

## **For the Week Ending March 3, 2017**

### **Upcoming Town meetings\*:**

- **Annual Meeting!** Monday, March 6, 2017
  - 5:30 PM-Community Dinner, Colchester High School Cafeteria, Laker Lane off Blakely Road
  - 6:30 PM – Voter Check-In
  - 7:00 PM Town Annual Meeting & School District Annual Meeting, Colchester High School Auditorium
- **Planning Commission:** Tuesday, March 7, 7:00 PM
- **Recreation Advisory Board:** Wednesday, March 8, 7 AM, Champlain Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- **Development Review Board:** Wednesday, March 8, 7 PM
- **Selectboard:** Tuesday, March 14, 6:30 PM
- **Selectboard Special Meeting; Public Hearing on Possible Vicious Dog:** Wednesday, March 15, 6:30 PM

\*All meeting take place at the Town Offices, 781 Blakely Road, Outer Bay Conference Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, unless otherwise noted.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- **VOTE:** Tuesday, March 7, 7AM – 7 PM Colchester High School Gymnasium – Not registered to vote? You may now register to vote anytime—even at the polls!

## **Message of the Week** Regional Dispatch

The concept of a regionalized emergency dispatch service for Chittenden County has been around for over 50 years. More recently, 22 years ago the State of Vermont received a grant, with the help Senator Patrick Leahy, to conduct a feasibility study for a Regional Emergency Communications Center, but the concept failed to materialize. Today, momentum is building and the idea appears to be gaining more traction among the key stakeholders in the County.

The Town of Colchester has operated a joint dispatch center with the town of Milton for the last two decades. The arrangement provides better service at a lower cost than either town could provide operating on its own.

Last year, in the interest of expanding the economies of scale, providing improved response times and service, as well as attracting and retaining highly trained dispatchers, we joined eight other Chittenden County communities to provide

guidance to a consulting team that conducted an implementation study on the viability and benefits of regionalized dispatch. The results confirmed that this is an area of local government that works better on a regional scale.

The study revealed a single countywide dispatch operation would provide:

- Faster emergency services response times (up to 5 minutes, or 90 seconds on average) by co-location of 911 and dispatch
- Redundancy staffing for major emergencies
- Increased training, quality assurance, support, and career opportunities for dispatch staff
- Streamlined cross city/town mutual aid for fire, rescue and police services
- Better support for fire and rescue staff in the field

Concurrent with the implementation study, our nine communities researched options for a governance structure. It was unanimously agreed a union municipal district was our best choice. Its advantages include the ability to enact and enforce ordinances for alarms or false 911 calls, lower municipal borrowing rates with the ability to qualify for grants as a municipality, and more.

Our next step will be to create a “Joint Survey Committee,” which is required by state statutes. There will be a number of steps to follow, but it is possible that the citizens of the partnering communities will be able to vote on membership at their 2018 Town meetings. A phasing in of dispatch operations could begin as early as July 1, 2018 if there is widespread support and numerous operational challenges overcome. We’ll be keeping you informed as the process continues.

Information is available online at <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/regional-dispatch/>. If you would like more information about Regional Dispatch you may contact Aaron Frank at 264-5509.

**Police Department**  
**Jennifer Morrison, Police Chief**

During the month of February, Colchester Police Department had 833 calls for service. We stopped 145 drivers for various violations and made 21 arrests on 26 criminal charges ranging from felony Aggravated Domestic Assault to DUI, to Unlawful Trespass, to Leaving the Scene of a Motor Vehicle Crash.

Colchester Police administration continues to tackle several issues on local, regional, and statewide levels. We are currently working with Town officials on a regional dispatch initiative. We are also working with various partners on a collective

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

Chittenden County law enforcement recruitment drive, and Chief Morrison is continuing her work on a statewide basis with Fair and Impartial Policing initiative.

We learned this month that Sergeant Peter Hull has been accepted to the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA. This 10 week program is a premier training program for police leaders. We congratulate Pete on his accomplishment.

In recognition of our 50th anniversary, our department has developed a new shoulder patch that officers will begin to wear this week. The emblem recognizes our past with our inception date and looks forward to the future with the new Town logo in the center.

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**

Colchester Rescue continues to be busy, with 220 calls for service so far this year. In February we received 105 requests, which was slightly fewer than January. We transported 65 people to the hospital, turned over seven calls, and responded for mutual aid (outside of our primary area) 26 times.

Taking a look at call volume by shifts [A shift is 12 hours, 6 AM-6 PM and 6 PM-6 AM]: the busiest shift this month was a Friday night with twelve calls. A Wednesday daytime was close behind, at ten calls. Our two slowest shifts were a Tuesday night with three calls and a Monday night with four.

As we start looking ahead to the spring and summer months, our call volume is sure to continue to increase. We will also see more standby and outreach events.

Stay safe out there!

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

### **Selectboard Meeting Highlights February 28, 2017**

- Revised Colchester Cemetery Rules and Regulations were approved by the Selectboard. Thank you to the Cemetery Advisory Committee for their hard work bringing the Regulations up to date.

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



- The Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) for 2017 were reviewed and approved. Thanks to Sgt. Jeff Bean, Seth Lasker, and Aaron Frank, Deputy Town Manager for their roles in keeping the Plan updated on an annual basis.
- The Selectboard approved a Capital Budget amendment and the purchase of an Asphalt Hot Box for the Department of Public Works. This will result in fewer worker injuries and improved paving results.
- An Amusement License was approved for the American Legion Post 91 located on Roosevelt Highway.
- The Town received the Stipulation regarding the Equalized Education Property Value, the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) and the Coefficient of Dispersion from the State of Vermont. The Selectboard signed the Stipulation which equaled a reduction in the Education Tax rate.

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