

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of June 28, 2013

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:

Town Manager's Office – Dawn Francis, Town Manager

The Selectboard voted to contract for expanded CCTA public transit services as a three year pilot project. Collaboration between CCTA, the Selectboards for Colchester and Milton and town staff has resulted in a transit service option which will be 50 percent lower in costs than in prior years (\$45,000 annually) and will not impact the tax rate as we will be using existing funds. We will reevaluate the service after this trial period to determine its sustainability.

I appointed Jennifer Morrison as the third chief of the Colchester Police Department effective July 29, 2013. The media and members of the public are invited to attend Chief Morrison's swearing-in ceremony at noon on July 29 at the Colchester Police Department, located at 835 Blakely Road. See our website and facebook page for a more detailed press release.

Look for a formal announcement next week when we launch a unified, collaborative communications initiative between the Colchester School District and Town of Colchester in response to residents' call for more information about their government and schools.

Burnham Memorial Library: Hannah Peacock, Assistant Director

Things are busy at Burnham Library, with our full schedule of summer programming - we've got sessions for teens, kids, and adults! Check out our website (<http://colchestervt.gov/Library/>) to see the full list, and to register. This weekend is our annual book sale - it runs Friday 6-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-4 pm, and Sunday 11 am-3 pm. There'll be thousands of books, CD's, and more, rain or shine! On July 4th, the library will be closed, but stop by for watermelon while you watch the parade (11 am)!

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

A new server is placed in the server room and the setup should be completed in a few days along with a new backup system. Helpdesk issues were addressed and some old monitors have been replaced.

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

Police Department – Douglas Allen, Interim Police Chief

Summer is now in full swing and our recreation and park areas become more of a focus for the Police Department. Cpl. Mike Cannon has assumed his seasonal duties as our Marine Officer, patrolling Malletts Bay and surrounding waterways. Colchester has more shoreline than any other Vermont community and keeping it safe can be a challenging task. We also have staffed our community service officer positions with Patrick Mager and Jordan Pasha. Both Patrick and Jordan have experience with emergency services and they act as the Police Department's eyes and ears as they patrol recreation areas and paths in our community.

Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads - Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Rescue responded to 23 EMS calls, and transported 15 people to the hospital for treatment. Technical rescue assisted multiple agencies Monday night, for a motor vehicle crash, involving a tractor trailer that went off the I89 bridge in Winooski. It was a difficult extrication process to remove the truck driver, who was seriously injured. The team is also currently on standby for the potential flooding tonight and tomorrow.

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

We have had our challenges this week with all the rain. We have not had to cancel any camps as we have rain locations for all of them. The 4th of July is next week and with all the rain there is no beach to shoot the fireworks from. Therefore, the Fireworks will be launched from the Bayside Softball Field. There will be spectator seating on the Colchester High School Practice Fields and Upper Bayside Park. The parade will take place on Main Street on the 4th starting at 11 am. For more information on all of the July 4th activities check out our website at www.colchestervt.gov

Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

While we are still working on significant infrastructure repair projects from the 2011 Presidential Damage Declaration, today we are attending an applicant's briefing for the 2013 declaration associated with the heavy rains received in this area during the last week of May where Colchester experienced over \$500,000 in infrastructure damages. While at this meeting, our Operational Staff are taking preparatory steps in the wake of a severe weather warning for the next several days which may bring several inches of rain to our area as well as wide spread flooding and more damage to critical infrastructure. Funding these types of repairs can be extremely challenging, and these large scale un-planned infrastructure projects also create a tremendous drain on the department's staff from each one of our maintenance workers, to our engineers, managers and support staff who are already managing over 20 large scale infrastructure projects as well as operating a very large maintenance program that spans over

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five maintenance divisions. We understand, however, that the community continues to have daily needs ranging from grading and dust control of gravel roads to addressing small isolated drainage problems in front of their homes. We are here and dedicated to addressing these issues for all residents but would ask for your continued patience as we attempt to balance all of these issues which are competing for a limited amount of resources.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

The Planning and Zoning Department would like to remind property owners with active sites to check erosion control measures and make adjustments where necessary to ensure that they are working properly due to the heavy rains. On June 26th the DRB met and approved

- An outside propane storage distribution facility at 359 Jasper Mine Road,
- A 9,600 sq. ft. truck and equipment storage building at 567 Depot Road,
- A preliminary plat approval for a nine lot, seven unit residential subdivision at 812 Holy Cross Road.

Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

The 2013 Grand List has been completed. Appeal hearings to the Board of Listers are complete and the Results of Grievance Notices have been mailed. The Select Board has approved the warrant with the FY 2013/2014 Grand List at \$19,714,140 and the municipal tax rate. The tax rate will be \$0.5640, which is 0.4 cents less than was projected at Town Meeting. If you have any questions please contact the Assessor's Office @ (802) 264-5670.

Finance – Joan Boehm, Asst. Town Manager/CFO

The month of May represents 92% of the fiscal year completed. During the month of May, in the General Fund, we recorded \$868,700 in revenues from property taxes and other sources. Expenses for May were \$917,999. The net of these is a deficit for the month of \$49,635. We expect to have a surplus for the year of about \$375,000, but it is difficult to determine the amount as June is traditionally a high expenditure month. The surplus is due primarily to staff vacancies and a renegotiation of health insurance benefits resulting in lower costs.

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