

Town Clerk/Treasurer's Report

Website

A reminder to visit our website at www.riptonvt.org and get familiar with the information you have access to when coming to the office is not convenient. Download a building permit application, view tax maps, read selectboard minutes, find contact information for town officers, and much more.

Land Records

At last, we are in the early stages of entering land records data into a database. Given that it's the type of work we only do in "spare" time, it will take awhile, but getting this project off the ground is a positive step forward. 494 pages were recorded in the land records in 2011 and 26 property transfer tax forms received.

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Property Transfers	26	44	24	18	18	26	28
# Pages Recorded	494	630	583	476	648	633	794

Vital Statistics

According to new numbers released by the US Census Bureau following the decennial census, Ripton has gained 2 people since the previous 2005 between-census estimate of 586, for a new population total of 588 (see revised population chart on the inside cover). In 2011, five births, four marriages, and three deaths were added to our vital records.

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Births	5	5	9	7	3	4	6	5	6	10
Marriages* / Civil Marriages	4	2	3	5	9	10	3	4	7	3
Civil Unions*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Deaths	3	4	3	4	1	4	3	4	7	0

*in 2009, "civil union" and "marriage" were replaced by "civil marriage" as the legally recognized union of two people.

Records Preservation

The two-year project to restore our oldest vital records is now complete; these precious handwritten documents can now be easily handled without causing further damage. A newly completed land records volume will be microfilmed in 2012 – we fill not quite one volume per year these days.

The draft records management policy created in late 2010 was adopted by the selectboard in 2011 with the participation of other key town officers involved with the handling of town records. This policy addresses how public records are created, received and maintained and will ensure the integrity of our town's legacy as expressed in the records we produce and preserve. Although it will take years to become fully compliant with the policy, it serves as an important guide as we work toward that goal.

A new vault door was installed in the town office in February. The old door was fifty years old and far past its prime. The two-hour fire protection insulation was crumbling and therefore no longer worth 2 hours of protection, the lock ceased to function, and the maker was long out of business. The Town Buildings Fund was used to purchase a new door, rated for 4-hours fire protection and weighing in at around half a ton. A very capable team, including one really big guy, spent most of one day getting it into place. Total cost, including hauling away the old door, came to \$8,175.



Town Clerk/Treasurer's Report (continued)

Dog Licensing

One hundred and eight dogs were licensed in Ripton in 2011. State law requires that all dog owners license any dog over 6 months of age with the town clerk between January 1 and March 31 of every year. Fees are: \$8 for neutered/spayed dogs, \$12 for unneutered/unspayed dogs. Licenses issued after the deadline include a late fee. We need to have a copy of your dog's rabies vaccination certificate on file to issue the license. If your dog's rabies certification expires later in the year, get your license now based on the current certification and send us a copy of the new one when you get it. The law further requires the town clerk to turn over to the selectboard a list of any known unlicensed dogs on May 30 of each year; further action to enforce the law will then be up to the board.

Elections

2011 was an off year for federal elections; the turnout for our local town meeting election was average for Ripton. See the chart below for important dates regarding 2012 elections. Remember that since 2010, the fall primary is now called the August primary – in 2010, this election was moved to the fourth Tuesday in August to allow more time for processing overseas and military absentee ballots before general election deadlines.

Vermont's presidential primary day is March 6, 2012 (same as Town Meeting election day). Be reminded that this is the only election where you must request a ballot by political party. This year, there are only two major party ballots available, Democrat and Republican. Sample ballots are posted at least 20 days before any election.

A new law permits seventeen-year-olds who will turn 18 on or before November 6, 2012 to vote in the presidential primary and August primary prior to the November general election. The thinking behind this is that the primary process is a nomination process so persons may participate in the nominations prior to taking the voter's oath. Seventeen-year-olds may only vote the *presidential primary ballot*, they may *not* vote any *local election ballots* (town officer ballot and other local articles). For further information about elections and election issues, contact the town office during office hours, visit the town website at www.riptonvt.org or the Vermont Secretary of State's website at www.sec.state.vt.us.

Election Calendar 2012	Town Meeting/Presidential Primary	August Primary	General
Date of election	March 6	August 28	November 6
Polling place, open 7am to 7pm	Town Office	Town Office	Community House
Last day to register to vote	February 29, 5:00pm	August 22, 5:00pm	October 31, 5:00pm
Last day to request an absentee ballot	March 5, 6:00pm	August 27, 6:00pm	November 5, 6:00pm

Ripton Voter Participation

Town Meeting			State & Federal Elections		
Year	Total Voters	Voted	Election	Total Voters	Voted
2011	447	116 (26%)	General 2010	451	291 (65%)
2010	446	125 (28%)	Primary 2010	447	167 (37%)
2009	433	137 (32%)	General 2008	444	355 (80%)
2008	424	269 (63%)	Primary 2008	431	48 (11%)
2007	424	172 (41%)	General 2006	453	316 (70%)
2006	450	110 (24%)	Primary 2006	428	92 (21%)
2005	436	107 (25%)	General 2004	444	332 (75%)
2004	405	152 (38%)	Primary 2004	438	87 (20%)

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways you can help your town. Just about every community group report in this town report offers opportunities to get involved; please take a moment to think about what you can do. In addition, we get an occasional request at the town office for a project-in-need. The current flowerbox caretaker of the Bridge of Flowers on Route 125 is looking for assistance or project takeover. Contact the town office for more information.