



Colchester Town News

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Colchester-What do you want to do today?

For the Week Ending January 29, 2016

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**

If you are out of town for February vacation, *please remember to vote before you leave*. After February 11, you can request or pick up an absentee ballot to vote on the budget and three capital plan authorizations.

The proposed FY17 budget maintains the same level of services, but recognizes that we have needs for increased public safety dispatch, police coverage, and additional needs for our volunteer fire departments. We are also challenged by state mandates for stormwater management. Eight of our twenty-six program areas were reduced and one was level funded in our budget proposal. A summary of the budget and how we used your investment in the community will be included in next week's Sun, mailed to residents and is posted on our website. Copies of the Town Report will be available at the Town Meeting, the Town offices, Burnham Library and at our website: www.colchestervt.gov.

The Selectboard and I thank our voters for supporting the budget and approving the local option tax (LOT) in 2015. The expected revenue from the LOT, along with cost savings from operational efficiencies, allowed us to deliver a 5.4% lower municipal tax bill to Colchester residents for FY 16. We also appreciate Town staff for helping us come in under budget for two consecutive years. The FY14 budget surplus of \$207,530 was used to reduce taxes in FY16 and a FY15 budget surplus of \$187,791 will be used to help reduce the need for property taxes in FY17. Thanks to a team effort, we realized cost savings in building maintenance and energy use, telecommunications contracts, bond interest, and our police vehicle fleet. Our Grand List also increased by 1.69%, due in part to our economic development marketing efforts. As a result, the estimated municipal tax rate will increase by 1.3% or three-quarters of a penny.

We hope to see you at the Community Dinner & Annual Town Meeting on February 29 at CHS and on Voting Day, March 1 if you do not choose to vote by absentee ballot.

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

For further information or comment, please call Linda Kingston at 802.264.5509



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Police Department Lt. Douglas Allen

Over the past month Colchester Police Department responded to 631 calls for service and had 393 contacts with drivers. Eighteen persons were arrested during this time on charges ranging from domestic assault, to drug offenses, being a fugitive from justice, larceny, and other crimes. Our DARE and School Resource Officers are fully engaged in our school district providing support, education, and law enforcement services to the students as well as the faculty and staff of our five schools. This year we celebrate 25 years of having the DARE program integrated in Colchester schools.

We continue our recruitment process for hiring one Police Officer and a Communications Specialist for the department to replace individuals who left for other positions.

For more information about Colchester Police Department, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/police> or call (802) 264-5556 (non-emergency).

Rescue and Technical Rescue Squads Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief

2015 ended another busy year for us. We received 1260 requests for service, putting us 110 calls ahead of 2014.

So far 2016 has started off a bit slower than usual, with 68 requests for service and 44 people transported to the hospital. This just means that people are staying safe and healthy so far this year! However, it does seem like our calls have been coming in twos lately. So far this month we have turned over 4 calls while already on a call.

Over the past few months all of our members have been working on Annual Training. Some of the topics include Hazmat, HIPAA, Exposure Control, and review of our own policies and procedures.

For more information about Colchester Rescue, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/rescue> or call (802) 264-5990.

For further information or comment, please call Linda Kingston at 802.264.5509