

**For the Week of:
August 14, 2017**

**Manager's Message of the Week
Dawn Francis, Town Manager**

Revision of Chapter 6: Animals, Colchester Code of Ordinances

The Selectboard held a public hearing on Tuesday, August 8 on the revision of the Colchester Code of Ordinances "Chapter 6. Animals" and adopted the revised chapter later in the meeting. Chapter 6 has been re-titled "Dogs and Wolf Hybrids." Its purpose is "to regulate the keeping of dogs and wolf hybrids and to provide for their leashing, muzzling, restraint, impoundment and destruction and their running at large, so as to protect the public health and safety of the Town and the quiet enjoyment of its residents' homes and properties."

Over the past few years the Town had received increasing numbers of complaints regarding animals in general, and dogs in particular. It became clear that we needed to amend the existing ordinance, as it provided little ground on which Colchester police could respond to typical complaints such as dogs running loose or nuisance barking. With the revision of the ordinance Colchester police officers may now issue tickets for violations.

The Number One animal complaint received by the Town is failure to "poop-scoop," whether in public spaces, dogs being allowed to eliminate on private property, or when waste-filled baggies are left behind rather than properly disposed of. Those who fail to remove their dog's waste may now receive either a warning or be fined \$50 for a 1st offense, up to a \$200 fine (and possible impoundment of the dog) for 3rd and subsequent offenses. Lesser waiver fees may apply for persons who decline to contest a ticket in court.

Of course, the best first approach to a neighborhood pet problem is to have a friendly chat with the animal's owner. If you keep the tone non-accusatory and calm you may reach a solution amicably and more easily than you expect. We encourage every owner of a dog (or any other pet) to be a responsible and thoughtful neighbor and citizen.

You can find a copy of the amended Chapter 6. Dogs and Wolf Hybrids at: <http://clerkshq.com/default.ashx?clientsite=Colchester-vt> in "Ordinances Pending Codification."

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

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

Office of the Assessor
Bob Vickery

- Only 22 out of 1,166 residents who received Change of Assessment notices appealed the new assessments to the Board Of Listers; 4 of those 22 appealed further to the Board of Civil Authority
- We will be concluding the appeals to the Board of Civil Authority in August
- The GIS Map and Assessment Data update has been completed
- We are in the process of updating the Property Record cards that can be accessed via the GIS Map; updates should be complete by the end of August
- You may view the online Web Map and Assessment Data by visiting <http://www.axisgis.com/ColchesterVT/>

For more about the Assessor's Office, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/assessor> or call (802) 264-5670.

Office of the Town Clerk
Karen Richard

- The first installment of taxes is due August 15th. When the taxes are not received on the 15th of August or postmarked by the U.S. postal service by the 15th 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 charter. The town charter was changed last year to reduce the penalty amount from 8% to 5% for the first 30 days, in response to the taxpayers' comments.
- 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 and not revenue to the town. You can pay by credit card up until midnight on the 15th. Payments will also be accepted in the drop box until midnight on the 15th. Payments received after the 15th in the drop box are considered late and subject to penalty and interest.

For more about the Town Clerk's Office, <http://colchestervt.gov/townclerk> or call (802) 264-5520

Highlights of the Selectboard Meeting of August 8, 2017

- A public hearing was held on the revised "Chapter 6, Animals" of the Colchester Code of Ordinances. The revised ordinance was adopted by the Selectboard.

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

- The Selectboard adopted a Resolution Reaffirming the Town’s Participation in the Lake Champlain Byway.
- Susan Gilfillan was reappointed as Colchester’s representative to the Winooski Valley Park District.
- Robert Vickery, Assessor, presented the Error and Omissions to the 2017 Grand List and they were approved.
- The Selectboard authorized Dawn Francis, Town Manager, to enter into The Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations (CUSI) Intergovernmental Agreement for a term of three years and to provide to CUSI the support of one officer for the full term.
- A First Class Liquor License was approved for Chef Werks, LLC d.b.a. The Roving Feast.
- The Bayside Park Master Plan was presented by Glen Cuttitta, Director of Parks and Recreation, with a request for guidance on how/whether to proceed with the proposed tunnel that would connect upper Bayside to Lower Bayside Park.
- The Private Roads Winter Maintenance Policy Discussion was begun and shall continue through the September 12 Public Meeting on the subject. The Selectboard intends to develop an official policy on the issue after collecting public input on the matter.

Upcoming Town Meetings:

- **Conservation Commission:** Tuesday, August 22, 5:00 PM. Fieldtrip to Law Island; meet at Coates Island.
- **Selectboard:** Tuesday, August 22, 6:30 PM.
- **Cemetery Advisory Committee: Meeting for August has moved:** Thursday, August 17, 8:00 AM at the Colchester Town Offices in the Champlain Room on the 2nd floor. **There will be no meeting on the Wednesday, August 23.**

All meetings take place at the Colchester Town Offices, 781 Blakely Road, in the Outer Bay Conference Room on the 3rd floor unless otherwise noted.

Upcoming events:

- The Selectboard will hold a Public Meeting on Tuesday, September 12, 2017 for the purpose of taking residents’ comments on the winter maintenance operations of 14 of 41 miles of the Town’s private roads. The meeting will take place at the Town Offices, 781 Blakely Road, in the Outer Bay Conference Room on the 3rd floor. Colchester residents are encouraged to attend this meeting. Further information is available on the Town’s website www.colchestervt.gov under “Popular Links.” Residents should also keep an eye out for a mailing from the Town about the issue before the September 12 meeting.

Traffic Notices:

- **Route 7/2/127:** Work will concentrate along Route 7/2 by Bay Road and the junction of Route 127. Drainage installation will continue and two-way traffic delays throughout the week are anticipated. Access to businesses will remain OPEN at all times. Questions? Contact Jill Barrett, Public Outreach Coordinator at 802.272.1248.
- **I-89 Colchester – Swanton** for the week beginning Sunday, August 13, 2017. All night work, 6:00 pm to 6:00 am Monday: Weather permitting, final paving northbound and southbound between the Lamoille River Bridge and Exit 16 – Colchester lanes beginning at the Lamoille River Bridge proceeding south to Exit 16. Tuesday thru Thursday: Joint work on bridges between Exit 16 & the Lamoille River Bridge northbound. One lane of travel will be maintained within the construction zone. Motorists should plan for minimal delays.

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