

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of June 26, 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

Happy Fourth of July to all!

The 45th Annual Colchester 4th of July Celebration schedule is as follows:

- Fun Run at Union Memorial School begins at 8:15 a.m.
- Burnham Library has watermelon as well as bathrooms during the parade
- Open House at Colchester Center Fire Dept. 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- 4th of July Parade starts at 11:00 a.m. on Main Street. Parade Marshal is the Division I State Champion Colchester Boys Soccer Team
- Swimming at Bayside Park from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Supersounds inflatable zone from 6-9 pm at Bayside Park
- Music Entertainment (The Hitmen) Bayside Pavilion from 6:45- 8:45 p.m.
- Fireworks at Dusk from the Bayside Softball Field

Thank you to our hard-working Parks and Recreation Department and Emergency Response providers who will be putting in long hours for your enjoyment and safety.

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

Assessor's Office—Bob Vickery, Assessor

The Assessor's Office has lodged the Fiscal Year 2015 Grand List (GL) in the Colchester Town Clerk's office.

- The FY 2015 "Abstract GL" was lodged and "Change of Assessment Notices" were mailed on May 30, 2014.
- 851 total parcels had site visits, field reviews, updates, or appeals, from the date the FY 2014 GL was lodged to the date the FY 2015 "Abstract GL" was lodged.
- 584 Total Change of Assessment Notices were mailed.
- 170 Assessments were lowered.
- 414 Assessments were increased.
- The Board of Listers (BOL) heard 33 appeals this year resulting in 42 BOL decisions and 28 changes to the assessments.
- At the close of the Board of Lister hearings the Abstract GL became the GL.

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

- The taxable FY 2015 GL is \$2,003,304,600.
- The net growth was \$31,890,600 or 1.62% increase over the FY 2014 GL as reported on the 2014 Tax Warrant.

For more information about the Assessor's Department, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Assessor/assessorHome.shtml> or call (802) 264-5670.

Town Clerk's Office—Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Tax Bills will be in the Mail

- The tax bills will be in the mail by July 15th. We will not know the amount of your state credit until July 10th. Please closely examine your tax bill to make sure that the proper rate has been applied. If you filed your homestead the rate for the education taxes should be the residential rate. The deadline for filing the homestead has been extended to October 15th. Filing late will result in late penalties being applied to the education taxes. The Selectboard voted this past week to reduce the penalty for filing late from 3% to 1 ½ %.
- Taxes are due August 15th. When they are not received on the 15th or postmarked by the U.S. postal service by the 15th they are considered late and subject to an 8% penalty and 1% interest. These rates are set in the charter. The town charter is in the process of being reviewed and we are recommending that the penalty amount be reduced, due to the many requests from the taxpayers.
- You can pay your taxes by check, cash, money order, escrow, auto-debit or credit card. If you pay by credit card there is a convenience fee of 2.6% that is received by the credit card company and not revenue to the town. You can pay by credit card up until midnight on the 15th. Payments will also be accepted in the drop box until midnight on the 15th. Payments received after the 15th in the drop box are considered late and subject to penalty and interest. Please contact us with any questions you may have.

For more information about the Town Clerk's Office, <http://colchestervt.gov/TownClerk/townClerkHome.shtml> or call (802) 264-5520

Finance Department—Aaron Frank, Assistant Town Manager/CFO

Recent activities included:

- Monthly financial report summary: after eleven months, we are 5% under budget on expenses and almost on budget on revenues. Most of the savings are labor related.
- Worked with town staff to re-arrange and centralize internet service which increased capacity and reduced expenses. This is part of a larger project to take full advantage of the Town/School fiber optic lines in the Blakely Road area.
- Public Works has reduced building cleaning expenses by \$5,800 annually through purchase, rather than rental, of mats and through seasonal variation in contracted cleaning.
- The Windemere Estates Mobile Home Park's water, wastewater, road and stormwater upgrade contract was awarded to Kingsbury Companies by the park owner, The Housing Foundation. Construction will begin after July 1. A meeting for the approximately 200 residents will be held

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Tuesday, July 1, 2014 at 6 p.m. at the Dunbar Café on the Fanny Allen Campus of FAHC. The Town, with voter approval, is backing a 2% loan, which will be repaid with no-tax revenues from the park owner.

A number of Town functions generate significant portions of their expenses from non-property tax revenues. Year to date non-property tax revenue recovery is as follows:

- The Town Clerk and Civil Board, 63%
- Planning and Zoning, 62%
- Rescue and Technical Rescue, 70%
- The Recreation Program (activities in brochures sent to Colchester households), 99%
- Public Safety Dispatch, 46%
- The Sewer Fund, which provides for public sewers along the route 15, in the Exit 16 area, Severance Corners, and Creek Farm Plaza and adjacent neighborhood, generates 100% of its expenses through non-tax revenues.
- Public works, 11%

2014-2015 Municipal Tax Rate

The value of property in Colchester grew \$31,800,600 or 1.62% since April 2013, double what was estimated last January when the budget was set.

The municipal tax rate increase is \$0.0074 (3/4 of 1 cent) per \$100 dollars of property value. This amounts to a tax rate of \$0.5714, an increase of 1.31%

This means the average property taxpayer of a \$300,000 home will pay an increase of \$22.11 for the coming year, less than half the increase of \$49.05 projected at our March town meeting.

For more information about the Finance Department, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Finance/financeHome.shtml> or call (802) 264-5650.

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