

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of July 6, 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.

This week the following occurred:

Burnham Memorial Library: Rubi Simon, Director

Burnham Memorial Library - This week has been the first week for the library's new schedule (M 10-8, Tu 10-6, W 10-8, Th 10-6, F 12-5, Sat Closed in Summer). The Colchester Farmers' Market is continuing to come together, with our first market next Wednesday (July 11th) from 4-7:30 pm.

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

This week we have begun replacing some of the older computers running Windows XP with new ones running Windows 7. The town has a 5-year computer replacement plan and we try to keep our technology as up to date as possible.

Police Department –Chuck Kirker, Police Chief

The week of July 4 is always a busy one for the police department preparing the annual Independence Day parade and activities at Bayside. This year’s challenge was to do what needed to be done with very little overtime available due to budget constraints. We will do everything we can to keep the town safe while dealing with this issue for the remainder of the year.

Rescue Squad and Technical Rescue– Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Rescue responded to 22 calls, and turned over 2 while already on a call. 17 people were transported to the hospital. The Technical Rescue team provided assistance on a mutual aid call for a mountain rescue; rescued a family of four children and two parents whose boat hit a reef in Lake Champlain this past weekend and on the Fourth responded to multiple emergencies with the Coast Guard, Fish & Wildlife and State Police marine patrols that resulted from the severe storm that came across the Lake around 7:00 PM. Both Rescue and Technical Rescue members participated in the 4th of July parade- handing out twizzlers to those who came to watch.

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

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

The summer concerts series will continue on a reduced schedule. On Saturday, July 21st the Colchester Community Band will perform at Bayside Park and then on Thursdays at 7 pm on July 26 Peter Miles, August 2nd, Chad Hollister Band and on August 9th Carol Ann Jones and the Superchargers.

Construction on the Colchester Causeway will begin in July. The start date has not been finalized but when work does start the path will be closed to the public for at least 14 weeks. We will keep the public informed as this project moves forward.

Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

The Campus Road Project is now complete. The roadway provides a direct connection between the St. Michael's College Main Campus and their North Campus in Fort Ethan Allen. A significant amount of traffic has now been removed from the Rt. 15 corridor. Left turns from Rt. 15 have also been reduced which have been the cause of a significant number of accidents. The new roadway provides residents and businesses within this area with improved access to Rt. 15, pedestrian facilities, and the recreational facilities located in Fort Ethan Allen. The total project cost was \$2.8 million. The project was funded by the Federal Highway Administration and St. Michael's College.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

The Planning & Zoning Department, collaboratively with the Department of Public Works, has a request for proposal out for permit and infrastructure management software. Bids are due on 7/16 and it is hoped that the new software will create an easier and more transparent permitting process in the planning department with the possibility of applying on-line. A reminder that all signs need permits and the temporary moratorium on sign fees has expired.

Clerk's Office – Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Town Clerk's Office – The tax bills will be sent to the printers this week and should be delivered to your mailboxes by the end of next week, July 13th. If you do not receive your tax bill please contact the office so that we can verify your mailing address.

Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

The Grand List has been lodged in the Clerk's Office with the Board of Lister's final decisions. The Assessor's office is now entering all the new owners and deed information for properties that have changed ownership as of April 1, 2012 into the appraisal software and the tax billing software, this will ensure that all the tax bills will be sent to the most current property owners. We are continuing to help the Clerk's Office in prepare to mail out the tax bill on July 15, 2012.

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

We are now into FY 13 which began on July 1. The General Fund budget for this year is \$11,085,390. The municipal tax rate is \$0.5530. As a new fiscal year begins, we are already

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planning for the budget for FY 14. We have prepared a questionnaire about budget related issues that will be sent to a random statistical selection of Town residents. In mid-August it will also be available on our website to all residents.

Town Manager's Office – Al Voegele, Town Manager

Because of the mid-week holiday and Friday afternoon furlough the week has moved quickly with few problems. Economically, DPW, P&Z and the Town Manager continued working with a developer to deal with a DRB review. The Town posted on its website new information from the Town's Attorney regarding the Superior Court and State Appraiser appeals on taxing camps on leased land. See <http://www.colchestervt.gov/CourtCase/LandValues.htm>. The Town also met with its health insurance broker to examine anticipated rates and better understand the Federal and State health care laws/mandates that might impact the Town. Finally, the Town is examining its options regarding the collection of taxes from a nonprofit organization that involves a dispute with the State Department of Taxes.

Al Voegele
Town Manager