

**Colchester's Weekly Town News**  
For the Week Ending January 24, 2014

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

**Town Manager's Office—Dawn Francis, Town Manager**

Given the wide variety of services the Town provides to the average resident, it is a challenge to summarize in this small space what taxpayers will receive for the average municipal tax bill of \$1,741 on a \$300,000 home. Our annual report will be available in a few weeks and provides the details on the services provided and initiatives we are undertaking. We have also made our budget presentations available on the Town's website (<http://colchestervt.gov/>), and a complete budget will be printed in a special edition of *Currently Colchester* on February 20.

Some budget reductions of note include cuts to the Selectboard contingency fund, Manager's miscellaneous line item, and use of the fund balance.

Some of the budget increases that are being requested this year will result in:

- Additional business retention and recruitment efforts to grow our grand list and reduce the property tax burden on our taxpayers. A significant amount of expertise is being donated by area colleges and residents to leverage these efforts.
- Better coverage in our public safety dispatch services (there are times when the emergency call volume exceeds the ability of a dispatcher to sufficiently manage single-handedly).
- Additional hours for the library (bringing it up to fifty hours, but still not up to the fifty-four hours we had in 2009) and to bring us up to the Vermont Public Libraries' recommendations for the population served.
- Additional online services, including the ability to use web-based services for Planning and Zoning applications/permits, recreation programs, property records, and Town information.
- Extending a seasonal position with the Parks and Recreation Department to a full-time position to be shared with the Public Works Department's Highway Division, as we have had the same number of highway workers for at least the past ten years even though we have added 5.23 miles of road and a significant number of paths and sidewalks.
- Additional hours for the Colchester Police Department to conduct community outreach and to offer enhanced patrol efforts and crime prevention (although these additional hours still do not bring us up to the level seen in previous budget years).

Sarah Hadd (the director of the Planning and Zoning Department) and I paid a visit to legislative leaders and officials with the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) regarding the shorelands bill being debated in Montpelier. These officials assured the Town that our shoreland regulations (in effect since the early 1980s) are consistent with the goals of ANR's proposed standards for shoreland protection and that they are working toward allowing Colchester continued oversight of our regulations in any bill passed. Colchester's standards are considered a model for other communities in our quest to improve water quality.

For more information about the Town Manager's Office, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Manager/index.shtml> or call (802) 264-5509.

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

## **Police Department—Jennifer Morrison, Police Chief**

The cold weather has kept most activity indoors. Officers have responded to 166 calls for service during the week and stopped 68 motorists for various infractions.

Our detective unit continues to investigate an armed robbery that occurred in a parking lot adjacent to the Spanked Puppy on Saturday evening. A woman in a vehicle was reportedly approached by a male with a handgun who demanded money. The perpetrator took the victim's cell phone and fled the area.

An investigation into a rash of thefts of laptop computers at Saint Michael's College has resulted in the arrest of thirty-nine-year-old Shane Colford of Burlington. The investigation is continuing into these thefts.

CPD hosted a tabletop exercise this week to help us better prepare for a violent encounter in our schools. Personnel from the Colchester School District, Malletts Bay Fire Department, Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company, Colchester Rescue, American Red Cross, Mountain Transit, First Call for Families, and Saint Michael's College met with our administrative staff and school resource officers to better define our roles and responsibilities in the event of an occurrence that we hope we never face.

For more information about Colchester Police Department, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Police/index.shtml> or call (802) 264-5556 (non-emergency).

## **Rescue and Technical Rescue Squads—Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief**

End-of-year statistics for 2013 are as follows:

- There were 1,104 calls for service; 68 were turned over to other agencies while we were already on a call.
- There were 185 mutual aid calls were taken (includes intercepts).
- There were 49 requests for an intercept; 32 intercepts were completed.
- There were 761 transports to the hospital.
- We now consistently have a paramedic on duty seven days and four nights per week.
- We have been very busy with training, as the National Scope of Practice has changed at each of the EMS levels. With this, the state has also updated our protocols, and we will be changing over on February 1. This has meant a lot of extra training time for all of our members, who are mostly volunteers!
- Colchester Technical Rescue responded to 44 calls in 2013.

For more information about Colchester Rescue, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Rescue/index.shtml> or call (802) 264-5990.

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