSE	DIFFER- ENCE	NOTES
CURRICULUM - SALARIES	\$ 34,000	\$ 10,256	\$ 46,360	\$ 62,700	\$ 16,340	.35 FTE (INCREASE OF .25 FTE), LEADERSHIP & COACHING STIPENDS
CURRICULUM - COORDINATOR SALARY	113,000	77,039	118,085	133,875	15,790	1.0 FTE
CURRICULUM - HEALTH INS	24,371	16,093	25,258	29,309	4,051	
CURRICULUM - HRA	8,400	3,554	4,000	4,000	-	
CURRICULUM - CURR EMPER TAXES	14,489	6,536	12,580	14,285	1,705	
CURRICULUM - LIFE INS	304	338	279	292	12	
CURRICULUM - NTHA VSTRS	-	1,402	1,450	1,500	50	
CURRICULUM - RETIREMENT CONTR	5,750	2,000	2,300	3,050	750	
CURRICULUM - WORKERS COMP	492	-	-	-	-	
CURRICULUM - PROF DEV	5,000	2,071	5,000	5,000	-	
CURRICULUM - DENTAL INS	870	978	523	692	170	
CURRICULUM - CONTRACTED SERV	5,000	1,282	5,000	9,000	4,000	
CURRICULUM - ADMIN PROF DEV	-	-	-	4,068	4,068	
CURRICULUM - TRAVEL	-	4,000	2,500	3,200	700	
CURRICULUM- SUPPLIES	1,500	699	1,500	2,500	1,000	
CURRICULUM - CURR-BOOKS & PERIODICALS	500	139	500	700	200	
CURRICULUM - TECHNOLOGY SOFTWARE	-	-	-	-	-	
CURRICULUM - DUES & FEES	2,000	2,273	5,000	5,200	200	
	\$ 215,676	\$ 128,659	\$ 230,335	\$ 279,371	\$ 49,036	
DISTRICT WIDE - CONTRACTED SERV	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ -	
DISTRICT WIDE - TRAVEL	-	56	-	-	-	
DISTRICT WIDE- SUPPLIES	1,000	460	1,000	-	-	Moved these expenses to Curriculum & Instruction
DISTRICT WIDE - BOOKS & PERIODICALS	200	29	200	-	-	
DISTRICT WIDE- DUES & FEES	500	370	500	-	-	
	\$ 5,700	\$ 915	\$ 5,700	\$ -	\$ -	
TECHNOLOGY - SALARIES	\$ 290,086	\$ 299,209	\$ 288,806	\$ 306,576	\$ 17,770	5.0 FTE - INCLUDES DATA MANAGER STIPEND
TECHNOLOGY - HEALTH INS	77,758	74,701	88,683	71,198	(17,486)	
TECHNOLOGY- HRA	17,400	9,431	17,200	10,600	(6,600)	
TECHNOLOGY- EMPER TAXES	22,192	20,811	22,094	24,802	2,708	
TECHNOLOGY - LIFE INS	486	473	508	432	(76)	
TECHNOLOGY - RETIREMENT CONTR	20,658	20,290	20,272	14,243	(6,030)	
TECHNOLOGY - ANNURAL ANNUITY	-	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	
TECHNOLOGY - WORKERS COMP	712	-	-	-	-	
TECHNOLOGY - TRAVEL/CONF	1,000	-	3,000	3,000	-	
TECHNOLOGY- DENTAL INS	2,096	2,188	2,267	1,872	(395)	
TECHNOLOGY - CONTR SERV	20,000	143	20,000	20,000	-	
TECHNOLOGY - REPAIR	500	145	500	500	-	
TECHNOLOGY - TRAVEL	1,000	2,038	1,000	1,000	-	
TECHNOLOGY - SUPPLIES	13,300	11,157	13,300	13,300	-	
TECHNOLOGY - DUES & FEES	-	100	-	100	100	
	\$ 467,189	\$ 442,186	\$ 477,631	\$ 469,123	\$ (8,508)	

Description	FY23 APPROVED	FY23 ACTUAL	FY24 BUDGET	FY25 PROPOSE	DIFFER- ENCE	NOTES
OFFICE OF SUPER - SUPERINTENDENT SALS	\$ 143,000	\$ 146,117	\$ 148,361	\$ 161,843	\$ 13,482	1.0 FTE
OFFICE OF SUPER - ADMIN SUPPORT	50,960	51,923	55,620	58,968	3,348	1.0 FTE
BOARD CLERK - SALARIES	3,000	1,000	900	1,000	100	
BOARD CLERK - FICA	-	77	-	77	77	
OFFICE OF SUPER - HEALTH INS	23,762	23,525	26,938	31,445	4,507	
OFFICE OF SUPER - HRA	6,500	5,196	6,300	6,300	-	
OFFICE OF SUPER - EMPLOYER TAXES	14,917	14,666	15,605	17,864	2,259	
OFFICE OF SUPER - LIFE INSURANCE	303	333	254	270	16	
OFFICE OF SUPER - RETIREMENT CONTR	5,067	3,809	3,615	5,480	1,865	
OFFICE OF SUPER - ANNUITY	-	8,702	1,500	8,092	6,592	
OFFICE OF SUPER - WORKERS COMP	508	-	-	-	-	
OFFICE OF SUPER - COURSE REIMB	5,000	200	5,750	5,000	(750)	
OFFICE OF SUPER - DENTAL INS	870	905	951	969	19	
OFFICE OF SUPER - CONTR SERV	5,000	500	5,000	2,500	(2,500)	
OFFICE OF SUPER - LEGAL FEES	15,000	10,004	15,000	12,500	(2,500)	
OFFICE OF SUPER - REPAIRS/MAINTENANCE	500	-	500	500	-	
OFFICE OF SUPER - SUPERINTENDENTS TRAVEL	-	4,000	4,000	8,000	4,000	
OFFICE OF SUPER - STAFF TRAVEL	-	198	100	200	100	
OFFICE OF SUPER - IN-SERVICE MTGS, ETC	2,500	695	2,500	2,500	-	
OFFICE OF SUPER - BOOKS AND PERIODICALS	-	1,664	-	1,500	1,500	
OFFICE OF SUPER - DUES AND FEES	15,000	22,433	17,500	20,000	2,500	
OFFICE OF SUPER - FINGERPRINTING EXP	4,000	4,482	4,500	4,500	-	
	\$ 295,887	\$ 300,429	\$ 314,894	\$ 349,509	\$ 34,615	
FISCAL SERVICES - TREASURER SALS	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ -	
FISCAL SERVICES - TREASURER FICA	92	92	92	96	4	
FISCAL SERVICES - ADMIN SALARY	102,000	108,000	106,590	117,075	10,485	1.0 FTE
FISCAL SERVICES - SUPPORT SALS	231,723	199,326	212,519	224,656	12,137	4.0 FTE
FISCAL SERVICES - HEALTH INS	96,881	96,136	99,791	88,747	(11,043)	
FISCAL SERVICES - HRA	21,400	20,434	19,400	15,000	(4,400)	
FISCAL SERVICES - EMPLOYER TAXES	25,680	21,726	24,412	27,646	3,234	
FISCAL SERVICES - LIFE INS	848	434	508	435	(73)	
FISCAL SERVICES - RETIREMENT CONTR	25,499	21,797	21,050	23,067	2,017	
FISCAL SERVICES - ANNUAL ANNUITY	-	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	
FISCAL SERVICES - WORKERS COMP	872	-	-	-	-	
FISCAL SERVICES - COURSE REIMB	3,000	1,549	3,000	4,068	1,068	
FISCAL SERVICES - DENTAL INS	2,175	1,924	2,376	485	(1,891)	
FISCAL SERVICES - OTHER CONTR SERV	61,000	86,443	62,000	75,000	13,000	PAYCHEX
FISCAL SERVICES - AUDIT	1,500	17,049	1,500	1,500	-	FIXED ASSET MANAGEMENT
FISCAL SERVICES - COMPUTER MAINTENANCE	500	-	200	200	-	
FISCAL SERVICES - TRAVEL/CONF	1,500	2,441	2,000	4,500	2,500	
FISCAL SERVICES - SUPPLIES	5,000	4,929	5,000	5,000	-	
FISCAL SERVICES - SOFTWARE	30,000	22,611	35,000	20,000	(15,000)	FINANCIAL SOFTWARE PROGRAM
FISCAL SERVICES - DUES AND FEES	500	6,880	2,500	4,000	1,500	
FISCAL SERVICES - AUDIT	50,000	-	60,000	70,000	10,000	
PERSONNEL ADMIN FEES	3,200	8,733	4,000	7,700	3,700	DATAPATH MONTHLY ADMIN FEES
	\$ 664,570	\$ 623,703	\$ 665,137	\$ 692,375	\$ 23,538	

Description	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY25	DIFFER-	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUAL	BUDGET	PROPOSE	ENCE	
CENTRAL OFFICE - BLDG/GRDS CONSULT	\$ 25,000	\$ 14,239	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ -	
CENTRAL OFFICE - EMPLOYER TAXES	-	665	1,913	2,023	111	
CENTRAL OFFICE - WORKERS COMP	-	43,588	9,750	9,229	(521)	CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF WORK COMP
CENTRAL OFFICE - UNEMPLOYMENT TAX	1,200	721	1,200	1,200	-	
CENTRAL OFFICE - LTD	3,100	10,617	10,000	3,210	(6,790)	
CENTRAL OFFICE - CUSTODIAL SERVICES	5,000	10,168	2,500	2,500	-	
CENTRAL OFFICE - DISPOSAL SERVICES	1,500	1,256	1,500	1,500	-	
CENTRAL OFFICE - REPAIRS AND MAINT	2,000	758	2,000	2,000	-	
CENTRAL OFFICE - RENTAL OF BUILDINGS	60,586	60,737	62,403	64,275	1,872	INCREASE PER LEASE AGREEMENT
CENTRAL OFFICE - PROPERTY/LIABILITY INS	2,333	1,577	2,400	2,400	-	
CENTRAL OFFICE - INTERNET	-	869	-	1,000	1,000	
CENTRAL OFFICE - TELEPHONE EXP	7,200	7,617	8,000	8,000	-	
CENTRAL OFFICE - POSTAGE	5,135	5,353	5,150	5,150	-	
CENTRAL OFFICE - ADVERTISING	2,000	4,876	4,000	5,000	1,000	INCREASE PER ACTUALS IN FY23
CENTRAL OFFICE - SUPPLIES	10,000	10,406	7,000	10,000	3,000	
CENTRAL OFFICE - SOFTWARE	1,000	-	500	-	(500)	
CENTRAL OFFICE - COPIER LEASE	5,000	8,872	8,000	9,000	1,000	INCREASE PER ACTUALS IN FY23
	\$ 131,054	\$ 182,319	\$ 151,316	\$ 151,487	\$ 172	
INSTRUCTION SALARY	\$ 59,805	\$ 3,237	\$ 63,528	\$ 66,294	\$ 2,766	
INSTRUCTION BENEFITS	1,500	-	1,500	-	(1,500)	
INSTRUCTION FICA	4,575	245	4,860	5,363	503	
INSTRUCTION LIFE	61	-	63	54	(9)	
INSTRUCTION	-	-	1,450	1,500	50	
INSTRUCTION RETIREMENT	-	575	-	-	-	PreK Literacy/Math Interv.
INSTRUCTION WC	155	-	-	-	-	Funded by Title I
INSTRUCTION DENTAL	435	-	-	-	-	
INSTRUCTION PURCHASED SERVICES	-	-	-	-	-	
INSTRUCTION TRAVEL	811	840	-	1,000	1,000	
INSTRUCTION SUPPLIES	5,000	505	1,000	1,000	-	
	\$ 72,342	\$ 5,402	\$ 72,401	\$ 75,211	\$ 2,810	
PRESCHOOL COORD - SALARY	\$ 5,000	\$ 0	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -	STIPEND IS \$5K
PRESCHOOL COORD - BENEFITS & TAXES	383	-	383	405	22	
PRESCHOOL COORD - NTHA VSTRS	-	1,402	-	1,500	1,500	
PRESCHOOL COORD - LIFE	-	27	-	-	-	
PRESCHOOL COORD - WINOOSKI VALLEY	11,426	13,030	13,500	13,500	-	WIN. VALLEY PARTNERS & TS GOLD
PRESCHOOL COORD - SUPPLIES	890	1,614	1,000	1,000	-	
PRESCHOOL COORD - TRAVEL	1,000	1,005	1,000	1,000	-	
PRESCHOOL COORD - PROFESSIONAL DEV	2,000	475	2,000	2,000	-	
	\$ 20,699	\$ 17,553	\$ 22,883	\$ 24,405	\$ 1,522	

Description	FY23 APPROVED	FY23 ACTUAL	FY24 BUDGET	FY25 PROPOSE	DIFFER- ENCE	NOTES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - SALARY	\$ 26,334	\$ 13,571	\$ 27,851	\$ 29,004	\$ 1,153	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - HEALTH INS	-	14,520	3,626	11,723	8,098	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - HRA	-	2,403	1,900	1,600	(300)	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - CURR EMPER TAXES	2,015	969	2,131	2,346	216	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - LIFE INS	61	60	63	22	(41)	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - NTHA VSTRS	-	1,402	1,450	1,500	50	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - RETIREMENT CONTR	-	210	-	200	200	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - WORKERS COMP	68	-	-	-	-	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - PROF DEV	-	-	400	400	-	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - DENTAL INS	422	439	460	460	-	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - CONTR CURRICULUM SERV	-	-	-	-	-	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - ADMIN PROF DEV	-	-	-	-	-	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - TRAVEL	-	271	100	300	200	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - SUPPLIES	-	156	50	150	100	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - DUES & FEES	-	-	100	100	-	
	\$ 28,900	\$ 34,001	\$ 38,130	\$ 47,805	\$ 9,675	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - IMPROVE OF INSTR	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39,363	\$ 39,363	.5 FTE - COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR
COMMUNITY SERVICES - HEALTH INS	-	-	-	8,179	8,179	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ACCT	-	-	-	2,000	2,000	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - CURR EMPER TAXES	-	-	-	3,184	3,184	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - LIFE INS	-	-	-	54	54	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - RETIREMENT CONTR	-	-	-	-	-	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - WORKERS COMP	-	-	-	-	-	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - PROF DEV	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - DENTAL INS	-	-	-	235	235	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - CONTRACTED SERV	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - TRAVEL	-	-	-	500	500	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - SUPPLIES	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - BOOKS & PERIODICALS	-	-	-	200	200	
COMMUNITY SERVICES - DUES & FEES	-	-	-	500	500	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 57,215	\$ 57,215	
Total Projected WRVSU Budgeted Expenditures:	\$ 1,902,017	\$ 1,735,168	\$ 1,978,426	\$ 2,146,501	\$ 168,075	
					8.50%	

.4 FTE POSITION
ADDED TO THE SU IN FY22

.5 FTE - COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

**White River Valley SU
FY25 Member Assessment Allocation**

	FY23 WRVSU Assessment Allocation:		FY24 WRVSU Assessment Allocation:		FY25 WRVSU		\$\$ Change FY24 to FY25
	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	
FBUD	21.00%	\$ 371,914	20.34%	\$ 371,902	21.05%	\$ 418,158	\$ 46,257
GHUD	3.30%	58,444	3.12%	57,047	2.96%	58,800	1,754
RSUD	11.20%	198,354	10.55%	192,899	10.24%	203,418	10,519
SHARON	14.60%	258,569	15.41%	281,761	15.43%	306,517	24,757
STRAFFORD	10.10%	178,873	10.25%	187,414	10.47%	207,987	20,573
WRUD	39.80%	704,865	40.33%	737,404	39.85%	791,621	54,216
	100.00%	\$1,771,017	100.00%	\$ 1,828,426	100.00%	\$ 1,986,501	\$ 158,075

WRVSU Revenue / Assessment Sources:	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	\$\$ Change FY24 to FY25
WRVSU BUDGET EXPENDITURES (Non SpEd)	\$1,902,017	\$ 1,978,426	\$ 2,146,501	\$ 168,075
LESS LOCAL SOURCE REVENUES:				
<i>INDIRECT RATE</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>INTEREST</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>LESS DIRECT GRANT REVENUE</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>MEDICAID</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>EPSDT / MAC</i>	-	-	-	-
FEDERAL TITLE FUNDS:	-	-	-	-
<i>IDEA B</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Title II - Curriculum</i>	(46,000)	(75,000)	(75,000)	-
<i>Title II - Prek</i>	(10,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	-
<i>Title I - Prek Reading / Math Intervention</i>	(75,000)	(70,000)	(80,000)	(10,000)
Local Assessment Amount:	\$1,771,017	\$ 1,828,426	\$ 1,986,501	\$ 158,075

WHITE RIVER VALLEY SUPERVISORY UNION

**Special Education
FY24-25 BUDGET**

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	FY22-23 APPROVED	FY22-23 ACTUALS	FY23-24 APPROVED	FY24-25 PROPOSED	DIFFER- ENCE	NOTES
EEE TEACHER SALs	\$ 131,672	\$ 148,688	\$ 136,204	\$ 140,358	\$ 4,154	2.0 FTE
EEE SUPPORT STAFF SALs	-	560	-	-	-	
EEE INSTR - HEALTH INS	23,762	9,383	18,128	21,161	3,033	
EEE INSTR - EMPLOYER TAXES	10,073	11,030	10,420	11,355	935	
EEE INSTR - HRA	6,300	4,812	3,800	3,800	-	
EEE INSTR - LIFE INS	122	-	127	108	(19)	
EEE INSTR - OPEB	-	1,402	-	1,500	1,500	
EEE INSTR - EMPLER RETIREMENT	-	29	-	-	-	
EEE INSTR - WORKERS COMP	342	-	-	968	968	
EEE INSTR - UNEMPLOYMENT	122	-	122	51	(71)	
EEE INSTR - PROF DEV	4,000	-	4,000	4,000	-	
EEE INSTR - DENTAL INS	844	-	921	940	19	
EEE INSTR - DISABILITY INS	342	-	354	337	(17)	
EEE - CONTRACTED SERVICES	5,000	990	5,000	5,000	-	
EEE - TUITION	500	-	500	500	-	
EEE INSTR - TRAVEL	2,500	5,515	2,500	5,000	2,500	
EEE - SUPPLIES	1,500	410	1,500	1,500	-	
EEE-DIRECT INSTR.-DUES&FEES	300	-	300	300	-	
TOTAL EEE INSTRUCTION	\$ 187,379	\$ 182,819	\$ 183,875	\$ 196,878	\$ 13,003	
IDEA B PRE-K - SUPPLIES	\$ -	\$ 12,444	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTAL IDEA B PREK	\$ -	\$ 12,444	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
EEE - OT CONTR SERVICES	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ -	
EEE - OT TRAVEL	500	-	500	500	-	
TOTAL EEE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST	\$ 4,500	\$ -	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500	\$ -	
SPEC ED - TEACHER SALs	\$ 1,024,828	\$ 874,445	\$ 1,204,753	\$ 1,260,906	\$ 56,153	17.0 FTE & .65 INT PROG CORD
SPEC ED - SUPPORT STAFF SALs	1,052,400	918,871	1,007,451	994,406	(13,046)	35 FTE PARA
SPEC ED - SUMMER SALs	38,000	15,120	30,000	30,000	-	
SPEC ED - SUBSTITUTES	70,000	42,563	40,000	40,000	-	
SPEC ED - HEALTH INS	636,333	471,723	632,888	619,605	(13,283)	
SPEC ED - HRA	111,340	84,214	127,900	84,000	(43,900)	
SPEC ED - EMPLOYER TAXES	158,908	145,891	169,234	182,455	13,221	
SPEC ED - LIFE INS	3,477	2,994	3,419	2,948	(471)	
SPED-VSTRS OPEB	11,500	8,412	11,500	11,500	-	
SPEC ED - RETIREMENT CONTR	73,668	83,051	65,484	68,858	3,374	
SPEC ED - WORKERS COMP INS	5,241	-	16,592	15,562	(1,030)	
SPEC ED - UNEMPLOYMENT	3,405	2,044	3,222	1,348	(1,874)	
SPEC ED - PROF DEV	3,500	10,332	-	-	-	FY24 and beyond budgeted in Function 2213
SPEC ED - DENTAL INS	23,783	19,953	22,803	18,980	(3,823)	
SPEC ED - CONTRACTED SERVICES	150,000	76,630	153,500	153,500	-	
SPEC ED - ADVERTISING	-	150	-	150	150	

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	FY22-23 APPROVED	FY22-23 ACTUALS	FY23-24 APPROVED	FY24-25 PROPOSED	DIFFER- ENCE	NOTES
SPEC ED - TUITION	1,605,000	1,417,465	1,640,000	1,640,000	-	
SPEC ED - TRAVEL	3,000	11,033	3,000	3,000	-	
SPEC ED - EXCESS COSTS	670,000	642,611	670,000	670,000	-	
SPEC ED - SUPPLIES	20,000	2,812	15,000	15,000	-	
SPEC ED - BOOKS	-	8,474	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - SOFTWARE	6,000	1,501	3,500	3,500	-	
SPEC ED - EQUIPMENT	15,000	116	10,000	10,000	-	
TOTAL SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECT INSTRUCTION	\$ 5,685,383	\$ 4,840,406	\$ 5,830,246	\$ 5,825,718	\$ (4,529)	
IDEA B PROF SHARE SUPPLIES	\$ 5,806	\$ -	\$ 5,806	\$ 5,806	\$ -	
TOTAL PROPORTIONATE SHARE	\$ 5,806	\$ -	\$ 5,806	\$ 5,806	\$ -	
IDEA B - DIRECT INSTRUCTION SALARIES	\$ -	\$ 162,014	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
IDEA B - DIRECT INSTRUCTION EMPLOYER TAXES	-	11,623	-	-	-	
IDEA B - DIRECT INSTRUCTION PROFESSIONAL SERVICE	-	16,330	-	-	-	
IDEA B - TUITION	-	-	-	-	-	
IDEA B - DIRECT INSTR SUPPLIES	-	-	-	-	-	
TOTAL IDEA B DIRECT INSTRUCTION	\$ -	\$ 189,966	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
SPEC ED - PSYCH SRVCS SALARY	\$0	\$173,474	\$0	\$85,000	\$85,000	ADDING PSYCHOLOGIST 1.0 FTE
SPEC ED - PSYCH HEALTH INS	-	-	-	29,309	29,309	
SPEC ED - PSYCH EMPLOYER TAXES	-	-	-	6,877	6,877	
SPEC ED - PSYCH RETIREMENT	-	-	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - PSYCH WORKERS COMP	-	-	-	587	587	
SPEC ED - PSYCH DENTAL INS	-	-	-	485	485	
SPEC ED - PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES	350,000	-	350,000	230,000	(120,000)	Clara Martin Classroom Case Managers
TOTAL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES	\$350,000	\$173,474	\$350,000	\$352,256	\$2,256	
IDEA B - PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSULT	\$0	\$24,222	\$0	\$0	\$0	
IDEA B - PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES	-	76,165	-	-	-	
TOTAL PSYCHOLOGICAL	\$0	\$100,387	\$0	\$0	\$0	
SPEC ED - SLP SALS	\$ 318,396	\$ 264,572	\$ 260,442	\$ 324,585	\$ 64,143	2.8 FTE SLP & 2.0 SLP AIDE
SPEC ED - SLP HEALTH INS	78,162	66,785	60,480	71,798	11,318	
SPEC ED - SLP HRA	14,900	8,296	10,300	10,300	-	
SPEC ED - SLP EMPLOYER TAXES	24,357	19,138	19,924	26,259	6,335	
SPEC ED - SLP LIFE INS	305	369	253	324	71	
SPEC ED - SLP RETIREMENT CONTR	3,066	3,935	2,989	4,866	1,877	
SPEC ED - SLP WORKERS COMP	828	-	1,953	2,240	286	
SPEC ED - PROF DEV	5,200	-	4,000	-	(4,000)	
SPEC ED - DENTAL INS	2,103	1,748	1,743	1,872	129	
SPEC ED - DISABILITY	828	-	677	779	102	
SPEC ED- SLP CONTRACTED SERVICES	20,000	35,646	20,000	20,000	-	
IDEA B BASIC-SLP CONSULTING	-	-	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - SLP TRAVEL	2,500	1,583	2,500	2,500	-	
SPEC ED - SLP SUPPLIES	1,500	1,456	1,500	1,500	-	
SPEC ED - SLP DUES & FEES	1,000	989	1,000	1,000	-	
TOTAL SPEECH SERVICES	\$ 473,145	\$ 404,518	\$ 387,762	\$ 468,023	\$ 80,261	

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	FY22-23	FY22-23	FY23-24	FY24-25	DIFFER-	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUALS	APPROVED	PROPOSED	ENCE	
IDEA B - SPEECH CONT SVC	\$ -	\$ 53,649	\$ -	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,000	
TOTAL IDEA B SPEECH	\$ -	\$ 53,649	\$ -	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,000	
SPEC ED - OT SALARIES	\$ 210,905	\$ 132,493	\$ 135,441	\$ 181,713	\$ 46,272	3.0 FTE DUE TO INCREASED NEEDS
SPEC ED - OT HEALTH INS	47,697	32,927	37,109	60,117	23,008	
SPEC ED - HRA	10,500	8,243	8,400	8,000	(400)	
SPEC ED - OT EMPLOYER TAXES	16,134	8,648	10,361	14,701	4,339	
SPEC ED - OT LIFE INS	-	120	127	162	35	
SPEC ED - OT EMPER RETIREMENT	5,513	8,949	8,804	12,266	3,462	
SPEC ED - OT WORKERS COMP	548	-	1,016	1,254	238	
SPEC ED - OT UNEMPLOYMENT INS	243	-	122	77	(45)	
SPEC ED - DISABILITY	548	-	352	436	84	
SPEC ED - OT PROF DEV	3,000	444	2,000	-	(2,000)	
SPEC ED - OT DENTAL INS	1,692	830	855	940	84	
SPEC ED - OT CONTRACTED SERVICES	15,000	33,092	15,000	15,000	-	
SPEC ED - OT TRAVEL	1,500	-	1,500	1,500	-	
SPEC ED - OT SUPPLIES	1,000	2,869	1,000	1,000	-	
IDEA B OT CONTRACTED SERVICES	-	98,628	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - OT EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	-	-	
TOTAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST	\$ 314,281	\$ 327,243	\$ 222,086	\$ 297,165	\$ 75,078	
PHYSICAL THERAPY CONT SVC	\$ -	\$ 40,697	\$ -	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	
SPEC ED - OTHER SUPPORT SERV	-	-	-	-	-	
IDEA B - OTHER SUPPORT CONT	-	9,938	-	-	-	
IDEA B SUPPORT SERVICES	-	64,169	-	-	-	
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES	\$ -	\$ 114,803	\$ -	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	
SPEC ED - INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF TRAININGS	\$ 45,000	\$ 10,153	\$ 25,000	\$ 17,000	\$ (8,000)	17 FTE @ \$1,000 per CBA
IDEA B - INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF TRAININGS	-	9,183	-	-	-	
TOTAL STAFF TRAINING/CURRICULUM	\$ 45,000	\$ 19,335	\$ 25,000	\$ 17,000	\$ (8,000)	
SPEC ED - ADMIN SALS	\$ 97,760	\$ 98,500	\$ 98,500	\$ 110,250	\$ 11,750	1.0 FTE
SPEC ED - SUPPORT SALS	78,932	61,812	53,642	44,990	(8,652)	.8 FTE
SPEC ED - ADMIN HEALTH INS	39,876	42,127	29,231	30,909	1,677	
SPEC ED-HRA OOP COST	8,600	9,128	8,400	4,000	(4,400)	
SPEC ED - HRA ADMIN	370	-	370	370	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN EMPLOYER TAXES	13,517	12,004	11,639	12,559	920	
SPEC ED - ADMIN LIFE INS	364	607	317	270	(47)	
SPEC ED - ADMIN RETIREMENT CONTR	7,025	4,037	5,487	3,037	(2,450)	
SPEC ED - ADMIN ANNUITY	-	5,000	-	2,000	2,000	
SPEC ED - ADMIN WORKERS COMP	595	-	1,141	1,071	(70)	
SPEC ED - UNEMPLOYMENT	243	-	122	26	(96)	
SPEC ED - ADMIN PROF DEV	6,000	1,053	2,000	2,000	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN DENTAL INS	1,741	1,697	951	485	(466)	
SPEC ED - ADMIN CHILD FIND	500	-	500	500	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN CONTR SERVICES	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN LEGAL SERVICES	5,000	140	5,000	5,000	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN REPAIRS/MAINT	500	-	500	500	-	

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	FY22-23	FY22-23	FY23-24	FY24-25	DIFFER-	NOTES
	APPROVED	ACTUALS	APPROVED	PROPOSED	ENCE	
SPEC ED - CONTRACTED TRANSPORTATION	-	6,619	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN PHONE	-	-	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN ADVERTISING	-	263	-	-	-	
SPEC ED ADMIN - MILEAGE	-	2,000	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN SUPPLIES	500	100	500	500	-	
SPEC ED - ADMIN BOOKS & PERIODICALS	-	-	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	-	-	
SPEC ED - DUES & FEES	2,000	4,651	2,000	2,000	-	
TOTAL SPECIAL ED ADMINISTRATION	\$ 268,523	\$ 249,740	\$ 225,300	\$ 225,466	\$ 167	
IDEA B - INDIRECT COST	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ (5,000)	
TOTAL CENTRAL SERVICES	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ (5,000)	
SPEC ED - CONTRACTED TRANSPORTATION	\$ 385,000	\$ 344,013	\$ 424,500	\$ 424,500	\$ -	Home to School Transportation
TOTAL STUDENT TRANSPORTATION	\$ 385,000	\$ 344,013	\$ 424,500	\$ 424,500	\$ -	
IDEA B - TRANSPORTATION	\$ 120,000	\$ 200,359	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000	\$ -	STA Extra Services/Contracted Service Providers
IDEA B PREK TRANSPORTATION	-	3,105	-	-	-	
EEE TRANSPORTATION	-	1,758	-	-	-	
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION	\$ 120,000	\$ 205,221	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000	\$ -	
TOTAL WRVSU SPECIAL EDUCATION	\$ 7,844,018	\$ 7,218,018	\$ 7,784,076	\$ 8,031,312	\$ 247,236	

3.18%

SPECIAL EDUCATION REVENUE				
	FY23	FY24	FY25	DIFFER-
	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	ENCE
	\$ 7,844,018	\$ 7,784,076	\$ 8,031,312	\$ 247,236
Act 73 Census Block Grant (NEW FY23)	3,279,465	3,606,573	3,743,039	136,466
Extra Ordinary Reimbursement (Excess of \$66,500/per student)	1,375,594	933,500	905,342	(28,158)
IDEA B Basic Flow Through	706,797	750,906	697,661	(53,245)
IDEA B Pre-School	26,388	29,076	14,805	(14,271)
EEE	136,511	146,156	173,020	26,864
TOTAL SU SPECIAL ED REVENUES	\$ 5,524,755	\$ 5,466,211	\$ 5,533,867	\$ 67,656
MEMBER TOWN ASSESSMENT	\$ 2,319,263	\$ 2,317,865	\$ 2,497,445	\$ 179,579
TOTAL	\$ 7,844,018	\$ 7,784,076	\$ 8,031,312	\$ 247,236
WRVSU SpEd Assessment Breakdown:				
	FY24	FY25		
EEE NET EXPENSE TO BE ASSESSED	\$ 13,143.96	\$ 13,553.15		
REGULAR SPECIAL ED SERVICES TO BE ASSESSED	\$ 2,304,721	\$ 2,483,892		
	\$ 2,317,865	\$ 2,497,445		
		\$ 179,579		

WRVSU FY25 SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT

FY25 PROPOSED SpEd ASSESSMENT			\$2,497,445	
%	Amount	Change	FY24 %	FY24 \$
22.46%	\$ 560,926	\$ 60,267	21.6%	\$ 500,659
5.27%	131,615	4,132	5.5%	127,483
10.36%	258,735	4,929	11.0%	253,806
17.48%	436,553	37,880	17.2%	398,673
10.84%	270,723	24,102	10.6%	246,621
33.59%	838,892	48,268	34.1%	790,624
SU SpEd Only: \$2,497,445		\$ 179,579	100.0%	\$2,317,866

WRVSU SPECIAL EDUCATION Assessment Only:	FY25 SpEd Assessment Schedule:		
	%	Amount	Monthly
FBUD	22.46%	\$ 560,926	\$ 46,744
GHUD	5.27%	\$ 131,615	\$ 10,968
RSUD	10.36%	\$ 258,735	\$ 21,561
SHARON	17.48%	\$ 436,553	\$ 36,379
STRAFFORD	10.84%	\$ 270,723	\$ 22,560
WRUD	33.59%	\$ 838,892	\$ 69,908
SU SpEd Only:		\$2,497,445	\$ 208,120
			\$2,497,445

**STRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
SECONDARY ENROLLMENT AND TUITION**

(as of January 2024)

SCHOOL	9	10	11	12	Total
Thetford Academy	9	2	5	7	23
Hanover High School	1	2	2	2	7
Hartford High School	0	1	0	1	2
White River Valley H.S.	0	0	1	0	1
Kimball Union	0	0	1	1	2
Sharon Academy	5	2	5	2	14
St. Johnsbury Academy	0	0	1	0	1
Out of State Private	0	1	0	0	1
Total Enrollment	15	8	15	13	51

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
	Tuition Rate	Tuition Rate	Tuition Rate
Thetford Academy	\$ 19,670	\$ 20,963	\$ 22,430
Sharon Academy	16,842	18,500	19,425
Hanover High School	21,399	22,555	23,568
Hartford High School	18,900	19,500	20,800
Private Schools (state average)	16,842	17,278	18,266

Congratulations, Graduates!
~ 2023 ~

MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADUATES

The Newton School

Ada Breese	Annelies Currier	Reagan Ekegren
Leif Hanchett	Tanner Hardy	Jesse Martin
Kody Merchand	Elenore Mullins	Hailey Race
Kai Slayton		Levi Smith

The Sharon Academy

Genevieve Patrissi

Lyme School

Astrid Girdwood	Stella Girdwood
-----------------	-----------------

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Thetford Academy

Finn Linehan	Harland Ransom	Charlotte Reimanis
--------------	----------------	--------------------

The Sharon Academy

Caleb Benjamin	Kailey Ekegren	Nathaniel Hill
Esme Krathamer	Jack Lloyd	Charity Mather
Maeve Miller	Simon North	Phoebe Quackenbos

Hanover High School

Darien Ray

Hartford High School

Jenna Worth

Kimball Union Academy

Eva Kelley

Trinity-Pawling School

Ben Plottner

White River Valley High School

Jillian Ziai

NEWTON SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Year	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2013-14		8	12	15	8	18	13	15	13	18	120
2014-15		14	8	11	16	10	19	14	16	12	120
2015-16	9	9	11	9	11	16	12	18	15	16	117
2016-17	8	12	9	12	9	11	16	14	17	15	123
2017-18	12	8	12	11	12	8	10	13	9	16	111
2018-19	15	10	10	14	11	13	8	10	10	9	110
2019-20	16	15	10	9	12	11	11	6	6	10	106
2020-21	16	10	13	12	11	12	9	12	4	6	105
2021-22	14	10	13	14	12	11	13	9	13	3	112
2022-23	19	16	11	13	14	12	10	14	5	11	125
2023-24	18	13	18	11	13	14	13	8	14	6	128

*Note: Reflects official October 1st student counts where available.
As of 2016-17, total includes pre-K.*

STRAFFORD TOWN OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday – 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM

TOWN OFFICE: 765-4411 ~ TownClerk@StraffordVT.org

LISTERS: 765-4360 ~ Listers@StraffordVT.org

SELECTBOARD ~ Selectboard@StraffordVT.org

TOWN GARAGE: 765-4550

www.straffordvt.org

Board Meetings

Some meetings may include video conferencing options.

Selectboard – Town Office – Second and Fourth Wednesdays, 6:00 PM

*Subject to change – check www.straffordvt.org or
call the Town Office for current Selectboard meeting times*

Planning Commission – Third Monday, 7:00 PM

Development Review Board – Town Office – Third Wednesday, 7:00 PM

Conservation Commission – Fourth Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Energy Committee – via video conference – Second Tuesday, 7:00 PM

School Directors – Newton School or via video conference –
Second Tuesday, 5:30 PM

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Fire, Ambulance and FAST Squad: 9 1 1

Orange County Sheriff: 685-4875

STRAFFORD RUBBISH COLLECTION SERVICE

Saturdays 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM – South Strafford Substation

Durkee Rubbish Collection - 765-4308

STRAFFORD RECYCLING CENTER

Saturdays 9:00 AM to 12 noon

MORRILL MEMORIAL and HARRIS LIBRARY

Check the library website for modified current hours.

765-4037 ~ StraffordVTLibrary@gmail.com

www.StraffordLibrary.org

LIBRARY TRUSTEES' MEETINGS

Second Monday each month – 7:00 PM at Library