

For the Week of January 15, 2018: Managers' Messages of the Week

Letter from Dawn Francis, Town Manager

Dear Residents of Colchester:

As I approach the end of my contract as Town Manager on April 30, 2018, I have decided after much consideration not to request an extension. My husband and I are ready to travel and take on new adventures while we are still healthy and able. Our children have seen more of the world than we have, and it's time for us to enjoy all that we have saved for during our careers. It has been a privilege to serve Colchester, and I have enjoyed working with a remarkable, well-functioning team of boards and commissions, employees, and community members. The Colchester Selectboard serves the community with the public's overall best interest in mind, and is one of the best boards I have worked with in my career. Colchester's employees also deserve special recognition, as they are creative, hard-working, and dedicated individuals, often working long hours, weekends, and nights to provide exceptional services.

Over the last almost five years of working together, our team has accomplished the following:

- Improved Financial Sustainability
- A Clearer Vision for the Community's Future
- Collaborative Relationships (locally, regionally, statewide, and with our federal delegation)
- Modernized Operations, Policies and Regulations
- Capital Improvements and Community-wide "Facelift"
- Improved Transparency and Communications
- Enhanced Branding and Marketing

None of the above would have been possible without the Selectboard's leadership and support, the boards and commissions working together, or the entrepreneurial and talented staff. Our citizens are also engaged and attend many public meetings to assist us in crafting the future in a respectful, civil, and productive manner.

Thank you for this incredible experience. Colchester is blessed with second-to-none natural resources; an attractive built environment providing housing, jobs, and commerce; and quality people with a desire to improve the community and leave it even better for the generations to come. I have been lucky to have been part of this special place for the last five years. I want to assure you I will be working hard with the team over my remaining months to accomplish the community's vision.

Sincerely,
Dawn H. Francis

Aaron Frank, Deputy Town Manager/CFO
Approved Capital Budget Program FY 2019-24

The Town of Colchester avoids debt and related interest payments for most of its capital needs. Like one might save for a new car, the Town saves in advance for many capital items and thus avoids borrowing money and paying interest. This is accomplished through voter approved “pay as you go” capital plans for:

- Transportation
- Facilities, Equipment, and Vehicles
- Park Capital
- Public Safety (including specialized equipment for Police, Rescue, and Technical Rescue)
- Radio Communications (for Police, Public Works/Parks, Rescue and the Volunteer Fire Departments)
- Information Technology (Town-wide, including telecom).

With voter approval, Selectboard support, and staff management, these plans operate efficiently. The lack of debt for the above contributes to the Town’s low debt service ratio of 5.3%. (For local government a service ratio of 10% is acceptable; 20% is concerning.) Debt service ratio is calculated by dividing the general fund debt service (principal and interest payments) by own-source revenue (not including payments from State or other governments).

Multi-year funding is approved by the voters; anticipated replacements and projects are considered annually by Town staff and the Selectboard, with public hearings held to take residents’ comments.

Approved FY 2019 projects and replacements include:

- Paving to include: Prim Road – Macrae Road to Bean Road; Heineberg Drive - city line to Prim Road; West View Drive; Colchester Point Road - Porters Point to Broadlake; Malletts Bay Avenue - Lavigne to Winooski line; Bean Road - Macrae to Prim; Porters Point Extension - Pine Meadow; Watkins, Mayo, Pretty, and East Roads. (\$1 mil+)
- Construction of a bike path on West Lakeshore from Prim to Church Rd
- Facility needs including replacement of Library air conditioning system
- Replace Radio Communication and Information Technology Equipment (\$100K+)
- Evaluation of vehicles that are planned for replacement to include: police boat, road grader, two dump trucks, Technical Rescue truck, police patrol vehicles, and a mower.
- Improvements to parks including paving of paths near the playground at Airport Park and replacement of park signs.

For more visit: <http://www.colchestervt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2937>

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

Selectboard Meeting Highlights from January 9, 2018

- Fiscal Year 2019-24 Capital Budget and Program approved by Selectboard
- Charter changes language was revised and approved for March 2018 ballot
- Certificate of Highway Opening for Brooke Lane was approved and signed
- Proposed General Operating Fund Budget for FY 2019 was approved for March ballot
- Liquor license was approved for Tamra Catering, LLC d.b.a. Hampton Inn, Burlington
- Possible location for a Town solar project was discussed

Upcoming Town Meetings:

- **Selectboard:** Tuesday, January 23, 2018, 6:30 PM
- **Planning Commission:** Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 7:00 PM

(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.)



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