

ANNUAL REPORT JULY 1, 2018-JUNE 30, 2019

RAYMOND VOTER INFORMATION PROJECT

P.O. Box 813; Raymond NH 03077

www.raymondvip.org

Board of Directors/President's Report:

This report is intended to summarize and highlight VIP activities during its 10th year of operation. Congratulations and Thank You to the many people who have volunteered over those years to create and support the Voter Information Project and to maintain its relevance for Raymond citizens.

Executive Board members were: President-Susan Hilchey; Vice President-Joyce Wood; Secretary-Dana Zulager; Treasurer-John Beauvilliers; Members at Large-Yvonne D'iorio and Kathy Pouliot.

Executive Board Meetings were held on 5/29/18 and 9/4/18 and the Annual Meeting was held on 10/11/18. Topics for the Executive Board meetings were outreach (e.g. July 4th parade, Fall speaker program, and the Voter Guide) and fundraising (e.g. membership and NH Gives Day).

The 10th edition of the Voter's Guide was published and distributed in February 2019. Again this year, an Administrative Team was instrumental in updating Google docs for the many Warrant Articles, writing collaboration, and problem-solving. Sincere appreciation is sent to the many other volunteers who worked tirelessly to create the Guide. Also, thanks go to those businesses whose sponsorship allowed us to publish and mail the Guide. Contact information for those companies is printed on VIP's home page found at www.raymondvip.org and a list is included here:

Ace Ben Franklin Hardware

Edward Jones Investments

Jambs Jewelry

Raymond Area News

Neighborhood Insurance Agency

Riverbend Realty Group

Northeast Woodworking Products

Universal Electric

Vernet Properties and Tuckaway Tavern & Butchery (con't next page)

Natural or Not Salon & Spa and Langford's Laundromat

Additionally, the following agencies and businesses made in-kind donations of space at public events, meetings and/or of advertising:

Raymond Area Chamber of Commerce

Raymond Coalition for Youth

Regional Economic Development Center (REDC)

The 2019 Administrative Team consisted of Susan Hilchey, Dana Zulager, and Kathy Pouliot. The Editorial Team members were Debra Doda and Stephen Mather-Lees. Leslie O'Donnell served as Bias Checker once again. Additional information about that committee is included later in this report.

Other VIP Board activities are listed here:

- The Board decided again to participate in Raymond's 4th of July Parade. Wearing t-shirts with the VIP logo, members walked and drove the route, handed out VIP pencils and candy, and received many positive responses.
- VIP again had a decorative VIP table and giveaways at Family Fun Night in February. Thanks to Yvonne D'iorio and John Beauvillers for hosting.
- Many hours were needed to create the 2019 Voters Guide during the fall and winter. This issue was the largest ever. Seasoned Ed Com and Reporters were invaluable in moving the process ahead. New faces were recruited again this year to help.
- VIP participated in the 4rd NH Gives Day on June 11-12 from 6pm-6am. In preparation, Kathy Pouliot enhanced the webpage used for that event and wording was improved to better promote the VIP mission.

- VIP maintained the usual 4 web domains with MoxDog to maintain identity and control flow of info.
- The VIP Annual Meeting was held on October 11, 2018 at Raymond High School. Officers were elected and Kathy Pouliot was voted in as a Board Member at Large for 2018-2020. The Annual Report is posted on the VIP website.

Please remember that anyone who wishes to donate to Raymond VIP may mail their contribution to PO Box 813, Raymond NH 03077 OR use PayPal via www.raymondvip.org As VIP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, donations may be tax deductible and receipts will be provided. For anonymous contributions and receipts, please contact Treasurer, John Beauvilliers via the PO Box or by calling 244-1056.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Hilchey, R-VIP President

Financial/Treasurer's Report:

VIP's fiscal year began July 1, 2018 and ended June 30, 2019. The organization began with a balance of \$800.78 and ended with \$926.75 in the checking account. Area businesses, previously listed, donated toward the organization again this year as did members and other supporters. The VIP Membership stood at 15 voting members (an increase from 14 last year) and 6 family members, (no change from 2 last year).

Through VIP's participation in the second NH Gives Day in June, \$350.00 was raised online. Due to the generosity of our members and supporters and our Business Donors, we achieved our goal to provide a printed Voter Guide which was mailed to every Raymond household. The cost of the 2019 Voter Guide was \$2,277.65. A Big Thanks is given to all who helped the Raymond VIP with funding and time to continue to provide this service to the Raymond community.

All appropriate filings have been made with the IRS and State of NH as follows:

- The 990-N e-postcard was filed w the IRS on 7/3/19; the due date is 5 months + 5 days after June 30

- Annual membership fee for NH Center for Non-Profits was paid by VIP this year
- Note: The State of NH requirement for the Annual Report filing has been suspended for 5 years from the last filing date on 10/7/16; the State will send a notice when next due

In-Kind hours: 440 (underreported as many volunteer hours could not be obtained)

In-Kind Donations: \$68.84

Total cost of the 2019 Voter Guide: \$1900.36

Susan Hilchey and Yvonne D'iorio assisted the Treasurer in preparing and reviewing the fiscal year 2018-2019 operating budget and in creating a projected budget for FY 2019-2020.

Submitted by

John Beauvilliers, Treasurer

Website Report:

During the 2019 Town election cycle, the Raymond VIP analyses were posted on the website as they were approved by the Editorial Committee and forwarded by the Administrator. Election results were posted immediately after votes were counted on voting day. New information for the website was added as received from the Board and additional updates as needed (e.g. messages from members, photos, etc.).

Special thanks go to Jennifer O'Neil and Stephen Mather-Lees for their support.

Submitted by:

Linda Hoelzel

Editorial Committee Report:

The Administrative Team was comprised of Kathy Pouliot, Dana Zulager, and Susan Hilchey. The Editorial Committee consisted of Stephen Mather-Lees and Debra Doda. The Bias Checker was Leslie O'Donnell. The process started last year by which reviews and editing of materials was continued utilizing Google Docs.

There were a few introductory, in-person meetings to present the purpose of the Voter Information Project and the *Voter Guide* to the new Town Manager, Joe Ilsley, and the new SAU Business Administrator, Marjorie Whitmore. Those meetings were positive and yielded strong cooperation for gathering and confirming information needed to complete the *Voter Guide*. The Town and School provided early copies of both WA drafts and budgets which served as a foundation for assigning Reporters for the largest *Guide* to date. The timing was greatly appreciated.

Upon learning that the usual one social services Warrant Article would be divided into individual Articles, a team of Dana Zulager, Leslie O'Donnell and Susan Hilchey was created to make direct contact with each agency to ask identical questions, to research those agencies online, and to write the articles in a uniform style to avoid any appearance of prejudice. Several meetings followed to edit information into a final version. This information proved quite useful during the Town Deliberative Session when questions arose from the floor about the purpose of each social service organization. VIP was deferred to in each instance and Susan Hilchey provided detailed information about each group, suggesting the Town's confidence in VIP's work.

Other preparatory work was completed individually this year using Google Docs, email and texting as well as private Facebook messaging. That included setting up the templates for Reporters, creating folders for each Warrant Article and making a new Excel spreadsheet to track the progress of each WA through the multi-step process of checks and balances based on the flowchart created last year. Additionally, a paper notebook was used to track the process as a doublecheck.

This year, since the social services Warrant Articles were separated, there were 51 Town and School Warrant Articles including Citizen Petitions. As always, a cadre of dedicated volunteers researched Articles, drafted write-ups, and read those drafts for clarity. In total, there were 3 people on the Admin Team, 14 Reporters, many

Readers, 2 Ed Comm members, and 1 Bias Checker. Although there was no grand total of volunteer hours spent on the 2019 *Guide*, the total typically exceeds 2000 hours. It was found that the time spent by Reporters on research and writing up a 2019 Warrant Article varied greatly, between 2-17 hours.

Once write-ups were submitted, initial edits for spelling, grammar, and factual details were completed by Susan Hilchey. She either emailed the draft back to the Reporter with questions or she emailed an acceptable draft to both Ed Comm members and received their feedback. Once final edits were made, the draft was submitted to Leslie O'Donnell for her bias check. By using this method materials were processed in a timely manner and this process was very successful.

In review, dealing with staff from the School District and Town Office was very positive for the Researchers/Reporters and for the Administrative Team. Staff members were accessible, responsive, prompt and helpful. Marjorie Whitmore, Dr. Tina McCoy, and Joe Ilsley were all tremendous help and great resources.

Additionally, Seacoast Media Group provided prompt and accurate cost projections for publishing/ mailing the *Voter* Guide and Sharon Crockett Holt, Raymond resident, worked independently with R-VIP on layout and was instrumental in getting the final draft to her employer, Seacoast Media Group, pre- deadline.

Sincere gratitude is extended from the Administrative Team to the Ed Com members. Deb Doda's knowledge and expertise and Stephen Mather-Lees experience with Ed Comm greatly aided the editorial process. Leslie O'Donnell offered her professional expertise and assistance in doing the bias checking. Linda Hoelzel promptly posted Articles to the VIP website. We also thank our 13 business supporters via monetary donations or in-kind contributions.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hilchey