

For the Week of February 13, 2023

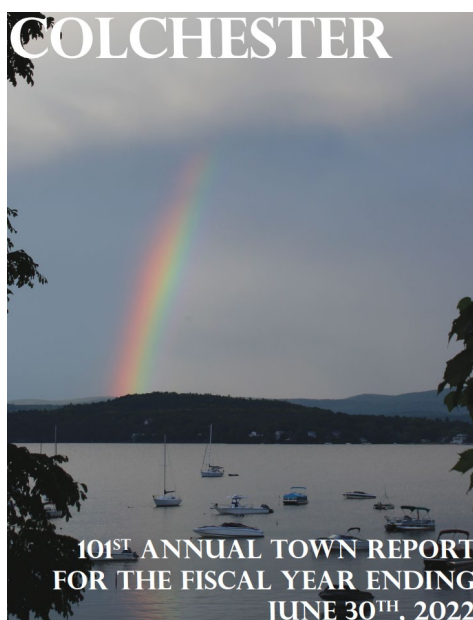
Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager

In observance of Presidents Day, the Town Offices and Burnham Memorial Library will be closed on Monday, February 20, 2023.



Annual Town Report Available!



The Town of Colchester has completed its Annual Town Report. The report includes directories of local officials and services; shares challenges and successes from the past year from your Town Selectboard, boards, commissions and staff, and reviews proposals for the upcoming year. You can pick up a copy from the Town Offices or read it online here: <https://colchestervt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7912/21-22TownReport>



In just a few weeks Town Meeting Day will be here, and your Town Staff wants you to be informed about when, where, and how to vote, and what you are voting on! In-person and absentee/early voting will be available, and we encourage Colchester voters to request an absentee/early ballot ahead of time to be mailed or picked up at Town Hall.

WHEN & WHERE TO VOTE IN-PERSON: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester High School Gymnasium, Laker Lane.

WHEN, WHERE, & HOW TO COMPLETE ABSENTEE/EARLY BALLOT VOTING:

- Visit My Voter Page, <https://mvp.vermont.gov/> to set up your personal voter account to request an absentee ballot be mailed to you directly. From this website, you can track your ballot until it is received and counted.
- Call 802-264-5520 to have your absentee ballot sent by US Postal Mail. Return by mail using the provided return envelope, and be sure to allow time for postal transit!
- Come in to the Town Clerk’s Counter M-F 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. to request an absentee ballot.
- Colchester Election Early/Absentee Ballot Drop Box is located at 781 Blakely Rd. between the Town Hall and Police Dept. buildings.

NOTE: Please be sure to put your voted ballot into the Certificate Envelope and complete the signature section before you drop off. Ballots must be received in the Town Clerk’s Office by 12:00 p.m. or the Drop Box by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, March 6, 2023. These voted ballots sealed in completed Certificate Envelopes can also be dropped off at the polling location (Colchester High School) on Election Day until 7:00 p.m. There will be a drop box at the Help Desk.

BALLOT ITEMS:

Colchester Recreation Center

“Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Colchester in the amount of \$6,907,000.00, subject to available grants-in-aid, be issued under Section 703(c) of the Town Charter and Subchapter 1 of Chapter 53 of Title 24, Vermont Statutes Annotated, payable from the existing 1% local option sales tax over a period not to exceed ten years, and shall the Town use \$9,000,000.00, in previously collected local option sales taxes that are restricted to voter approved capital projects, for the construction of a Recreation Center?”

- The proposed Colchester Recreation Center is a 29,427 sq. ft. multi-generational facility and responds to a community need that has been identified over the past 20 years through multiple surveys, community outreach and engagement.
- This project will be paid entirely from the current and future proceeds generated from the existing 1% Local Option Tax (LOT), approved by voters in 2015 for financing of existing or future voter-approved capital projects.
- NO PROPERTY TAXES will be needed for this project.
- Membership and facility use fees will cover the ongoing operating expenses.
- NO PROPERTY TAXES will be used for operating costs of the Colchester Recreation Center.
- Learn more about the proposed Colchester Recreation Center here: <https://colchestervt.gov/3292/Colchester-Recreation-Center>
- For more information on the Recreation Center, please contact Parks and Recreation Director Glen Cuttitta at 802-264-5641 or gcuttitta@colchestervt.gov.

Town Municipal Services Budget

“Shall the voters of the Town of Colchester approve total general fund expenditures of Fifteen Million, Twenty-Eight Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty-Six Dollars (\$15,028,386) of which Twelve Million, Six Hundred Twenty-Two Thousand, One Hundred Eighty-Nine Dollars (\$12,622,189) shall be raised by taxes and Two Million, Four Hundred Six Thousand, One Hundred Ninety-Seven Dollars (\$2,406,197) by non-tax revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024?”

- Estimated to increase the municipal services tax rate by 5.7%.
- Maintains current level of municipal services and addresses additional resource needs in Information Technology (IT) due to expanding cybersecurity threats, increased service fees for departmental specific software and internet connectivity, as well as a Civilian Evidence Technician in the Colchester Police Department and additional resources required for data storage and transmission for Body Worn Cameras and Digital Evidence Software.
- Residential Municipal Services Property Tax Impact: For a property valued at \$300,000, the increase would be \$99/year or \$1.90/week.
- Learn more about the proposed FY24 Budget here:
<https://colchestervt.gov/349/Budget-Documents>
- For more information on the Budget, please contact Deputy Town Manager Renae Marshall at 802-264-5509 or rmarshall@colchestervt.gov.

Whether in-person or early/absentee, we hope you take part in your Town Government and make your vote count on Town Meeting Day! For more information, refer to <https://colchestervt.gov/325/Elections-and-Voter-Information> for voting information and <https://colchestervt.gov/342/Town-Meeting-Budget> for Town Meeting and ballot item information.

Letter of Support for the Colchester Recreation Center from Planning Commission Chair, Rich Paquette:



781 Blakely Road • Colchester, Vermont • 05446 • 802.264.5500

www.colchestervt.gov

November 2, 2022

Colchester Selectboard
781 Blakely Road
Colchester, VT 05446

RE: Letter of support and finding of compatibility for proposed Community Recreation Center

Dear Members of the Colchester Selectboard,

On behalf of the Colchester Planning Commission, I would like to assert support for the proposed Colchester Community Recreation Center, as presented by the town's Recreation and Parks Director and Recreation Advisory Committee. Our support for the project is aligned with the proposal's compatibility with the Town's vision, current land use, and future land use goals.

We find that the proposed recreation center is compatible with the 2019 Colchester Town Plan. In fact, the support within the plan appears early and often. The plan's introduction states that,

*Proud of the quality of life enjoyed here, the people of Colchester seek to build upon this foundation to ensure economic prosperity, **recreational opportunity**, and an entrepreneurial spirit for future generations."*

With respect to the Inner Bay neighborhood, where the existing Bayside Park facilities are and where the proposed recreation center would be located, the Town Plan states that:

Services and recreational access for residents and tourists should be improved.

The Town Governance chapter of the 2019 adopted town plan speaks to a town recreation center directly:

The Bayside Hazlet and Bayside parcels must be developed to make room for the recreation center.

Policy #3 of that chapter:

3. Make improvements to Bayside-Hazlett property and Bayside Park, ultimately leading to the creation of an indoor recreation facility.

And Action 7 of the same chapter:

7. Advance the Bayside-Hazlett project as funding allows, and continue the recreation impact fee in support of the needs of a growing community.

And the goal of the *Cultivating Colchester* chapter:

Colchester will continue to be a recreation destination with equitable access for all, making it a healthy community to achieve physical, mental, and social wellbeing.

Action item:

3. During the term of this plan, the first phases of the Bayside Park Master Plan are anticipated to be implemented, resulting in increased recreational offerings benefiting the community.

The 2019 Town Plan, drafted by the community, advanced by the Planning Commission, and voted affirmatively for adoption by the Selectboard, fully supports the development of a Community center at the Bayside Hazelett site. The proposal has the support of the Planning Commission for compatibility with this important community-driven plan.

Respectfully,



Rich Paquette, Planning Commission Chair

CC: Adriane Martin, Recreation Advisory Board Chair
Glen Cuttitta, Parks and Recreation Director
Cathynn LaRose, Planning and Zoning Director

Department Updates

Burnham Memorial Library:

AARP Tax Assistance

This is a free service that runs from February until early April for people over the age of 50 who have a low to moderate income. The time slots are filling fast, so book your appointment today by calling the library at 802-264-5660! Saturday morning and Monday afternoon slots are available, and the service takes place at the library.

AARP Volunteer Tax Assistance



Upcoming Town Meetings

Selectboard: Tuesday, February 14th, 6:30 p.m. 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

Library Board of Trustees: Thursday, February 16th, 4:00 p.m. in the Burnham Room of the Burnham Memorial Library.

Conservation Commission: Monday, February 20th, 6:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 2nd Floor, Champlain Room.

Planning Commission: Tuesday, February 21st, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3rd Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road.

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>

Now follow us on Instagram! <https://www.instagram.com/townofcolchestervt/>

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