

Agenda
Ward 6 NPA Virtual Meeting
Thursday, June 4, 2020

Please join this virtual meeting using the following options:

1. Join via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81027856568> (Meeting ID: 810 2785 6568, No Password)
2. Watch Live Online:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLljLFn4BZd2P9f16v7BtN6C9kos1zGEmG>
3. Call in for audio only: [1-929-205-6099](tel:1-929-205-6099) meeting ID:81027856568

Agenda

6:30 - 6:40 PM

Musical opening by the Ruesink/Barker Family

6:40 - 6:50 PM

Public Comment

6:50 - 7:10 PM

DPW Construction Season Preview

Chapin Spencer/Robert Goulding

7:10 - 8:00 PM

Primary Candidates for Vermont House of Representatives Chittenden 6-5 District

- Gabrielle Stebbins
- Jesse Paul Warren
- Tiff Bluemle
- Scott Pavek

Ward 6 NPA Minutes, June 4, 2020

6:30 PM Start

The Barker-Ruesink Family sang, played guitar and viola

Public comment: no public comments

DPW Construction Season Preview with Robert Goulding:

The construction season got a late start due to COVID-19. Delay was furthered by making sure that projects followed pandemic guidelines.

April 11 was start of season with project on Howard St.

Sustainable infrastructure plan focuses on sidewalks, streets, and water mains.

Sidewalks: tripled production over last 3 years; received additional funding to complete short-run work. Some long-run projects are on Summit and Juniper Streets. Spot repair work also being completed.

Streets: some COVID delays. Only got one bid which could be attributed to the pandemic. South Prospect near Ledge getting a major patch overlay.

Water mains: first proactive effort to address old water mains, some of which are 75-100 years old. Some delays due to service disruptions and inability to enter people's houses. There was a stormwater/treated wastewater overflow into the lake ½ mile from shore at a depth of 40 feet last week. Overflow water used to be dumped off shore, but no longer. There is a delay in sewer pipe relining project due to the pandemic. Project is off the table and department will be coming back with a proposed restart.

Upcoming work: Shelburne St. Roundabout soil boring activity; South Winooski lane reconfiguration; and work in City Hall Park due to continue until October.

Q&A

Q: Why was there a water plant overflow? Two inches of rain during storm; it was a 10-year storm event. And, these storms are more frequent. DPW keeps staff onsite during storm. When staffer evaluated bleach levels, the pump had sent out more bleach than it should have. The wastewater wasn't fully disinfected because of low levels of bleach. There are no tank-level sensors with alarms that would help with these chaotic events. Staffer pivoted to alternative disinfectant, but 40-50 minutes of the storm had passed.

Primary Candidates for Vermont House of Representatives Chittenden 6-5 District:

Gabrielle Stebbins

Statement: I would be honored to serve this district in the legislature; aware of elder and child care and education needs; wants youth to have the opportunities she did as a kid; familiar with legislative process and bringing bills from committee to passage; a classical violinist and has also taught; started a business and ran a non-profit. Worked on human rights issues in South Africa. This country has a lot to do to address racism. Desire to serve is driven by interconnectedness of humans who share the planet. To

make the world a better place must address inequities. For the last 12 years has focused on advancing clean energy. Climate change will worsen all issues facing society. Is chair of BED Commission. If we powered vehicles and heated with electricity we would save money and reinvest money into our community rather than paying for fossil fuels. There are huge opportunities, but we need a climate driven economic plan for the state.

Q: What budget cuts will you tolerate?

A: Hoping for federal stimulus dollars to help cover deficit. When you are in a situation like ours, an austerity budget does not help things.

Q: What are your specific plans for systemic racism?

A: Address law enforcement, education, promotions, economic inequalities.

Jesse Paul Warren

Statement: runs a non-profit called Democracy Creative. Wants to address racial justice and dealing with structural racism and white supremacy in VT. Incidents of police brutality have not been addressed. In VT, blacks are 10 times more likely than whites to be incarcerated; that is higher than national average. Experience: career split between policy/governance and creative world. Worked for VT House leadership; ran state-wide campaign for David Zuckerman. Democracy Creative brings people together to find solutions to problems with democracy. Three driving issues: financial stability for working families in VT, they are tied to structural racism; guaranteeing health care to all VTers; and changes necessary to protect the environment/climate.

Q: City Council voted on a resolution to remove statement of appreciation for all that was done by BTV Police Department. How would you have voted?

A: I did not read the resolution, so can't answer that. Concerned about militarism of police and use of deadly force.

Q: What specifics can you offer about healthcare for all?

A: Right now we are spending \$6 billion for healthcare in VT. We are already spending an astronomical amount. We are the only industrialized country in the world whose citizens during COVID lost health care due to job loss. Under Shumlin we lost Act 48, but it also conflicted with the roll out of the Affordable Care Act. Universal healthcare saves a lot of money and it's easier for providers and patients. One third of health care dollars go to overhead for insurance companies.

Tiff Bluemle

Statement: has spent over 2 decades working as a teacher and doing non-profit work in South End. Executive Director for 17 years at VT Works for Women. Saw women struggling in poverty, wanted to help make changes in policy and rules that work against women. We have lost residents and businesses because it is too hard to be black in VT. Essential workers are low wage earners. COVID has magnified issues. Wants to think creatively and differently about issues facing VTers. Wants to support aging population and working families. Her approach to solving problems is inclusive and action oriented and we must build coalitions and have persistence.

Q: What is your position on sale, taxation and use of marijuana?

A: Has not followed the issue that closely. Have always supported legalization for individuals and medical marijuana. Aware of dangers on young people.

Q: You have done a lot of work on gender equity issues. How would you bring a voice on equity issues to the legislature?

A: My work has taught me a lot about poverty and access to training and education. Disabled women and women of color have higher rates of poverty in VT. Her initiative, Change the Story, shows that financial inequity persists for women of color; they earn less, get fewer loans, and got less PPP money.

Q: Burlington has two disadvantages in school funding. PILOT funds are not eligible for education spending; per pupil spending for BTV doesn't account for needs of its student population. How are you thinking about education funding?

A: Has been talking to education organizations in the state and studying options for communities like BTV that have unmet needs. Very important issue.

Scott Pavek

Statement: works for Catamount Commitment at UVM. Started legislative campaign last year. We must do more for folks who are struggling to survive and thrive in VT. Challenges are more apparent due to pandemic. Climate change, higher ed, justice systems, public health are issues. Has worked for campaigns, non-profit boards, campaigns. Grew up poor in VT; was marginalized and lacked opportunity. From early age had substance use disorder. Seven years ago entered recovery. Understands that for opportunity to recover, he needed stability and security, and got it due to community support. No VTer should do without housing and other needs due to addiction. Fell in love with legislature in 2000 when his two mothers came to VT because of civil union laws. Seeking to serve because compelled to make sure VT policy is rooted in equity.

Q: You are very active on social media. Is it a tool for good?

A: Social media became a big part of his advocacy and sharing his experiences to push for policy reforms. He looked for any avenue to get his message out. Uses Twitter. During pandemic it's hard to keep up with what's going on in legislature. Good to have social media to hear legislators' voices.

Q: Where should VT seek revenue to get big projects done?

A: Savings through de-carceration of prisoners; safe use and taxing of cannabis, we have lost competitive advantage by taking so long, it's low hanging fruit and we should get the market running; taxing wealthy VTers through progressive tax reform.

Annie Wohland statement: has been involved in local, state, and federal politics. Only young woman running for office. Was inspired by a legislator. Political experience: volunteered for campaigns over the years and worked for BTV's Fight for 15 to raise the minimum wage; inspired by Bernie Sanders and worked for him as Youth Outreach Coordinator in 2018. Raising minimum wage allows for affording expenses, allows for savings, wanted to send a message to the state. BTV voters supported livable wage by 75%. Advocated at statehouse to have minimum wage bill pass state-wide; governor vetoed bill. Child poverty, abuse and neglect are very important issues for her. Public schools are stepping up by

delivering food to children's homes. Strongly supports mental health services because they can address racial injustice as well. Wants to make higher ed affordable.

Q: What would it take to get a \$15 minimum wage?

A: Educating businesses that affordable minimum wage would help VT's economy. Instead they think raising wages would result in higher prices and would hurt their businesses.

Q: A lot in media regarding the election. Should ballots be mailed to everybody?

A: Ballots should be mailed to people. Voters in Wisconsin had to risk their safety and health and wellbeing to vote. There should always be an option to mail in their ballot. Disagrees with Governor Scott on this issue and agrees with Secretary Condos. Crucial that people do what's most comfortable in terms of voting.

8:30 PM Adjourn