

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of August 23, 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

This week at the library, our programming has included one event by LCATV for kids and another for teens, as well as the second in our First-Time Kindergartners sessions. On Thursday, we'll also hold the end of the summer party for our always popular Reading Buddies program. We had good weather again for the Farmers' Market, and our vendor's products currently include baked goods, crafts, tea, hot food, maple syrup, lemonade, jewelry, and produce. Much thanks to the band The Fizz for their performance this week.

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

This week we began setting up a credit card system in the Town Clerk's office. When the system is completed citizens will be able to pay their taxes and other license fees by credit card at Town Hall. Other work included installing software, updating computers and databases.

Police Department –Chuck Kirker, Police Chief

The last week was relatively quiet for Colchester Police which investigated approximately 200 incidents. A list of the types of incidents is published weekly in the Colchester Sun. Officers wrote 29 traffic tickets and 31 traffic warnings with our efforts centered on the Middle Road and Austin House Road area. The annual Public Safety Awareness Camp was held last week at St Michael's College. The camp was organized this year by Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company (CCVFC) and is designed for youth aged 9-15 who have an interest in emergency services. This nearly all volunteer event was supported with officers from Colchester Police, as well as personnel from CCVFC, Colchester Rescue, and St Michaels Fire and Rescue. Twenty campers had hands on experiences from all three branches of emergency services. Burlington Technical Center's Criminal Justice Program provided law enforcement equipment.

Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads - Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Colchester Rescue responded to 16 calls, and transported 14 people to the hospital. Colchester Technical Rescue responded mutual aid, to Smuggler's Notch, for a teenager who had fallen down a cliff while hiking. The patient was rescued, and transported to Fletcher Allen for treatment.

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

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

This week our department has been busy training our ACE Before and After School staff. We are very excited about the staff we have hired this year to work with the children in our program. The ACE program is in three Colchester schools; Porters Point, Union Memorial and Malletts Bay. The Porters Point and Union schools are at their maximum enrollment and Malletts Bay has only a few openings available. In total there are 175 children participating amongst the three schools.

This was the last week of summer camps for our department. As our camp season comes to an end there is much work that takes place with reorganizing the Waterfront and Bayside Park. We would like to thank our staff at the Waterfront and those who worked our summer camps for a great summer!

The Fall Program Guide will be in Colchester mailboxes this weekend. Take a moment and read about the great programs and events we are offering this fall. Maybe even take the next step and try one out.

Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

Met with a wetlands specialist to begin wetland delineation in and around the Meadow Drive ditch. The state wetlands Office has determined that the Town will need to obtain a wetlands permit to make repairs to the Town's ditch which was heavily damaged during the spring flooding of 2011, and subsequently became a FEMA damage site eligible for federal funding to make the repairs.

Contractors have removed approximately 15% of the 9,000 cubic yards of material to be removed from the East Road Depot Road intersection. A temporary water system has been put in place to continue water service while the main water main is relocated to accommodate the lowering of the roadway.

A pre-bid meeting was held for the reconstruction of a storm water outfall located on Porters Point Road. Contractor interest in the project was very high.

The buildings division completed interior painting of the Meeting House, saving approximately \$5,000 in contractual costs.

Preliminary planning and the development of a grant application for a Park & Ride Facility on Heineberg Drive is underway.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

On Tuesday, August 23rd, the Department of Planning and Zoning was visited by FEMA. This was a follow up site visit to the Spring of 2011 flood to review Town compliance and the rebuilding efforts. Positive feedback was received from the visiting officials especially with regard to the prohibition of fill in the floodplain. While this visit was part of a continuing review by FEMA of the Town, we are happy to have established a good rapport with these officials and to hear their praise on our rebuilding process.

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Clerk's Office – Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Please remember to vote on Tuesday, August 28th. The polls will be open from 7 am to 7 pm. If you normally vote at the High School you need to remember that the polling location has changed to Malletts Bay School, due to a conflict. The presidential election in November will be back at the High School for District 9-2.

Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

The Board of Civil Authority (BCA) has heard most of the appeals for 2012 Grand List, and will be inspecting the properties over the next month and ruling on their findings. The Assessor's office will also be reviewing building permits that were issued in prior years as well as buildings that were under construction on April 1, 2012 to ensure all improvements are recorded in the 2013 Grand List.

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

We have tabulated the results of our budget survey. The purpose of this survey was to help the Town determine what citizens priorities were for the budget. We had about a 25% response rate. 68% of the respondents were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the overall quality of services provided by the Town. The question that asked whether to raise revenues, cut services or a mixture of both to balance the budget showed that 43% of the respondents wanted a mixture of raising revenues and cutting services, while 33% said to cut services. 24 hour police protection, plowing and maintenance of roads were the services most often requested to be maintained at current levels. 48% of the respondents came from voting district 9-2 (the Bay), 45% came from voting district 9-1 (the Village) and 7% did not identify their location. 64% of the respondents were over the age of 50. 53% of the respondents were female. Additional results will be available on the Town's website. The website will also have surveys available to be filled out by any citizen who did not receive a survey in the mail. The Library and customer windows at the Town Hall will also have surveys available to be completed. A drop box will be placed in the lobby to receive completed surveys. We thank all the citizens who took the time to complete the survey.

Town Manager's Office – Al Voegele, Town Manager

This week was a "meeting week" listening and talking with many people. Some conversations dealt with neighbor disputes, citizen flood plain and FEMA concerns, revision of the Town's Personnel Policies, monitoring the progress of the refurbishment of the Police Department facility, the Heritage Project along with the proposed Heineburg Drive Park & Ride and Drop Off Recycling Depot - a very diverse range of discussions. I am happy to report the Police facility is progressing very well and by next week I hope to have a date for a community open house at the new Police Station. FEMA gave the Town's Planning & Zoning Department "high marks" for its management of flood plain regulations and services to assist camp owners rebuild their damaged camps. Next week at Noon on Thursday, August 30, the Town will have an open house for the community at the new Technical Rescue building (which is behind the Colchester Rescue facility). Looking forward, the Town in association with CEDAC is progressing with Heritage Project planning to improve the economic vitality of Malletts Bay.

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