

Getting to Know You...

December 14, 2022

There are a lot of you. 8,675 to be exact. That's how many unique people and organizations are active in our twenty-five-year-old database. Imagine the impact that many local leaders could have on public policy. Imagine the effect of harnessing that purchasing power to negotiate better contracts or services. That's only possible if we know you, can reach you, and can call you to action. That will become a lot easier early next year when VLCT implements a new online member services platform.

What Does This Mean for You?

First off, you'll notice a new look and feel on the VLCT website. You'll be asked to sign into your account to access most of the information and services your dues and member contributions paid to create. As a result, we'll be able to provide every member access to a personalized portal that gives you:

- Easier access to on-demand publications, including recorded webinars, handbooks, and toolkits
- An improved inquiry management system ensuring that your legal inquiries can be answered more effectively and efficiently
- A new events platform that will make event registration and payment easier
- A record of what trainings you have taken
- Secure credit card payment options for publications, events, and trainings
- New communications tools that make it easier to keep in touch and subscribe to the emails that most interest you
- A searchable database of municipal officials across Vermont

While our project team readies the VLCT staff for this major conversion, we've been updating our database (making more than 1,000 updates this year alone), questioning processes, and taking an inventory of our website to improve searchability (we'll be launching a refreshed website simultaneously). The success of this new system will depend heavily on your willingness to log on.

What's Next?

In the coming months, we'll be asking you to utilize an account at vlct.org. Then, after Town Meeting Day, we hope you can help us update our database and make sure we know who you and your fellow local officials are by providing updated contacts. This will help to ensure that every official in your municipality can use the system to access valuable training and job aids, register for events, and ask MAC questions. I know it's a big change, but we're working hard to make this easier than shopping on Amazon or watching a show on Netflix.

What Are We Most Excited About with This New Member Services Platform?

Gaining a better understanding of who you are and what you need from VLCT. Our current database relies on one or two people to update it annually – and as a result, there are planning commission members, associate members, and even some clerks and selectboard members who aren't using VLCT services because we don't know them and they don't know us. A more distributed system, that gives you access to more information and allows you to share more with us, builds a better relationship for all involved and results in a more effective membership organization.

The best way we can successfully get work done for our communities is if we know each other. So I'll close as I opened, by quoting Rogers and Hammerstein from the King and I. "Getting to know you, getting to know all about you. Getting to like you, getting to hope you like me. Getting to know you, putting in my way, but nicely, you are precisely, my cup of tea."