

## ANNUAL REPORT JULY 1, 2017-JUNE 30, 2018

### RAYMOND VOTER INFORMATION PROJECT

P.O. Box 813; Raymond NH 03077

[www.raymondvip.org](http://www.raymondvip.org)

#### **Board of Directors/President's Report:**

This report will summarize and highlight VIP activities during its 9<sup>th</sup> year of operation.

Executive Board members were: President-Susan Hilchey; Vice President-Joyce Wood; Secretary- Dana Zulager; Treasurer-John Beauvilliers; Members at Large- Yvonne D'iorio and Sue Roundy (until her resignation on 5/22/18).

Executive Board Meetings were held on 8/2/17, 12/18/17, 4/30/18, 5/21/18, and 6/11/18. A major topic of discussion was a review of the Bylaws, leading to recommendations for streamlining Membership categories and for adjusting the timing of the Annual Meeting. Also, the search for a Voter Guide Administrator was part of the discussions. At the final meeting of this fiscal year, appreciation was noted for Sue Roundy's contributions on the Board and on the Voter Guide. Minutes of those meetings are on file.

The Voter's Guide was published and distributed in February 2018. This Voter's Guide was created using an Administrative Team, rather than one person serving as Administrator, and initiated Google Docs to communicate. Great appreciation is sent to the many volunteers who worked tirelessly to produce 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](http://www.raymondvip.org) and a list is included here:

Ace Ben Franklin Hardware

D.F. Richard Energy

Edward Jones Investments

Jambs Jewelry

Natural or Not Salon & Spa and Langford's Laundromat

Raymond Area News

Riverbend Realty Group

TLC Spa Therapies

Vernet Properties and Tuckaway Tavern & Butchery

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

Raymond Area News

Regional Economic Development Center (REDC)

To create the 2018 Voter Guide, an Administrative Team was created, consisting of Susan Hilchey, Dana Zulager, and Kathy Pouliot. The Editorial Team members were Sue Roundy 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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.
- People's United Bank allows business account holders to host an info table for one month each year. VIP set up the table in the fall to promote awareness of the groups' mission, invite membership, advertise the Fall Speaker Program and offer giveaways (candy, VIP pencils). People were invited to vote for reasons they like Raymond. Results showed a tie for first place "My Family, My Neighborhood" and "Parks and Outdoors" and a tie for second place between "My School/My Teacher" and "Raymond Rec and Sports Teams." Other votes were cast for Volunteering Opportunities, for the People in Raymond, and for the Historical Society. Thanks go to Yvonne D'iorio for keeping the table items replenished.
- VIP hosted a table at the annual Chamber of Commerce Business Expo in September. Visitors to the table were reminded of the importance of local voting and encouraged to become members. Some donations were received. Thanks to Joyce Wood and John Beauvilliers for hosting and to Dana Zulager for providing table and an Uncle Sam placard "We want YOU".
- Preceding the Fall Speaker program on October 26, 2017, Girl Scout Troop #10435 hosted a dinner for Dr. Sara Withers at the Masonic Hall. They then greeted attendees at the REDC. NH Humanities co-sponsored this event with Dr. Withers presenting "*Uprooted: Heartache and Hope in NH.*" The audience was small but attentive.

- VIP again had a decorative VIP table and giveaways at Family Fun Night in February. Thanks to Yvonne D'iorio and John Beauvilliers for hosting.
- Great effort was put into creation of the 2017 Voters Guide during the fall and winter. Seasoned Ed Com and Researchers were invaluable in moving the process ahead. New faces were recruited again this year to help.
- VIP participated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> NH Gives Day on June 6-7 from 6pm-6am. In preparation, Kathy Pouliot enhanced the webpage used for that event. Wording was enhanced, categories for donations were suggested, and graphics were improved.
- A review of the VIP website by Linda Hoelzel and Stephen Mather-Lees continued in earnest. They made recommendations to the Board including removal of obsolete information and clarification of some tips. The Board suggested that a FAQ section be added which is on the goal list for next year.
- VIP maintained the usual 4 web domains with MoxDog to maintain identity and control flow of info.
- The VIP Annual Meeting was held on September 19, 2018 at Raymond High School. 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](http://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, 2017 and ended June 30, 2018. The financial balance began with \$640.94 and ended with \$800.78 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 14 voting members (an increase from 12 last year) and 6 family members, (an increase from 2 last year). With six additional members, VIP had an increase in membership of 43% this year.

Through VIP's participation in the second NH Gives Day in June, \$236.90 was raised online and an additional \$100 donation was received by mail. 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 2018 Voter Guide was \$1900.36. 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 7/14/18; 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: 2000

In-Kind Donations: \$276.34

Total cost of the 2018 Voter Guide: \$1900.36

Susan Hilchey and Yvonne D'iorio assisted the Treasurer in preparing and reviewing the fiscal year 2017-2018 operating budget and in creating a projected budget for FY 2018-2019.

Submitted by

John Beauvilliers, Treasurer

### **Website Report:**

During the 2018 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.). Slides were created for the RCTV community bulletin board during the year for various VIP activities.

Stephen Mather-Lees and Linda Hoelzel met to discuss changes or updates to improve or make the VIP site more user-friendly. Suggestions were sent to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval. Changes were implemented, including removing outdated event information.

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

Submitted by:

Linda Hoelzel

### **Editorial Committee Report:**

Since the position of Voter Guide Administrator was vacant, a team approach was established. The Administrative Team was comprised of Kathy Pouliot, Dana Zulager, and Susan Hilchey. The Editorial Committee consisted of Sue Roundy and Stephen Mather-Lees. The Editorial Committee continued the process started last year by which reviews and editing of materials was completed electronically, but this year, with a new focus utilizing Google Docs.

A number of preparatory meetings took place to “set the stage” for the work of Voter Guide volunteers. Susan met with the Board of Selectmen (BOS) on 8/28 to discuss the difficulties obtaining information for the 2017 Guide since the Town Manager asked that VIP only contact him with questions, and to garner support for direct access to Department Heads. On 8/28, John Beauvilliers, Yvonne D’iorio, and Stephen Mather-Lees attended the BOS meeting to say “thank you” for assistance with last year’s Voter Guide. Dana, John and Susan attended the School Board Meeting on 9/6 to say “thank you” as well. The purpose of these meetings was not only express appreciation for support, but also to remind people that VIP would be creating the Guide again this year and asking for their input. As a result, Susan was able to obtain an early copy of the potential Town Warrant Articles at a BOS meeting on 9/11/17. Several subsequent Admin Team meetings occurred to divide tasks, set up Google docs, set up a new spreadsheet, and create folders for each Warrant Article and for Reporters, etc.

Kathy Bailey, a Raymond journalist, met with Susan and Dana to discuss the process of creating the Voter Guide and as a result, Kathy sketched a flow chart to better visualize the multi-step process. Stephen Mather-Lees kindly transferred this sketch into electronic form. This tool greatly aided in tracking progress of write-ups through the many steps of checks and balances and it has been used to communicate the thorough process followed to folks outside VIP. Another useful document was the Excel spreadsheet created by last year’s Administrator, Sue Roundy; it was most helpful for tracking completion of the varied steps of the process (assignment of Articles, due dates, business donor contacts/contributions, etc.).

This year, there were 31 Town and School Warrant Articles plus Citizen Petitions, many fewer Articles than last year. Yet, as always, a cadre of dedicated volunteers was needed to research Articles, draft write-ups, and find Readers. Volunteers contributed over 2000 hours to complete the Guide (3 on the Admin Team, 12 Reporters, many Readers, 2 Ed Comm, 1 Bias Checker). There were 14 business supporters via monetary donations or in-kind contributions.

Once the actual work on Warrant Articles began, initial edits for spelling, grammar, and factual details was completed by Susan Hilchey. She then emailed each edited 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 the School District staff was very positive for the Researcher/Reporters and for the Administrator. They were accessible, responsive, prompt and helpful. Ron Brickett was a tremendous help and resource, and Dr. Tina McCoy, Superintendent was very supportive. Town Manager, Craig Wheeler, provided information via emails when requested and other Town staff persons provided input as well. Special note is given to Steve Brewer (Public Works) and Ernie Cartier Creveling (Community Development) their timely assistance.

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. Sue Roundy's experience as Administrator and Stephen Mather-Lees experience with Ed Comm last year greatly aided the process. Leslie O'Donnell offered her professional expertise and assistance in doing the bias checking. Linda Hoelzel promptly posted Articles to the VIP website.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hilchey