

**For the Week of February 17th, 2025**

**Below is a letter from your Town Selectboard:**

Dear Colchester Voters, Residents, and Taxpayers,

We, your Selectboard, are writing to provide information on the Town of Colchester's FY 26 Municipal Services Budget to be voted on Town Meeting Day 2025.

The proposed FY26 municipal services budget primarily maintains the current level of Town services. It also addresses: 1) additional resource needs in the Assessor's Office necessitated by the state's requirement to conduct a town-wide reappraisal, as well as achieving the Selectboard's goal to reduce costs associated with the mass reappraisal, by transitioning to a rolling reappraisal, conducted by in-house staff, moving forward; 2) retention of volunteer firefighters by increasing stipends when responding to calls; 3) recognition of DPW-Highway staff that have gained the skill and ability to operate heavy equipment, creating a growth opportunity within the department, and providing a benefit to the Town by having more than one person able to operate our large equipment when needs arise; 4) community programming needs within Colchester Burnham Library by transitioning one 35-hours/week library employee to 40-hours/week.

Forty-two percent, or \$7,134,155 of the FY26 Municipal Services budget is dedicated to the Town's public safety services – Police, Fire, Rescue, Tech Rescue, and Public Safety Dispatch. This amount doesn't include the other municipal support services provided for public safety equipment, vehicle/building maintenance, information technology, human resource, finance/payroll, and general management needs. With those costs included, the Public Safety Services would represent well over half of our municipal services budget.

**FY26 Estimated Municipal Services Property Tax Impact:**

<b><i>FY 26 Estimated Municipal Services Property Tax Impact</i></b>			
<b>Assessed Value</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>Annual</b>	<b>\$1,340</b>	<b>\$2,010</b>	<b>\$2,680</b>
<b>Monthly</b>	<b>\$111.67</b>	<b>\$167.50</b>	<b>\$223.33</b>
<b>Weekly</b>	<b>\$25.77</b>	<b>\$38.65</b>	<b>\$51.54</b>

<b><i>Estimated Municipal Services Property Tax Increase (Compared to FY 25)</i></b>			
Assessed Value	200,000	300,000	400,000
Annual	\$64	\$96	\$128
Monthly	\$5.32	\$7.98	\$10.63
Weekly	\$1.23	\$1.84	\$2.45

The tax impact of the municipal services budget, along with the previously approved capital items, is a 4.86% increase to municipal services property taxes.

Based on 2024-25 taxes, Colchester's municipal services taxes are fifteen percent below average and the second lowest per resident among the seven inner Chittenden County communities.

We ask that you support the FY 26 municipal services budget with your vote.

Sincerely,

Pam Loranger, Chair; Tom Mulcahy, Vice Chair; Jacki Murphy Clerk; Maureen P. Dakin and Charlie Papillo

**Town of Colchester Ballot Items and Budget Interview:** An interview by LCATV interview can be viewed by clicking this link <https://lcatv.org/town-colchester-fy26-budget-presentation-2025-02-12>

More detailed information on the budget and ballot items is also available here: <https://colchestervt.gov/344/Ballot-Items>

**Town Audit:** The Town of Colchester has received its annual external audit from Sullivan, Powers & Co., P.C. (Certified Public Accountants). We have a clean audit, with no findings. Congratulations to Finance Director Lara Alemy and staff members Amy Baker, Lorena Bortz, and Ben Castor for their consistent production of accurate financial records; to the Town Clerk/Treasurer Julie Graeter and her staff for billing and recording revenues in a responsible manner; and to the entire Town staff who must follow ten different Selectboard policies related to financial management. Find the audit report here:

<https://colchestervt.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/900>



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## Department Updates

### Parks & Recreation:

The Town of Colchester and the Parks and Recreation Department would like to thank all the people who came out to celebrate the ribbon cutting and open house event at the Colchester

Recreation Center on Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup>. This event was the

culmination of over 20 years of work by the Selectboard, Recreation Advisory Board and many other boards and individuals to design and construct the 30,000 square foot Recreation Center. The center is now open to the public and tours are available to learn more about the different amenities and programs available. For more information visit

[www.colchestervt.gov/333/Parks-Recreation](http://www.colchestervt.gov/333/Parks-Recreation) or call 802-264-5640.



Do you love trivia? And enjoy our local Colchester history? The Colchester Historical Society's Winter Trivia Game is now available.

The questions are available

at <https://www.colchestervt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10983/2025-Winter-Trivia-Game-Historical-Society-Questions?bidId=>. And, when you're ready for the answers, you'll find them

here: <https://www.colchestervt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10984/2025-Winter-Trivia-Game-Historical-Society-Answers?bidId=>.

Have fun -- some of the answers may surprise you!

For more information about the Colchester Historical Society, please visit <https://www.colchestervt.gov/422/Colchester-Historical-Society>.

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## Upcoming Town Meetings & Agendas

**Selectboard Meeting:** Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 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. 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)

**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Agenda: <https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docid=PLANAGENDA>

**Recreation Advisory Board:** Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 a.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Agenda: <https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docId=RecAdv&path=BOARDS%2CRecAdv%2C>

**Development Review Board:** Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 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. Agenda: [https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docid=DRBAGENDA&path=DRB%2CDRB\\_Agendas%2CDRBAGENDA%2C](https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docid=DRBAGENDA&path=DRB%2CDRB_Agendas%2CDRBAGENDA%2C)

**Library Board of Trustees:** Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> 4:00 p.m., in the Burnham Room of the Burnham Memorial Library. Agenda: <https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docId=LibBoard&path=BOARDS%2CLibBoard%2C>

**Colchester Conservation Commission:** Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, at 6 p.m. in the Champlain Room, Colchester Town Office. [https://clerkshq.com/Content/Colchester-vt/Boards/ConservCommsn.htm#\\_CPA1](https://clerkshq.com/Content/Colchester-vt/Boards/ConservCommsn.htm#_CPA1)

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