

**Colchester's Weekly Town News**  
For the Week Ending March 21, 2014

**While by no means a total representation of all the work performed by the Town, the following information highlights some activities which occurred:**

**Town Manager's Office—Dawn Francis, Town Manager**

The initial FY '15 budget presented at Town Meeting requested increases to restore some of the cuts that were made in 2013—specifically, hours of library service, police overtime, and public safety dispatch overtime. The initial budget also included additional time to assist with winter snow removal.

As a result of the Colchester Selectboard's general guidance about budget reductions at the March 11 meeting, staff has prepared budget cuts that are primarily a rescission of the above-noted additions as well as some savings in fuel. The cuts will result in \$129,822 less expenditure and reduce the tax rate from a 1.64 cent increase to less than one cent.

This budget reduction will result in:

- \$129,822 in reduced expenditures, of which 99 percent was staff wages, payroll taxes, and benefits
- 0.5738 tax rate, an increase of 0.98 cents (less than one cent) per hundred dollars of property value
- 1.73 percent property tax increase, rather than the 3.06 percent proposed, inclusive of the voter-authorized additional VNA funding
- \$11,697,172 total operating budget, of which \$2,072,168 is funded with non-property tax revenues, a net operating budget of \$9,624,986.

We have implemented a hiring freeze, increased oversight of overtime and capital purchases, and will be reducing the number of vehicles in our fleet. We are also looking into longer-term measures, such as reconsidering the level of services provided; increasing contracted services like the dispatch service we provide for Milton's police, fire, and rescue; selling unused property; and contracting out some park maintenance functions. We are also considering non-property tax revenues, such as the local option sales tax, which could substantially reduce the property tax.

Finally, we instituted an online and paper survey of citizen ideas and comments on the budget for the Colchester Selectboard members to consider in their deliberations on this matter. We will share summaries of the survey when they are available. We welcome comments and ideas about the budget and Town services at any time. Your opportunities to comment on the reduced budget are welcome at any of the upcoming Colchester Selectboard meetings held at 6:30 p.m. on April 8 and 22 prior to the May 6 revote.

For more information about the Town Manager's Office, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Manager/index.shtml> or call (802) 264-5509.

**Colchester Police Department—Jennifer Morrison, Chief of Police**

Year to Date 2014:

- CPD has handled more than 2,750 calls for service since January 1. We made sixty-three arrests during this time, including nine DUI arrests and five domestic assault arrests.

- Like all Vermonters, we have struggled with the weather conditions this winter and look forward to spring. CPD would like to thank our colleagues at the Department of Public Works for their outstanding work keeping Colchester's roads in great condition despite Mother Nature.
- During the month of February, multiple officers participated in "I Love to Read Week" at Malletts Bay School. This was an opportunity for patrol officers and supervisors to spend time reading to classes and emphasizing the importance of becoming lifelong readers.
- CPD hosted a successful RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) class in January and February, and the attendance list for the next class is filling up fast. If you are interested in learning more, contact Cpl. Jaime Bressler at 264-3191. This *Burlington Free Press* article has more details on the RAD program:  
<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2014303040041>
- On March 18, we welcomed Lt. Doug Allen back to full duty! We thank the Colchester community for the concern and support expressed during his absence.
- On April 1, Cpl. Mike Cannon will retire after more than thirty-two years of service to the Town. Mike's expertise, institutional knowledge, and sense of humor will be sorely missed.

For more information about the Colchester Police Department, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Police/index.shtml>, or call (802) 264-5640.

### **Colchester Rescue & Technical Rescue Squads—Amy Akerlind, Rescue Chief**

#### *Colchester Rescue*

- Since Feb 20, we have responded to sixty-eight EMS calls, six of which were mutual aid (out of town). We transported forty-four people, and we turned over one call while already on a call.
- On March 1, we went online with the new state protocols. This gives each of our levels of licensure (EMT, AEMT, Paramedic) some added interventions and medications. It also allows us to do more without first having to call the hospital, resulting in quicker administration of medications and interventions!
- Have you ever wondered what it would be like to help your community and to be part of an ambulance crew? Maybe you don't have the time it takes to obtain and maintain an EMT license? Colchester Rescue is looking for mature, responsible people to become drivers. We will train you in CPR and some other basic hands-on skills to assist the EMTs, AEMTs, and paramedics on our crews.
  - You would be assigned to a set crew and required to run one twelve-hour shift per week, plus one weekend shift per month (an average of sixty hours per month).
  - If you are interested, please visit our website ([www.colchestervt.gov/Rescue](http://www.colchestervt.gov/Rescue)) and print off an application. Once your application is received and reviewed, someone from the membership committee will contact you for an interview. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Chief Amy Akerlind at 264-5590 or [aakerlind@colchestervt.gov](mailto:aakerlind@colchestervt.gov).

#### *Colchester Technical Rescue (CTR)*

- Assisted Stowe Mountain Rescue with an injured skier
- Assisted Vermont State Police with a missing person search—she was found by a motorist shortly after CTR arrived to assist
- Continues training twice per month to keep up on specialized skills

For more information about Colchester Rescue, please visit <http://colchestervt.gov/Rescue/index.shtml>, or call (802) 264-5590.