

**For the Week of January 8, 2024**

## Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager

**Martin Luther King Jr, Day of observance:** The Town Offices will be closed on Monday, January 15, 2024 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.



**Public Works Director Retirement:** After more than 30 years of dedicated service to the Town of Colchester, Bryan Osborne, Director of Public Works, has announced his intent to retire from full-time employment on July 1, 2024. As Colchester's first Director of Public Works, Bryan has been instrumental in bringing together engineering, capital project management, and the maintenance of Town buildings, roads, paths, vehicles, and wastewater and stormwater into a top-notch workgroup. Bryan's steady leadership throughout the last three decades has been integral in maintaining Colchester as a great place to live, work and play. Bryan led the Town's efforts to improve water quality, expand sidewalks and multi-use paths, upgrade our intersections and bridges, and maximize the use of state and federal grants. In anticipation of Bryan Osborne's upcoming retirement in June, the Town will be conducting a robust job search to identify a successor. Please join us in wishing Bryan a much deserved relaxing and healthy retirement.

**Town Municipal Services Budget:** The proposed FY 25 budget would result in an estimated 4.6% municipal service tax rate increase, maintaining the current level of municipal services and addressing: 1) additional resource needs in the Colchester Police Department due to having the highest rate of calls per officer of any department in Chittenden County; 2) expanding needs in public safety and other Town departments to address increased cybersecurity threats, departmental specific software and network connectivity; 3) additional human resource staff to address a sustained higher rate of employee turnover due to societal changes; and 4) funding for the fourth full-time firefighter that was hired in June 2023 but not included in the FY24 budget. For a residential property valued at \$300,000, the increase would be \$84/year or \$1.62/week. The Selectboard is holding a hearing on the budget January 9, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m. at 781 Blakely Road in the 3rd Floor Conference Room. More info: <https://colchestervt.gov/349/Budget-Documents>

<b><i>Estimated Municipal Services Property Tax Increase (Compared to FY 24)</i></b>				
Assessed Value	200,000	300,000	400,000	500,000
Annual	\$56	\$84	\$112	\$141
Monthly	\$4.68	\$7.03	\$9.37	\$11.71
Weekly	\$1.08	\$1.62	\$2.16	\$2.70

**Colchester Historical Society:** The Colchester Historical Society is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Colchester's history. They share historical information and hold history-related events within the community. If you'd like to learn more or become a member, please visit:

<https://colchestervt.gov/3050/Member-Application-Form>.

Everyone is welcome at events and to become a member, and membership fees and donations help support their mission in to preserve and share Colchester's wonderful local history.



### **Get Ready for Vermont History Day!**

It's not too early for teachers and students to begin thinking about and preparing for Vermont History Day. Every April, hundreds of Vermont students share their learning at the

annual Vermont History Day state contest. As students create these projects, they develop research and historical thinking skills. They explore content and gain life skills through project-based learning and the study of history. Students who win at the state contest qualify for National History Day in June. The 2024 theme is "Turning Points in History."

"The Colchester Historical Society would love to see some of our local teachers and students participate," said Bonnie Potter, President of the Colchester Historical Society.

"We believe Colchester has many students who would really shine at this event. And, there are some wonderful prizes," she added.

Some students participate as part of history class. Others do History Day as an independent project or for extra credit—maybe History Day could be part of your personalized learning plan? Creating a project for Vermont History Day can help students learn history and new skills.

Vermont students in grades 5 through 12 and homeschool students ages 10 to 18 can compete in Vermont History Day. Students exercise their voice and choice by selecting a topic related to the annual theme and presenting their research as an exhibit, website, documentary, performance or paper. Working individually or in small groups (up to five), students can explore a topic related to Vermont history, US history or world history. Vermont History Day is a great venue for personalized learning.

Students explore change, continuity and context as they conduct research online and in libraries, museums, and historical societies. Using evidence from primary sources and interviews with experts, students examine multiple perspectives and draw conclusions. At the state contest, students present their claims to local historians, educators, and other professionals who participate as judges. Through their work, students act as historians and become experts on a wide range of topics. With the guidance of teachers, students learn history by doing history.

**Note to Educators:** The Vermont History Day Educator Workshop will be held Friday, January 19, 2024, at the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. Whether you are new to History Day, or you are just curious about participation, all educators are encouraged to attend. This in-depth workshop will examine the different options for integrating History Day into your classroom or school. Educators will learn how to support students through the process of creating projects and participating at the state and national level. Workshop topics include:



- A "Year in the Life" of a VHD teacher
- How to guide students through the research process
- Crafting a strong thesis
- Finding appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Pre-registration is required.
- A \$45.00 registration fee includes both lunch, and a certificate for 6 hours of professional development. Please register at
- <https://form.jotform.com/232604000453137>.

Students need to register for the contest by March 15, 2024, at 11:59 pm. Get all the details about Vermont History Day at <https://vermonthistory.org/vhd-getting-started>. It's not too early to start thinking about how you will present "Turning Points in History"!

---

## Department Updates

**Town Clerk's Office:** *Attention Colchester dog parent!* It's time to renew your dog's annual license.

### Fees:

Fixed dog                      \$15.00

Non-fixed dog                \$20.00

To avoid an additional \$5.00 fee, license your dog before April 1st.



The state of Vermont requires all dogs to be licensed with their town, 20 V.S.A. § 3581. A current rabies certificate along with proof of spay/neuter and fee is needed to issue the license and tag.

Licensing can be completed online, by mail or in person. For more information go to <https://colchestervt.gov/323/Dog-Licensing> or call 802-264-5520.



### **Parks & Recreation**

The 2024 Winter Brochure is now out! This brochure covers the months of January-May. Register online here:

<https://colchestervt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8439/2024-Winter-Brochure>

---

## **Upcoming Town Meetings**

**Selectboard Meeting:** Tuesday, January 9, 6:15 p.m. (public portion beginning at 6:30) at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Alternatively, send a note, up to 1,000 words, to [TownManager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:TownManager@colchestervt.gov) with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and your 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>
- Agenda: [www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas](http://www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas)

**Recreation Advisory Board:** Wednesday, January 10, 7:00 a.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road.

**Development Review Board:** Wednesday, January 10, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:zmaia@colchestervt.gov) or by mail to Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446.

**Colchester Conservation Commission:** Monday, January 15, 6:00 p.m., at the Colchester Town Offices, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Champlain Room, 781 Blakely Road.

**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, January 16, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road.



*Colchester – What do you want to do today?*

**Library Board of Trustees:** Thursday, January 18, 4:00 p.m., 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/jkMA02v>

For more information or to comment, call 802-264-5509 or email [townmanager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:townmanager@colchestervt.gov)