

## **For the Week of January 25, 2021**

### Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager

### **January 12 Colchester Selectboard Meeting Highlights:** Your Town Selectboard

- Approved regulations on a completed new road, Vicenza Way that was turned over to the Town including: Speed posting of 25 mph; No Parking designation along both sides of the roadway, and placement of stop sign at intersection of Vicenza Way with Windemere Way.

- Voted to support acquisition a 61.47-acre lot by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife for conservation. The lot is currently owned by Vermont Gas Systems and includes 47.5 acres of forested area and 15.2 acres of non-forested naturalized area.

- Received plans for Town Meeting 2021 reflecting the Selectboard's vote in December to hold Town Meeting 2021 by Australian Ballot only due to COVID-19 and the associated risks to our community. The plan includes:

- Mailing prepaid return postcards to all registered voters to provide easy access to mailed out ballots which can be returned by mail or to our secure drop box.
- Allowing early voting whereby a ballot can be obtained from the Town Clerk's office from 7:30AM to noon on business days, voted in the privacy of one's vehicle and dropped off in our secure drop box.
- Allowing in-person voting on Town Meeting Day from 7:00AM to 7:00PM with precautions to increase safety for volunteers, staff, and those who vote in person.
- Completing the Town Report early and posting on the website and making available via social media and newsletters.
- Providing information about the items that require votes on the Town website and in the newsletters, social media and LCATV.
- The Selectboard has now held seven public meetings on the Town's Municipal Services Budget and will offer three additional meetings about the Town Municipal Services Budget where the public can call in to ask questions. For dates and times: <https://colchestervt.gov/342/Town-Meeting-Budget>
- The Town Manager and Deputy Manager will take calls and emails about the Town's Municipal Services Budget and Public Safety Capital Plan.

- Held a public hearing and approved the Town Municipal Services Budget and the Public Safety Capital Plan to be placed on the ballot for Town Meeting votes.

- The proposed **Town Municipal Services Budget** would result in an estimated 2% municipal tax increase for next fiscal year to maintain the current level of municipal services and add resources related to COVID recovery and grant management, highway maintenance and fire equipment maintenance. For a residential property valued at \$300,000 the increase would be \$34/year or 65 cents/week.

More info: <https://colchestervt.gov/349/Proposed-Budget>

Residential Assessed Value	FY 22 Tax Increase	Weekly Increase
\$200,000	\$22	\$0.43
\$250,000	\$28	\$0.54
\$300,000	\$34	\$0.65
\$350,000	\$39	\$0.75
\$400,000	\$45	\$0.86
\$450,000	\$50	\$0.97
\$500,000	\$56	\$1.08

- The **Public Safety Capital Plan** re-authorizes advance savings for specialized public safety equipment such as diagnostic monitors, power cots, stair chairs and radios for Rescue; inflatable boats, air packs, harnesses and a search camera for Rescue; and the police boat. This plan allows us to avoid tax spikes that would be caused by purchasing these items with cash or interest costs if we had to take a loan out to purchase these items. More info:

<https://colchestervt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6388/FY22-FY27-Public-Safety-Capital-Program-Reauthorization-SB-Presentation---revised-12-11-2020>

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## COVID UPDATE:

Registration for the 75 and over age group began on January 25th. Clinics will begin Wednesday January 27<sup>th</sup> at 54 sites in 39 towns including seven in Chittenden County. More information, including a video of how to register:

<http://healthvermont.gov/MyVaccine>

Online registration is best. Please reach out to assist those who don't know how to do that. Registration by phone is available for those who cannot register online from Monday-Friday, 8:15 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at 855-722-7878.

If you make an appointment please keep it and do not cancel or miss the appointment. If you cancel or miss, your vaccine dose may go to waste.

When the state gets more vaccine, they will increase the number of people getting the shots and will be able to move on to additional groups more quickly including: 70 and older; 65 and older, and then those with chronic medical conditions who are not a part of these groups.

**Vermont Vaccine Dashboard:** As of 1/22, 40,318 Vermonters received their first dose of the COVID19 vaccine, and 8,949 people have received their second dose.

See <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-dashboard>

While we wait for vaccine to become more widely available to Vermonters, we must keep up our prevention practices, including physical distancing, mask-wearing, handwashing and staying home when we're sick. <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/protect-yourself-others>

You can also help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by getting tested. If you want to get tested for COVID-19 and have no symptoms, you can visit a location near you. There are now more than 15 regular locations throughout the state, and more of them are now open daily. Many sites now allow you to take a sample yourself, using a short swab in your nose. It's quick, easy and free.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your health care provider to refer you for testing. If you don't have a provider, you can call 2-1-1.

**We were cautious. And yet, somehow, my entire household got COVID-19.**

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/voices/2021/01/17/covid-19-hit-my-entire-household-even-though-cautious-column/4153586001/>

**COVID Cases in Colchester:** 376 total cases as of 1/20/2021; this is 22 new cases in the last seven days (354 cases as of 1/13/2021).

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/current-activity/covid-19-communities>

**St. Michaels College COVID Cases:** No new cases between 1/15/21 and 1/22/2021 with a total case count of 83. See <https://www.smcvt.edu/return-to-campus/covid-dashboard/> for campus COVID updates.

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Parks and Recreation  
Glen Cuttitta, Director

- The Winter/Spring program brochure is available at <https://colchestervt.gov/333/Parks-Recreation>
- At this time we are unable determine if there will be a Youth Basketball Program. We are awaiting guidance from the Agency of Education about the availability to use the schools.

- Staff is working on summer camp programming and staffing. Summer camp and program information should be posted in the next couple of weeks. The program brochures are now digital. Hard copies will no longer be mailed to each household.
- The Airport Park Ice Rink has been flooded! Please follow all State of Vermont Outdoor 4.1 Recreation and Fitness guidelines: <https://accd.vermont.gov/news/update-new-work-safe-additions-stay-home-stay-safe-order#outdoor-recreation-and-fitness>
- Park staff has started to groom Nordic trails at Airport Park, perform maintenance in the parks and its facilities, and remove snow at Town buildings, parks and emergency services.

Visit <https://colchestervt.gov/333/Parks-Recreation> or call 802-264-5640.

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Colchester Police Department  
Chief Doug Allen

- We are being updated on a continual basis from our local, state, and federal partners on information on various threats that have been posted online and in social media surrounding the events in Washington DC on January 6<sup>th</sup> and the inauguration. We have no credible threats on a local or state level. We have been involved in planning and support postures to ensure public safety while safeguarding protected speech and activities.
- Please take every precaution if venturing out on the ice on Malletts Bay or other surrounding waterways. No ice is safe ice. Our weather this winter to date has not been conducive to strong ice accumulation.
- Our December Holiday Traffic Safety Campaign was successful. We made it through the holiday season without a significant motor vehicle crash in our community!
- We bid a fond farewell to Officer Jennifer Czachor and her K-9 partner, Jagger. Officer Czachor is now an investigator with the Vermont Department of Liquor and Lottery Enforcement. Jagger will be enjoying a well-deserved retirement at home with Jen. We thank them both for their service to Colchester.
- Since December 16<sup>th</sup>, CPD has responded to 895 calls for service. These calls resulted in 36 arrests on 44 criminal violations including Domestic Assault, Assault on a Law Enforcement Officer, and Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol among others.

Visit <http://colchestervt.gov/police> or call (802) 264-5555.

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Colchester Rescue  
Chief Scott Crady

- There were 154 emergency medical calls in the last 30 days, compared to 158 calls last year for this time frame.
- The Town of Colchester has many EMS licensed personnel who are interested in working with the Vermont Department of Health to administer COVID-19 vaccinations and to collect COVID-19 samples. Specific training for personnel that focuses on all aspects of operating at a COVID-19 Vaccination and/or Testing Clinic is underway, with many personnel finished and ready to operate. The administration of a vaccine is very similar to what EMS personnel are already trained to do with other medications in the emergency setting. These personnel are excited to be a part of this event of administering and estimated 1.2 million vaccines to Vermonters.
- With winter upon us, if you are able, please take a moment to shovel, salt and/or sand the walk of a loved one or neighbor that may not be able to do so themselves. Injuries due to slips and falls on the ice can have a dramatic life changing effect for some of our community members.

Colchester Rescue: <http://colchestervt.gov/rescue> or call (802) 264-5990.

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Planning & Zoning  
Sarah Hadd, Director

The Colchester Planning and Zoning Department reports the following:

- The Colchester Development Review Board met on January 13<sup>th</sup> via Zoom and approved a seawall at 595 Orchard Shore Rd. The Board also considered a sketch plan application for a three-lot subdivision at 600 Jasper Mine Road and a site plan and conditional use application for expanding the commercial marina at 310, 318, and 371 West Lakeshore Drive. The marina applications were continued until the February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Thinking about a project this spring? A step-by-step permit guide with applications is available at [www.tinyurl.com/colchesterapply](http://www.tinyurl.com/colchesterapply)
- Finished a project and need a final inspection? Requests for inspections and other information can be obtained by emailing [pzinfo@colchestervt.gov](mailto:pzinfo@colchestervt.gov)

- Interested in what a neighbor is constructing or the permit history of a property?  
All of our records are online and searchable at [www.tinyurl.com/colchesterpermits](http://www.tinyurl.com/colchesterpermits)

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

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Colchester Fire Department  
Chief Stephen Bourgeois

- In the last month, our Department has responded to 90 calls for service in Colchester and several incidents outside of Town for Mutual Aide.

- The members are doing well, and the Department continues to function with adjustments due to COVID restrictions to help keep our members and the public safe. Our members have started to receive their COVID vaccinations and we are hopeful this will be completed soon. The vaccinations we anticipate will help reduce the time needed to resume normal operations and in-person training.

- It has been a difficult year for the department to function under the COVID restrictions. Our members have and will continue to provide the best service we can provide to the people we serve. We are all hoping that 2021 will be a better year for all of us and look forward to resuming normal operations.

With winter weather upon us I would like to remind everyone to:

- Have working smoke detectors and CO Alarms, test them once a month and replace batteries twice a year.
- Keep combustibles away from any heating appliance such as wood stoves and space heaters.
- Keep your heating vents clear of any snow and ice.

Visit <https://colchestervt.gov/3245/Fire-Department> or call 802-862-4415.

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## **Upcoming Town Meetings**

Agendas available at: <https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt>

- **Planning Commission:** Next meeting: TBA

- **Development Review Board:** Development Review Board: Next meeting: February 10, 2021 at 7:00 PM via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/9359846003>; Zoom Webinar ID: 935 984 6003
  - Live stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
  - Mail or email public comments prior to the hearing ([lriddle@colchestervt.gov](mailto:lriddle@colchestervt.gov) or Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446) or participate at public comment periods during the Zoom meeting.
- **Recreation Advisory Board:** Next meeting: TBA
- **Conservation Commission:** 3rd Monday of the month. Next meeting: February 15, 2021 via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/94009416919> Dial by phone: 1-929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 940 0941 6919; Passcode: 291046
- **Library Board of Trustees:** Next meeting: February 18, 2021 at 4:30 PM. Dial: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 913 5435 3560 Passcode: 559104.
- **Selectboard:** Next meeting: January 26, 2021 at 6:30 PM.
  - Attend via phone: 1-929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 936 0702 9858; Passcode: 493485
  - or alternatively send a note to [TownManager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:TownManager@colchestervt.gov) with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and their name. As with in-person Citizens to be Heard, we ask that you **SHARE YOUR ADDRESS**. The email will be shared with the entire Selectboard prior to the meeting and included in the information packet at the next meeting.
- Watch the meeting online via live stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Selectboard Agenda: [www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas](http://www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas)

Subscribe to the Town Newsletter: <https://www.colchestervt.gov/list.aspx>

For more information or comment: 264-5509 or [townmanager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:townmanager@colchestervt.gov)