

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of August 10, 2012

Preamble: "Colchester, Vermont, located on Lake Champlain's Malletts Bay, is a diverse, civic-minded community endowed with a rich heritage of commercial, agricultural, recreational, and educational gifts. Proud of the quality of life already enjoyed here, the people of Colchester seek to build upon this foundation to ensure economic prosperity, recreational opportunity, and an entrepreneurial spirit for future generations" – Vision Statement, Heritage Project, 2012.

By no means a total representation of all the work performed by the Town the following information highlights some activities which occurred:

Burnham Memorial Library: Rubi Simon, Director

We had another active week here at the library. Programming included our annual Monopoly tournament, which included kids from age 6-18; a circus arts workshop, where participants learned to juggle, walk on stilts, and more; and a very well attended (if a bit messy) tie-dyeing program. The library is putting together a collection of graphic novels for adults; stop by to see what we have so far. On Wednesday, we had the Farmers' Market, which featured a performance by the Colchester Community Band.

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

This week has been busy with helpdesk calls covering software and hardware. Laptops are being prepared for the Clerk's office to use for the August 28 Primary Election at the Meeting House and Malletts Bay School. The laptops are necessary to keep in contact with the Vermont Secretary of State's voter database in case there are any voter registration inquiries.

Police Department –Chuck Kirker, Police Chief

Colchester Police are focusing our investigative efforts this week on a series of thefts and burglaries in our community in the past several weeks. Since July 1st, CPD has responded to 12 burglaries to residences, the majority of those occurring during the daytime. The burglaries (unlawful entry into a building with the intent to commit a crime) have included thefts of jewelry, money, prescription drugs, electronics, and checks and credit cards. Thefts from vehicles have also continued in our community with 10 reported larcenies in the past month. Forced entry into vehicles parked in recreational areas has also increased. Please secure your home and vehicle and report any suspicious activity including unusual persons coming to the door to Colchester Police at 264-5555.

Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads - Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Colchester Rescue responded to 18 calls, and transported 14 patients. Colchester Technical Rescue was quiet this week.

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

For further information or comment, please call June Campbell at 264-5509.

This week the Parks and Recreation Department has been working on putting the finishing touches on the Fall Program Guide. Within that guide you will find 15 new programs offered. As well as some new events such as “Junk in the Trunk” which is a community rummage sale that will be at Bayside Park and our Adventure Race on September 15th. We anticipate this guide will be in your mailbox the week of August 27th. Once you receive the guide in the mail you can register online, mail or at the office.

As summer camps come to an end we are thinking about school also. The start of school means the start of our ACE Before and Afterschool Program. We are currently interviewing for staff openings and preparing the sites. Two of our sites, Porters Point School and Union Memorial School enrollment is at capacity, with a few openings available at Malletts Bay School.

Our Park Staff has been busy getting the athletic fields ready for fall sports and making the parks shine on a daily basis. The Colchester Causeway reconstruction is continuing to progress as the contractor is making great strides. Thank you to the public for respecting the signs which allow the contractor to do their work uninterrupted.

Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

Completed paving on Hillcrest and Village Drive where roadway and drainage improvements were recently completed.

Completed and submitted annual report of all improvements and changes to fixed assets, including depreciation schedules, to the Town’s Finance Office as required under GASB 34.

Finalized Tasks 4 and 5 of the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan funded by a \$1.5 million EPA Grant aimed at preserving and protecting the Town’s water resources.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

The Planning & Zoning Department continues to be busy with building permits as well as Development Review Board applications. People are encouraged to visit the Town’s website and explore the future DRB agendas listed that include application information and plans. Applications include a congregate care facility off of River Road, residential subdivisions on Malletts Bay Ave. and Main St., as well as commercial development at Exit 16.

Clerk’s Office – Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Project completed – We now have a complete backup of the entire vault. This has been a multi-year ongoing project to scan, microfilm and backup to digital images all of the record books in the vault. As part of that project we were able to acquire the first five record books being stored in Special Collections at the University of Vermont. The first book dates back to 1702, prior to the town being chartered. Those books were very delicate and not able to be handled. We ordered reproduction books created from the digital images. Please stop by to see these historical records. The monies used for this project came from fees collected for recording documents, and not from tax dollars.

Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

The Board of Civil Authority (BCA) has started hearings for the 2012 Grand List. There are 107 appeals of camps on leased land. The 107 include the 44 camps that are continuing their appeal from 2011, 34

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additional camps that have joined with the same attorney, and 29 more camp owners that are appealing their amenity value based on the court decision. There are 6 appeals to the BCA this year that are not camps on leased land. We will be busy preparing to defend the appeals.

Town Manager's Office and Finance – Joan Boehm (Asst. Town Manager/CFO)

Did you know that the Town's General Fund operating budget revenues come primarily from property taxes (83%), but we also receive revenues from other sources (17%). Here are some of the other sources of revenues: fees in the Town Clerk's department = 2.3%, Planning & Zoning fees = 2.2%, Police revenues (mostly Milton Dispatch services) = 2.2%, ambulance revenues = 3.2%, revenues from the State of Vermont (State Aid to Highways, Payment in Lieu of Taxes, etc.)= 3.5%, miscellaneous other types of revenues = 3.6%. We are trying to increase these other revenue sources to lower the property tax burden on our taxpayers.