

Swanton Enhancement Project (SEP)

Steering Committee Meeting

May 2, 2024, 5:30 pm

Swanton Public Library-Children's Room

Minutes

Present: Betsy Fournier, Chevon Cooper, Christina Candels, Darcy Benoit, Abigail Gaudette, Suzie Kelleher, Don Collins, Hank Lambert, Molly Lambert, Crystal Lampman, Nancy Fuller, Susan Collins, Alli Born, Melinda White, Jodi White

1) Welcome & Agenda Review

Betsy welcomed everyone.

2) Review Minutes of 3/14/2024

Molly made a motion to approve 3/14/24 minutes, seconded by Crystal. Motion carried.

3) Finance Update

Betsy shared Joel's finance update. Please see attached.

Abby gave Betsy an invoice for the Hard'ack pool pass of \$432.00 for Joel.

4) Melinda White Presentation

Melinda is CRC Turning Point of Franklin County Recovery Coach Supervisor - NMC Emergency Department employed by Turning Point. Sandy invited Melinda to attend and share information.

Crystal shared SEP's focus this year is substance abuse and welcomed Melinda.

Melinda shared a presentation for substance use disorder, prevention, and treatment options available. This presentation is attached to view.

Abby said they offer harm reduction bags at the library for anyone to pick up.

Melinda shared a three-part series WCAX did on addiction and recovery.

Chevon asked if 2 weeks in treatment due to payment. Melinda said yes Vermont Medicaid pays for 2 weeks, longer than that typically falls on the facility. New Hampshire reimburses much higher amounts than Vermont. If someone has private insurance she refers them the Granite Recovery in New Hampshire.

Molly said she hears often there is not enough treatment resources. Franklin Grand Isle Community Partnership was previously funded by Agency of Human Services until 2008. That is when Franklin Grand Isle Community Partnership was formed, this is a very useful group that meets the 1st Wednesday 9-10:30am open to anyone at NCSS or via Zoom. Melinda said there are so many great services but there needs to be less barriers. (Telephones, Transportation, Wait Times, Treatment Beds, Housing, Detox Beds)

Crystal shared there are no longer detox beds, individuals are now taken to the correctional center, and this is not ideal situation.

Melinda shared Granite Recovery in New Hampshire offers detox, residential program, PHP (partial hospitalization) intensive outpatient recovery residences. Offering 4-6 months of continuous treatment.

Molly asked if this program is state supported? Funded? Melinda said they take New Hampshire Medicaid, and private insurance.

Abby asked if there are any pop-up services available in Swanton? She hears from people all the time the bus schedule is hard to access services in St. Albans.

Melinda said not since Covid have they been able to offer this. Prior to Covid they were able to partner with The Notch & NMC. Abby said she gets a lot of requests for resources, and a 6am – 6pm bus schedule does not help.

Crystal shared there is a Voices Against Violence advocate based out of the Abenaki center and she is available to help people connect with services. Abby said she was under the impression that Michelle works with only women, Crystal said she works with any victim of domestic violence male or female. Melinda said Turning Point is hearing that the need is out there, Swanton is a priority. Abby said she would be open to creating space in the library for this. Abby also requests Narcan training for her staff. Melinda said they will make this happen. Crystal also said all American Heart Association CPR trainings include Narcan training.

5) Committee Chair & Stakeholder Updates:

a. MVDS-Chris Dodge

Chris was unable to attend but did send an update. Please see attached information shared by Chevon.

b. Swanton Arts Council

Alli shared they received a free art grant. With this they will offer free painting class at the Swanton Public Library, free mini barn quilt making class, youth watercolor class. Upcoming they are working on Swany 5 and looking for participants with this. Alli shared they are doing a raffle for a bird house. Tickets are \$5 and the proceeds for Friends of the Missisquoi Wildlife Refuge are available at the library. Other upcoming events are the youth art show, into to embroidery, 5/17 open mike night 5:30-7:30, open to everyone. Annual art show at the Wildlife Refuge starting 5/18.

c. Swanton Public Library

Abby shared they writers' group is picking up, twice monthly book clubs, working on starting adult game night, working with Swanton Rec on Teen Gala, grants are making 5 weeks of free summer camp 4 weeks 8-4 and one week of 8-12. Most of these spots are full. Green Up day bags are available. June-August Swanton Library will offer teen open/maker space Fridays 4-6pm.

d. Recreation Department

Betsy shared Swanton Rec Little League, Cross Country and Football are all up and running. April break Rec Day camp was a success with 20-30 kids attending daily. Swanton Rec will be partnering with the Swanton Library to host a babysitting class. Cornfest will be back this summer, hunters' safety course, teen offerings/nights this summer. Swanton Rec will host the Abenaki PowWow Memorial Day weekend.

e. Swanton Historical Society & Chamber of Commerce

Chevon shared Swanton Historical Society will host National Train Day 5/10 & 5/11 11am-3pm. Chamber of Commerce will host Car Show 7/27 9am-3pm with rain date the next day. Memorial Day parade 5/27 2pm contact Adam Paxman. Veterans Flags will go up 5/25 9am, volunteers needed.

f. Town of Swanton

Christina shared the soil testing is complete of 4th street property and they're awaiting the results of that. Swanton Town Clerk is currently accepting applications for Assistant Town Clerk.

g. Village of Swanton-Suzie Kelleher

Suzie shared that she is focusing on a different Village business each week to share on Facebook. Suzie shared the Village will have a parking ban on Blake St. along the John Raleigh field going into effect this summer. Swanton Village Public Works will utilize a \$35,000 highway safety improvement grant to update signs throughout the Village. The Village has a \$200,000 grant for the B-6 bridge (Veterans Memorial Bridge) to replace the joints in July -August. This date is not yet set, with further upgrades in 2029. Swanton Village is accepting bids for the wastewater facility upgrade, bids are due by 5/15. Swanton Village has an open bid for a 3-acre storm drain upgrade at Swanton Village Complex. Swanton Village Public Works has done work at Marble Mill. Suzie requested SEP purchase a pickleball net for Marble Mill Park. Betsy said yes there is money allocated for this. Suzie shared 3 handicap parking spaces that have been marked in front of Merchants Row and is looking to add a wheelchair ramp at 74 Merchants Row. Swanton Village is in the process of awarding the Scott Muller internship award, working with MVU. 4/27 Swanton Village had graffiti and they worked with the Fire Dept to cover the graffiti up. Betsy asked about 30-minute parking signs, Suzie was not certain if they are in compliance with Village ordinances. Darci said there is no enforcement of this. Suzie said this is something they are discussing at an upcoming meeting. Betsy asked about upcoming meetings for the bridge work. Suzie said they will update the Riv property at 5/13 Village Trustee meeting.

h. Beautification-Hank Lambert

Hank shared planting day May 18 start at 9am. They are applying for a grant to accelerate the planting of ten trees a year. Hank shared that they have been working with Joel Clark & VFW on a mural across the bridge by the VFW. This is an Eagle Scout planning project by Sampson Lake. Hank shared they have had some vandalism of the flowerpots on the bridge. Ross Lavoie will build some replacement

boxes. They are working to stay ahead of this. Crystal shared there was vandalism, and the departments are working together.

Sampson Lake planning

i. Healthy Communities/Substance Use

Crystal shared May is a month of celebrating youth in Vermont. April the Vermont Teen Institute with Swanton Rec youth and hosted a Solar Soiree, Celebration of the Solar Eclipse. This was the youth substance free event, almost all attendees were Swanton kids. They look forward to working with Swanton Rec & Swanton Public Library for other youth sponsored events this summer.

j. Communications

Chevon shared that she is working to record meetings and events. Chevon said she is still looking to meet with Judy Paxman to create an events flyer. Chevon shares as much information as she can.

Molly asked if she was still I or a we? Chevon said they now have a committee with Nicole, Abby, Nick, Kylie, Shane Mott.

k. Community & Economic Development

Darci shared that she has joined the Chamber of Commerce board to learn how to be more effective. She is looking to get started with groups/business to work to promote downtown businesses.

Molly shared there is willingness with businesses for this. Suzie said she is using her platform to give business a shout out.

Chevon shared Nicole has student intern working on business directory/community guide. Abby suggested Chevon do business spotlights and put them on YouTube.

Chevon shared the presentation put on by Grey Media and this can be expanded to what business needs. They are the experts, and these learning/trainings are free.

Darci said the biggest problem is the scheduled time for this. Chevon asked if they are still holding business meetings? Darci shared they have attempted to but low attendance, she is looking at a different direction.

Chevon shared the outdoor markets and there have been talks about them to be on Wednesday, they do have C&M Concession available Mondays if they host them then. Signage is still something they are working/talking about. Can SEP help fund these? More info to come. Darci said this would be better focused on one big event vs multiple events. Chevon has contacted other market managers to not have them on the same days. Abby, Nicole, and Chevon will discuss one day event vs multiple.

l. Abenaki Nation of the Missisquoi Food Shelf

Please see attached.

6) Public Comment

Crystal shared May 25th there will be a "Ride for Olivia" motorcycle event to raise money/awareness for MADD. All funding will stay in Vermont. The event starts at Wilkins in Barre and ends at Franklin Elementary School where Olivia attended school. They have a lot of events planned.

7) July Meeting Date-Cancelled
The next meeting will be in September.

8) Adjourn

Chevon made a motion to adjourn at 7:07 pm, seconded by Hank. Motion carried.

Minutes Drafted by Christina Candels

SEP Budget

a/o 31 Mar 2024

Unrestricted

Balance \$11,322.96
Activity since last report
Candels -160.00 Minutes

Restricted

Balance \$32,339.21 (\$3,800 committed to LVRT)
Activity since last report
\$1,850 to Beautification (7 donations)
\$-3430.00 Green Country Corners (flowers)

Balance by category

Bikes/Signs	\$88.95 (\$3,800 committed)
Capacity Bldg	\$1,477.25
Substance Misuse	\$1,625.61
Beautification	\$6,532.40
Marble Mill	\$815.00
Mural	\$00.00
CD Beautification	\$18,000.00

SWANTON

Christopher Dodge / Principal

CENTRAL BUILDING

24 Fourth St., Swanton, VT 05488

Tel No. (802) 868-5346 Fax No. (802) 868-4861



SCHOOL

Justina Jennett / Asst. Principal

MARY S. BABCOCK BUILDING

113 Grand Ave., Swanton, VT 05488

Tel No. (802) 868-4920 Fax No. (802) 868-3389

Swanton Enhancement Project Missisquoi Valley School District Report May 2, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to be part of the Swanton Enhancement Project. I am looking forward to growing the connections between Swanton School and its stakeholders, as well as our greater Missisquoi Valley School District communities. Below are a few highlights of the current work within MVSD that support our students through community engagement.

Missisquoi Valley School District:

- MVSD is planning a district-wide preschool through sixth grade Family Literacy Night on May 9, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, in the MVU Theater. Please consider distributing the linked invitation within our MVSD communities and encouraging families to register. The evening will be facilitated by notable children's author Paul Reynolds, and will include a variety of hands-on, creative, literacy-based activities, as well as free books and activities for children. Questions about the event may be directed to Kosha Patel, MVSD Director of Curriculum (kosha.patel@mvdschools.org).
- In the coming days, MVSD administrators, Board members and additional stakeholders will reconvene to discuss and plan for a future second budget revote, to be scheduled for a later date. MVSD reduced its first to second round proposed budget by \$1,035,000. That reduction primarily represented postponed capital projects. MVSD will continue to work with stakeholders to discuss steps in drafting the next proposal, while continuing to focus on high-quality student learning.
- Our MVSD Schools are beginning the implementation of a new reading program. After months of research by our internal literacy leaders, MVSD selected the American Reading Company's program for its high-quality books, academic rigor, and inclusion of all of the essential elements of literacy. Teachers at each grade level are piloting the program now, and all teachers will implement the program in the fall. Students and



teachers are raving about the engaging books the program provides, and the seamlessness between reading and writing with this program.

Swanton School:

- Swanton School is partnering with Swanton Recreation on Monday, May 6, to host an incredible **Starbase rocket launch** on the recreation field! Our School's fifth graders have a longstanding tradition of participating in the Starbase program, which offers hands-on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) opportunities in their state-of-the-art classrooms on the Air National Guard base in Burlington. During this program, each fifth grader has built a rocket, which they will launch on this day as a culminating activity to the program. You can read more about our students' engagement in this program in this [St. Albans Messenger article](#).
- Swanton School's young artists are excited to be hosting a **community art show** at the Swanton Public Library! The show opens May 3, with a community reception from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. The show will remain open until May 30.



- We are excited to be welcoming Jessica Bourbeau as Swanton's **new Assistant Principal** beginning July 1. Ms. Bourbeau is currently the school Mathematics Instructional Coach and will replace outgoing Assistant Principal Justina Jennett. Please join us for an opportunity to "meet-and-'greet" Ms. Bourbeau on Friday, May 10, from 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM, in the Swanton School Central Building Library.

Highgate Elementary:

- Highgate Elementary recently celebrated **Green Up Day** by cleaning up the school and arena grounds. They had a number of community partners support this work!



Franklin Central School:

- Franklin celebrated 100 percent attendance at parent conferences in March. Conferences included not only meeting with classroom teachers, but also with special educators and interventionists. These conferences provide great opportunities for families and caregivers to celebrate student progress.

- On April 15th, sixth grade teachers met with seventh grade staff to provide information to MVU regarding sixth graders to help with a smooth transition. Information shared included successful learning and teaching strategies for individual students, individual student strengths and challenges/interests, and work habits.

Missisquoi Valley Union Middle and High School:

- The MVU Aspirations Steering Committee is making plans for a **Future Planning Website** that would support students in knowing and planning for the expectations of high school and to help them plan for life after high school. The site's audience would be students, caregivers and faculty. To ensure access to the site, the group is considering ways that this resource could be incorporated into the school day, as well.
- Volunteers from throughout Franklin County helped facilitate a **Financial Literacy Day** at MVU in February. Representatives from a variety of local businesses and groups were on hand to provide information on loans, banking, and personal finance.
- MVU continues to encourage and support the creativity of students through the arts. In April, students performed *Footloose* as this year's **spring musical**, drawing fantastic crowds from our communities and many of our elementary students for the dress rehearsal!. On May 3 and 4, MVU hosted the **Franklin County District Music Festival**.



Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Dodge, Principal
Swanton School



ABENAKI NATION OF MISSISQUOI

St. Francis/Sokaki Band

100 Grand Ave, Swanton, VT 05488

Ph: (802) 868-6255

Abenaki Food Pantry News

Our Food Pantry numbers are growing rapidly. For the month of March, we fed 536 clients, which is 180 families. 75 of those families were Abenaki. We serve clients from all over Franklin County, and all are welcome. We have had to limit visits to once a month due to the increase in our client list. I have begun gathering our April numbers, but they will not be ready for your Thursday meeting. Glancing quickly at them we will be close to 600 clients in April and possibly over. This is a number none of us wants to see increase.

We have been fortunate to have PC Construction donate to us a retired truck to our pantry. A 2016 Ford 150 truck that has been very well maintained. Including 2 sets of tires! We purchased a cap for the back for pick-ups. This will be a huge cost savings for our pantry. Each month we pay close to \$600.00 in mileage to volunteers picking up food from local grocery stores and Costco's. This program is part of Feeding America. This generous gift will allow us to put the savings into filling our shelves with products and needed items.

We have been blessed with several grants this month. Ben & Jerry's Cat team, Vermonters Feeding Vermonters, Vermont Food Bank Capacity, EFSP Phase 41, Vermont Food Bank Mini grant, LFPA Plus grant. The LFPA Plus is one of our largest, \$30,000. We are waiting to hear back from a private donor, another sizeable grant. This grant was invitation only and requested an interview. Chief Gagne and I hit it out of the park! We hope to hear back by early June or sooner.

I will do my best to attend your meetings when I am able. My assistant has taken on a full-time position, so my plate is full. I write all our food pantry grants in the evening and on my days off, it is impossible for me to apply for grants when I'm in the office.

In our Native American tradition, we are taught to care for our community-our friends, family and neighbors-whether they are a member of our tribe or not. We share what we can as best as we can.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Dubois Lavoie



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Ph: (802) 868-6255
