

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of July 27, 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

The library had another busy week of summer programming. We had nice weather for another Farmers' Market, and are continuing to expand our number of vendors. Last week, we had a performance of Sleeping Beauty by Rutland High School students, and this week we've had a very well attended tea party (for preschoolers), a jewelry program, and a contest for teens to create the best "Midnight Snack." Next week, we'll have a Reptiles and Amphibians activity on Thursday.

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

The department has been engaged with typical support and troubleshooting this week, including desktops and servers, hardware and software. We've also completed configuration of the tablets for the Development Review Board, which should go out to the board members soon; these tablets will dramatically decrease the time, effort, and paper that goes in to photocopies for the board's business.

Police Department –Chuck Kirker, Police Chief

The summer is a great time to get to know your neighbors. Over the last few years a number of neighborhoods have started a tradition of holding Block Parties. The police department supports these events and has the authority to even close streets for this purpose. We feel familiarity with your neighbors can help reduce crime. Call or write a letter to the Chief of Police requesting a closure of your street if you want to have an event.

Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads - Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Colchester Rescue responded to 19 calls, and turned over 2 calls. Of the 19 responses, 13 people were transported to the hospital. Two of the patients were from the same call. Our monthly squad training was held at Bayside beach, and was a great opportunity to get some hands on training in water rescue. Since we have so much water front in Colchester, this is a training the squad tries to do annually.

Colchester Technical Rescue responded to the Richmond "pot holes" (swimming hole) for a person struck in the water. However, personnel on scene were able to help the person out of the water, and the Technical Rescue team was cancelled en route.

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

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

Reconstruction of the Colchester Causeway will begin on Monday, July 30th. This means that the Causeway will be closed and there will not be any access to that area while construction is taking place. This is a 14 week project that needs intensive attention to the work being done without worrying about people walking/biking on the path. We will do our best to update the public through the media about how the construction is proceeding. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Glen Cuttitta, Parks and Recreation Director at 264-5641/gcuttitta@colchestervt.gov

Looking for a volunteer opportunity? Come join us by helping us with our newest event. The Muck It Up race is an outdoor adventure race that will be held on Saturday, September 15. All volunteers receive a really cool t-shirt and a fun experience. Call Derek Mitchell at 264-5642/dmitchell@colchestervt.gov if you are interested.

Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

- Cleaned and inspected 35 storm water catch basins as required under a federal permit. The Town has approximately 2,500 catch basins.
- Completed 10 miles of roadside mowing to improve sight distances and allow proper roadside drainage.
- Performed a complete rebuild of a primary pump within one of the Town's 12 wastewater pumping stations.
- Issued a request for proposals to convert the Town's 830 street lights to more efficient LED fixtures.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

Attention Colchester Business Owners-

The Town of Colchester is in the process of developing an interactive business map to promote Colchester businesses. This map-based directory will be published on the Town's website and provide visitors and residents of Colchester a quick and easy way to find out more about local businesses.

The Town of Colchester is home to over 500 businesses- providing a rich variety of goods and services to the Colchester community. It is our hope that this online platform will make businesses more accessible to customers, encourage buying from local businesses, and continue to stimulate a healthy business environment.

If your business is interested in being listed in the directory, please email your business name, address, contact information (owner name, email, website), and a short business description to our project intern, John Neri, at jneri@colchestervt.gov. There will be no charge to be listed in the directory. Questions and comments are welcome.

Clerk's Office – Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Town Clerk's Office – The deadline for appealing your assessment to the Board of Civil Authority was July 13th. With all of the appeals in the BCA will be hearing the following: 107 camps on leased land (includes the 44 camps that are pending from last year, 63 new camps) and 6 other appeals for a total of 113. Last year the BCA heard 300 appeals.

Election note: We are gearing up for a busy presidential election year. Please consider registering to vote if you are new to town. And do not forget that the state primary is August 28th. District 9-1 will vote at the Meeting House on Main St, and District 9-2 will be voting at Malletts Bay School on Blakely Road.

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

Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

The Assessor's Office has busy over the last couple of months preparing information for appeals of the Board of Civil Authority's 2011 decisions to the State Appraiser and Superior Court. We are also working on assigning E-911 addresses to the new buildings being built this spring and summer. We will soon be inspecting properties that have been issued permits after April 1, 2012.

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

This week the Select Board adopted a Fraud Prevention Policy that was promoted by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and our auditors. The policy provides employees and officers who may suspect fraud with a protocol for reporting it. There has been a lot of press recently about fraud in various municipalities in Vermont. In Colchester we are being proactive to make sure that it doesn't happen here. We have had our auditors speak to our employees to increase their awareness of fraud. We are reviewing our internal controls to make sure we have adequate controls in place.

Town Manager's Office – Al Voegele, Town Manager

On Friday of last week Judge Crawford, hearing the appeals on the "amenity" value of leased land, ruled that the Court will not reconsider its original opinion. On Tuesday evening the Selectboard approved appealing Judge Crawford's decision to the Supreme Court and also agreeing to ask the Supreme Court to combine the State Assessor's decision the Town appealed earlier to the Supreme Court with the appeal of Judge Crawford's decision. But before we get to appealing Judge Crawford's decision the "disputing parties" still have a legal way to go in "negotiating" the Court's final "judgment". The Court's decision is posted on the Town's website.