

Colchester's Weekly Town News

For the Week of October 12, 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

This week at the library, we had a full slate of stories, music, and tutoring. The Farmers' Market finished up for the year, and despite some inclement weather, there was still food, vendors, and singing. Our Parent-Child sign language class is beginning again on Tuesdays at 11:30, so call the library to register. And though it's still a couple of weeks away, we'd like to remind everyone about our Halloween party (10/29 - 4 pm) for kids up to age ten - call to sign up!

IT – Alice Greig – Technology Department

Angry Birds and Bad Piggies ! The technology department watches out for viruses, adware, spyware, malware, etc. This week we have been warned about a new scam relating to a popular game - Angry Birds. Just like a popular television show this game has a spin-off called Bad Piggies. Those who use Google's Chrome browser in order to surf the web have been told that Bad Piggies is now available FREE for use with the browser. The problem is that there is no current version of Bad Piggies (as of Oct. 9) that will work with Google Chrome. If you search on the web for the new Bad Piggies game you will come up with some links to download the game for your Chrome browser -- DON'T DO IT ! It's another example of scammers just getting as much information about you from your computer as it can get.

These Bad Piggies downloads write to your computer a bit of software that will track you and attempt to get as much information about you and your interests as it possibly can. Always check out anything that is offered 'free' on the internet -- is usually isn't free and can cause harm to your computer or to you. Taking a minute or two to search for information about a download before you install it can save you a lot of future problems.

Police Department –Chuck Kirker, Police Chief

This past week, the Colchester Police Department has been busy with the first round of annual block training. The Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council mandates that each full time certified police officer receive a minimum of 24 hours of training each year, to include certain mandatory subject

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matters. These include firearms qualifications, first aid, and domestic violence. This agency has always exceeded the minimum set by the council.

As part of the training cycle, half of the officers are taken off the schedule for three days to receive training. The second half of the department will complete the training cycle in two weeks.

This year's training includes use of force, investigation of stalking complaints, License Plate Reader policies and procedures, Taser recertification, and in house training on our new payroll and scheduling software.

Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads - Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

Colchester Rescue responded to 27 EMS calls this past week, and transported 14 people to the hospital. Did you know that most of our volunteers run a 12 hour shift a week, as well as cover another 12 hours a month on a weekend. This does not include our monthly training, extra shifts picked up to help with coverage, or any standby events, and Outreach projects the volunteers do! EMTs, no matter what level they are certified at, must also complete 72 hours of continuing education every two years, just to keep their certification. Our volunteers give a lot of their personal time to provide EMS services to the Town of Colchester, in turn saving the tax payers hundreds of thousands of dollars in salaries and benefits.

Colchester Technical Rescue did not respond to any calls this week. This specialized team is comprised of 25 volunteers, who train a minimum of twice a month. This does not include the other courses they must attend, just to obtain initial certification in all of the areas they have to be trained in.

Parks and Recreation – Glen Cuttitta, Director

This current week our Recreation Division is working on the Winter/Spring Program Guide. We are having some great success finding new programs to offer to the community. Staff is also learning a new publishing software InDesign which we are using to create the guide. Also, we are preparing for our newest event "Junk in the Trunk". This is a rummage sale at Bayside Park on Saturday, Oct 13th. If you are interested in selling some items please contact Kelly McGinley at 264-5646. We also need folks to come by and purchase those items, you never know what gems you will find. This event takes place from 8-Noon on Saturday.

The Parks Division is still mowing grass and preparing baseball and softball fields for the spring. We purchased more infield material and added it to the existing fields to level out some low spots to allow the fields to drain better after rains. We repaired two sink holes that have been gradually getting larger on the Bayside Softball Field.

The Colchester Causeway is getting very close to completion. The contractor is currently putting down the final surfacing material this week and into next week. We anticipate completion by the end of October. Please do not go out on the Causeway until the project is completed.

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Public Works – Bryan Osborne, Director

A speed study for East Lakeshore Drive was recently completed for the Town by the Chittenden county Regional Planning Organization. Although the study presented evidence that the posted speed limit on the southern end of East Lakeshore Drive is lower than what it should be, the department recommended to the Select Board that the existing speed limits remain in place. The Board accepted this recommendation. The completed Speed study can be viewed on the Department's web site.

The Department's facility maintenance personnel went through an extensive training program to become acclimated to the new Police Facility. The facility is equipped with sophisticated systems aimed at high efficiency.

Work has commenced on repairing a storm water outfall on East Lakeshore Drive damaged by ice flows this past spring.

A meeting was held with the design team working on the upgrade of the Severance Corners intersection. These improvements are critical to the future development of the Town's Growth Center and economic development plans.

Planning & Zoning - Sarah Hadd, Director

The Department of Planning & Zoning has received notice of three wireless antenna projects in Colchester. These projects are exempt from local regulation and are solely under the jurisdiction of the Vermont Public Service Board and include two installations on existing farm silos on Mallets Bay Avenue (Thibault Farm) and on Roosevelt Highway (Elm Hill Farm). The third project will include the construction of a new tower on an undeveloped site on Clay Point Road across from the intersection of Brae Loch Road. We have also received many calls on the Vt Gas pipeline project occurring along the Munson Flats section of Roosevelt Highway just north of the Village. This project is also under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Board and exempt from local permits. This is a trunk line project that reroute an existing supply line and is unrelated to any other construction or development.

Clerk's Office – Karen Richard, Town Clerk

Early Voters: "Get your Can to the Polls!" If you are stopping by the Town Office to cast your ballot for the November election please consider donating non-perishable items to benefit the local Colchester Food Shelf. There will be a box in the lobby area to deposit your items.

The Colchester Food Shelf will be hosting a food drive on the day of the presidential election. There will be a vehicle at each polling location parked near the entrance to accept donations of canned goods and other non-perishable items. District 9-1 will be voting at Our Lady of Grace Church, downstairs. District 9-2 will be voting at Colchester High School.

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Assessor – Bob Vickery, Assessor

The Assessor's Office continues to reorganizing the filing system for property records. This includes updating the Record Retentions Guidelines to conform to State recommendation, so that outdated files, correspondence, and redundant information are not taking up space. We will also be utilizing an electronic fillings system to have associated documents linked to the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) software. This will allow us to review a property's data and any information that might help in determining the property's value in one place. These changes will create efficiencies by consolidating data and have a better use of the limited space.

Town Manager's Office and Finance Office– Joan Boehm (Asst. Town Manager/CFO)

Did you know that the Town administration provides the Selectboard and citizens with a financial summary of where the Town stands each month. The CFO gives this report at the Selectboard meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Prior to the meeting the report may be viewed by going to the Town's website and clicking on "Agendas/Minutes". This will take you to Clerk Base, then click on agendas and select the date. On the agenda you will see the Chief Financial Officer's report. The word "report" will be in blue. If you click on this, it will take you to copies of that month's financial reports.

In addition to the financial report, any item shown in blue can be clicked on to get copies of data relating to that subject. We welcome our citizens reviewing these documents regularly to stay informed about the happenings in Town.