

Greensboro Select Talks Transportation

by Emmett Avery

GREENSBORO — Transportation was the main topic of discussion at the Greensboro Select Board's October 9 meeting. Greensboro Fire Chief Dave Brooks presented four options for a new tanker truck, and town road foreman Tom Camarra shared his report. There was also talk of renaming a town road and the possibility of a new town garage.

Brooks' preferred option for a new tanker is to buy a demo or stock truck, which are essentially brand new, with a cost of \$160,000 to \$180,000, he said. With a down payment the department could pay the truck off in four to five years. This option would provide the "best bang for the buck," Brooks said. Other options he presented included a bid for a brand new truck, fixing the current tanker or buying a used one. According to Brooks, the cost for a brand new truck is more than \$200,000. He said it would take two to three months for the bidding process and an additional six months to build the truck.

"I like to think I'm spending over \$200,000 on a tanker truck that isn't doing right," Brooks said. "It just seems like throwing good money over the side at this point." He said interest in taking on a managerial role for the proposed garage was high, but that it would be a good idea to hire a proposal from the state and permitting. Since no board members have expressed interest in taking on a managerial role for the proposed garage, Brooks said he would like to see someone who could help secure funding, as well.

about the tanker issue "on a more serious basis." The department had no incidents in September, Brooks said.

All of this year's paving projects in Greensboro have been executed. Select board member Matt McAllister said town road foreman Tom Camarra when the white sidewalk/demarcation lines will be painted on East Street. Camarra said he would get the project going. McAllister said that a few days back he saw two cars driving directly up where the sidewalk would be, and the lines need to be painted "ASAP."

The Northeast Vermont Development Association finished an inventory of Greensboro's roads, with a focus on hydrologically connected segments. There were 415 segments inventoried, 169 of which fully meet state standards, 89 which partially meet standards and 160 that are currently noncompliant.

The select board renamed Town Highway 16. The road will now be known as Birch Hills Drive. The change was made to better meet state 911 standards.

Roman said he has spoken with Steve Pitkin about Greensboro town garage project. Pitkin is an "experienced" project manager who is interested in taking on the project, according to Roman. "There are tons of little things that Roman works with the state and permitting." Since no board members have expressed interest in taking on a managerial role for the proposed garage, Brooks said he would like to see someone who could help secure funding, as well.



A male monarch butterfly finds insects in marigolds on Spring Street in Hardwick Oct. 10. More monarchs found their way to Vermont this year because we didn't have a lot of rain or cold weather in June.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

OSUED Nears Budget Season

by Emmett Avery

GREENSBORO — There was a hard push to wrap up the October 10 meeting of Orleans South-West Union Elementary District (OSUED) on time. But the meeting still ran late, despite board chair Katharine Ingram setting strict time limits for several agenda items. Issues discussed included Lakeview's asbestos mitigation project, the long-range tech plan developed by the Supervisory Union (SU), sports programming in the district, informal exit survey results from families that transferred between district schools and numbers from the SU's chief financial officer, Jon Smith.

Smith said health insurance costs will rise by 12.3 percent this year, following an 11.9 percent increase last year. This year's increase is slightly higher than the statewide average rate of 12.4 approved for Blue Cross Blue Shield by state regulators.

Smith raised the possibility of providing free universal breakfast and lunch across the district. Lakeview is currently the only school with a full universal meals program. Smith said the cost to upgrade Lakeview and Woodbury to full universal meals programs would be approximately \$200,000. There are free lunches at Hardwick breakfast (already provided) and \$1,000 for breakfast and lunch at Woodbury. Board member Kevin Moore said that while the percentage of the OSUE's \$7.1 million budget that would represent dinner is 0.59%, several members spoke in favor of a request for changing and one-sided social life. "I'm curious about the other six children who did not respond to the survey."

Lakeview Union will undertake a project to remove asbestos from one of the school's classrooms next summer. The board agreed that there is not enough data to indicate any specific action.

room is currently partitioned into sections for use as office space and a meeting room. The project includes removing the partitions to create a bigger classroom, said Lakeview Principal, Justine Guthrie. This will enable classes currently housed in the Greensboro town hall to move into the main Lakeview building. "I think it's a better option for student safety and I think it's also a great opportunity for community," Guthrie said.

The SU is creating a long-range tech plan. The group assembled to work on the plan will consist of SU staff members, teachers and hopefully students, said SU superintendent Adam Rosenberg. Rosenberg said the budget is nearly finished. OSUED board member Kim Silk said he thought the board should have had more direct input in the process. Superintendent Rosenberg said he is accustomed to creating budgets based on the Continuous Improvement Plan, which is a living document that reflects priorities similar to what Silk was advocating for.

The sports programming overview requested by the board at last month's meeting has been completed. Board member Kevin Moore said there is a lot of room for collaboration. Ingram stated that the board's job is to "do policy or give direction," and not to get too far into specifics.

An informal exit survey was conducted of families who transferred between OSUED schools this past year. Four of the ten families who changed schools completed the survey. Three of the four cited aspects of a request for changing and one-sided social life. "I'm curious about the other six children who did not respond to the survey."

Board Vice Chair Rose Rodry, said the board agreed that there is not enough data to indicate any specific action.

New Commuter Bus Route Planned for Route 14

by Will Walters

CALAIS — A new bus route is in the planning stages to provide commuter bus service up Route 14 through Calais and Woodbury as part of a route linking Barre and Morraville.

The route will serve residents of Morraville, Wolcott, Hardwick, Woodbury, East Calais and Mottshole. The service will be free.

The Morraville-to-Barre route, developed by Rural Community Transportation, will offer a transfer point to East Mottshole at the Washington Electric Cooperative and allow riders to switch buses to continue to St. Johnsbury and Mottshole via RCT's US 2 Commuter run. The Mottshole run will allow commuters to transfer to the Burlington bus.

Select board chair Denise Wheeler said the planned route would include runs in the early morning and the afternoon so that commuters may travel to and from work.

The route was scheduled to begin Oct. 7, but was pushed back to November while arrangements for a bus stop location in East Calais are negotiated.

Nick DiAgostino of RCT and Bonnie Wagner of Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission speak with select board members and Calais residents about a practical, safe location in East Calais to pick up and discharge riders. Suggested spots included the East Calais recreation field, a ballcourt plot of land across Route 14 from the field, the Woodbury town office and a parking area at the Woodbury boat access town line.

The select board agreed it would contact the East Calais Recreation Association to inquire about using its parking area for a stop. DiAgostino said it would not be considered a state-owned facility and that it would not be subject to the same requirements.

There was discussion about compensation for the use of the land, which will be explored further. DiAgostino suggested the town consider \$500 to \$1,000 to go toward these costs, and residents discussed putting an appropriation article on the warning for Town Meeting in March.

Resident Barry Berenstein commented that while it is important to consider safe parking for riders when selecting the locations for stops, riders who do not own a car also need to be considered.

Towns are not required to provide funding for the route, but RCT requests that towns receive the service contribute some financial support to help defray the cost of funding grant's local match requirements. RCT funds can be used to match federal funds for each bus, and the state Agency of Transportation will pay for the route for three years. After that time, fuel, driver's wages, administration and other expenses will require significant percentage matches from RCT.

The buses are rated for 22-24 passengers plus four spots for wheelchair. RCT will determine the success of the route based in part on the number of riders served per hour.

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Ken LaCasse (left) chief operator of the wastewater treatment facility, Marjorie and Victoria Graham (right) wife and daughter of Vermont River Water Association, measure the depth of the vigil at the steps of a school.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Ana Pucy (left), 13, of Woodbury, Sara Saxe (center), 13, of Wolcott and Tash Gilbert (right), 11, of Stannard, wear Safety harness, traditional police attire, during the 11th Annual Run for Child Haven International. The benefit was held at Hazen Union School Oct. 12.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Man Charged with Child Abuse

by Michael Bielawski

WOODBURY — A Woodbury man is charged with abusing two children who were left in his care, allegedly trying to strangle and hanging one from the ceiling. Joel Sargent, 27, appeared in Washington County Criminal Court last week for two felony charges of second-degree unlawful restraint, two misdemeanor counts of cruelty to a child and two misdemeanor counts of domestic assault. Sargent pleaded not guilty to all charges and was released with conditions. If convicted, he faces up to 17 years in prison.

According to court documents, on September 29, a woman called police to report possible child abuse at Church Street in Woodbury. When Sargent dropped off the two children, the caller told police she noticed no signs of the girl's body. The caller said the

child may have been tied up by Sargent as a form of punishment. Sargent claimed that the marks may have occurred from the girl wearing a seat belt.

According to reports, when the Department for Children and Families interviewed the male victim on Oct 4th at the Lamoille County Social Investigations Unit in Hyde Park, they observed a mark around his waist. The male victim said Sargent had been using up the children as a form of "time-out." The male victim said Sargent tied up the female victim and hang her from a ceiling lamp while he was "laughing like crazy."

Vermont State Police trooper Pitkin Morrison confirmed that photos of the injuries appeared to be rope burns. The male victim sustained injuries to the waist and the female victim sustained injuries to the neck.

See ABUSE, 2

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 CRAFTSBURY BOYS
 EARN FOURTH WIN

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 EARN FOURTH WIN

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 UNLEASHING
 RESTORED WHITEHEAD

AWARE Holds Seventh Annual Candlelight Vigil

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK — AWARE held its seventh annual Candlelight Vigil on October 9, at the Peace Park in Hardwick. The goal was to raise awareness of victims of domestic violence.

The vigil originally started in 2013 in remembrance of Rhonda Gray (Grove), said AWARE Executive Director Anna Pirie. Gray was killed that year by her estranged husband. A permanent memorial to Gray can be found in the Peace Park, a small grey stone bearing her photo and the words "Every Storm Runs out of Rain."

Approximately four dozen people of all ages, races, genders and walks of life, attended the vigil. Each of ten red silhouettes represented a person the community lost to domestic violence. This year's ten "silent witnesses" honored were AWARE at (802) 472-6463. People in immediate danger should call 911 immediately.

Melissa Jenkins, Rhonda Gravel, Jeanie Koblitz, Zubersky, Molly, Janea, Catherine, Courtney Galbreath, and Laura Hearnsey. Janea is 13 years of age, was the youngest at the vigil. She was represented by a witness who spoke about how domestic violence led to the person's death.

AWARE's mission is "to prevent violence and to support survivors and others with awareness, empathy, respect and personal responsibility." The organization serves Hardwick, East Hardwick, Cabot, Craftsbury, Greensboro, Stannard, Walden, and Woodbury. Anyone in those towns who is in need of an advocate for their own domestic violence situation can contact AWARE at (802) 472-6463. People in immediate danger should call 911 immediately.