

For the Week of November 7, 2022

Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager



Thank You Veterans!

Veteran's Day is a time to honor those who have defended the nation to protect the life, liberty, equality, democracy and the justice we share. We thank our Veterans for their selfless acts of heroism and everyday efforts that contribute to the American story. In observance of Veteran's Day, the **Town Offices will be closed on Friday, November 11th.**

Colchester Historical Society Wins Award of Merit

The Colchester Historical Society is proud to announce that they were recently presented the League of Local Historical Societies & Museums Award of Merit from the Vermont Historical Society for their Self-Guided Historical Driving Tour.



Inspired by the COVID-19 health pandemic and the inability to hold in-person programs and meetings for more than a year, the Self-Guided Historical Driving Tour provides people with an opportunity to get out-and-about in a fun and safe way to explore and learn about many of Colchester's wonderful historical sites. The great advantage for participants is that the tour can be done on their own time, at their own pace, and without any fees.

The tour includes over 40 local historical sites and, for ease of use, is divided into four broad geographical areas: Colchester village area, Mallett's Bay area, Fort Ethan Allen area, and Airport Park area. There is an additional section that includes six of Colchester's local cemeteries. For each location, the physical address is included, and in some instances a map has been provided. It was noted that our driving tour offers an example for local historical societies who may be geographically expansive and cannot create a more traditional walking tour, as well as "a commendable example of how a small organization responded creatively to pandemic limitations."

"We extend our thanks and appreciation to the Vermont Historical Society for this recognition as well as to the several local volunteers who worked on this project to make it a wonderful, on-going success," said Bonnie Potter, President of the Colchester Historical Society.

Learn more about the driving tour at <https://colchestervt.gov/3257/Driving-Tours>.

Town News Interviews

Financing Assets and Accuracy

An interview with Lara Alemy, Finance Director

by Alicia Tebeau-Sherry, Town Manager's Office, Communications Coordinator

ATS: How does the Finance Department help operations run smoothly for the Town?

LA: The Finance Department is responsible for maintaining accurate, current and reconciled financial information. Our financial data can be used and relied upon at any point to make day-to-day or future resource decisions. Budget and actual reporting is available to all departments for tracking throughout the fiscal year. Financial information is provided publicly monthly in Selectboard packets, and our audited financials are presented by a certified public accountant serving as an external auditor at a Selectboard meeting. The accuracy and ease of obtaining information is essential to keep operations running smoothly.



ATS: What does a day or year look like for you and the Finance Department?

LA: Most days you would walk into the Finance Department to see staff preparing vendor checks, processing payroll, posting journal entries or reconciling accounts. The larger focus of the department changes depending on whether we are preparing for audit, budget preparation, the closing of fiscal year-end or the processing of year-end tax information. Overall, the processes within the department are cyclical, whether bi-weekly, quarterly or annual.

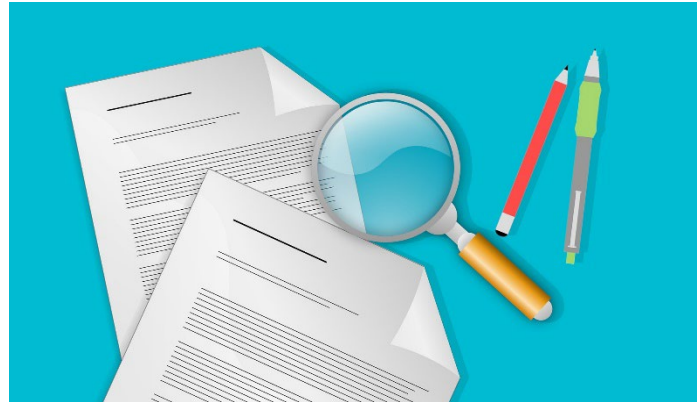
ATS: What does collaboration with other departments look like for you and the Finance Department?

LA: The Finance Department is unique because it works closely with every department in some way. On a routine basis, we are collecting information and communicating with every department to issue accurate payroll and vendor checks. Frequent communication regarding budget revenues and expenditures, progress on grant use and procedural changes is essential to keep us on track and to receive clean audits.

ATS: What has been the most impactful project the Finance Department has been a part of (past, ongoing, or future)?

LA: Although it's not a "project," I believe the most important role the Finance Department plays is obtaining clean audits. It is essential that our financials and our systems are found to be accurate and there is integrity in the information that we present to the public.

Beyond the audit, I believe that our recent change to bi-weekly payroll has made the largest impact on how our department functions. Moving away from a weekly payroll cycle has saved on multiple resources.



ATS: What is something the community might not know that the Finance Department does to help the Town operate?

LA: I find that there is usually confusion about what the Finance Department does versus what the Clerk/Treasurer's Office does. Within the Town of Colchester, Finance does not handle incoming cash for any reason. The Clerk/Treasurer's Office handles most revenue intake, including the Town's Municipal Services Taxes and the State of Vermont's Education Taxes. Finance is responsible for auditing and tracking the incoming revenue collected by the Clerk's Office and reconciling the bank accounts for accuracy. Separating these duties provides for important checks and balances. Ultimately, finance puts in place policies and procedures to safeguard the Town's assets.

Department Updates

Town Clerks Office:

VT General Election

Tuesday, November 8th, 2022

Polls open from 7 AM – 7 PM

Colchester High School

Returning Absentee Voted Ballot/Unused Ballots

- **Use our GREEN Drive-Up Drop Box.** It is available **until Monday, November 7th by 4:30pm.**
- Any US Postal Mailed voted ballots received after November 8th **will not be counted.**
- **The Town Clerk's Office counter will close at noon on Monday, November 7th.**
- **On Tuesday, November 8th,** bring your voted absentee ballot to the Colchester High School Gym. There will be a drop box at the **HELP DESK.**

For more information, please visit

<https://colchestervt.gov/325/Elections-and-Voter-Information> or call the office at 802-264-5520.



Property Taxes

The second installment of Property Tax Bill payments are due November 15, 2022. For more information, please visit <https://colchestervt.gov/329/Property-Taxes> or call the office at 802-264-5520.

Upcoming Town Meetings

Selectboard: Tuesday, November 8th, 6:30 pm at the Colchester Town Offices, 3rd Floor, Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Residents are welcome to attend the meeting or alternatively send a note, up to 1,000 words, to TownManager@colchestervt.gov with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and their name and address in the body of the email. The email will be shared with the entire Selectboard prior to the meeting and included in the information packet at the next meeting (as the information packet for the current meeting is sent out along with the agenda).

- Watch the Meeting Online via Live Stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Agenda: www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas

Development Review Board: Wednesday, November 9th, 7:00 pm at the Colchester Town Offices, 3rd Floor, Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Residents are welcome to attend the meeting or public comments can be submitted prior to the hearing by email to zmaia@colchestervt.gov or by mail to Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446.

Recreation Advisory Board: Wednesday, November 9th, 7:00 am at the Colchester Town Offices.

Library board of Trustees: Thursday, November 17th, 4:00 pm in the Burnham Room of the Burnham Memorial Library.

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

Note: Agendas are posted at least 48 hours before the meeting, so you may find past agendas when clicking the link. Revisiting the link closer to the date of the meeting should provide you with the current agenda.

Subscribe to the Town Newsletter: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/jkMAO2v>

For more information or to comment, call 802-264-5509 or email townmanager@colchestervt.gov