



## **For the Week Ending August 7, 2015**

While by no means a total representation of all the work performed by the Town, the following highlights some Departments' activities:

### **Town Manager's Office Dawn Francis, Town Manager**

The Malletts Bay Cemetery has received a face lift! We are investing over \$26,000 of the cemetery maintenance fund (provided by lot sale revenues) to accomplish:

- removal of large, dead trees within and on the fence line of the cemetery
- new fencing along three sides
- new signage (to be installed soon)

Thanks for the hard work of our new Cemetery Advisory Committee (enabled by the charter changes passed in March); Karen Richard, Town Clerk; Parks and Recreation Director, Glen Cuttitta and our Parks staff; DJ's Tree Service and the Middlebury Fence Company! Our plan is to tackle improvements to all six cemeteries over the next six years.

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 been upgrading the GIS Map / Assessment Data web page. This is a very time consuming process as each parcel file must be converted into PDF format, renamed, and then uploaded onto the webpage. Although we can convert and rename large batches of files at once, we are limited on the number of files that can be uploaded at a time.

We are also reviewing and correcting any files on the web page that may not have data linked to them. Lack of data may be caused by a number of reasons such as

- One owner of multiple contiguous lots that generate only one tax bill for all the lots
- Multiple owners in-common of one lot
- New subdivisions where the data has not been linked yet.

This will be an ongoing process as parcel ownership changes and new parcels are created every year.

We are also working on a new version of the map webpage that will not require users to download Silverlight. This new version will be accessible to more users, including

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users those who have iPhones and iPads. We are hoping to roll out the new version this month. We would appreciate public feedback about their GIS Maps experience to help us improve everyone's accessibility to this data.

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**

- The first installment on taxes is due August 17th, since the 15th falls on a Saturday. If the tax payments are not postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or are not received by the Town Office by the 17th of August they are considered late and subject to 5% penalty and 1% interest. If they are not paid in 30 days there will be an additional 3% penalty assessed. These rates are set in the Town Charter. The Town Charter was amended last year to reduce the penalty amount from 8% to 5% for the first 30 days, in response to taxpayers' comments.
- The tax bills were mailed last month. If you have not yet received your bill please contact us. Each year citizens change their mailing addresses or decide to receive their mail at a PO Box and fail to inform us. We have had many tax bills returned to us as undeliverable.
- If the property is your primary residence please check your tax bill carefully to see if you received the residential rate. If you have questions about your tax bill please contact us at 264-5520.
- 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; it is not revenue to the Town. You can pay by credit card until midnight on the 17th. Payments will also be accepted in the drop box at the front of the Town Office until midnight on the 17th. Drop box payments received after the 17th are considered late and subject to penalty and interest.

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**

- After completing fiscal year 2015, we are about \$100,000 (1%) over budget for revenues and about \$220,000 (2.2%) under budget for expenses. Major areas of expense savings included wages, benefits, and legal fees. We combined a few positions with retirements, negotiated health care agreements with no cost increase, and have drafted contracts and negotiated agreements with less legal assistance in the past. Revenues were higher than expected in planning and

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zoning, rescue, and funds earned from administration of a community development grant.

- We have completed an upgrade to improve the radio system for the Town's volunteer fire departments.
- Working with Town staff on our six year capital program on which the Selectboard will hold public hearings this fall.
- Drafted an agreement between Vermont Gas and the Town to provide additional funding to the Town over the next five years in consideration for a private property transaction that was made for considerably more than assessed value.
- Completed the inventory of all Town fixed assets purchased with general fund (property tax funding).

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