

Colchester's Weekly Town News
For the Week of January 26, 2015

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

The Town of Colchester's Annual Town Meeting will be held on Monday, March 2, 2014 and the items to be voted on by private (Australian) ballot will be on Tuesday, March 3, 2015 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM at Colchester High School.

Voting Information

Both districts 9-1 and 9-2 now vote at the Colchester High School on 131 Laker Lane (off Blakely Rd.) due to a lack of parking and accessibility for seniors and persons with disabilities. Early voting will be available by absentee ballot on February 16th. Our audit and town report for FY 14 are now available on- line and the printed version of the town report will be available after 2/10.

Ballot Items

There are four articles to be voted on by ballot this year: a) the Town general fund operating budget; b) re-authorization of the technology reserve fund; c) re-authorization of the communications reserve fund; and d) consideration of a Local Option Tax to reduce property taxes by funding voter approved capital projects with Local Option Tax revenues rather than property taxes.

Town Budget (Article 6)

The Town Budget provides funding for 26 areas including public safety and health (police, fire and rescue), public works, parks and recreation, library, planning and zoning, the Town Clerk's functions, land and vital records as well as Visiting Nurse Association, Winooski Valley Park District, County judicial system and the Regional Planning Commission.

- The Town proposed general fund operating budget is a 1.3% increase over the FY 15 budget. The average household would pay \$15 more per year in taxes.
- Together with capital plans and debt, the budget will require a tax rate of 57.648 cents per hundred dollars of property value. This is less than a 1 percent increase.

Technology Reserve Re-Authorization (Article 7)

Allows the Town to replace information technology equipment without borrowing or budget spikes and

For further information or comment, please call Linda Kingston at 264-5509.

provides replacement funding for 185 devices such as computers, servers and software programs in support of Town functions.

Communications Reserve Re-Authorization (Article 8)

Provides for replacement of \$850,000 in radio, telephone, and telecommunications equipment for general and public safety use.

Local Option Tax Charter Change (Article 9)

The Local Option Tax is being proposed to:

- Lower taxes (by 5 %) and pay for debt
- Reduce reliance on property taxes
- Generate revenues from taxpayers outside of Colchester
- Help pay for **voter approved** capital projects

For more information about the above, visit our website and watch for an insert in the Colchester Sun which is being distributed to all residents.

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

Police Department—Jennifer Morrison, Police Chief

Over the last four weeks, Colchester Police officers have responded to 830 calls for service and stopped 278 operators for motor vehicle violations. Tragically, we have investigated our second motor vehicle crash involving a fatality in the past two months. Overall, CPD investigated nine crashes involving personal injuries, 29 property damage crashes, and had 50 non-investigated crashes reported to us. We are working to reduce the number and severity of crashes in our community. We do this with a variety of resources including participation in SHARP – Safe Highway Alcohol Reduction Program –an effort coordinated by the Vermont Governor's Highway Safety program that brings enforcement efforts together from a variety of different police departments in the area to focus on traffic safety.

By Lt. Douglas Allen

Rescue and Technical Rescue Squads—Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Rescue finished the 2014 calendar year with 1,149 requests for EMS! Sixty-two of the 1,149 calls had to be turned over another agency, as we were already on a call. Of the 1,087 calls to which we responded, 775 people required transport to the hospital.

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January is usually a busy month for us and with four more days to go, we have already responded to 91 calls and transported 62 people to the hospital. We have had to turn over 6 calls to other agencies and have provided mutual aid coverage 11 times.

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

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