

Colchester's Weekly Town News For the Week of August 16, 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

The library continues to be busy as we start to wind down our summer programming season. This week we've had a Teen Animation Camp through LCATV, a program for first-time Kindergartners, and our monthly Pajama Story Time. On Saturday (Aug. 18th), there'll be a Native American-themed program where kids will get to create their own dreamcatchers. The Wednesday Farmers' Market continues, with a couple of new vendors joining in the last two weeks – at next week's market, the band The Fizz will play from 5-6 pm.

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

Part of this week was spent updating and upgrading AntiVirus software and Anti-Malware programs. All computer users, whether at work or home, need to have these programs to stop attacks by viruses and malware. Can you have too many antivirus programs on your computer? Yes. You should only ever install one antivirus program at a time because each antivirus program will see the other as a virus! You can have several anti-Malware programs on your computer because they are looking for a different type of infection than the antivirus software. The technology department is very diligent about these safeguards.

Police Department –Chuck Kirker, Police Chief

Residents are reminded that we have created two detour routes to accommodate traffic impacted by the closing of East Road due to construction. Traffic North of the construction are will be able to detour via Middle Road and Depot Road - Sand Road and Colchester Pond area will use a temporary cut-thru from Depot Road to Route 2A. Be mindful that increased traffic on these detours will be closely monitored by the Police Department. We have already issued a number of traffic tickets for speeding and other violations. Drive with care and respect your neighbors along these detour routes.

Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads - Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Colchester Rescue responded to 14 calls, which resulted in 13 transports. A few of our volunteers also helped out with Public Safety Camp on Tuesday, along side St. Michael's Fire & Rescue, CCVFC, and Colchester PD. Our members went over bandaging, backboarding, and other first aid activities with the group of middle school kids.

Colchester Technical Rescue did not have any calls this week. However, they did conduct dive training on Wednesday evening...just one of their 24 scheduled team trainings each year.

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

As summer vacation comes to an end we have been busy putting together the Fall Program Guide. It has been completed and is currently at the printers. We expect it to be in the mailboxes of residents during the week of August 27th barring that there are no problems at the printers. In the guide you will find many new programs and events to keep you and your family busy this fall.

The Colchester Causeway renovation that started on July 30th is moving steadily along and continues to stay on schedule. Again, we thank the public for staying away from the construction site to allow the contractors to complete their work.

Planning continues for the 1st Annual Muck it Up Adventure Race. We currently have 28 teams registered and can accommodate 60 teams so if you are interested call us or visit our website at www.colchestervt.org/recreation We have been working on the course and getting all the details

resolved. If you are interested in volunteering please call 264-5640 and you will receive a really cool t-shirt.

Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

The reconstruction of the East Road Depot Road project began this week focusing mostly on preparatory tasks such as mobilizing equipment and materials to the site, tree removal, and the establishment of survey control. The Highway Division has performed additional grading and dust control application along the detour routes with gravel surfaces. This additional attention will continue as needed throughout the duration of the project.

The final design and bid documents associated with the repair of Malletts Bay Avenue have been completed. The roadway was damaged under the last federal damage declaration. The work will involve the replacement of a storm water outfall, the installation of under drains and the reconstruction of the roadway. The project site is near the top of the hill by the Thibault farm.

An extensive literature search was completed to better understand the possible alternatives and models to improve the management of the Town's water resources. Using data collected over the past two years through the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan, models are being identified and evaluated on how best to manage on-site wastewater treatment systems and storm water.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

The Department of Planning and Zoning is considering a revised sign permit for Imago on Jasper Mine Road. Several years ago the applicant submitted a sign application that was deemed to contain nudity and denied. The permit was appealed and the Town prevailed. Several of the residents within the Jasper Mine Road area participated in this process. The applicant has now revised the sign image to address concerns of obscenity. Those that wish to review the current sign application are encouraged to contact or stop by the office.

Clerk's Office – Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Frequent question during the collection of taxes: "Why have my taxes increased by hundreds or thousands of dollars?" After further research we were able to determine that the increase was a result of the state tax credit not being received, not an increase to your gross tax bill. If you have received an adjustment to your tax bill in the past and did not receive one this year it is possible that you did not file at all or in a timely manner. The deadline for filing the HS-145 is September 4, 2012. You can file online at <http://www.state.vt.us/tax/index.shtml> If you miss this deadline we are not able to assist you, as this is a state program. Feel free to call us at 264-5520 with any questions you may have.

Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

The Board of Civil Authority (BCA) will be hearing appeals on leased camps this week. The Assessor's office is preparing for those appeals. There are 107 appeals of camps on leased land. The 107 include the 44 camps that are continuing their appeal from 2011, 34 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.

Finance – Joan Boehm (Asst. Town Manager/CFO)

Did you know that the Town of Colchester operates a number of funds, but not all of the funds are supported by your tax dollars. The funds in which your property taxes provide primary support are the General Fund (which covers day to day operations of the Town), the Capital Transportation Fund (roads, bike paths, culverts, etc) the Capital Equipment Fund (vehicles and mowers) and the Debt Service Fund which is used to pay off previously issued bonds for town improvements. The Recreation Program Fund and the Wastewater Fund operate as self sufficient funds that pay for their expenses with revenue generated from fees paid by users. The salaries and benefits of most of the recreation employees are paid for out of the Recreation Program Fund. In addition, the Town receives grant funds each year from the Federal Government, the State of Vermont and other sources. These grants may support some or all the expenditures related to the grant.

Town Manager's Office – Al Voegele, Town Manager

I have become very aware that many Colchester residents do not understand the Town has six (6) municipal governments within its border that provide differing services. Each of these governments is separate and independent of each other. They are: (1) the Town of Colchester Municipal Government; (2) the Colchester School District; (3) Fire District #1; (4) Fire District #2; (5) Fire District #3; and (6) the Champlain Water District. The Colchester Municipal Government provides police and rescue services; road and waste water services; parks and recreation services; buildings, septic and building permits; library services; and vital and land record retention services along with collection of taxes for both the Municipal Government and School District. The School District (government) operates all Colchester schools from kindergarten to 12 grade. Fire Districts #1 and #3 provide retail water services to homes. Fire District #2 provides retail water services to home plus operates the Malletts Bay Fire Department. The Champlain Water District distributes water to the three retail water districts and operates two retail water companies – the Malletts Bay Water Company and the Colchester Water Company. All these government entities excepting the School District “own” space within the water tanks on Water Tower Hill. Each of those government entities have their own “interests” and “turf” often making simple decisions very complicated. This system of multiple governments within the Town is neither efficient nor cost effective but it is what the taxpayers have designed in years past to meet its service needs.