

For the Week of June 1, 2020

Manager's Message
Aaron Frank, Town Manager

George Floyd: The administration of the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Police Department support and endorse the joint statement below from the Vermont Association of Chiefs of Police and the Vermont Police Association. We must, as a community, defeat any culture where actions and inactions of officers are contrary to the goals of policing—to protect and serve the community.

On behalf of the Vermont Association of Chiefs of Police and the Vermont Police Association, I express both outrage and sadness surrounding the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis last week. The actions of one maligned officer with his unwarranted use of force and complete disregard of human life, as well as the inaction of other witnessing officers to intercede and protect, has left the law enforcement community of Vermont stunned and outraged. This incident has once again created a chasm of mistrust, fear, and anger between law enforcement and the people in which we serve which has spread across the nation. There was no reason for the death of George Floyd to occur and the people involved must be held accountable and will be held accountable.

In a matter of minutes, the horrific actions or negligent inaction of these officers have obscured all the tremendously good deeds of compassion and kindness which go unnoticed or unspoken by police officers across the nation each and every day. Here in Vermont, law enforcement has diligently worked hand in hand with people of all communities to develop the trust and respect which should exist between law enforcement and the people that they serve. These efforts will continue. Our goal is to have all people who may feel marginalized to feel safe and secure wherever they may be in Vermont and to continue to build trust for law enforcement. We have been resolute in our pursuit of these goals in the past and we will be even more so in the future.

We urge people across our nation to act with respect and courtesy for one another and to use restraint during these most difficult times. Violence is not the answer. Critical communication and dialogue are stifled when emotions are not controlled. At this time, clear thought, control and determination are key to resolving these issues. We ask all our leaders to renounce violence and to be voices of calmness, reason and unity towards a common goal of respect and compassion for all human lives.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of George Floyd and the community of Minneapolis, Minnesota. We ask everyone to remember them as well, and to work together to make sure mutual respect and dignity for everyone are common place commodities in our wonderful state of Vermont.

Chief George P. Merkel
Vergennes Police Department and President / Vermont Association of Chiefs of Police

Colchester Fire Department: The Town of Colchester's town-wide Fire Department began service today--June 1, 2020! Chief Engineer, Steve Bourgeois and the three full-time weekday daytime firefighters were on duty working on trucks the stations and are ready to respond to calls. The staffing of full-time firefighters was done to augment our volunteer firefighters when we were dangerously short of responding volunteers due to weekday daytime work commitments.

Town Offices: The Town offices/Town Hall at 781 Blakely Road is now open to the public by prior business day appointment for services that cannot be provided over the phone, email, or web access. In order to open up for walk-in service, we are awaiting delivery of clear window dividers to keep the public and staff safe.

Central Costs: The Town of Colchester has reduced its overhead cost by 11% from FY 13 to FY 20. This was determined through a cost allocation plan which shows the percentage of central administrative costs such as human resources, information technology, telecommunications, radio system management, capital management, budgeting, building management, finance and payroll, compared to the cost of direct service

Colchester Causeway: The 2018 wind and high water storm removed 10% of the Colchester Causeway by volume and caused over \$1.8 million in damage. The State of Vermont generously made temporary repairs that allowed us to open in 2018. In 2019, FEMA agreed to provide funding to bring the causeway back to its pre-storm condition. The Town of Colchester waited until after summer 2019 to begin construction.

The work of our contractor got behind schedule due to an early snow and adverse late winter weather, which did not allow for adequate compaction of materials. The project was also hindered by the Governor's orders to keep us safe from COVID-19. As a large complex civil construction project with limited access, significant federal funding requirements, new state rules about workplaces due to COVID-19, specially sized and quarried rock, and skilled labor, it took time to get the project, including its supply chain of materials, back up and going. We expect construction to be completed by September 8th, barring anything significantly unforeseen.

Fourth of July: Given the Governor's orders to keep us safe from COVID-19 cancelled traditional fairs and festivals until further notice, we have cancelled all special events planned at our Town parks through August. This includes the 4th of July Fun Run, Parade, Concert and Fireworks. Also, the Colchester Triathlon, Summer Concert Series and Movies in the Parks have been cancelled this summer. Please enjoy the parks on your own in small groups physically distancing and with non-contact sports.

COVID INFO

Unemployment: Colchester's rate was: 1.9% in February, 2.6% in March, and 13.2% (1,408) in April 2020. Other April percentages: Chittenden County 14.0%; Vermont, 16.8%, and U.S. 14.4%. <http://www.vtmi.info/laus.pdf>

Town Fiscal Impact: In addition to extra expenses related to COVID-19, we have a \$50,000 sewer abatement request, \$17,000 lost planning and zoning revenue just for March, and \$335,000 in outstanding tax revenues from the March installment. Of this \$335,000 outstanding balance of the Town will pay approximately \$251,000 to the State education Fund in a week.

How COVID-19 Spreads: COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person. Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

Changing COVID Info? Is the changing information about this terrible pandemic unsettling? We often hold leaders accountable for the consistency of their positions. But in the scientific world, thinking is expected to evolve based on new evidence — and that's happened during Covid-19. <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/23/why-scientists-change-their-mind-and-disagree.html>

More COVID-19 Pop-Up Test Sites Open for Asymptomatic Vermonters

The Health Department has opened nearly two dozen additional pop-up sites located throughout the state to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19.

Appointment slots are still available. Find locations and make an appointment to be tested at www.humanresources.vermont.gov/popups, or by calling 2-1-1 or 802-828-2828. All clinics operate from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We especially encourage health care workers, first responders, child care providers, and people returning to Vermont – such as college students, people who winter out of state and second home owners – to consider being tested.

Vermonters with Even Mild Symptoms Should Call Their Doctor to Be Tested

People with even mild [symptoms](#) are encouraged to call their health care provider to get tested. This includes parents of children who have possible symptoms. Your health care provider will ensure you receive proper care and treatment. If you don't have a health care provider: Dial 2-1-1 to connect with a [community or hospital-connected clinic](#).

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

Planning and Zoning Department

For further information or comment: 802.264.5509 or townmanager@colchestervt.gov

Sarah Hadd, Director

Summer always brings a flurry of home repair and improvement projects. Please consult the Town's web site to see if the work you are planning requires a permit. Permits can be submitted on-line. Go to <https://colchestervt.gov/3167/Apply-for-Permit-Online>

The Development Review Board met on May 12th and granted the following:

Final Plat and Site Plan applications of John and Marianne Terrien for a two (2) lot subdivision of a 1.83 acre parcel in the GD1 District located at 419 Main Street.

Final Plat amendment of Rivers Edge Building Development to a previously approved 49 unit, 28 lot planned residential Amendment is to: 1) increase footprint lot 1A to 2,721 sq. ft.; and 2) increase footprint lot 1B to 2,868 sq. ft. located at 129 and 127 Annas Court.

Final Plat application of Robby and Carla Mazza for a two (2) lot planned unit development on a 110 acre parcel in the R5 District located at 1156 Middle Road.

For more visit <http://colchestervt.gov/planningz> or call (802) 264-5600.

Rescue Squad
Scott Crady, Rescue Chief

Clayton Cameron, one of Rescue's full time employees has resigned last week. Clayton has taken a full time employment position with the State of VT Medical Examiner's Office. This position has been a passion for Clayton as he has worked for the Medical Examiner's office part time for a few years. Clayton will stay on with Rescue in a part time capacity. We wish Clayton the best of luck.

The staff at Rescue, Volunteer and Career, are all healthy and in great spirits. COVID-19 has created many operational changes, some of which many of our providers have never had to work under. All personnel have stepped up to this challenge and trained hard to work in this new environment of required PPE. They have done this without complaint as they have a passion for delivering quality care and keeping everyone safe, patients and staff during these unprecedented times.

During COVID-19 Rescue has had to limit potential exposure to personnel as everyone in the country has had to do. With this limited staffing we have suspended bringing new volunteers into Rescue. We are looking at our current staffing, which is strong, state mandated restriction of workplace gatherings and our future needs. We hope to start interviewing potential volunteers soon.

There were 137 emergency medical calls in the last 30 days, compared to 122 calls last year for this time frame.

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

For further information or comment: 802.264.5509 or townmanager@colchestervt.gov

Upcoming Town Meetings: held remotely until further notice

- **Agendas available:** <https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt>
- **Planning Commission:** 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 7:00pm. Next meeting: TBD
- **Development Review Board:** 2nd Wednesday of the month, 7:00pm. Next meeting 6/10/20 via zoom.
- **Recreation Advisory Board:** 2nd Wednesday of the month, 7:00am. Next meeting TBD
- **Conservation Commission:** 3rd Monday of the month, 7:00pm. Next meeting TBD
- **Library Board of Trustees:** 3rd Thursday of the month, 4:30 PM Next meeting 6/18 via zoom.
- **Selectboard:** 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm. Next meeting: 6/9/20.
Dial Uber Conference: (802) 255-4075
Enter Participant PIN = 03883
 - live stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
 - Selectboard Agenda: bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas

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