71st Annual Town Officers Education Conferences

Agenda and Workshop Descriptions

April 13, 2016
Lake Morey Resort
Fairlee

April 20, 2016
Stoweflake Mountain Resort
Stowe

April 27, 2016
Killington Grand Resort
Killington

8:00-8:30 | Registration Open, Exhibitor Display and Light Breakfast

8:30-8:40 | Welcome: Your Key to Understanding the Day

8:40-9:30 | Session 1

**Enhancing Your Community's Livability through Walk Audits**
*Kelly Stoddard-Poor, AARP and Fred Schmidt, Vermont Institute for Government*
Too many of our communities are designed for automobile travel, with very little consideration given to the needs of walkers. Lack of sidewalks, construction of sidewalks too close to roads and lack of maintenance are all factors that discourage people from walking regularly. You can help make walking safer by teaching small groups to take simple “walkability” surveys. This workshop will help you learn everything you need to know about conducting a walk audit in your community.

**Mapping and Analysis Using Parcel Data Joined to Grand List Data**
*Leslie Pelch, Vermont Center for Geographic Information*
This workshop will demonstrate how digital parcel boundary data (tax maps) joined to digital grand list data creates opportunities for analysis of information related to ownership, valuation, property types, impermeable surfaces, etc. Learn how to do simple analysis, and learn what you can ask Regional Planning Commissions and consultants to do.

**Got Records? Now What?**
*Megan Wheaton-Book and Nicholas Connizzo, Vermont State Archives and Records Administration*
This workshop will provide a broad understanding of records management and give you first steps towards a management program—because whatever our role in state government is, we are all responsible for records. You will walk away knowing the importance of records and information management, or RIM, and you’ll be able to explain the fundamentals and benefits of records management. Finally, we will go through resources and tools that the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration offers.

**Slow It, Spread It and Sink It Using Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)**
*Milly Archer, Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) and Becky Tharp, Green Infrastructure Collaborative*
Water quality is a growing concern in Vermont. More and more municipalities are adopting local stormwater standards that incorporate Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) and Low Impact Development (LID) management practices. Learn more about these stormwater management practices and how municipalities can promote water quality through effective and flexible bylaw standards.
9:40-10:40 | Session 2

Keynote Panel: Understanding the “Value” of Your Town
Douglas Farnham, Vermont Department of Taxes
Shoshanah Inwood, UVM Department of Community Development and Applied Economics
Deb Markowitz, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Along with traditional economic value of town property and buildings, Vermonters are seeking to better understand the value that citizen participation in governance, environmental quality and healthy lifestyles contribute to the overall quality of the places they call home. Our panelists from the University of Vermont and state government will share their unique perspectives on the economic, natural and social values found in our communities.

10:40-11:00 | Networking and Exhibitor Display

11:00-11:50 | Session 3

Plenary: Inventorying the Strengths and Assets in Your Community
Shoshanah Inwood, UVM Department of Community Development and Applied Economics

Every community has different strengths, they can be human, natural, social, financial, cultural, built, and political. In this guided exercise participants will learn about these different assets and will work together to inventory assets in their community. Together we will explore how these resources can be used and leveraged in our communities. Come ready to share the strengths of your community.

11:50-12:50 | Lunch

12:50-1:40 | Session 4

I May Not Like You, But I Respect You: The Value of Lively and Meaningful Community Participation
Susan Clark, Slow Democracy and Vermont Institute for Government (VIG) and/or Fred Schmidt, VIG

Whether they’re serving on committees, participating in events, or being heard online, citizens are a critical element of how we govern Vermont communities. But in this age of negative ads and shock jocks, how can we ensure that participation is a positive experience—both for citizens and local officials? This workshop will look at new and emerging trends in Vermont, and offer specific tips for improving local participation.

Understanding and Following Vermont's Open Meeting Law
VLCT Municipal Assistance Center Staff Attorneys

Vermont's Open Meeting Law applies to all “public bodies”—which include municipal boards, commissions, and committees. This session will describe the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, such as: public notice of meetings, producing and posting agendas, ensuring meetings are open to the public and taking and posting minutes. It will also review practical applications of compliance with the law.

Not Your Typical "Trash Talk"
Bryn Oakleaf and Mia Roethlien, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Vermont's Universal Recycling Law (UR law, or Act 148) is entering its fourth year since adoption. This workshop will cover where we are with implementation, what's ahead, and what is being done across the state to get us there. Discussion will touch on planning for food scrap collection for transfer stations and haulers that must start in 2017. Participants are encouraged to come ready to share success stories.

Assessment Data Presented at State Level Appeal - Case Studies
Edgar Clodfelter VMMA, New England Municipal Resource Center

This workshop will present case studies of information presented at state level appeals before a Hearing Officer. The
focus will be on the types of data assembled as well as the format of the presentations. Sources of data to complete the appraisals will be discussed. The results of a Supreme Court case will also be presented.

1:40-2:00 | Networking, Exhibitor Display and Snack Break

2:00-2:50 | Session 5

Efficient, Cost-Effective Service Delivery: Options for Municipalities to Work Together
Lee Krohn, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (RPC); Abby Friedman, VLCT and Kitt Shaw, Rutland RPC
Municipalities face ever growing pressure to minimize costs and taxes, yet at the same time to maintain or enhance services provided to citizens/taxpayers. Let’s explore opportunities for sharing equipment, purchasing, and services. The intent of this session is to offer ideas, ask questions, and learn from others’ experience, all to explore possibilities.

Act 64 Overview With a Focus on the Municipal Roads General Permit
Jim Ryan, Department of Environmental Conservation
This workshop will cover Vermont’s New Clean Water Law and its resulting water quality-related programs and permits. With a focus on the upcoming Department of Environmental Conservation’s Municipal Roads General Permit, we will discuss the timelines, permit framework, likely new standards for different road types, priority road segments, implementation schedules, collaboration with VTrans, and technical and financial assistance opportunities.

Current Use… Moving On!
Christie Wright, Property Valuation and Review (PVR) and Lisa Truchon, Vermont Assessors and Listers Association (VALA)
Suggested best practices for administering the Current Use program for Town Listers and Assessors. Creating a system that helps clarify all enrollment criteria and assessment/allocation fundamentals in a system to help support a seamless integration between Listers/Assessors, PVR and Current Use.

Challenging Behaviors, Difficult People: Survival Strategies for Municipal Officials
Mary Peabody and/or Ellen Rowe, UVM Extension
People can be both the best and the worst part of public service. In this session we’ll review some tips and strategies for dealing with difficult situations and challenging people in ways that are healthy for all parties. In addition to sharing some proven techniques we’ll leave plenty of time to answer questions and share best practices from the field.

3:00-3:50 | Session 6

Lister Forum
Facilitated by Staff from VALA and PVR
An open forum for Listers and other municipal officers interested in a group discussion of current issues facing property valuation within the State of Vermont.

Community Indicators: Accessing Information About Your Town
Michael Moser, Vermont State Data Center
Presenters will review relevant Census Bureau and other data access options. They will provide brief tutorials on pulling down data in tables, charts and basic maps using tools like the Census’ American Factfinder and the Vermont Insights community data portal.

Drones for Community Mapping
Jarlah O’Neil-Dunne, Taylor Engel, Sarah Leidinguer, Nathanial Ward, and/or Zoe Davis, UVM Spatial Analysis Lab
Learn how UVM is using drones to help communities in everything from disaster response to town planning. This workshop will include a live outdoor demonstration held after the presentation—all are welcome to attend. Please note: Our Killington demonstration will be held 10 minutes away; participants will have the option to drive themselves to the site and leave from there.

3:50-4:00 | Complete Evaluations, Drone Demonstration and Conference End