

The Winooski Newsletter

A newsletter created in partnership by the City of Winooski and the Winooski School District.

JANUARY 2024



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS
We are the future.

Letter from the Mayor

By Mayor Kristine Lott

Hello Neighbors, I hope you've been enjoying a peaceful winter and festive holiday season.

Kudos to Downtown Winooski and our local businesses for another successful Holiday Pop Up shopping event!

January brings a new year with new hopes. It also means that the City Council, Staff, and community members are well into the fiscal year 2025 budget planning process, shaping the budget you'll vote on during the Town Meeting Day election. I encourage you all to get involved in the process, attend



budget meetings, ask questions, and voice your opinions on how your tax dollars should be spent. For full budget details and to view the meeting schedule, visit winooski.vt.gov/fy25.

Like many of you are experiencing, this budget is also seeing a significant impact from inflation and increasing costs. There are three proposed budgets under consideration:

- Council-Directed Budget:** the City Council's direction was for a modest increase to update costs for existing services, and includes some increases to catch up on some deficiencies, with an emphasis on Municipal Infrastructure, one of the City's four Strategic Vision/Master Plan goal areas. This would result in a projected tax rate increase of 8.7% (a \$249.05 increase to the city portion of the average property tax bill).
- City Manager Budget:** The budget proposed by the City Manager would allow for catching up in the Safe, Healthy, Connected People Strategic Vision/Master Plan goal area with a projected tax rate increase of 12.76% (a \$359.39 increase to the city portion of the average property tax bill).
- Alternative budget:** Should the Council decide against the proposed budget and tax increase, staff have prepared an alternative budget with a focus on catching up on the Municipal Infrastructure goal areas. This would result in a projected tax rate increase of 10.54% (a \$296.77 increase to the city portion of the average property tax bill).

The budget also projects a 5% increase to both sewer and water rates, resulting in an increased cost to the average Winooski household of \$50.76 per year (\$22.88 for water and \$27.88 for sewer). And finally, we may consider a bond vote

to pay the \$3 million local contribution requirement for the Burlington/Winooski Bridge Replacement Project (burlingtonwinooski.vttransprojects.vermont.gov).

As a reminder, last year's voter-approved budget used a big portion of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal grant money we received to address COVID-19 impacts to reduce the tax impact of significant increases to our Community Services staff and programs. This was a one-time opportunity - moving forward, these costs will be covered by the newly available tax revenue from paying off the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) loan related to redeveloping our downtown in the 2000s. After the specific department meetings, the overall budget discussion will occur on January 16, providing community members with one of the last remaining opportunities to weigh in! On **January 22**, the City Council will vote on the final budget. We'll have the City and School Budget Presentation and Community Dinner on **February 19**, the final Town Meeting Day presentation on **March 4**, and the Town Meeting Day election on **March 5**.

All legal residents (regardless of citizenship status) can vote on local (City/School) ballot items during the Town Meeting Day election. You may also consider running for local office. Open terms include Mayor, two City Councilors, three School Board Trustees, and the Champlain Water District Commissioner. Visit winooski.vt.gov or stop by the City Clerk's Office to get your form and petition documents, which are due back by 5pm on Monday, **January 29**. These incredible opportunities are perfect for those looking to serve the community in a meaningful way.

Feel free to reach out to me directly if you'd like to learn more about the role and time commitment.

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Superintendent Report

By Wilmer Chavarria, Superintendent of Schools

Dear members of the Winooski community,
We are excited to be advancing through the budgeting process for this year, especially during times of great uncertainty due to major changes in the law related to how we fund our schools. If you have not heard, Winooski is set to be able to have the ability to absorb some additional costs (like the ones previously covered with COVID relief money) and still not feel a negative impact on our taxes, or if so, probably only minimally. If you want more explanation about what this means, please attend any of our Board meetings. Our dates and agendas are posted on our website (<https://www.wsdvt.org/school-board/>). We also would love to hear what the areas are you would like us to focus our funding on, out of six options. The QR code above will take you to a very brief survey.



On a different topic, the past month has been full of excitement mixed with learning and reflection in our schools. Students across all grades have been showcasing their academic

and extracurricular learning through a variety of events, some of which you may have enjoyed in person, and our staff continue to support our students through times of growth, change, and even difficulty.

I know that events both locally and globally continue to impact members of our community in different ways, and we want to ensure that our systems of care are strong and ready to be activated for anyone in our learning community. We continue to promote what we call “dialogical” spaces for people to talk openly about what different events mean to us locally and personally, and each of the schools has engaged in deep reflection and conversation about our own response to traumatic incidents. This is no easy work, but I am thankful for the professionalism, compassion, and empathy I have witnessed in our team members. Many of our students have expressed feelings of fear, uncertainty, and worry about what some of these things mean to their personal safety, so I ask that you join me in doing what we can to keep our students safe, learning, and always appreciated.

From The School Board

By Robert Millar, President, Board of School Trustees

Happy New Year! What a complicated and often challenging year 2023 was for many of us and for the world at large. On a district level, we certainly had a lot of changes, but also a lot of successes this year. The School Board experienced significant turnover through the year. We celebrated the completion of our Capital Project building renovations in April. We welcomed new Superintendent Wilmer Chavarria in July. In November, our Boys Soccer team won their second championship in a row. And that's just to name a few!

As I write this in early December we are deep in budget season for Fiscal Year 25 (July 2024-June 2025). We've already had several budget work sessions as a Board, which will continue through early January. We also just completed a public feedback event this past weekend, in which Board Members gave a presentation and took a survey on attendees' budget priorities. This survey will also be distributed widely in coming weeks. Thank you to Board Members Isaiah Donaldson and Nicole Mace for taking the lead on this great new event and survey!

When you receive this newsletter in early January, we will be nearing the end of our budget discussions as a Board, but we will still very much be looking for more input and feedback from the public. We will have our final budget work session on January 3rd, with the goal of passing a budget at our regular meeting on the 10th. Then it's up to the voters! As always, we are planning several information sessions, community dinners, and other outreach efforts throughout January and February, so stay tuned for dates and times.

The vote itself will be on Town Meeting Day, the first Tuesday in March, which this year is March 5th. You can find more information about voting in Winooski here: www.winooski.vt.gov/vote

But the budget isn't the only thing the Board has been working on recently! We've continued to review and update important school policies every month; recently had a presentation on changes to the structure of High School Graduation requirements; will be meeting with legislators later in December; and much more. Our work never stops, not even for the budget!

We also recently, after a lot of discussion and self assessment, voted to recommit ourselves to Policy Governance as our system for organizing our work. This can be a complex system and with so much turnover on the Board in recent years, some pieces have not been kept up with. We have committed to changing that, which means professional development for the Board and building a better process for getting new Board Members up to speed going forward. It will be a lot of work, but worth it in the long run!

I'll close by asking again for your input and feedback. We always love to have members of the public participate at our meetings and we offer virtual options to ensure accessibility. You can also always contact us anytime using the contact information on the back of the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you!

Winooski School District Antiracism Steering Committee Update

By Christie Beveridge, Program and Communications Director, UP for Learning

On Monday, November 27th, youth and adults from the Winooski community gathered for the fifth meeting of the 2023-2024 Antiracism Steering Committee (ARSC). This team is tasked with implementing the six demands of the Winooski Students for Antiracism (WSA): to form a truth and reconciliation committee, hire and retain more faculty of color, establish a multilingual mentoring program, implement an ethnic studies curriculum, conduct an equity audit of the school, and host a yearly workshop for students where they can learn about their civil rights.

We want to first share the exciting news that the Winooski School Board has approved \$10,000 to contract with a Multilingual Mentor Program Coordinator! The next steps will be to post the position and to begin accepting applications. We want to express our deep gratitude to Winooski Middle School math teacher Maeve Poleman, the adult lead for this action team, as well as the many youth and other community members who have been integral to achieving this demand. The Board has

also allocated an additional \$8,500 for the committee, which will go towards their food budget, as well as stipends for additional members. We also want to thank Superintendent Wilmer Chavarria and the Board for their belief and investment in the work of the ARSC.

The meeting began with a pizza dinner, and then an opening circle, when each member of the team each shared a highlight of their Thanksgiving Break. They then turned to a partner to share their thoughts and feelings about the horrific shooting of three Palestinian college students by a white man in Burlington on November 25th. The youth facilitators, Auishma Pradhan and Mea Ree Jan, then opened up the discussion for people to share their thoughts with the whole team.

The youth and adults have many ideas about what they, as a group devoted to antiracism, can do in response to the event. Some of the ideas that came out of the discussion were to write letters to the mayoral candidates in Burlington expressing their desire for change around gun laws and racism, to host a sit-in to



share their thoughts about the shooting, to take some sort of action on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and/or to facilitate discussions about the event during upcoming advisories or community meetings. During their next gathering on December 11th, the team will determine which actions they would like to take.

The committee then got into small groups to look over and make edits to the survey they have been creating, which poses questions about the ARSC and the status of the antiracism demands. On December 11th, they will look over the final draft of the survey, and determine when and how they will distribute it to the school community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Winooski PTO

By Libby Daghlian

The Winooski PTO is a dedicated group of parents working together to support the WSD learning community. We have several more activities planned this school year, including school dances, staff appreciation events, and a community dinner.

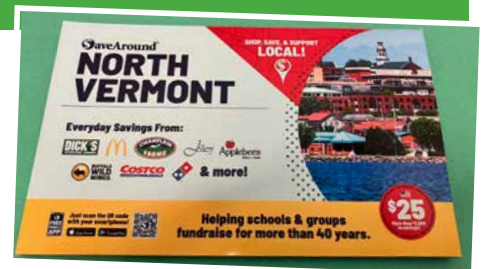
Join us and share your enthusiasm and ideas for supporting our students, teachers and staff. **Our next meeting is on Tuesday, January 16th at 6pm at the school.** We can't wait to meet you!

Visit <https://www.wsdvt.org/parents-families/pto/>, check out our Facebook page (Winooski PTO), or email us at PTO@wsdvt.org for more information.

Veggie VanGo

The Winooski School District hosts Veggie VanGo (VVG) bi-monthly. This is completely free to the community and all are welcome (hours are 10:00 a.m. to 10:20 am). VVG comes twice a month, the first and the third Friday of each month. Upcoming dates: **Jan 5th, Jan 19th**, Feb 2nd, Feb 16th, Mar 1st, Mar 15th, April 5th, April 19th, May 3rd, and May 17th.

In addition to Veggie VanGo, there are lots of other food access resources available to families and community members in Winooski and the surrounding areas. For more information including a full list and map of locations, visit <https://bit.ly/SummerFoodResources>.



SaveAround Coupon Books

By Karen Greene

Are you looking for a last minute gift or just looking to save yourself some money? The Winooski High School prom committee can help. We have a few SaveAround Coupon Books left. They are for the entire 2024 year so you are not late getting one. The cost is \$25. If you are interested please email me at kgreene@wsdvt.org. Thanks in advance.

Learning From Each Other

By Andy Schlatter, 2nd Grade Teacher

A big part of our students' learning in Winooski comes from the thinking of their peers. Students have daily opportunities to share their math strategies with the rest of the class. In second grade, we usually begin each



math lesson with a Number Talk, often consisting of a series of equations that allows every student an entry point into the math. We spend “private reasoning time” thinking about the equations, followed by time where every student shares their thinking with a partner. This helps ensure that each student engages in the math.

The last part of our Number Talk is where students can share their thinking with the class, either by coming up to the screen or by using their words to explain their thought process. They are incredible at coming up with ways to solve problems and explain it to their peers, stating their reasoning in their own



words, often making it much easier for their fellow students to understand. In this way, the students are always learning from and teaching each other, giving them true ownership of the content, and giving them the confidence to try new challenges.

Student Spotlight: Meet Senior Rachid Muzaliwa

By Miriam Greenfield, Director of Communications

iLab teacher, Lindsey Cox, sat down with Rachid Muzaliwa, a talented student and musician who has been making waves with his unique musical journey. Rachid shares insights into his passion for music, the inspiration behind his compositions, and the profound impact it has had on his personal and academic life.

Where are you from?

I am from Brundi, but was born in the Congo. My stage name is Draken Jasper.

Tell me about your music career.

I started doing music back in Africa when I was 12 and I was singing in my Church group. My friend told me I was good at singing and I should keep it up. I started writing a couple songs for our prayer group and I didn't have an opportunity to record those because it was too expensive. I got to Vermont in April 2019. With the help of school instructional assistant Mike Webster, we wrote and recorded the song, Twende Shuleni, and we got invited to perform at the State House.

Where do you perform? How often do you perform?

I have performed in a lot of festivals, like one in Brattleboro. I performed at

Radio Bean in Burlington. I performed in Portland, Maine with A2VT. In one month, I can perform between 4-5 times, but some months, we don't have any shows.

What does music mean to you?

For me, music gives me power and helps me in hard times. I can listen to it when I feel depressed and whenever I write music it feels like I am opening up and seeing what knowledge is inside me.

Tell me about working with a professional photographer and starring in your own music video.

Working with a professional helps a lot because as an artist I need to be more on social media and post a lot about what I'm up to build my fan base. When we put the video out there, people liked it. But when I dropped my second song, people were talking more about it because I used to sing gospel, but now my music is secular.

What are you studying at Burlington Technical Center (BTC)?

I am studying how to make beats, record myself, and how to take photos. The programs I participate in are music recording and digital media lab.



How has what you've learned at BTC prepared you for the future?

It helps because it prepared me how to manage my own brand, so if I become a CEO of my own record label, I will have the skills to do that. I am learning photography, videography, but also how to make your own master so I can produce my own music.

Check out Rachid's music: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCohW4wCvoV5G7Q_C-nAsFpg



WMHS Concert

By Miriam Greenfield, Director of Communications

On December 7th, the WMHS orchestra, chorus, and band came together to create an unforgettable musical experience. Kudos to the talented musicians, the music teachers, and everyone who played a role in making this concert a resounding success. Thank you for filling our hearts with joy and our ears with beautiful music.



HEALTH CORNER


Health Office News

By Elizabeth Parris, BSN, RN, NCSN

Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a peaceful holiday season. We want to extend our thanks to UVMMC Primary Pediatrics for hosting flu shot clinics and administering 248 shots to individuals in our learning community.

If you have not already done so, please reach out to your provider to see if the COVID or flu vaccines are right for you.

The Abbey Group **Winooski Elementary School Breakfast**
January 2024
 Menus are subject to change

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 No School	2 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	3 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	4 Iced Breakfast Bun Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	5 Chocolate Chip Muffin Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety
8 Blueberry Bread Slice Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	9 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	10 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	11 Iced Breakfast Bun Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	12 Chocolate Chip Muffin Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety
15 Blueberry Bread Slice Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	16 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	17 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	18 Iced Breakfast Bun Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	19 Chocolate Chip Muffin Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety
22 Blueberry Bread Slice Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	23 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	24 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	25 Iced Breakfast Bun Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	26 Chocolate Chip Muffin Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety
29 Blueberry Bread Slice Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	30 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety	31 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit, Milk Variety		


Breakfast in the Classroom


Meals Are Free To All Students

Adult Breakfast \$2.90
 Adult Lunch \$4.75
 Milk \$0.50

Please Click Links Below for Nutrition Information on Daily Options:
 Fresh, Dried, or Canned Fruit, Skim White Milk, 1% White Milk, & Fat Free Chocolate Milk Offered With All Meals.

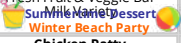

Milk Condiments
 Fresh, Dried Or Canned Fruit

Pay for meals on-line. Click on Link Below:


Please advise us if special meal accommodations are required for allergens or other special dietary needs.
 Click Image Below for employment opportunities


This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Abbey Group **Winooski Elementary School K-8 Lunch**
January 2024
 Menus are subject to change

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 No School	2 Buffalo Chicken Dip w/ Tortilla Chips Mexicali Corn Spanish Rice Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	3 Homestyle Mashed Potato, Meatball Bowl Homemade Dinner Roll Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	4 Cheesy Ravioli Bake Garlic Breadstick Steamed Broccoli Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	5 BBQ Turkey Flatbread Steamed Green Peas Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety
8 Creamy Macaroni & Cheese Homemade Cornbread Steamed Green Peas Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	9 Pulled Pork Nachos Rice Pilaf Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	10 Cheesy Breadsticks Marinara Sauce Seasoned Green Beans Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	11 Chicken Teriyaki Rice Bowl Steamed Broccoli Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	12 Baked Potato w/ Toppings Beefy Homemade Chili Homemade Dinner Roll Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety
15 Dress Your Own Burger on a Bun Veggie Burger Homemade Potato Salad Maple Baked Beans Garden Pasta Salad Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar 	16 Taco Bar w/ Hard or Soft Shell Garden Salsa Rice Pilaf Seasoned Black Beans Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	17 Buffalo Chicken & Cheese Flatbread Melt Fresh Broccoli Salad Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	18 Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce Garlic Breadstick Steamed Corn Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	19 Fluffy Pancakes Real Maple Syrup Twin Turkey Sausage Patty's Sweet & White Homefries Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety
22 Chicken Patty Sandwich w/Lettuce & Tomato Roasted Sweet Potato Wedges Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	23 Bean & Cheese Quesadilla Garden Salsa Southwest Rice Pilaf Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	24 Chicken & Cheese Calzone Roasted Beet Wedges Seasoned Green Beans Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	25 Chicken Alfredo w/Pasta Steamed Broccoli Dinner Roll Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	26 Grilled Cheese Sandwich Tomato Basil & Brown Rice Soup Oven Baked Potato Puffs Steamed Broccoli Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety
29 Meatball Sub (Beef & Chicken Meatballs) Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	30 General Tso Chicken Rice Pilaf Steamed Broccoli Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	31 Cheesy Breadsticks Marinara Sauce Caesar Salad Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety		


Meals Are Free To All Students


Adult Breakfast \$2.90
 Adult Lunch \$4.75
 Milk \$0.50

Please Click Links Below for Nutrition Information on Daily Options:
 Fruit & Yogurt Parfait w/Granola, Deli Turkey & Cheese Sandwich, Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich w/Cheese Stick
 Fresh, Dried, or Canned Fruit, Skim White Milk, 1% White Milk, & Fat Free Chocolate Milk Offered With All Deli Options K-8

Express Options
 Grab & Chef Salad or Yogurt Parfait w/Oat

Milk Condiments
 Fresh, Dried Or Canned Fruit

Please advise us if special meal accommodations are required for allergens or other special dietary needs.
 Pay for meals on-line. Click Image Below


Harvest of the Month:
Beets


Click on the image above for more info on the Harvest of the Month!

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



From Your Local Representative

By Representative Taylor Small



Dear Neighbors,
I hope this message finds you well. As some of you may have seen, the Administration released their “December 1st letter” projecting education spending for the upcoming year jointly published by the Department of Taxes and the legislative Joint Fiscal Office. It is crucial to address the projected 18% increase in the average property tax rate. This estimate is indeed concerning and warrants careful consideration. However, it’s essential to make sure that we understand the context of this projection accurately.

The early estimation of an 18% increase in the property tax rate is a preliminary assessment based on initial budget submissions from school districts across Vermont. Several factors contribute to this estimate, including inflationary pressures, the expiration of federal pandemic aid, and notably, a significant rise of approximately 16% in healthcare costs along with payments on school construction or renovation projects.

I want to emphasize that this projection is merely a starting point. School boards are currently working through their annual budget discussions, which will be presented to voters in March. Legislative action will follow in the spring when we establish the annual homestead property yield based on approved budgets and more refined revenue projections. At that juncture, we will set a tax rate aimed at covering

the anticipated needs of the statewide Education Fund.

Over the next couple of months, our focus will be on making sure that we cover what schools need without drastically increasing taxes – and we’ve planned ahead for this. We’ve saved some money aside and have plans to lower tax rates, so that we can help schools without putting too much burden on tax payers.

I know times are tough for many of us with prices going up and pay staying the same. Higher property taxes would be an unbearable burden for many. As we convene in Montpelier for the legislative session, I am committed to actively listening to our community members—neighbors, teachers, parents, business owners, and stakeholders—to navigate these challenging decisions.

I want to draw your attention to an important difference in this year’s letter because the way the Administration is talking about these tax increases might not be totally fair. The Administration opted to base the projected increases on the tax rate after the CLA (Common Level of Appraisal) is applied, termed the “actual” tax rate, rather than the traditionally used equalized rate in previous comparisons. This makes it seem like the tax rate is going up by 18.5%. But when we compare it the way we usually do, it looks more like a 3.8% increase.

That’s a big difference! And it’s important because it changes how we move forward in addressing this issue. It’s not just about schools spending too much. Other things, like how property values are going up and how we calculate taxes, are playing a big role.

The disparity between the projected 12% increase in public school budgets and the 3.8% increase in the equalized tax rate underscores the diverse revenue streams contributing to the Education Fund. The legislative decision to allocate 100% of sales and use tax to the Ed Fund alleviates reliance solely on residential property taxes, reflecting a balanced approach to funding our schools.

It is important that we review this analysis accurately to avoid unwarranted scrutiny of public schools for an 18.5% increase when the equalized rate

comparison reveals a much lower percentage increase, consistent with historical assessments since the implementation of Act 60. We need to talk about using the right numbers to come up with fair ways to keep our schools great without making life harder for Vermont families.

I want to thank our own school staff and board for their commitment to transparency and community involvement as they develop next year’s budget. I encourage all of you to stay engaged through the budget process and to reach out as questions arise.



Community Vision

This section of the Winooski Newsletter is designed to keep our residents and visitors informed of the progress being made in the City’s Strategic Vision areas – or “community vision”. To learn more and view progress updates, visit winooski.vt.gov/vision.

Economic Vitality:

On December 4, the City Manager provided the City Council with an Economic Vitality update. Work to finalize amendments to the Municipal Code related to sidewalk use is underway and progress info was provided related to the Working Communities Challenge Grant, a project that builds cross-sectoral collaborations to enhance economic opportunity by advancing equity, especially for our new American residents.

Municipal Infrastructure:

On December 4, the City of Winooski, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, and VHB presented a draft of the Winooski Walk/Bike plan. The plan will provide the vision for

a connected network of walking and biking facilities that gets people safely to where they want to go. The final plan will include a prioritized set of infrastructure recommendations with planning level cost estimates. To view the plan, visit ccrpcvt.org/our-communities/winooski.

Housing:

Amendments focused on definition changes to the City's housing chapter (9) of the municipal code were recently adopted by the City Council after a public hearing. During their meeting on December 11, the City Council received a conceptual overview of a short term rental ordinance and an amendment request to the Housing Trust Fund guidelines that include a new interest rate buydown program. To view the City's housing initiatives and resources, please visit winooski.vt.gov/housing.

Safe, Healthy, Connected People:

During their recent meeting, the Safe, Healthy, Connected People Commission reviewed a draft invasive species management for Winooski's natural areas. They also discussed the future management of Memorial Park and the potential transfer of ownership and upkeep over to the Winooski Valley Park District. If you're interested in learning more about Winooski's parks and open spaces, check out the City's Parks and Open Space Master Plan at winooski.vt.gov/vision.



Reminders from the City Clerk's Office

The City Clerk's Office is open for regular hours, Monday – Friday from 8am to 4pm.

Upcoming closures

- Monday, January 1, 2024 (New Year's Day)
- Monday, January 15, 2024 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

Register to Vote and Town Meeting Day

Are you registered to vote in Winooski? The 2024 Town Meeting Day Election is on Tuesday, March 5. To get started, visit olvr.vermont.gov or contact us for assistance: 802 655 6410 / clerk@winooski.vt.gov.

View our voting page to learn more about voting in Winooski: winooski.vt.gov/vote. Reminder: all legal residents, regardless of citizenship status, can vote on local (City/School) ballot items and run for Mayor, City Councilor, or School Board Trustee.

Interested in Running for Local Office?

The following terms are up for election on Town Meeting Day:

Winooski City Council

- Mayor (3-year term)
- City Councilor (2-year term)
- City Councilor (2-year term)

Winooski School District School Board

- Trustee (3-year term)
- Trustee (remainder of a 3-year term, 2026)
- Trustee (2-year term)

Champlain Water District Board of Commissioners

- Commissioner (3-year term)

Residents interested in running for these seats must fill out a Consent of Candidate form and obtain 30 petition signatures (more are encouraged). Visit winooski.vt.gov/townmeeting or visit us at the City Clerk's office to get started.

PLEASE NOTE: Forms and petitions are due back to the City Clerk's Office by 5pm on Monday January 29, 2024.



Annual Winter Parking Ban Reminder

There is no overnight street parking from 2:30 – 6am in Downtown Winooski from December 1 – March 31. For everywhere else in Winooski, overnight winter parking bans are made during winter storms and for snow removal where street parking is not allowed from 11pm to 7am.

To sign up for our winter parking ban alerts, text Winooski to 888 777 or register at nixle.com.

- Winter parking bans may last more than one evening.
- The alerts will say when the ban starts, if it keeps going, and when it is done.
- The City of Winooski reserves the right to tow vehicles at the owner's expense.
- Landline phone users can get updates by calling 802 655 3908.
- Signs will flash at exit 15 on East Allen Street, on the Winooski side of the Winooski/Burlington Bridge, on Malletts Bay Ave, and on Main Street.
- Parking is available from 6pm to 7am in the Winooski Parking Garage on Cascade Way.
- Users can pay in the garage or by using the ParkMobile app.
- Overnight parking in the lot at the O'Brien Community Center is not allowed from 11pm to 7am (all year)
- Lawn ornaments, sports equipment, or other obstructive items must be removed from the city right-of-way - if they are in the way and damaged during plowing, it is the responsibility of the homeowner

Visit our parking page at winooski.vt.gov/parking



Main Street Revitalization Project Updates

The Winooski Main Street Revitalization Project encompasses the full reconstruction of approximately 4,000 linear feet of Winooski's Main Street. The project will improve safety, accessibility, and mobility for all modes of transportation through the corridor; replace vital water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure; and accommodate stable growth along the corridor by eliminating physical barriers and improving the street and landscape environment.

Construction is estimated to begin in 2024! Community members are encouraged to sign up for project updates, milestone announcements, weekly construction updates, and invitations to public meetings.

Visit winooski.vt.gov/mainstreet to sign up and learn more.



Community Services Updates

Recreation and Parks

Sign up for our programs at winooski.vt.gov/recprograms

  @winooskirec

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth Climbing

- Ages 5-8 / Tuesdays / January 2 - February 20 / 3 - 5pm @ MetroRock
- Ages 9-13 / Thursdays / January 4 - February 22 / 3 - 5pm @ MetroRock

Youth will work with coaches to learn the basics of climbing techniques, get comfortable with safe belaying, and build their confidence. All gear is provided.

Winter Adventures

- Grades 3-8 / Wednesdays / January 3 - February 21 / 3 - 4:30pm / Various Winooski Parks

Looking to get outside this winter and participate in seasonal activities while exploring local parks and nature areas? Youth will engage in winter sports such as snowshoeing, ice skating, winter hiking, snow fort building, and more!

Youth Basketball League

- Grades K-2 Co-Ed Clinic / Saturdays / January 6 - February 17 / Time 9:30-10:30am @ Winooski School District Gym
- Grades 3-6 Boys or Girls Teams / Weeks of January 2 - February 17 / Time TBD @ Winooski School District Gym

Students in grades K-2 will participate in a weekly Saturday clinic. Students in grades 3-6 will practice one time per week (Monday - Friday depending on volunteer availability) and attend Saturday games against neighboring communities

Youth Drop-In Indoor Soccer

- U8-U12 Girls and Boys / Sundays / January 7 - February 25 / Time TBD @ Winooski School District Gym

Are you looking to continue working on your soccer skills through the colder months? Join us in collaboration with Vermont Patriots for this indoor soccer program! This will be a drop-in, pick-up program and registration is not necessary.

Very Merry Theatre

- Grades 5-9 / Mondays / January 8 - February 19 / 3 - 4:30pm @ Winooski School District Performing Arts Center

Interested in exploring your talents

and learning more about theatre arts and stage performance? Join Winooski Rec & Parks in collaboration with Very Merry Theatre for this fun musical version of Peter Pan! Fly off to Neverland and play a pirate, lost child or mermaid! Great roles for everyone.

Winter Activities February Break Camp

- Grades K-5 / Monday - Friday / February 26 - March 1 / 9am - 3pm @ Winooski School District & O'Brien Community Center

Enjoy an amazing week of winter-themed activities! We'll explore various winter outdoor activities such as snowshoeing, sledding, and fort-building (weather permitting). Our indoor activities include playing games, reading winter stories, exploring various arts and crafts, and learning about Vermont winter traditions.

Game Creation Camp at Generator

- Ages 9-12 / Monday - Friday / February 26 - March 1 / 9am - 3pm @ Generator

Design, build, and play your very own game! Campers will use 3D printers, laser cutters, vinyl cutters and electronics to create and customize a game to take home. Explore new STEAM skills led by expert instructors, experience the design process, and test out ideas! If you like to play games, learn new skills, and have fun, this camp is for you.

ADULT & SENIOR PROGRAMS

Yoga Vinyasa Flow

- Ages 18+ / Mondays / January 8 - February 26 / 5:40 - 7pm @ O'Brien Community Center Studio
- Ages 18+ / Wednesdays / January 10 - February 28 / 8:30 - 9:30am @ O'Brien Community Center Studio

Join yoga practitioner Sarah Sears of Yoga Vermont for an amazing Vinyasa Flow program! Open to everyone and all levels, this program is designed to help you adapt to postures and create your own practice routine.



Thrive After School

winooskivt.gov/thrive

@thrivewinooski

Our state-licensed, 3 STAR childcare/enrichment program fall season (beginning September 2023) is open for registration! Sessions run from 3 - 5:30pm, Monday – Friday.

We partner with the Winooski School District to provide a community where children in grades K-5 explore, learn, and grow during their after-school hours. During Thrive, students engage with creative arts, STEM and Makerspace activities, literacy skills, cooperative and socio-emotional learning, outdoor play, and more.

Thrive costs \$19 per day enrollment or \$90 for full week. We accept state childcare subsidy as well as offer scholarships to families in need.

To learn more and sign up, please visit winooskivt.gov/thrive.



Winooski Memorial Library

winooskivt.gov/library

@winooskilibrary

Library Hours

Monday: Closed
 Tuesday/Wednesday: 10am-6pm
 Thursday/Friday: 10am-5pm
 Saturday: 10am-2pm
 Sunday: Closed

Audiobooks, eBooks, & More!

Did you know that all Winooski Memorial Library cardholders have access to FREE online resources including audiobooks, ebooks, film streaming, language learning, educational and professional development courses, and more? Visit our website at winooskivt.gov/library or stop by the library with questions about access and/or additional information.

Dad Guild Playgroup

Join the Dad Guild for an afternoon of play, and connect with other parents, guardians, and caregivers - all are welcome regardless of gender identity. This event is free and open to all.

- Saturday, January 20 from 12:30-2:00pm
- Children 0-5; parents, guardians, and caregivers.

About Dad Guild: Founded in 2019, Dad Guild is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization formed to create a supportive network for new fathers in the greater Burlington, VT region. They offer opportunities for dads to connect with one another, share their experiences, model positive father engagement, and advocate for parental equality.

English Conversation Group

We're excited to announce our partnership with USCRI Vermont to offer their English Conversation Group program! Join a weekly conversation group to practice English skills. Each week will have a different theme and new vocabulary to practice. Do you have a topic you would like to talk about? Join the conversation!

- Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am-12pm
- Free to join, open to adults 18+

Free Winter Produce Distribution

We've partnered with the Intervale Center to provide FREE local produce to our community members! Looking to add color and vibrancy to your next meal? Want to enjoy something fresh and amazing from a local Vermont farm? Drop by for our free distribution! This month will also include resources and

info from AgeWell!

- Wednesday, January 3 from 3:30 - 5:30pm @ the O'Brien Community Center
- Please bring your own reusable grocery bags
- Seasonal item availability on a first-served basis

Friends of the Winooski Library

The Friends of the Winooski Memorial Library is recruiting new members interested in supporting the values and mission of the Library. The Friends are a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization that aims to promote use of the library's resources, work to encourage contributions and lead fundraising efforts, and serve as an advocate of all things library in the community.

As a Friend, you might participate on the Friend's Board, attend quarterly meetings, help to create public support and awareness for the Library and its programs, raise money for capital campaigns or direct gifts for items not in the Library's own budget, sponsor and support Library programs and events, volunteer to work in the Library or on specific tasks, and/or something else of your choosing.

Membership is free and open to anyone in the Winooski community.

Please reach with interest or questions to Nate Eddy, Library Director, at neddy@winooskivt.gov / 802-655-6424.

Hot Cocoa Storytime

Cozy up at the Library on the first Friday of each month this winter for a wintry-themed storytime. We'll enjoy a hot cup of cocoa and two picture books before settling into a simple craft. Recommended for youth ages 4 and up.

- 1st Friday of the month: January 5th 3:30 - 4:30pm
- Youth 9 and under must be with an adult caregiver.

Library of Things

Stop by for snowshoes, museum passes, headlamps, birding backpacks, a telescope, walking poles, snow shovels, and other items to enjoy in the outdoors!

Library Playgroup and Family Support

Join the Winooski Memorial Library for a fun playgroup for parents, caregivers, and young children ages 0-5. Meet at the Library for activities such as reading stories, movement exercises, and sing-alongs. Adults will also have the opportunity to talk about child development or just chat. Come connect with your child and meet other families within your community.

- Tuesdays from 10:30-11:30am

For more information, please reach out to Kirsten Wilson at kwilson@winooskivt.gov; 802-655-6424.

Pokémon Club

Join us on Wednesdays at the Library for all things Pokemon! Franchise fans will get together to discuss their favorite cards, games, and TV episodes. Along with card trading, we'll have simple art projects and other activities for club members to enjoy while socializing at this weekly activity group.

- Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30pm
- Drop-in, no registration required
- Youth 8+

STEAM Ahead Saturdays

Find us on Saturdays from 10 - 11am for our STEAM Activity hour. Each week will feature a new project for young learners that will engage the mind and introduce participants to science, technology, engineering, art and math-based concepts!

This program is intended for youth ages 5 and up, however parents are encouraged to partake. Youth should attend in clothing appropriate for art projects.

Weekly Storytime

Join us on Thursdays at 10:30am for our weekly storytime! We'll be reading our favorite books, singing songs, doing a little dancing, and sharing in fun. No registration required.

Winooski Reads Book Group

The Winooski Library is excited to offer a chance to participate in our Winooski Reads Book Club for adult readers (18+)! Join your friends and

neighbors for a lively discussion of each month's selected title and share your thoughts, insights, and reactions to the book. Free to take part, email or call Nate Eddy, Library Director, at neddy@winooskivt.gov / 802-655-6424.

Youth Jewelry Club

Join us every Thursday after school as we learn to make jewelry at the Library! Each week we'll try out a different pattern or style of friendship, paracord, or bead bracelets together.

- Thursdays from 3:30 - 4:30pm
- Drop-in; no registration required
- Recommended for youth ages 8+

Questions? Please contact Kirsten Wilson, Library Youth Services Coordinator, at kwilson@winooskivt.gov or 802 655 6424.



Winooski Senior Center

winooskivt.gov/seniorcenter

 @winooskiseniorcenter

The Winooski Senior Center is open for regular programming on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am-12pm & Thursdays from 9am-2pm. Join us for events and programs! Stay connected with us: call: 802-655-6425, voicemail 24/7. Email us at: seniorcenter@winooskivt.gov

TUESDAYS

Grab-N-Go Meals for Seniors - pick up 10am-12pm

In partnership with Age Well, we offer Older Vermonters (60+) a nutritious take out meal every Tuesday. We want to support you being well at home and provide you with an opportunity to stay connected to your community while enjoying a healthy and deliciously prepared meal. Reservations must be made by 12pm the Thursday before the scheduled Tuesday meal. Find our

monthly menus at winooskivt.gov/seniorcenter.

Call us at 802 655 6425 to register for this program. \$5 suggested donation to Age Well.

Note: No Meal on December 26 and January 2.

WEDNESDAYS

Breakfast Café & Coffee Chat serving 9 - 11am

Breakfast and Conversation are served! Everyone is welcome to drop in and join us as we gather and converse with community members. Our eat-in Breakfast Café features hot breakfast sandwiches, fruit, treats & beverages. Priced by donation.

Coffee Chat From 10 - 11am

Join us as we welcome our City Councilors for an informal discussion about all things Winooski! Hear updates on City initiatives and projects. Bring your questions, concerns, and thoughts. This is your last chance to talk about the upcoming City budget!

- January 10 - Bryn Oakleaf, Winooski City Councilor
- January 17 - Aurora Hurd, Winooski City Councilor

THURSDAYS

Sit Down Community Meals - served at 12pm

In partnership with Age Well, we are now offering healthy sit-down community meals for older Vermonters (60+). Reservations must be made by 12pm the Monday before the scheduled meal. Call us at 802-655-6425 to register for this program. \$5 suggested donation to Age Well. Find monthly menus at winooskivt.gov/seniorcenter. After lunch, stay and play games or just relax with friends and neighbors!

Special Events

January 11 - Elvis Birthday Luau Party at 12pm

We will be serving Hawaiian inspired foods and celebrating Elvis Presley's 89th Birthday. Reservations must be made by January 5 at 12pm. \$5 suggested donation at the door. Call 802 655 6425 to RSVP

Special Programs

Bone Builders - Mondays and Wednesdays at 2-3pm

RSVP Bone Builders is an exercise program designed to prevent (and even reverse) the negative effects of osteoporosis. The program is based on research conducted and published by Tufts University which shows that strength training just twice a week dramatically reduces the risk of fractures due to the disease. Bone Builders classes fill a vital need for regular physical exercise as well as increased social interaction, both well-known components of healthy aging. Free!



MEALS on WHEELS AMERICA

Meals on Wheels

If you know of an older Vermonter who has special nutrition requirements or is having difficulty with meal preparation, please call Age Well at 802-863-0360 to find out the eligibility requirements. No one is denied meals due to an inability to donate. Volunteer drivers are always needed.

AARP Tax-Aide

The volunteers from AARP will be back for free income tax assistance starting February 2, 2024.



Appointments will be in the mornings on Mondays and Fridays. Please call the Winooski Senior Center and leave a message at 802 655 6425 to make an appointment.

We will start making appointments on **January 16**. Free!

AROUND WINOOSKI — HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2023 EVENTS



The Year In Review: 2023

By Melissa Corbin, Executive Director, Downtown Winooski

Downtown Winooski experienced a lot of change in 2023. Your Board of Directors launched an executive search for a new leader for the organization in the first quarter of the year. This lengthy and intentional process landed with me stepping into the role of Executive Director in April.



“Melissa came on board at a time where we were ready to enhance the organizational capacity and operations of Downtown Winooski. Her background in event planning, fundraising, finance and business support made her the clear choice for this role. We are excited to build on what she has learned this first year in 2024.” ~ Laura Wade, Board Chair and Owner of Misery Loves Co. & Onion City Chicken and Oyster

The Winooski Farmers Market hosted more patrons and vendors than ever before with an average of 750 people a week in attendance and over 30 local producers. We plan to build on the success of this year and bring an activity-based theme to each market in 2024. Reported sales from vendors was nearly \$200,000 over the season. We plan to build on the success of this year and bring an activity-based theme to each market in 2024.

“The market is more than a place to buy your veggies. It is a gathering place for our community every Sunday. We want to create more reasons for families to stay and play next year.” ~ Sarah Brunkhorst, Farmers Market Manager

Winooski Wednesdays, presented by Mascoma Bank, is a free concert series in Rotary Park once a month June through September. We supported eight local performers and entertained an estimated 1,500 residents this past year.

Juneteenth, Pride and Halloween in Winooski rounded out our Rotary events, which were the best attended since their inception. **Blingo** started in August and brings out the funky flair in our community. Two hours of laughter and fun have stimulated local businesses on a Tuesday when sales are typically low. We have given out



thousands of dollars in cash prizes while operating a modest fundraiser for our organization.

Our final event of the year was our **Holiday Pop-Up Shop** that hosted 60 local entrepreneurs in 13 locations. Feedback from the vendors and the venues was overwhelmingly positive.

Looking ahead, we have a significant amount of construction that will be impacting our great City for many years to come. Our Board of Directors is meeting next month for a full day retreat to develop our strategic plan for supporting businesses during the construction. We have many communities to model ourselves after that have successfully mitigated significant risk to operations during peak impact times. Downtown Winooski is committed to supporting our local economy and keeping our downtown vibrant during these times of infrastructure upgrades.



Finally, a thanks to all of you who volunteered time and donated money this past year to make our community events possible. Direct costs to host all the events mentioned above were \$44,784 this past year with an estimated 920 volunteer hours to execute. We need donors, sponsors and volunteers to make these events possible. Please visit our website to learn about opportunities to support our events in 2024.

SAVE THE DATES

2024 Winter Farmers Market!

By Melissa Corbin, Executive Director, Downtown Winooski

We're super excited to introduce the Winooski Winter Farmers Market! **Find us in the gym at the O'Brien Community Center (32 Malletts Bay Avenue)** every other Sunday (with adjustments for holidays) from 10am-2pm. We'll see you on:

- January 7 | January 21
- February 4 | February 18
- March 3 | March 17
- April 7 | April 14

Interested in being a part of the market? Email or phone with questions: 802-310-6942 or melissa@downtownwinooski.org.



Winooski Food Shelf Schedule for January

By Linda Howe, Winooski Food Shelf Coordinator

Wednesday, January 10th	1:00 to 3:00pm	Pantry staples, veggies, meat and eggs
Saturday, January 13th	9:30 to 11:00am	Veggies, deli, bakery, meat and eggs
Wednesday, January 24th	1:00 to 3:00pm	Pantry staples, veggies, meat and eggs
Saturday, January 27th	9:30 to 11:00am	Veggies, deli, bakery, meat and eggs

The Holidays are behind us and the Winooski Food Shelf is back on our usual schedule. We remain very busy. We have over 320 Winooski families using our services on a regular basis. Please pack your patience and some reusable bags. We no longer have diapers..

Food Shelf Policy: We request that all new food shelf clients bring a piece of mail such as a utility bill or lease with their current address. We do not accept “junk mail” or driver license. Winooski residents may come three times a month. They can come one Wednesday and both Saturdays. Starbucks in Colchester provides pastry and sandwiches while Hannaford Market on Dorset Street helps provide Saturdays’ food selections.

Where to find us: The Food Shelf is located in the United Methodist Church at 24 West Allen Street. We do not provide rides so please bring a wheeled cart or suitcase and some bags to

lug your food home. The church phone number is 802-655-7371.

Cash donations needed: The Food Shelf is growing rapidly. More and more of the food must be purchased since donations of food items cannot meet demand. Checks can be mailed to: The Winooski Food Shelf, P.O. Box 53, Winooski, VT 05404. You may also donate at winooskifoodshelf.org.

New drop off location: The Winooski Senior Center will accept non perishable food and toiletries during regular programming on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:00am to noon and Thursdays from 9:00am to 2:00pm.

Food Shelf Volunteers Needed: If you have some free time and would like to do some pickups and deliveries, pack food boxes, set up for food shelves or serve our clients, please reach out to us at our e-mail address: winooskifoodshelf@gmail.com. We especially need help serving clients on Wednesdays.

Free Fentanyl & Xylazine Test Strips

By Paul Detzer, Development and Communications Engagement Manager

Drug overdoses are on the rise. It took only eight months for the number of fatal overdoses in 2023 to surpass the entire number of overdoses the year prior. Part of the reason behind this spike is the introduction of xylazine and fentanyl into the drug supply, often added to street drugs to increase potency and enhance the effects of the substance.

Xylazine is a sedative drug that can cause cardiac arrest if too much is taken. The only way to prevent a xylazine overdose is to use test strips to see if it is present in the substance to be used.

As part of its harm reduction approach to the treatment of opiate use, Howard Center’s Safe Recovery program offers free test strips that can indicate the presence of fentanyl and xylazine in any substance purchased on the street. Fentanyl is 30 to 50 times more powerful than heroin, and it only takes a very small amount to cause a fatal overdose.

According to the 11/2023 Monthly Opioid Report (healthvermont.gov), fentanyl was a factor in 95% of fatal overdoses in Vermont, and xylazine was a factor in a third of all fatal overdoses.

Without testing, it is nearly impossible to determine whether a particular sampling of opiates, pressed pills, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, or any other substance may contain fentanyl or xylazine, so individuals are unaware of the presence of these substances in the drugs they are using until it is too late. The

testing procedure is relatively easy. A small

sample of the drug is mixed with water and the test strip is then dipped into the solution.

Howard Center Safe Recovery Program provides free and anonymous Fentanyl and Xylazine test strips and Narcan® (Naloxone) overdose reversal kits. Safe Recovery is open Monday-Friday from 9am – 12pm, and 1 – 5pm.

Individuals do not need to have an appointment to receive services. For more information, call Safe Recovery at 802-488-6067 during business hours as above, or you can visit Safe Recovery at 45 Clarke Street in Burlington. In the event of an overdose, please dial 9-1-1.

Need Help or Services?

If you need support or information, please contact our Access and Intake Main Number 802-488-6000; Monday-Thursday 8am – 6pm, and Friday 8am – 5pm. Our staff will help you to find supportive resources and services.



New Year, New Opportunities

By Ric Cengeri, Communications Specialist

It's just the passage from one day to the next and one month to another, but when we click over to a new year, it has always been a time to assess our lives and decide how we might change them for the better.

Moving into 2024 doesn't have the great unknown feeling of Y2K (remember that!?) or leaving 2020 behind (let's not remember that!). Instead, we can boldly look forward to a new year of new possibilities.

That makes it a great time to look at how sharing your home can positively impact your life in this new year. Homesharing is the practice of having two or more people share a home for a mutual benefit. The homeshare host provides a private bedroom and shared common space in exchange for rent, services or both.

Hosts can benefit from receiving rent and/or a share of utilities, or getting help with snow shoveling, walking your pet in the wintery weather, meal prep, chores, tech questions and more. For guests, homesharing provides incredibly cost-effective housing, using existing housing stock.



If you have a room in your home that would be a great place for someone to live, consider offering it through HomeShare Vermont. Although the average monthly rent is \$378 through the program, hosts in Chittenden County can charge up to a maximum rent of \$650.

A typical homeshare match lasts around 13 months. We conduct background and reference checks and interviews. Then, you decide which of our pre-screened candidates you'd like to meet and who you'd like to live with.

If you're interested in learning more about how we create compatible matches and how homesharing might benefit you, we'd be happy to visit with you or you can call us at (802) 863-5625. You can also visit our website, HomeShareVermont.org, where you can read our past newsletters and learn about some of the matches we've created.

January Update

By Kate Nugent, Executive Director

Most Winooski retailers comply with signage rules

Reducing advertising for substances helps reduce overall exposure of youth and young adults under age 21 to alcohol, THC/Cannabis, and Nicotine advertising, a known driver of early substance use and cause of substance use disorder. By documenting the signage environment in Winooski, the WPP found overall, most retailers are eager to comply with current law, which doesn't allow signage to be attached to areas outside of stores, on fences, or poles. Most retailers, when asked, also supported signage laws that reduce the amount of space taken up by advertising posters in windows (usually provided by distributors, not because retailers necessarily want them). Most retailers are required to put up some amount of advertising in their windows by distributors and manufacturers to be able to sell those products. However, stronger regulation at the local level can even the playing field for all retailers and support the retailers' interests in creating a more appealing shopping experience for their customers. The Winooski Planning Commission has expressed interest in addressing this at some point in the future.

Screenagers Under the Influence

The WPP and WSD collaborated to show our first screening of the film *Screenagers Under the Influence* on the evening of December 1 at the Winooski School District. Mukhtar Abdullahi, the WPP's new Substance Use Prevention Educator, facilitated the viewing and discussion that followed. The WPP provided



Winooski Partnership
for Prevention

free food and interpretation. Our next screening will be available to the wider community will take place simultaneously with our January 29 community dinner at the O'Brien Community Center. Mark your calendars and please join us for a FREE screening, FREE food, and productive discussion. We hope families will attend together, also. Stay on top of the event updates by signing up for our newsletter.

802Quits Helps Vermonters Quit Vaping, Too

Vermont's resource for quitting smoking and other tobacco.

Wherever you are on your path to quitting, 802Quits is here to help. Make Your Quit Plan, Get Help Quitting, Free Nicotine Replacement. Or if you are trying to stay quit, 802Quits has Fun Quit Tools, Support for managing cravings and handling slips, as well as toys, rewards, and other fun swag.

Click the QR code above for more information and to get access to these resource for quitting vaping and or combustible tobacco.





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IMPORTANT NUMBERS IN WINOOSKI

WINOOSKI SCHOOL DISTRICT
www.wsdvt.org

Superintendent of Schools
Wilmer Chavarria, wchavarria@wsdvt.org
802-383-6000

John F. Kennedy Elementary School
Principal: Sara Raabe
802-655-0411
sraabe@wsdvt.org

Winooski Middle and High School
Co-Principals: Kate Grodin and Jean Berthiaume
802-655-3530
kgrodin@wsdvt.org
jberthiaume@wsdvt.org

Board of School Trustees
Robert Millar, *President*, 802-238-0089, rmillar@wsdvt.org
Steven Berbeco, 858-376-7269, sberbeco@wsdvt.org
Kamal Dahal, *Vice President*, 802-310-2821, kdahal@wsdvt.org
Isaiah Donaldson, *Secretary*, 802-999-8410, idonaldson@wsdvt.org
Nicole Mace, 802-363-7777, nimace@wsdvt.org

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CITY OF WINOOSKI
www.winooski.vt.gov, 802-655-6410

Mayor
Kristine Lott, 802-766-1988, klott@winooski.vt.gov

City Manager
Elaine Wang, 802-655-6410, ewang@winooski.vt.gov

City Councilors
Aurora Hurd, 802-734-7082, ahurd@winooski.vt.gov
Charles Judge, 802-655-6410, cjudge@winooski.vt.gov
Bryn Oakleaf, 802-448-2966, boakleaf@winooski.vt.gov
Thomas Renner, *Deputy Mayor*, 802-922-3265, trenner@winooski.vt.gov

City Clerk
Jenny Willingham, 802-655-6410, jwillingham@winooski.vt.gov

Winooski Police
Emergency: Call 9-1-1
Non-emergency: 802-655-0221

Winooski Fire Department
Emergency: Call 9-1-1
Non-emergency: 802-655-6420

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