



The **September 2015** *Middletown Magnet*

"News that sticks in Middletown Springs"



What Happened to the August Magnet?

To all our faithful contributors and readers,

It is with a generous measure of sadness that we, *The Magnet* volunteers, inform you that *The Magnet* has ceased production. At the present time the current crew of volunteers no longer has the time to devote to this endeavor. Did you know that it takes over 20 hours to produce each issue? And that those hours are crammed in to just 5 to 6 calendar days? When we think about those facts, we can't help but be a little bit amazed that this wonderful resource has lasted so long.

We realize that this will be a complete shock to some of you and that you will miss reading it cover to cover or that you may have had big plans for upcoming issues. We apologize for disappointing you. With that said, we also know that sometimes, and in the case of meeting minutes — most times, the information we shared with you was no longer timely.

Luckily, this move is coming at a time where we have tools at our disposal to share information almost instantaneously. We encourage organizations to take advantage of *Front Porch Forum* to post your events and notices. We also encourage you to investigate the Town's website at <http://middletownsprings.vt.gov>. We are willing to help your organization or committee establish a presence on that website and to develop a plan to get information posted on a regular basis.

Our immediate plans include:

- Hosting a meeting on September 29 with organizations, town boards, and committee members to help with the next steps.
- Sending out this official notice as the September Magnet to our readership, advertisers & subscribers; and helping get the NEW Town Directory delivered.
- Refunding all prepaid advertising dollars and all prepaid subscription dollars.

Lastly and maybe most importantly, the Select Board and the current *Magnet* volunteers invite anyone who would like to continue on with this worthy endeavor to step up and take a turn. If you are interested in taking a turn on *The Magnet*, we would be more than happy to answer questions, share the lists and the design documents, and the Select Board is more than happy to continue to fund this resource. If you are seriously interested, it would make sense for you to speak up sooner rather than later so that advertising and subscription refunds can be put on hold, which would save you a ton of up front leg work and keep the coffers solvent for your venture.

Thank you all so much for many, many years of support and contributions. We feel honored to have served you.

*Patty Kenyon, Patty McWilliams,
Kimberly Mathewson, Pat Hemenway*

Middletown Springs Movers, Shakers, and Recordkeepers Join us Tuesday, September 29th at 7pm at the Library

Topic: Public Relations & Outreach

How do you get the word out in the post-*Magnet* World??

Info on:

- Best Front Porch Forum Practices
- Town Website & Blog (latest news)
- Effective Posters & best locations
- School Newsletter & what they will print
- Facebook can be your friend
- Quarterly meetings opportunity

Followed by instructional meeting on how to post agendas & minutes to the town website.

One member of each group, committee, organization, board, or commission is highly encouraged to attend.

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|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Select Board | Grange |
| Building Committee | Fountain of Youth |
| Planning Committee | School Board |
| Energy Committee | Town Clerk |
| Cemetery Commission | Town Librarian |
| Conservation Commission | Fire Department |
| Trustees of Public Funds | First Response |
| Listers | Historical Society |
| Auditors | River Trails Group |
| Library Trustees | Town Treasurer |
| Friends For Education | Road Commissioner |
| Friends of the Library | Other groups? |

Extra points for those who come representing various groups. **Refreshments served.**

Newly Revised Open Meeting Law and the Town Website

The Open Meeting Law requires:

- Public announcement of meetings. 1 V.S.A. §§ 312(c), 310(4)
- Preparation and posting of agendas for every regular and special meeting. 1 V.S.A. § 312(d)
- Conducting the business of the municipality in open meetings (unless specifically exempted). 1 V.S.A. § 312(a). Resolutions, rules, appointments, or formal actions that are not taken or made at an open meeting are not considered binding, except actions to secure real estate options. 1 V.S.A. §§ 312(a)(1); 313(a)(2).
- Allowing for public comment at meetings (subject to reasonable rules). 1 V.S.A. § 312(h)
- Taking minutes at meetings, making those minutes available 5 days after the meeting, and posting on a website, if there is one. 1 V.S.A. § 312(b)
- Responding in a timely manner when there is an allegation of violation of the law. 1 V.S.A. § 314(b)

- Effective July 1, 2014 and enforced after July 1, 2015, all municipal bodies [boards, commissions, committees, and subcommittees], in hardcopy & online, must:
- Publicly announce their meetings.
- Prepare & Post an agendas for regular meetings (48 hours in advance) and for special meetings (24 hours)
- Take minutes at all meetings and make those minutes available within 5 days, including on the town website. This applies to both unofficial and approved minutes.

Go to the following link for more information and a downloadable booklet on the revised open meeting law: <http://www.vlct.org/vermont-local-government/vermont-open-meeting-law/>

The town website has embedded google documents which are accessible by the various clerks/secretaries and chairs in which to post the agendas and minutes. Approved minutes will be archived as pdf documents on the town website as well

LOOK INSIDE for:

NEW! Town Directory

Check out the local business listings and find your neighbors' phone numbers without having to dive into the county phone book. The advertisers in the back of the book make the printing possible; thank them when you have a chance.

We appreciate your patience and on-going updates . . . the Directory Volunteers: Leslie Silver, Maria Riley, Kimberly Mathewson, Pat Hemenway, and Kathy Letendre.



Miss The Magnet Already?!

Fill out the enclosed survey. David Wright and Melissa Chesnut-Tangerman are seeking your input. The Magnet emerged, and has morphed several times, after The Communicator stopped printing. Is there a next life for the town newsletter? What are your thoughts and opinions?



The Middletown Magnet
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