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Woodbury Seeks Removal of Zoning Administrator

by Doug McClure

WOODBURY — In a three-hour hearing, the town presented its case for removal of Zoning Administrator Jennifer Harman, alleging inappropriate conduct, insubordination and intoxication on duty Harman denied herself, suggesting that she was the Woodbury Select Board and others as part of a conspiracy by the Washington County Sheriff had an office on land because they were requested.

"Are you claiming that they [the town's witnesses] are conspiring with each other?" asked counselor Ed Adrian, representing town.

"I don't think I did," replied Harman. "But let me think on it..."

She returned for several minutes, describing being left out of a Select Board meeting, adding that once she believed to become aware of a complaint against her, "I have jumped all over that but would, in that way, I would say I did it conspiracy."

Harman drew connections between all three of the town's witnesses, alleging the board had put a target on her back for

anyone who had an issue with her, "hoping that that would be the thing that would allow me to move me from office and, as I say, it's the fifth try."

The town called three witnesses to support its allegations: Greg Brouse, a former select board member; Steven Durgin, a Barrett City police sergeant; and Thomas (Skip) Lindsay, current select board chair. Adrian also introduced forty minutes of video of a select board meeting as a supporting exhibit. Harman called no witnesses and testified for herself.

Roussel and Harman have been at odds for months over his desire to construct a helipad on his property. He alleged that Harman threatened him, saying if a helipad was to be over her property, she would shoot at it. When Harman responded that Roussel was violating federal law, he alleged that Harman replied "Well, hell, I would have to shoot you lower." In rebuttal, Harman repeatedly stated that Roussel was lying. After numerous objections from both Adrian and moderator Ed Gillis that she was violating, rather than questioning the witnesses.

See REMOVAL, 8



A Redbury firefighter (left) exits a building at Woodbury Firefighters Chris Barren (center) and Clive Poyette (right) prepare to enter it during a two-day training field visit Wednesday in Woodbury. The Vermont Protective Conference and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus class was instructed by members of the Vermont Fire Academy. The Woodbury Fire Department hosted the event, which included firefighters from Greensboro, Montpelier and Rutland.

Quick Plea Deal on Slow-Speed Police Chase

by Doug McClure

ST JOHNSBURY — Just one month after a plea agreement, Kaitlin Davis, the driver in last October's low-speed, long-distance police pursuit, was sentenced by Caldwells County Superior Court to 15-16 days beginning July 23, with fines of \$44,000 to be levied.

Davis originally faced three counts: felony fleeing, which could carry a sentence of up to five years and a \$5,000 fine; misdemeanor vehicle operation — license suspended (DLS), which could carry a sentence of up to six months and a fine of \$1,000.

Davis attorney Beth Bridget Gross filed a plea change on June 15 and Judge Andrew Anagnost Jr. changed the amended first count from felony fleeing to a misdemeanor and dropped the count of VCOR, with Anagnost dropping the vehicle down two charges. On 23 July, Davis was sentenced to 10-16 days on the two remaining counts, to be served concurrently.

Included in court documents was an affidavit from Trooper Jason Haffley describing the sequence of events. Haffley stated that he noticed a vehicle with invalid stickers while patrolling Route 191 in Fairlee and, upon checking, realized the plates did not belong to that vehicle. Instead of stopping Davis, the driver, took off up Interstate 91 at

speeds no greater than 70 miles per hour.

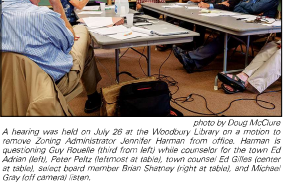
State police deployed spike strips at the 128-mile marker of I-91 which worked, in the sense they "took out the front tires," but the vehicle did not stop.

Davis continued on Route 2 west on ruins, traveling at 90-95 mph, with Haffley saying she was "unable to control the vehicle driving on the rims and swerved back and forth within her lane."

Other reports said Daville Inc was notified over concerns the vehicle might have to flame. State police made a second attempt with spike strips by the Vermont Agency of Transportation's Daville garage, but Davis went around them and headed onto Route 15. Hardwick Police (HPD) was notified at this point and set up a third set of spike strips west of Naystar Road in Walden. And again, Davis swerved around them.

A fourth attempt by State Police to spike the car near Haley Hazen on Route 15 worked better. The spikes "got lodged under the vehicle and dragged down the road."

HPD tried once more to spike the car at the intersection of Routes 15 and 16 which became entangled in the odder set and lodged under the vehicle. "An Vermont trooper tried to block Davis' car as she entered Hardwick village, which she narrowly missed running into before going off the road briefly. Davis made it as far as Route 14 South before finally pulling over, ending a 59-mile pursuit."



A hearing was held on July 26 at the Woodbury Library on a proposal to remove Zoning Administrator Jennifer Harman from office. Harman is questioning Guy Bowser (right) about the hearing from Adrian (left), Peter Potts (bottom left), town councilor Ed Gillis (center) and select board member Brian Shanley (right at table), and Michael Gray (left corner).

East Hardwick Begins to Chart a Course

by Doug McClure

EAST HARDWICK — On the heels of receiving Village Center Designation, citizens of East Hardwick held a meeting on July 19 to chart a course forward for

the village, addressing the concerns and ideas raised in a May meeting of the Orange.

Cheryl Michaels is an organizer and said the group's goals are to "work toward positive change in the village in order to create com-

munity and preserve the architectural heritage of the village." Concerns raised most frequently during the May meeting were related around traffic, speeding and parking.

The group considered what to do about people speeding through the village, considering new signage to emphasize the 25 m.p.h. village speed limit. More critical and more complicated — is trying to get the section of Route 16 that passes through the village down to a 35 m.p.h. speed limit.

"Traffic accidents are in the spotlight after three fatal crashes in the past month in Vermont, with 2018 poised to have the highest number of fatalities in five years. According to VTtrans, the only fatal accident in Hardwick in the past ten years was on Route 16."

The meeting minutes cited several related concerns, including "Cars exit from [Route] 16 onto Cedar Street and do not slow down, despite the 25 m.p.h. sign. The entrance to [Route] 16 from Main St. is hazardous due to low visibility and the speed of vehicles on [Route] 16. Entering [Route] 16 from the businesses and residences along [Route] 16 onto Cedar Street is hazardous."

At the meeting, Michaels agreed to contact Representative Chip Tronzo (15 Caldwells-2nd) in Pittsburgh.

Consolidated Communications Workers Vote to Strike

by Doug McClure

PORTLAND Me. — The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and the Communication Workers of America (CWA) "overwhelmingly" voted to authorize a strike against Consolidated Communications if the union and Consolidated cannot come to an agreement before current contract expires on August 4. The parties have been trying to find agreement since April.

Among the areas of dispute are health care, paid leave and Consolidated's use of subcontractors. In the unions' statement, the coalition bargaining team said there is a lot of daylight between the two sides.

A strike can still be averted if the two sides come to an agreement. Fairpoint, which Consolidated purchased in 2017, conducted a 13-day strike in 2014, which caused service issues that led to a Public Service Commission (PSC) investigation.

Consolidated's Vice President of Human Resources Ryan Whiteback said "This far, no strike has occurred. The Company will continue to negotiate in good faith; however, we have a comprehensive contingency plan in place to minimize any potential service disruptions should a strike occur."

"Consolidated Communications has a long history of positive and respectful labor relations across the country, and we have successfully negotiated over 20 labor agreements in the past four years. We have been committed to trying to accomplish the same with both the IBEW and the CWA contracts."

The threat of a strike comes on the heels of the PSC's findings that responsiveness of Consolidated to its customers was far below what the PSC considered acceptable, with just 23 percent of calls being issues responded to within 24 hours.

Whiteback said "The Company is committed to constructing flexibility to allow for the use of additional resources to help meet the additional requirements."

See STRIKE, 4



Tapscott Rich (left), Larrin Gargiolo (center) and Kelsey Binkley (right) are organizing for making banana chocolate chip muffins during an Openness Southwest Superiority Union Summer Learning Camp for elementary students. The students are enjoying their assemblies by working in the greenhouse at Hazen, exploring and cooking healthy foods with DMRS Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), as well as many other activities.

Danville Hill Road Redesign Again

by Will Walters

CABOT — The redesign of Danville Hill Road and other engineering studies are getting renewed attention.

Proposed changes to the Danville Hill Road intersection were brought before two select board meetings recently. At the time the engineering report was released, neither the select board nor the public warmly received its recommendations.

Dan Currier, of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, said that when they recently

talked with Road Commissioner Karen Deasy about village planning, the topics covered were sidewalks along Main Street, a redesign of the Danville Hill Road intersection at Main Street, a walkway or sidewalk to the lower ball field and a trail to Molly's Falls Pond.

All of those plans were covered in the Dubois and King study, except a path to Molly's Falls Pond. Extending the sidewalks along one side of Main Street to the north bridge at the intersection of South Walker Road was put on the ballot at Town Meeting in 2014 in an article asking for voter approval of up to \$41,804 to con-

struct a new sidewalk along Main Street, \$275,000 was to come from federal and state grants and an up to \$69,804 to come from local taxes. The ballot failed on a vote of 114 to 166.

On June 16, Deasy emailed Currier, asking for any high-resolution photos the commission may have of the intersection to help with work on renewing or relocating the utility pole in the intersection's triangle. Deasy passed out sketches to local businesses to show what the redesigned intersection might look like. The water sub was expected to start in 2014 in an article asking for voter approval of up to \$41,804 to con-

See REDESIGN, 5

Local Cheesemakers Win Ribbons in National Competition

by Doug McClure

RANDOLPH — Two Vermont cheesemakers were honored for being the best in show. Both were from Jasper Hill Farm, of Greensboro, which had cheeses honored for being Best in Show at the annual American Cheese Society competition in Pittsburgh.

Winning cheeses from Vermont included Jasper Hill Farm's Harrison (first place in category, first place best in show), Jasper Hill Farm's Caldwell (second place for best in show), Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Cabot Sour Cream (first place), Cabot Case Curd (first place), Cabot Case Hill Orchard, Craftsbury Commons, Wild Mountain (Tonne third place), Jasper Hill Farm, Bayley Hazen Blue (first place), Calloway (first place) and Willoughby (third place).

According to the Vermont Cheese Council, 11 Vermont cheesemakers took home 30 ribbons compared at the national competition on July 27.

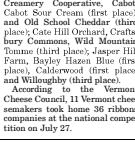


Photo by Vanessa Fournier



Rose Finnsson (left) and Justin Landis (right) were presented their Pure & Just Vermont State Cheese Label from July 18. The event was sponsored by The Greensboro Farm Academy.

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CLOSE CONTESTS AT CASPIAN CHALLENGE

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CLOSE CONTESTS AT CASPIAN CHALLENGE

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