

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of February 22, 2013

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: Hannah Peacock, Assistant Director

Here at the library, we've had another good week, full of tutoring, story times, yoga, music, and more. This weekend is the first part of our practice SAT exam, put on in cooperation with Princeton Review; we'll be having a similar ACT exam at the end of March. We'd like to thank everyone who came out for our Winter Book Sale last weekend, as well as those tireless souls who volunteer and make such fundraisers possible. We still have openings with tax help through the AARP Tax Aide program, though the schedule is starting to fill up. Sessions are held on Saturdays, as well as a few Wednesdays - call 879-7576 to make an appointment. For those who are curious, our search for a new library director is currently in process. We will be accepting applicants until March 15th, at which point the library trustees and the Town Manager will work in concert to determine the individual who is the best fit for the position.

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

The department has been engaged with typical support and troubleshooting this week, including printers, desktops and servers, hardware and software. We have begun preparing laptops that will be used at the polls on Town Meeting Day.

Police Department –Chuck Kirker, Police Chief

Two incidents this week highlighted our work with the Colchester School District to keep our schools as safe as possible. In the first incident, two young students attending the after school program at Malletts Bay School reported seeing a man in the trees behind the school with what they believed was a gun. Malletts Bay School and adjacent Colchester Middle School went into a "lockdown" setting while up to ten police officers searched the area. A surveyor carrying equipment was identified as the person the children saw. In the second incident Colchester Middle School was put in a secure footing when two bb's struck a window on the 2nd floor during an after-hours faculty meeting. A 17 year old male was identified as the responsible person after police searched the area. We work closely on a continual basis with Colchester School personnel on keeping our school campuses safe and weapon free.

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

Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads - Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

It has been a very busy week for our members! We responded to 31 calls, and transported 23 people to the hospital. Two calls in town were turned over to other agencies, because we were already on a call.

In addition to regular shift coverage, we also had crews providing three days of coverage for the Pond Hockey tournament held in Malletts Bay last weekend.

The Technical Rescue Team was called to assist St. Michael's Rescue with extrication of a person who had jump off the Lime Kiln bridge, landing on the railroad tracks below. It was a quick care out, and the patient was transported to FAHC to be treated for multiple injuries.

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

The Recreation Division has finished up the Spring/Summer Program Brochure and it is at the printers. Arrival in resident's mailboxes should be the first week of March. When you receive the brochure you will be able to register for the programs in person or online. The Youth Basketball program ended its season this past weekend. We feel it was a great season with all the participants improving while learning the game of basketball. Special thanks to all the volunteers that make this program so special. With basketball ending, Youth Lacrosse is starting up. Registrations are currently being accepted and deadlines to register is March 15th. Be sure not to be left out and register now! Planning and logistics are finalized for the Family Snow shoe Dinner which takes place at Airport Park on Friday, February 22nd. If you missed registering then put it on your calendar for next year. It is a great family event.

In the Parks Division, we continue to help with snow removal at town buildings and making sure that the ice rink and ski trails are usable at Airport Park. Preparations are being made for spring/summer projects and getting cost estimates. We are looking at replacing a tennis court fence at Airport Park, expanding the entry road at Airport Park and improving the entrance to Bayside Park to make it more pedestrian friendly.

Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

The Department's snow and ice removal program works toward the broad community goals of public safety and economic sustainability. As a highly visible activity, I am often asked how we are doing. Below is the current status of this program. While many people often associate the cost of snow removal with total accumulations, a better indicator is actually the total number of storm events. For example, a 4" snow storm that lasts for 14 hours will cost more money in fuel, overtime, and salt, than a 10" storm that lasts 8 hours. The data below however contains both.

Winter season	75% complete
Snow accumulation	79% of annual average
Number of events	51% of annual average
Salt usage	56%
Fuel usage	57% (YTD including July-October)
Overtime	52%

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

The Town's Snow and Ice Removal Plan can be viewed on the Public Works web site. Select services, highway, and then snow removal.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

The Planning and Zoning Department held several preconstruction meetings this past week for projects that will soon break ground including the 9-room Starlight Motel adjacent to the Sunset Drive-In on Porters Point Road and four townhome units on Church Road. There were also several "technical advisory committee" meetings that were held to review possible developments still in the design stage. At the Development Review Board meeting this past week the Board approved a 13,200 sq. ft. multi-tenant industrial building at Brentwood Park at Exit 17 and considered another 5-unit townhome project between Emmas Way and Foley Road.

Reminder: the cutting of trees one-inch caliper (diameter) or greater within 100 feet of the Lake is regulated by the Town. Check with our department prior to cutting or pruning in this area for applicable permits.

Clerk's Office – Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Election Day is March 5, 2013. The ballots have arrived. You can stop by the office to vote, you can carry your ballot home to vote or you can request that we mail you a ballot. You cannot carry someone else's ballot out of the office, only your own. The deadline to register to vote for this election is February 27th.

On Monday March 4th there is a Town /School Meeting at the Colchester High School auditorium. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. Prior to the meeting there is a community dinner, provided by the Town and School officials. Guests are asked to bring a dessert to share. The dinner begins at 6 p.m. Please consider attending both events. It is an opportunity to hear an update from your legislators while you eat, and then to attend the informational meeting re: the budgets. We look forward to seeing you!

Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

Nothing new to report.

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

The projected Municipal tax increase for FY 14 is \$0.5680 and is 1.5 cents higher than in the current year.

I have listed below what the weekly tax increase would be for a 1.5 cent increase for various assessed values. Please go to the Town's website, www.colchestervt.gov, for more information about the FY 14 budget.

<u>Assessed Value</u>	<u>Weekly Tax Increase</u>
\$150,000	\$0.43
\$200,000	\$0.58
\$250,000	\$0.72
\$300,000	\$0.87
\$350,000	\$1.01

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\$400,000	\$1.15
\$450,000	\$1.30
\$500,000	\$1.44
\$550,000	\$1.59

Town Manager's Office – Al Voegele, Town Manager

On Thursday, February 21, 2013, the Town, through its attorney, Brian Monaghan, addressed its appeal of Judge Crawford's decision regarding the intrinsic or amenity value attached to buildings on leased land. Liam Murphy, addressed the Court on behalf of the appellees. Now we all await.