



WESTFORD NEWSLETTER

April 2025



The **Brook Trout** is the smallest native salmonid of Vermont. Also known as a "brookie", its brilliant orange belly makes it thought of by many as our most beautiful fish. Wild populations are found in most streams and many ponds.

Westford Town Office

1713 Vermont Route 128 - Westford, Vermont 05494

Phone: (802)878-4587 Fax: (802)879-6503

<https://westfordvt.us/>

TOWN OFFICE NOTES

EWSD (School) Election Ballots

If you requested an absentee ballot for the school vote those went out as soon as ballots were available. Voters can return their ballots with the provided return postage, at the town office drop box, inside the town office, or at the polls during polling day, April 8th 7am-7pm at the Westford School.

Dog Licenses

Dogs in Westford are required to be vaccinated against rabies and licensed with the town by April 1st. This is required legally by the State of Vermont. The fee for spayed/neutered dogs is \$13.00 and the fee for intact dogs is \$15.00. After April 1st late fees will begin being assessed.

Senior Luncheon

Happy Spring!! Any current and past Westford residents 55+ are encouraged to hop on over to the BMH on Monday April 14th for a tasty pork dinner prepared & served up by our wonderful volunteers. Doors open at 11:30am with the meal to follow around 12:00pm. We love seeing new faces!

Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Co-Presidents - Mary Fay (878-1215) & Cori Hill (238-1018)

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

The office is open to the public:

- Monday-Thursday, 8:30am-4pm
- Friday, 8:30am-1pm

Closed:

- April 8: School Budget Election
- 26 May – Memorial Day

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the May Newsletter is 12:00 noon on Monday, April 28th.

Eyeglasses and Hearing Aids for Recycling

The Jericho-Underhill Lions Club have placed collection boxes in the Westford Library & Westford Town Clerk's Office. The Collection Boxes are there for anyone that has used eyeglasses and used hearing aids that wishes to donate them for recycling. All you need to

WESTFORD CEMETERY REMINDERS

Artificial flowers, glass containers and items with wire are **NOT** allowed in any of the Westford cemeteries. They will be subject to removal by cemetery officials. Also, the **planting of trees and shrubs is NOT permitted**. There are signs posted in each cemetery.

Thank you for your cooperation,
Westford Cemetery Commission



MUD SEASON!

What you need to know about spring road conditions.

- **Mud:** appears on gravel roads as snow thaws. Reduce your driving speeds to ensure safety and to preserve road conditions.
- **Snow:** a mix of precipitation can occur. Snow on top of muddy roads will become more slippery.
- **Potholes:** WILL appear on gravel roads. They cannot be fixed in freezing temperatures. Do your part to help reduce potholes by driving slowly and avoiding areas in poor condition if you can.
- **Heavy Loads:** do damage to thawing roads. Traveling on roads with heavy equipment may be prohibited at any time.
- **Repairs:** roads are repaired as weather allows. Know that this takes time, it might take the road crew some time to get to your road. Highly traveled roads in poor condition are given priority.

Reminders:

- Watch for increased activity by wildlife including bears coming out of hibernation, wild turkey and young animals navigating roads for the first time.
- Pedestrian & recreational use of roads will increase starting at this time of the year, slow and allow room for all road users.
- Please keep pets and other animals under leash or vocal control when on or near roadways.



SPRING IS IN THE AIR – AND SO ARE HOME PROJECTS!

As the days get longer, many of us are getting excited to tackle new projects. Whether you're building a shed, expanding a deck, or starting a home business, don't forget – you may need a zoning permit!

- ✓ Building something larger than 100 square feet?
- ✓ Moving more than 50 cubic yards of material?
- ✓ Changing how you use your property or structure?
- ✓ Adjusting or relocating a boundary between two parcels?

If you're unsure whether your project requires a permit, I am here to help! Give me a call at (802) 878-4587 or email zoning_admin@westfordvt.us – let's chat about your plans!

Happy building, Westford!

WESTFORD MUSIC SERIES

PRESENTS

THE TENDERBELLIES



BOLD AND BRAZEN

-free will donation-

4 - 5 PM: WESTFORD COMMON HALL

SUNDAY: APRIL 6, 2025

Springtime brings the Tenderbellies as the Westford Music Series offering as the sap is running strong and the Vermont-based string bang seamlessly blends Americana, bluegrass, new grass, jazz, and rock music with their high energy picking and singing. Known for their bold and brazen music that embraces delicate and somber tightly arranged songs and improvisational fun that engages audiences from start to finish.

Double pie raffle celebrating spring with a Maple Cream Pie and a "Peggy Rodgers" Quiche. Call 802-734-8177 for questions.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

The Town of Westford has several volunteer opportunities to serve the community. To apply for one of the positions below, please submit an application ([APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO \(westfordvt.us\)](https://westfordvt.us) to townadmin@westfordvt.us or mail/drop off at the town office.

The Clean Water Advisory Committee

The CWAC oversees the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission activities and policy development regarding but not limited to, the Vermont Lake Champlain Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Plan and its related plans and programs. The Committee typically meets the first Tuesday of the month. To view minutes, agendas, and other documents, please go to [Clean Water Advisory Committee - CCRPC \(ccrpscvt.org\)](https://ccrpscvt.org). For more information contact Dan Albrecht, CCRPC Senior Planner, at dalbrecht@ccrpscvt.org or 846-4490.

CCRPC Lamoille Basin Water Quality Council

The responsibilities of a BWQC as outlined § 39-502 of the CWSP Rule are:

- The purpose of a BWQC is to establish policy and make decisions for the CWSP regarding the most significant water d-quality impairments that exist in the basin and prioritizing the clean water projects that will address those impairments based on the basin plan.
- When prioritizing clean water projects and prioritizing the most significant water quality impairments in the basin, the BWQC shall consult with the basin plan and CWSP and utilize the Agency's project selection protocols.
- The BWQC shall participate in the basin planning process established in 10 V.S.A. § 1253(d).

Potential members should be:

- knowledgeable on clean water topics for the applicable basin
- Interested in prioritizing and selecting non-regulatory clean water projects for funding at quarterly BWQC meetings
- Interested in participating in the applicable Tactical Basin Planning process

Please contact the Town Office at 878-4587 or townadmin@westfordvt.us if you are interested in being appointed to one of these positions.





WESTFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

TRAIL CLOSURES: During mud season, various trails will be closed to prevent erosion from pedestrian traffic. Please adhere to trail closures while we wait for things to dry out. We may not have enough signs to close all affected trails, so please use your best judgment; if you need to go off the trail to walk the trail, you should not be on the trail. In other words, if conditions are so muddy or deteriorated that you need to go well off the traveled way in order to go forward, it's time to turn back. It may be possible to walk on parts of a trail, but not all the way through.

"Trails that are oversaturated are vulnerable to damage from soil compaction and erosion with every footstep. Soil compaction degrades the quality of the trail by reducing its ability to absorb water, causing increased flooding later and making it harder for vegetation to grow. Erosion then carries the soil away, leaving rocks and roots exposed." – Green Mountain Club

GROOMED TRAILS –But if we happen to ever see any snow again...The trails are open to all, but to maximize everyone's enjoyment, please maintain "lanes" on the groomed trails. The set track is for cross country skiers, the corduroy is to be shared by snowshoers and skate skiers.

FLICK A STICK - Please let us know if you see downed trees or other required maintenance to any of the trails. We're happy to go out and clean things up! Feel free to flick sticks and other small obstacles as you enjoy the trails. All debris must be kept within the trail right of way, so debris should be just off to the side of the traveled path. **We will soon be scheduling a Spring Clean-Up Day, so stay tuned.**

DONATIONS! The WCC is funded in part by donations. If you appreciate our efforts, and would like to help fund our work, please send a donation to: Westford Conservation Commission, 1713 Vt. Rte. 128, Westford, VT 05494. Thank you!

The WCC's next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 6:00 pm at the Town Office





The Westford Farmers Market is seeking Vendors for our Summer season! All Vermont-made products are welcome, especially: Fresh produce, meats, eggs, prepared foods, beverages and food trucks. [Application found here!](#)

We are also looking for Musicians! [Application found here!](#)

We are also looking for Sponsors! We'd advertise your business in different ways depending on the sponsorship level. We plan to use sponsor funds to purchase market insurance to cover all participating vendors. Please reach out to us to learn more and sponsor the market.

Market will be held on Sundays, 3-6pm, June 1st - September 28th on the Town Common.

Find us on Facebook and Instagram @westfordfarmersmarketvt or email us at westfordfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com

Market Organizers

Kirsten Tyler and Kristin LeClair



A good number of area residents heard Michael Lange's talk on the "Many Meanings of Maple" this past weekend. It was a light and meaningful talk so if he is speaking again locally and you didn't hear him on the 22nd you will do well to take it in. Also, the Westford library has a copy of his book so don't hesitate to ask Bree about borrowing it. We appreciate the Vermont Humanities Council for co-sponsoring the presentation.

Our next undertaking will be on April 12th at the Arrowhead Senior Center at 26 Middle Road in Milton. A number of area Historical Societies have been asked to participate with the goal of highlighting their respective work and collections. The event takes place on Saturday, April 12th from 10 until 2. The event is open to the public. Our Historical Society will be participating, Come on down and see what area historical societies are doing and planning in 2025.

One talk that our group has booked is on barns and preserving old barns. It will be led by John Porter an expert and historian from New Hampshire. This talk will take place on August 16th. Stay tuned for more details as they emerge.

We plan to have our building open on Saturdays from 10 until noon starting at the end of April. Also, if the OPEN sign is out and you are traveling by feel free to visit. And, feel free to contact Caroline Brown at 802-878-8890 if you would like to book a private appointment. And, once again, we are always looking for new members. Don't hesitate to contact Caroline Brown for more details. Or, come to one of our meetings at 6:30 at our building on the Common on the 3rd Monday of each month.

MUNICIPAL JOB OPENINGS

For more information on job postings please visit our Careers page on the website: <https://westfordvt.us/careers/>

DOG WARDEN

The Town of Westford is looking for someone who is interested in serving as Dog Warden. What is a Dog Warden? A Dog Warden is a person who helps dog owners comply with the Westford Dog Ordinance.

Qualifications: A love for dogs, the ability to communicate effectively and a location to bring dogs until they can be reunited with their owner to name a few. You may think you need a kennel to be a Dog Warden. This is not the case. However, a stray dog does need to be kept in a healthy environment until it is reunited with the owner. A healthy environment includes shelter, food, water, and a suitable area for them to relieve themselves.

The Dog Warden position receives an annual stipend of \$500 and there are funds available for training, supplies and mileage. The Town also has supplies, including a dog house, that can be utilized. If you would like more information on helping your community by serving in this position, please contact the Selectboard at selectboard@westfordvt.us or call the Town Office at 802-878-4587. Westford residency is preferred but not required.

FULL TIME ROAD CREW MEMBER

The Town of Westford is seeking qualified applicants for a full time Road Crew position with benefits. This position involves skilled and unskilled labor tasks and the knowledge and operation of highway equipment for maintenance and repair of town roads.

Requirements: valid Vermont CDL Class B license; good driving record; experience operating various highway equipment; willingness to work long hours, especially during winter months; ability to maintain logs; participate in random drug/alcohol testing; possess physical strength, agility, endurance, and mental ability to concentrate, mechanical abilities and good communication skills. Must pass pre-employment physical exam and drug test. A full job description can be viewed at <https://westfordvt.us/administration/highway-department/>.

For consideration, please submit resume, references, and employment application (found at <https://westfordvt.us/administration/highway-department/>) to: Town of Westford, Attn: Sean Cushing, 1713 VT Route 128, Westford, VT 05494.

For more information, contact Sean Cushing at road_foreman@westfordvt.us or 802-879-4306
Position open until filled. Westford is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

COMMON USE POLICY

The Westford Common Committee wants to remind residents that any major use of the Common or gazebo requires an application. This does not apply to small gatherings like friends meeting for coffee or a couple of folks having a picnic. This policy has been implemented to avoid conflicts since the Common and gazebo are being utilized more. We ask all town organizations to also follow this procedure so the calendar will reflect all activities.

Here is a link to the application:

<https://westfordvt.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Common-Use-Application-August-2023.pdf>

If you have any questions, please call the Town Office for assistance: 802-878-4587.



TRASH, RECYCLING & FOOD SCRAPS IN WESTFORD

Can I Recycle That?

Did you know that you are not supposed to put your recycling in plastic bags of any kind? The only exception to this is shredded office paper, which is accepted only if it's in a CLEAR BAG that's tightly closed.

Here are some other items that do NOT belong in your recycling bin:

- Dirty containers
- Plastic wrap
- Durable plastic (e.g., Tupperware, laundry bins, etc.)
- Styrofoam
- Motor oil or hazardous waste containers



For more information on the proper way to recycle, please visit <https://cswd.net/recycling/>. There is even an interesting video of a tour of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) where your recycling goes to be sorted.

Food Scraps *(Effective July 1, 2020, per Act 148, food scraps are banned from landfills.)*

What are food scraps?

Food scraps are parts of food that are typically discarded rather than eaten: peels, rinds, cores, eggshells, seeds, pits, bones, shells, coffee grounds and filters, loose-leaf tea, and fats/oils/grease. Food scraps is also food that was eaten but not finished: "plate scraps" or leftovers that went bad. Any type of food can become food scraps including bread, pasta, soup, vegetables, fruit, sauces, meat, fish, dairy, sweets, etc.

What should I do with meat and bones?

If you compost in your yard, the law allows you to put meat and bones in the trash, so they don't attract animals to your composting bin. If you chose to bring food scraps to a drop-off center, you can include meat and bones with the rest of your food scraps.

CSWD has an abundance of information on their website including answers to questions, ways to reduce waste and how to compost to name a few. Please go to <https://cswd.net/scrapfoodwaste/> or call **872-8111** to get more information.

SEASONAL COMPOSTING TIPS: SPRING

- Scavenge for compostable material during your spring clean! This is an easy way to recycle cardboard boxes, just remember to take off any tape!
- When adding new material to your compost pile, breaking down that material into smaller pieces will help it compost faster.
- Did you know you can add ash? Just do so sparingly. Coffee and coffee filters make great composting material as does citrus, just be aware that citrus takes a long time to break down.

How to make compost fast: <https://thisismygarden.com/2018/07/summer-compost-pile/>

STAY UP TO DATE WITH OUR HAULER

Myers has now set up a Facebook page for Westford specific trash & recycling communications! You can find it here: <https://www.facebook.com/Town-of-Westford-Waste-104918838111423>.



WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

<https://westfordpubliclibrary.org>

(802)878-5639

westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com

1717 VERMONT ROUTE 128, WESTFORD VT

Coffee and Cards

10:30am-Noon

Now meeting **EVERY** Tuesday!

Meetup with folks at the library for coffee, conversation, and cards - a great opportunity to socialize and keep those card playing skills sharp. Open to anyone, but especially looking to connect with seniors.



Money Mentor Workshop

With Doug Emery

Tuesday, April 1

6:30-7:30pm

Would you like to understand better how to prepare for retirement?

- Learn how to estimate retirement expenses
- Identify saving and planning strategies to maximize savings at any age
- Compare the types of retirement plans available to you
- Set goals for your own retirement savings

Retirement

Money Mentor Workshop
presented by M&T Bank.



Menopause "Monthlies"

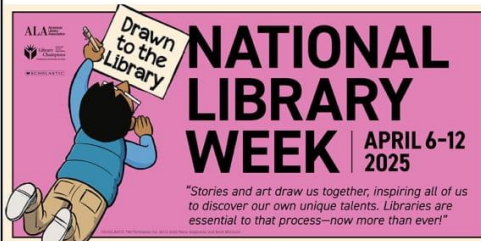
First meeting: April 16

7:00-8:30pm

Come one, come all to talk about (hush) **menopause!**

Just kidding - we are not keeping quiet about this important topic! Hoping to make this a **monthly series**- come to this first organizational meeting, where we will also talk about some of the new books in the collection on this topic - from informative to hilarious. We will brainstorm at this meeting about future topics, presenters, and even plan a "moth" style program. Bring a friend and come chat - no matter your stage of life!

National Library Week is an annual celebration highlighting the valuable role libraries, librarians, and library workers play in transforming lives and strengthening our communities.



OPEN HOURS:

Tuesdays 10am-7pm

Wednesdays 1-7pm

Thursdays 10am-7pm

Fridays 1-7pm

Saturdays 10am-2pm

Adult Book Group

Wed., April 30

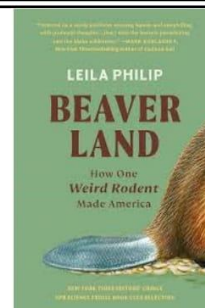
7:00-8:00 pm

Beaver Land

By: Leila Philip

NPR Science Friday Book Club Selection

An intimate and revelatory dive into the world of the beaver—the wonderfully weird rodent that has surprisingly shaped American history and may save its ecological future.



A masterful work of narrative science writing, a book that highlights, through history and contemporary storytelling, how this weird rodent plays an oversized role in American history and its future. She follows fur trappers who lead her through waist high water, fur traders and fur auctioneers, as well as wildlife managers, PETA activists, Native American environmental vigilantes, scientists, engineers, and the colorful group of activists known as beaver believers.

Beginning with the early trans-Atlantic trade in North America, Leila Philip traces the beaver's profound influence on our nation's early economy and feverish western expansion, its first corporations and multi-millionaires. In her pursuit of this weird and wonderful animal.

What emerges is a startling portrait of the secretive world of the contemporary fur trade, and an engrossing ecological and historical investigation of these heroic animals who, once trapped to the point of extinction, have returned to the landscape as one of the greatest conservation stories of the 20th century. Beautifully written and impeccably researched, *Beaverland* reveals the profound ways in which one odd creature and the trade surrounding it has shaped history, culture, and our environment.

Available in Print at the library. There is no audiobook available for this title. The ebook is limited use on Libby.

Early Literacy Storytime - All ages welcome! Thursdays at **11:25am** in the Library

4/3/25: Theme: Rainbows

4/10/25: Theme: Baby Animals

4/17/25: Theme: Eggs

4/24/25: Theme: Spring

We sing songs, read stories, move and do crafts! No sign up needed, all ages are welcome.

NOTE THE NEW TIME - 11:25 - TO ACCOMMODATE WES PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE

April Library Events

- April 1 Coffee and Cards 10:30-noon**
April 1 Retirement Planning 6:30-7:30pm
April 3 - Maker's Group 6:30-8pm
April 5 - Saturday Storytime 10:30-11:30
April 6-12 - National Library Week!
April 8 - Coffee and Cards 10:30-noon
April 9 - Trustees Meeting 7-9pm
April 10 - Writer's Group 6:30-8pm
April 11 - D.E.A.R. Reading Party 4-5pm
April 15 - Coffee and Cards 10:30-Noon
April 16 - Menopause "Monthlies" 6:30-8pm, talking about books and planning future talks
April 19 - Egg Hunt on the Common 10am
April 19 - Easter Crafts and Fun in Library 10:15-11:30am
April 22 - Coffee and Cards 10:30-Noon
April 23 - Drop in and Play - 3-6pm
April 25 - Shakespeare Group Part I - Hamlet 2-3pm
April 29 - Coffee and Cards 10:30-noon
April 30 - Adult Book Group 7-8pm, discussing Beaverland

Storytime Thursdays 11:25 in the Library

Get creative at the library!

Maker's Group Meets at the library the First Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:00pm. All types of crafters are welcome to attend. Bring projects to show off, share expertise, and enjoy each others' company.



Writers' Group meets the Second Thursday of each month from 6:30-8pm.

Facilitated by J Bruscini
My best intention for the group would open itself to writers in the area of any genre, style, and level of experience. I have been part of writing groups and workshops fairly frequently since college and have more than a handful of strategies and exercises to offer as a facilitator when needed. I would like to encourage experimenting with style and open time for feedback for anyone wanting it.
Come if interested in any type of writing.



Shakespeare Group - Hamlet
First meeting: April 25 from 2-3pm
Second Meeting: May 23 from 2-3pm

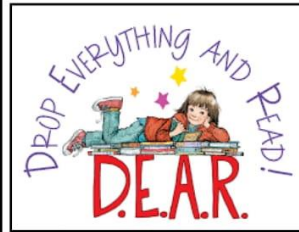
This group will study a Shakespearean play for two months - **First meeting:** Read some of the play out loud, discuss, and maybe watch a portion of a classic performance. **Second meeting:** Discuss the entire play and pick then next play to discuss. All materials will be provided. To read or not to read?

Come join a new group that is interested in learning and enjoying the written word. No need to be a scholar - the Bard wrote for everyone!



Saturday Story Time! April 5 from 10:30-11:30!

First Saturday of every month. There will also be elements of Spanish to the songs, stories and crafts.



Drop Everything And Read (D.E.A.R) Day is April 11! Let's celebrate by reading - with snacks! Kids can ride the bus to the library afterschool for a special hour of reading from 4-

5pm. Sign up at the library (email or phone) and let the school know if you will be riding the bus here. All ages welcome to read!

Easter Egg Hunt on the Common Saturday, April 19 at 10am SHARP

After the Hunt:

Hop on over to the library for crafts and more fun from 10:15-11:30am. This is a great time to socialize with all your "peeps".



Got bored kids over April vacation? Want to play with friends, but don't want to clean your house? Meet up at the library for an April vacation playdate! And we'll



even make it easy on you:

Drop by and Play Day

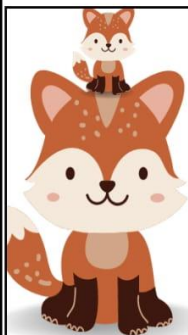
Wednesday, April 23 from 3-6pm

This is not a drop off event.

Play with the library's Keva planks, LEGOS, building toys and more! We'll have snacks and art supplies too! Make a plan to meet up with your friends and play! Come for an hour, or stay the whole time. Just get out of the house and connect with your kids and adult friends too! No sign up or RSVP needed.

Save the Date: Welcome Baby Tea Saturday, May 10 from 10:30-Noon

We are celebrating all children born from April 2024-March 2025. If your child was born in Westford, you will receive an invite in the mail. If you have moved into town and your child fits into that age category - you are invited too! Please contact the library with your child's info. We can't wait to celebrate our littlest patrons!





WESTFORD
COMMON
HALL

OUR COMMITMENT

We strive to make the Westford Common Hall accessible, welcoming, and open to everyone. Our goal is to promote inclusion, diversity, equity, and access throughout the organization with policies and practices that foster transformative change.

Westford Music Series at the WCH

The Tenderbellies
Sunday April 6th. 4-5pm

This Vermont-based string band seamlessly blends Americana, bluegrass, new grass, jazz, and rock music with their high energy and picking and singing. They're known for their bold and brazen music that embraces delicate and somber tightly arranged songs and improvisational fun that engages audiences from the start to finish.



Free will donation, plus a double pie raffle celebrating spring with a Maple Cream Pie and a Peggy Rogers Quiche!



Join the Westford Bone Builders!



FREE classes are held every Wednesday and Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Westford Common Hall. Remember to wear comfortable clothing and bring water!



The RSVP Bone Builders Program focuses on balance and light weight training to protect against fractures caused by osteoporosis. Based on studies conducted by Tufts University and published in the New England Journal of Medicine, those who participated in this program just twice a week gained muscular strength, balance and increased bone density.



Contact Jocelyn Chauvin at 802-999-6387 for more information



Our mission is to create a gathering space for diverse communities to connect, share and celebrate.

21 Brookside Road, PO Box 53, Westford, VT 05494

Email us at info@westfordcommonhall.org

Website: www.westfordcommonhall.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/westfordcommonhall>

Instagram: [westfordcommonhall](https://www.instagram.com/westfordcommonhall)

We are a non-profit 501c3.



A Celebration of Pride!



Pink Pony Club

Dance Party

I'M GONNA KEEP ON DANCIN'

at the Westford Common Hall

Saturday, June 21st 7:00 - 9:30pm

This is an All Ages Welcome,
alcohol-free event!

TICKETS ON SALE SOON: \$10 ADULTS, UNDER 18YRS FREE

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Representative Brenda Steady

I want to thank the people of Westford for electing me to represent you. It is my greatest honor to serve in this role.

This legislative term, I've been assigned to the Human Services Committee, which focuses on serving Vermont's most vulnerable populations. One major focus has been the Budget Adjustment Act (BAA), typically a routine fiscal correction. This year, however, it sparked debate due to funding uncertainties and the impending end of the Cold Weather Emergency Housing program on April 1. Our committee considered two options: \$50,000 to house the most vulnerable or \$1.8 million to extend housing for all recipients. While I supported the \$50,000 option to prioritize families with children and individuals with disabilities, the committee voted to advance only the \$1.8 million proposal to the House floor. Governor Scott vetoed the bill on March 14, calling the hotel/motel housing program a failed system. I hope his recommendation to extend housing for the most vulnerable is accepted before April 1.



H.218, a bill that allocates opioid settlement funds for safe injection sites, is another significant piece of legislation. I plan to vote against it, as I believe it is not the right solution to address addiction. I advocate for expanding effective programs like Valley Vista instead.

The Human Services Committee also reviewed H.91, which removes the 80-day cap on the Emergency Temporary Shelter Program. To better understand its fiscal impact, I requested an analysis from the Joint Fiscal Office. Their findings revealed that the bill's state, federal, base, and one-time costs would total approximately \$86 million, with an additional \$7,000 to include board stipends, mileage reimbursement, and meals. With a cost of \$86 million, I do not believe this bill is sustainable. I support proactive measures, such as reducing the costs of permits and Act 250 compliance, to encourage affordable housing development.

On education, Governor Scott has proposed a transformative reform plan aimed at reducing costs and improving equity in Vermont's school system. His proposal includes consolidating the state's 119 school districts into five regional districts, implementing a statewide property tax rate, and introducing a foundation formula to calculate school funding based on per-pupil costs and specific needs. While the legislature continues to review the Governor's plan, the Majority party has yet to put forward a proposal of its own. They are working on a bill in the Education Committee to address district numbers and size, class size minimums, school size minimums, and statewide school information and financial systems. Additionally, the Ways and Means Committee recently passed the yield bill, allocating \$77 million from the Governor's budget to help offset property tax increases.

I do support retaining universal school meals, which provide relief for working families. However, as the Governor has suggested, funding for this program should be prioritized within the proposed budget rather than relying on new spending. This approach ensures fiscal responsibility while maintaining essential support for all Vermont's children. Last year, the legislature passed the Clean Heat Standard (Act 18), a highly controversial policy that faced significant public opposition and was vetoed by Governor Scott. While the super-majority overrode the veto, there is growing pressure to repeal the act, particularly from those who oppose its carbon credit framework. Vermont Act S.65 is now under consideration as a response to these concerns. This bill expands the scope of the energy efficiency charge on electric bills, allowing funds to be used for greenhouse gas emission reduction projects. While it repeals the Clean Heat Standard, it has faced criticism for potentially increasing electricity costs and creating inefficiencies. Despite these concerns, it has passed out of the Senate Finance Committee. I found this interesting article in the Vermont Chronicle <https://vermontdailychronicle.com/roper-dems-clean-heat-face-saving-attempt-blowing-up-in-face/>
Thank you for your continued trust in me.

I remain committed to advocating for practical, fiscally responsible solutions that benefit our community.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

State Senator Chris Mattos

The legislature has reached its midpoint of the session. Crossover is here when bills must be out of committee in the respective bodies to be considered this session. This is always a busy time in the State House as the deadline always fast approaches and priorities are trying to be met.

In my morning committee, Senate Judiciary, we have passed out a few bills. Some bills of note include S.9 – after-hours access to orders against sexual assault, S.12 – sealing criminal history records, and S.45 – protection from nuisance suits for agricultural activities. S.9 expanded access to after-hours for orders against sexual assault. This bill will allow for individuals to seek an ex parte emergency relief order against sexual assault submitted after regular hours of the court. Previously this was not attainable. S.12 relates to the sealing of criminal history records. This is only for a select group of offenses. Some of these records were previously expunged. The difference between sealing and expungement is, whether the documents are destroyed. The sealing of records is still confidential and can only be accessed for certain uses and by certain individuals. Lastly, S.45 is an agricultural bill that returns the burden of proof back to the plaintiff for proving nuisance or trespass. Currently, a farmer must prove to be using best practices and be in regulatory compliance against a suit. I voted in favor of each of these bills.

In the afternoon, I sit on the Senate Finance committee. We have not passed out many bills as we have been focused on the funding portion of the Governor’s education plan. We have spent weeks reviewing different model’s other states use. It may come as no surprise that we’re only one of two states that fund education the way we do. The Governor’s administration and consultants have also presented their plan. There is still a long way to go, and no change should be made lightly. I’ve committed over the past years to reform the education finance system to more closely align a district’s spending to their own tax rates and be more transparent on how your tax bill is derived. We need a system that works for the taxpayers, school staff and most importantly the children it serves.

We have also been taking testimony on healthcare costs and how it affects health insurers. Blue Cross Blue Shield is the largest commercial payer in the state, and they are facing serious financial constraints. Between the high cost of care and higher utilization, their expenses are outpacing revenues. Last year they had a \$62 million loss and needed a \$30 million surplus note from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan to keep their risk-based capital score above 200% to avoid state intervention. They have submitted a risk-based capital plan with the state.

Much more to come in the following weeks. Crossover has just begun with increased time spent on the floor voting on bills that met the deadline.

As always, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or concerns at cmattos@leg.state.vt.us.

Chris Mattos

State Senator

Chittenden-North District





WESTFORD RECREATION DEPARTMENT

UPCOMING RECREATION MEETING 4/1 7pm @ Town Office & via Zoom
Changes to WRD programming because of changes to the school will be a main topic!

Adult **Pick-up Basketball** and **Women's Futsal** are still going strong. There is still time to join and get in shape for TRUE spring!

The Annual **Easter Egg Hunt** is Saturday, 4/19. Line up at 10:00 a.m., goodie bags for all!

Youth ages 18 months to 4 years will search one side of the common. Youth ages 5 to 9 will search the other side!



Westford Recreation needs your help:

Join the WRD Committee! There are two board seats open. The WRD Committee meets once per month regularly on the 1st Tuesday of each month to plan WRD programming. Some Committee members choose to run programming, but it is not required. We need your ideas to make good things happen for Westford! E-mail to express your interest!



WRD will need **coaches for summer and fall Soccer!**

WRD needs **coaches for summer Parent & Me T-ball and Soccer!**



Links to registrations and more information available on the town website: <https://westfordvt.us/recreation/>

E-mail - recreation@westfordvt.us

Westford Recreation Annual



Saturday, April 19, 2025

10:00 a.m. sharp, Snow or Shine!

Prize bag for every child.

**Youth aged 18 months to 4 years will
search one side of the common.**

**Youth ages 5 to 9 years will search
the other.**



WRD/4-H Babysitting Course

- Fridays May 2 and May 9 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the WES Gym - full attendance at both is necessary for successful completion.
- For youth ages 11 to 15.
- Cost is still to be determined, but not over \$30, and WRD will waive most of the fees for participants who agree to help at WRD or town events.
- Participants will receive a babysitting 1st aid kit and babysitting tool kit bag.

This two-day class helps middle school and teen-aged youth learn what it takes to be a responsible, caring, trustworthy, competent, capable, and safe babysitter. Through role-playing, discussion and hand-on activities, youth will learn about:

- child development stages
- positive discipline
- safety and emergency preparedness
- first aid
- food and nutrition
- the business of babysitting

Look for the registration form on the Westford Recreation Website soon!
<https://westfordvt.us/recreation/> or E-mail - recreation@westfordvt.us

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<https://westfordvt.us/documents/newsletters/>