



TOWN OF RANDOLPH, VERMONT

Economic Development Council

Via Teleconference

Minutes of December 7, 2020

Members Present: Mary Richter, Damian DiNicola, Jay Hooper, Bethany Silloway, Sarah Jackson

Guests: Gary Dir, John Lutz, Sonny Holt, Pat Moulton, Jerry Ward, Andrea Easton, Julie Iffland, Dan Bennett, Peter Reed

Town of Randolph: Joshua Jerome

Selectboard Liaison:

Public Attendees: None

Mary informed this meeting is being recorded to document minutes. Do I have any objections to the recording? No objections.

1. Establish Quorum (Quorum)

2. Call to Meeting to Order

Mary called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Welcome New Council Member, Sarah Jackson

At this time, I would like to welcome Sarah Jackson, our newest Randolph Economic Development Council member. Sarah, many of you know from much of the work she has accomplished, including the R3 initiatives. Sarah is the executive director at Vital Community. Welcome aboard, Sarah. We are happy to have you join the Council.

5. CoVID-19 Update

Bethany commented Gifford is anxiously awaiting the vaccine's arrival, and Dr. Josh White is addressing the school board meeting that is currently in session during our Council meeting. Josh shared an informative article in the December 3rd Herald [Top Gifford Doctor Talks New COVID Vaccines](#). Vaccines have been delivered to Gifford and will be distributed to health care workers. Employees have been surveyed whether they would receive the vaccine when it comes, but do not require that at this time. Josh is hopeful about the vaccine's efficacy Gifford is building a new structure for in-house testing and will use that site as a vaccine clinic space as a drive-thru when are distributed to the public. We are preparing for that surge. For now, it will be used for testing and then switch to testing and vaccinating when that time comes.

The Department of Health has asked Vermont Tech if they would be interested in distributing the vaccine at another site. Mary opened to comments to questions.

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A comment was made about faster available tests, but I do not know if that is realistic and out there that Gifford has started to use yet. Bethany responded that Gifford has a rapid test if needed with a quick turnaround; however, it is costly. It is used for patients who come through the ER that need to be admitted, emergency surgery patients, or critical employees that might need to be tested. Gifford continues to use the test they have been using and have seen some delays due to the UVM cyber-attack impacting testing times and return on testing results. Gifford's testing results are starting to return to normal with a three day turnaround time.

Governor Scott continues his press conferences and updates on the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) website <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19>

6. Center on Rural Innovation (CORI) / Digital Economic Ecosystem <https://ruralinnovation.us/>

Josh provided an overview of the CORI project. Matt Dunne and his staff have worked with over 20 communities and stakeholders around the country to strategize and assist in preparing a grant application for federal funding. Randolph has been considered a candidate for the 2021 Federal EDA Build to Scale program in the Spring that can provide up to \$1M in funding for this initiative.

Randolph has completed the first step over the last three months, and in January, other communities will have their kickoff. The project is moving fast, and the core team members have been identified who will be responsible for the day to day activities requiring five to ten hours a week. So far, the first team members of the core team are Bob Haynes, Ken Cadow, and Josh Jerome. There will be three different teams who will be responsible for various work to meet the June deadline. The second and third teams will be community partners, and stakeholders such as VTC, Gifford, and many others as the teams and participants are finalized.

Questions were raised if there was information regarding this initiative. Julie advised the Council, Matt Dunne and Leah Taylor from the Center on Rural Innovation, to present at RACDC's 2020 Annual Meeting and can be viewed on their website <https://racdc.com/>.

Attendees provided many suggestions and potential participants for this project as a takeaway for the core team to consider.

Jerry Ward brought up a good point that *"we are getting ahead of ourselves by trying to publicize something that seems pretty amorphous."* It is an honor that Randolph has been selected with three other Vermont towns. Each town is unique with its need, and the process is to plan how the funds will be utilized to achieve its particular goal within the framework that they set up, not just finding well-paying jobs, it is building a community culture. Even if this initiative is not successful, there will be a wealth of learning and ideas generated from the process.

Andrea Easton commented, *"I think there are folks also that might hear this or and read about it. It should be going both into audio and print. There are many folks on the retirement band that might like to get involved"* and suggested Jay Hooper's WCVR radio program as one of the communication outlets.

Mary commented to Josh and Julie, reiterating Jerry's comment and allowing the core team with CORI's assistance to develop the various teams' framework before broadcasting information. Josh confirmed that much information was discussed on Friday, and there will be more in the coming weeks.

7. Local School System

Mary mentioned many conversations at the last Council meeting, and Ken forwarded the school profile (attached). Also, a subcommittee will be created in which Ken and Damian have expressed interest.

The school system subcommittee will identify the right people and stakeholders to concentrate on the issues from an economic development standpoint and work with folks within the school system to identify the perceived weaknesses, attract and retain employees and families.

Damian will take the lead in helping to organize the folks who are out there, collect names, and bring them to the table and start the discussion. In addition to including representatives of both the business community, town, and our legislators.

Damian will start emailing some folks, and anyone from this group who would like to be involved in this initiative, please contact Damian DiNicola at damiandinicola@icloud.com.

8. Randolph in Motion (RIM) Website Update

Josh reported hoping to complete the website by January 1st. It has taken a back burner for the last few weeks because of vacation and other priorities. Josh is gathering additional content and will reach out if anything else is needed.

9. RACDC / RAMAN Updates (Julie Iffland)

- **Randolph Bucks**

Julie reported the bonus bucks had been extended until the end of December when Randolph Bucks are purchased and have approximately \$7,000 in Randolph sales. 30 Randolph businesses are participating in this initiative. In December, RACDC will provide the State with the metrics for the grant.

- **Illuminated Downtown**

Illumination is being installed, and the skier on the Gear House/RASTA building has been lit with a projector. There will be an installation in the Belmain's windows, Chef's Market will have a projected light show and music, installation of addressable light strings will be installed in various windows around town, and RACDC's third-floor window has a programmable feature that someone can program one of 16 different lighting displays. It can be found on RACDC LEDs www.racdc.com/leds. When it is ready, anyone can go on their phone

- **Downtown Wi-Fi**

The Wi-Fi is fully functional; however, it is not available in every nook and cranny because it is a mesh system and where routers can receive a signal. Mary asked if there was an announcement to the community, and Julie replied it was announced at their annual RACDC meeting and made a formal announcement.

- **Housing**

Julie had a conversation with Josh and would like to discuss with the Council to hold a community housing discussion this winter to get feedback on housing needs such as homelessness, opiate addiction task force housing committee, and through restorative justice and other non-visible situations.

- **Other**

RACDC is doing a significant upgrade at the Randolph House and is in the process of funding for that project.

Mike Keith is an Upper Valley resource who works with various groups throughout the region.

Julie also reported there would be no Holly Jolly Project due to the CoVID-19 pandemic. RAMAN (Randolph Area Mutual Aid Network) is raising funds for gift cards to help families in Randolph, Braintree, Brookfield & East Granville.

10. White River Valley Chamber of Commerce Updates (Andrea Easton on behalf of Linda Runnion)

WRVCC did not have its annual holiday shopping card program because of the extra burdens of the CoVID pandemic.

For the coming year, there will be a focus on working with Jay and the Council's Randolph in Motion kiosk to install a digital component. Furthermore, the magazine racks have been installed to display the Randolph in Motion Guides.

Andrea reiterated McDonald's' would like to partner with the Council a Kiosk Open House event in the Spring and support community activities. Mary confirmed she had added their information to the business distribution list as Randolph in Motion starts planning in January.

Jerry asked about Kiosk winter lighting, and Jay confirmed there is lighting and will be installing a timer. Mary asked when a ramp will be installed; Jay responded a handicap compliant ramp is being built by Tim Angel and Jake Garner and installed in 15 days. Andrea offered three-foot-tall railing spindles to avoid a drop on either side of the ramp.

Andrea suggested adding a barn quilt floor motif and perhaps ask local artists to do a block in the Spring. Sarah Jackson is a member of the East Valley Community Group and will discuss this at their next meeting. Andrea shared many thoughts and ideas to warm up the kiosk interior. A cartoon drawn map by a local artist, Barbara Carter, was done sometime in the 1980s. WVRCC plans to sponsor update the map with current businesses and tags. Andrea will distribute it to the group when it becomes available for feedback sometime in 2021 Q1.

WRVCC is looking for new members and has four to five Board openings. Anyone interested can contact Linda Runnion at info@whiterivervalleychamber.com or Andrea Easton at ccomforts@comcast.net.

11. Old Business

- Randolph in Motion Fall/Winter Project Closure December 2nd
 - ✧ Next RIM Guide planning starts in Jan 2021
 - Mary updated the group that Randolph in Motion had its Fall / Winter Guide project closure last Thursday, and then we will start planning for the next edition in January
- Belmain's Update
 - Josh reported that the cheese producer is still working out the details. Same status as the last 12 months.
- VTC Updates
- R3 - Energy, Environmental and Agriculture Initiatives Updates
 - No new updates: Gary had to drop from a meeting to attend another.

12. New Business

- Housing in Randolph
 - ✧ Salisbury Square Phase II Development Project (Julie Iffland)
RACDC posted a Request for Proposal – Architect (RFP) no later than noon on November 18th, 2020.
- Review and update Council By-Laws (scheduled for Q1 2021)

Mary reported to the Council members that a review of the bylaws will be done in early 2021. Julie responded that the bylaws are approximately 15-20 years old, and Sonny Holt was one of the originators. Sonny will send Mary the original draft.

13. Other

An attendee asked about the future of the town manager position and heard discussions of not filling the position and perhaps disbanding the seat. Mary responded it was a rumor and the search was being extended to the New England region. Josh concurred.

The Branchwood property the town owns, the Selectboard, was updated on Phase One and next steps with Phase Two assessment, and it is the intention to do some area-wide planning with the community around that parcel in the Spring.

Sonny reported on the Elm Street Park, and the Randolph Sunrise Rotary refurbished the benches donated by Day's Funeral Home, and they will be installed in the Spring. There is a new art sculpture called Lemon Lily. Furthermore, somewhere in the town garages, the ends from the benches Vermont Casting's donated to the town years ago. The wood has deteriorated, and perhaps this can be another Rotary restoration project.

Final 2020 words from Mary; I want to thank everyone for your time and energy. I wish you all a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a Healthy and Safe New Year. It has been a pleasure to have been your Chair this year. This is not a parting message; it is a thank you as we have pulled together great as a team, and it is much appreciated. The Selectboard, town, and community appreciate our efforts. We received much positive feedback from the community, and it is because of everybody's hard work. Again, great job, everyone, and Happy New Year, and pray for a better 2021!

Adjourned: 8:00 PM

Adjourned: 7:55 pm
Respectfully submitted,
Mary V. Richter, Chair

Randolph Union High School

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Accredited by the Vermont Agency of Education

Member of the League of Innovative Schools, Member of the Mastery Transcript Consortium

T. Elijah Hawkes, Principal; Caty Sutton, Associate Principal; Beverly Taft & Kara Merrill, School Counselors

www.orangesouthwest.org; CEEB Code: 460345

School Profile: SY 2020-2021

Our Community & Region

Randolph Union is located in the heart of Vermont, drawing a dynamic student body from the towns of Brookfield, Braintree and Randolph. This is a region marked by compelling contrasts: tradition and innovation, rolling hills and river valleys, farming and high-tech manufacturing. Our student population represents the interconnectedness as well as the socio-economic and professional diversity of our towns. Many of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. In addition to small-scale entrepreneurs and businesses, some of the larger industries and institutions of our towns include the Gifford Medical Center, Vermont Technical College, the Chandler Center for the Arts, GW Plastics, and Vermont Castings - to name a few. Major cultural events in our region include the New World Festival, the Vermont Pride Festival, Tunbridge World's Fair, and others. The healthy array of vibrant public and private institutions in our region enriches the lives of our students in new and exciting ways each year.

<p>Student Body</p> <p>We have a student body of about 400 students, grades 7 - 12. Our students and school are known for innovation, integrity, and commitment to the common good. This reputation draws students and families to us from towns outside our district. This year, 25 families from 9 other Vermont towns have chosen to send their children to our school. In addition, many home-schooling families enroll students for partial programs in academics and the arts.</p>	<p>Graduates (5 year average)</p> <p>Class size: 66 GPA: 3.03 Graduation Rate: 95% (Vermont average: 85%) Percent attending a 2 or 4-year college: 58.6% (Vermont average: 59.3%) Enlisting in military: 3% Gap-year with plans for college: 12.2% Pursuing apprenticeship or work: 26.2% SAT Averages: Math: 499; Reading/Writing: 533. ACT Composite Average: 21.5</p>
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Core Curriculum & Flexible Pathways

A student's pathway to graduation is marked by a combination of core requirements and flexible pathways. Teachers at RU are committed to rigorous traditional offerings such as AP courses, while also aggressively pursuing innovation and contemporary relevance. Innovative courses offered in recent years include: "Entrepreneurship and Manufacturing," taught in collaboration with a local high tech manufacturing company, and Project Based Learning courses in Digital Music, Youth Media, Documentary Film, International Aid, Service Learning Abroad, and Restorative Justice. Students at RU also benefit from a shared campus with the regional Technical and Career Center, where students enroll through a competitive application process in one of 13 immersion programs, including: Graphic Arts, Digital Film, Building Trades, Diversified Agriculture, Culinary Arts, and more.

<p>Graduation Requirements</p> <p>Proficiency in graduation standards as demonstrated through completion of years of study in various disciplines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 English 3 Math 3 Science 3 Social Studies .5 Health 1 Fine Art 1 World Language* 1.5 PE <p>Senior Project or Tech Portfolio</p> <p>*exceptions apply</p>	<p>Course Completion & Honors</p> <p>Beginning in 2018-2019, RUHS transitioned to a proficiency-based graduation system. Final course grades are no longer on a 100 point scale. Based on a student's proficiency in grade-level expectations, final course grades are awarded on the following scale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Complete with High Honors -Complete with Honors -Complete with Proficiency -Complete -Not Complete <p>A score of High Honors is the highest level of achievement. A score of Not Complete is the equivalent of not passing</p>	<p>GPA</p> <p>When calculating GPA, a 0.33 weighting applies to AP courses only.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Prior to SY 18/19</td> <td>SY 18/19 & beyond</td> </tr> <tr> <td>98-100 = 4.0</td> <td>Complete with High Honors = 4.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>88-89 = 3.0</td> <td>Complete with Honors = 3.67 or higher</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80-82 = 2.0</td> <td>Complete with Proficiency = 3 or higher</td> </tr> <tr> <td>70-71 = 1.0</td> <td>Complete = 2.5 or higher</td> </tr> </table>	Prior to SY 18/19	SY 18/19 & beyond	98-100 = 4.0	Complete with High Honors = 4.0	88-89 = 3.0	Complete with Honors = 3.67 or higher	80-82 = 2.0	Complete with Proficiency = 3 or higher	70-71 = 1.0	Complete = 2.5 or higher	<p>Portfolio Defense & Senior Project</p> <p>RU students cultivate a strong understanding of themselves as learners and are expected to become independent thinkers. At the end of 8th and 10th grade, students must engage in a portfolio defense before an audience of past, present and future teachers. A student's learning journey culminates in Senior Project, a high stakes graduation requirement that compels students to work with a local expert to complete a project that is defended before a panel of faculty and community members.</p>	<p>COVID-19 [-Q4] 2nd Semester, SY 19-20</p> <p>During the Spring Semester of School Year 19-20, the Vermont Agency of Education closed our campus and moved students to remote learning. Students were assessed and graded in courses, but due to concerns about access to Internet in our rural zones, engagement in remote learning was not permitted to negatively impact academic standing achieved prior to school closure. Students who passed a course based on Quarters 1-3, but who did not adequately engage in Quarter 4 have this noted with the symbol [-Q4] next to their course completion status.</p>
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Recent Course Offerings

NOTE: Due to COVID-19 staffing and scheduling constraints, certain electives and other courses were not offered School Year 20-21. School counselor letters will explain how a student's program of study may have been impacted by these constraints.

<p>English AP Language & Composition AP Literature American Literature Creative Writing Dystopia English 9, 10 Food & Travel Writing Food Systems PBL Literature to Film Racial Justice PBL Restorative Justice PBL World Literature Youth Media PBL</p>	<p>Social Studies AP World History AP US History American History Archeology Case Studies Current Issues Environmental Inequality PBL Famous Supreme Court Cases Human Experience Interact PBL Psychology Racial Justice PBL Sociology Theater History & Production US History I</p>	<p>Music & Visual Arts 2D vs 3D: The Artist Within 3D Art Advanced Music Art & Artists Band Chorus Composition & Theory Construction Art Drawing & Painting Digital Music PBL Exploration Art Jazz Band Jazz Lab Musical Composition Music Theory</p>	<p>Science AP Physics I AP Biology Astronomy Biology Chemistry I Entrepreneurship & Manufacturing CBL Environmental Science Intro to Engineering NGSS I & II Physics I Planets in Motion Science 10: Bodies of Atoms The Learning Brain PBL Water Resource Management CBL</p>
<p>PE & Health Health Education Intro to Personal Fitness Lifetime Fitness Movement Exploration PBL My Physical Best I & II Recreational Fitness Recreational Sports Strength & Conditioning Unified PE</p>	<p>Math Advanced Coding (elective) AP Calculus (AB/BC) AP Statistics Algebra II, Algebra I Bridges to Algebra II Business & Personal Finance Entrepreneurial Math Financial Literacy Geometry Introduction to Coding (elective) Pre-Calculus</p>	<p>World Languages French I - Advanced French Language, Culture, Cuisine Spanish I - Spanish IV</p>	<p>Randolph Technical & Career Center</p> <p>Programs:</p> <p>Advanced Manufacturing Automotive Technology Construction Mgt & Building Trades Criminal Justice Culinary Diversified Agriculture Diesel Technology Digital Film Electrical Technology Environ. Resource Mgt. Graphic Arts Health Careers Education/Social Services</p>
<p>Dual Enrollment & Early College Community College of VT (CCV) Norwich University Vermont Academy of Science & Technology (VAST) Vermont Technical College</p>	<p>ILO Independent Learning Opportunity: These non-traditional classes are a way of pursuing learning outside of the offerings that might fit into a particular student's schedule in a given semester. It is also an option for students who want to push their learning in settings and domains outside of what we offer as typical courses.</p>	<p>PBL Project Based Learning electives focus on collaborative approaches to contemporary problems. PBLs require community partnerships, public demonstrations of learning, and proficiency-based evaluation in transferable skills, English and Social Studies.</p>	

College Enrollment

RU graduates are accepted to a wide array of colleges, including our nation's most highly selective schools. RU counselors work closely with students to find the right fit. From the Ivy League schools to competitive "small Ivies," from specialized design and engineering schools to the liberal arts, the portfolio of schools our students attend is diverse, and in recent years has included:

- Public colleges and universities, including New Hampshire and Vermont State Colleges, Ohio Technical College, and others.
- Larger state universities, including UMASS Amherst, University of Maine and the University of Vermont.
- Smaller private schools, including Hamilton College, Hampshire, Landmark, Macalester College, Middlebury College, Bard College, and others.
- Larger private schools, including Columbia, Syracuse, Pratt School of Design, McGill University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, U of Chicago.

Clubs, Drama, Athletics, and International Exchange

Extra-curricular pursuits are an important part of school life. RU offers more varsity athletics opportunities than similar public schools of our size, from basketball, baseball and soccer, to volleyball, gymnastics, bowling – and many more. Our Encore Theater Company produces two full powerful drama performances each year. Other important clubs and groups include: the RU Marching Band, Student Congress, Campus Life Committee, National Honor Society, Interact, Poetry, LGBTQ, Mountain Biking, Robotics – and more. Another unique feature of this rural Vermont community is the commitment to international exchange.

Student Transcripts: The transcript will show what courses a student has taken from the array of course offerings above. In addition, each RU student transcript includes an **"Individualized Student Profile"** that presents the noteworthy activities, special accomplishments and pursuits that have textured a student's high school years.