

For the Week of February 1, 2021

Manager's Message
Aaron Frank, Town Manager

Masks in Public Spaces: If you are walking/biking on sidewalks, paths, trails or other outdoor public spaces--where you will not be at least six feet away from people who do not live with you--please bring something with you and pull it up over your nose and mouth as you pass within six feet of others. Please be especially considerate of others wearing masks outside as this indicates they would not want to come into contact with others without masks. This is a courtesy and expectation under the current state of emergency and Governor's Orders.

Black History Month: Carter G. Woodson, a Harvard PhD in History created an organization in 1915 to promote the scientific study of black life and history following a celebration of emancipation sponsored by the State of Illinois. The Association for the Study of African Life and History has had annual themes since 1926. The 2021 theme is The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity. Information on the organization can be found at <https://asalh.org/> and the 2021 theme at <https://asalh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2021Theme.pdf>

Colchester Historical Society Event: The Buffalo Soldiers in Vermont, 1909-1913:
February 18, 2021, 12:00 p.m.

Register now for this free presentation about Colchester's famous Buffalo Soldiers. This event is hosted by the Vermont Historical Society and recommended by the Colchester Historical Society. <https://form.jotform.com/203236565233148>

The arrival of the Tenth Cavalry sent Burlington into demographic shock. Almost overnight the small city acquired a substantial black community, a situation that clearly dismayed many residents. In July 1909, the Tenth United States Cavalry Regiment, one of four regular army black regiments collectively known as the Buffalo Soldiers, arrived in Colchester to begin a four-year tour of duty at Fort Ethan Allen. Many people feared the presence of sizable numbers of African American soldiers in their community and a bitter debate ensued over whether the City of Burlington should adopt Jim Crow facilities. For the next four years, the Tenth Cavalry would encounter similar reactions as it traveled throughout the northeast and as far south as Winchester, Virginia. Wherever they went, the black soldiers faced fear and suspicion and had to demonstrate good behavior to win the acceptance of the white population. The presenter is David Work, Ph.D. in American history. https://vermonthistory.org/journal/73/07_Work.pdf

January 26 Colchester Selectboard Meeting Highlights: Your Town Selectboard

- Approved the 2022-2027 Capital Budget Program to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and to hold a public hearing on the program on March 23, 2021. The Capital Budget Program consists of a capital budget which lists and describes the capital projects to be undertaken during the coming fiscal year, and a capital program which is a plan of capital projects proposed to be undertaken during each of the following five years.
- Agreed to a no cost loan of a fire boat from the State of Vermont for use by the Town Fire Department.
- Accepted proposed changes to the Town's Ethics Code by the Town Board of Ethics
- Heard an update from the Fire Chief Bourgeois on the Department staff and equipment

Details: https://clerkshq.com/Content/Colchester-vt/council/2021/jan26_21td.htm

COVID UPDATE:

Unemployment: During the current economic crisis caused by COVID-19, the unemployment rate rose extremely fast—declined quickly and is beginning to rise, at least in Colchester and Vermont. Initially, the Colchester unemployment rate rose from 1.9% to 13.3% in two months. We are now at 2.3% unemployment. Vermont is tied for third lowest rate with Iowa, just behind Nebraska and South Dakota (3.0 percent). Info on past downturns: <https://colchestervt.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/693>

The 2.3% unemployment represents people who are actively looking for a job. The unemployment rate would not include people who cannot work due to lack of childcare or a variety of other reasons. In December 2020, 6.5% or 687 fewer Colchester residents were working than in December 2019. There are 110 or 1.1% fewer people working in December 2020 than there were in November 2020. Unemployment definitions: https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm. National, State, County and Colchester Unemployment: <http://www.vtlni.info/laus.pdf>

Unemployment Rates (%) in Current Economic Downtown

Month	Colchester	Chittenden County	Vermont	US
Feb 2020 (for perspective)	1.9	1.8	2.6	3.8
Mar 2020	2.6	2.5	3.4	4.5
April 2020	13.3	14.2	16.8	14.4
May 2020	10.6	11.7	12.7	13.0
Jun 2020	7.7	8.7	9.5	11.2
July 2020	6.8	7.6	8.2	10.5
August 2020	3.8	4.3	4.8	8.5
September 2020	3.3	3.7	4.2	7.7
October 2020	1.9	2.1	2.4	6.6
November 2020	2.2	2.4	2.8	6.4
December 2020	2.3	2.5	2.8	6.5

COVID Cases in Colchester: 404 total cases as of 1/27/2021; this is **28** new cases in the last seven days (376 cases as of 1/20/2021).

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/current-activity/covid-19-communities>

St. Michaels College COVID Cases: No new cases the week of January 25, 2021.

Total case count remains 83. See <https://www.smcvt.edu/return-to-campus/covid-dashboard/> for campus COVID updates.

Colchester's Burnham Memorial Library
Kelly McCagg, Director

- As we settle into a long winter, we are excited about all our curbside and virtual offerings this season. Throughout the winter, we are continuing our curbside services, which are on Tuesdays from 1-4 pm, Thursdays from 3-6 pm and Saturdays from 10 am–12 pm. You can reserve books through our card catalogue on our website; by email at burnhamlib@colchestervt.gov; or by calling us at 802-264-5660. We ask for 24-hours' notice to get all your items ready for you.

Here is an example of a book you can ask us to put aside for you:

- *Wonder Art Workshop: Creative Child-led Experiences for Nurturing Imagination, Curiosity, and a Love of Learning* by Sally Haughey – Juvenile Non-Fiction, 2019

Reviewed by: Kelly L. McCagg, Library Director

Though written for the Montessori-minded, Haughey's book features projects all children will enjoy. More importantly, they provide caregivers the opportunity and instruction to step back and let the kids explore the mediums and process on their own. If you're a Type A like me, you want a neat work area and an obvious final product. But as anyone who has ever met a child can tell you—children are not neat! It is this very characteristic that makes them and their artwork so honestly beautiful. Story blocks, crushed chalk paint, and tube sculptures are just a few of the explorative ideas you will find in this book. So buy a thick plastic tablecloth, rustle up some craft supplies, take a few deep breathes, and let the kids make a mess.

- While we are unable to schedule AARP Tax Appointments at this time, we do have federal tax forms available and are expecting instructions to arrive quickly. Please call or email us if you would like a federal form put aside for you. They can be picked up during our curbside hours.

- In addition to our curbside services, we continue to hold virtual programming on our Burnham Memorial Library – Youth Services page. You can check out our weekly selection of story times, live on Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:30 am. On Wednesday, February 10th and 24th at 3:30, kids can join our live Young Writers group for some writing prompts. For adults, we have a monthly book club Zoom discussion. This month, we are meeting on Tuesday February 16th at 1:00 pm to discuss *Miracle at St. Anna* by James McBride. You can call or email the library to reserve your copy of the book. If you are interested in joining our discussion, please email kmccagg@colchestervt.gov for the Zoom link.

Visit <http://colchestervt.gov/library> or call (802) 264-5660.

Office of the Town Clerk | Treasurer
Julie Graeter

-The Town Clerk's Office has sent out two reminders and informational postcards in the last week to voters and dog owners. Please take the time to review them.

If you need more information on Town Meeting and voting, go to <https://colchestervt.gov/325/Elections-and-Voter-Information>.

For more information on registering your dog, this link will help <https://colchestervt.gov/323/Dog-Licensing>.

Visit <http://colchestervt.gov/townclerk> or call 264-5520.

Assessor
Robert Vickery

- The Assessor's Office is open from 7:30 to 12:00 for in person visits and from 12:00 to 4:30 the Assessor and Property/Tax Specialist by phone; (802) 264-5670, (802) 264-5671, and by Email (colchesterassessor@colchestervt.gov) to answer your questions

- All parcel data is online: <https://www.colchestervt.gov/149/Assessor>

- We are reviewing all Certificates of Occupancy that have been issued since April 1, 2020

- We have requested a redetermination of the Equalized Education Grand List; This is one of the factors in determining the education tax rate

- GIS Map and Assessment Data: <http://www.axisgis.com/ColchesterVT/>

Visit <http://colchestervt.gov/assessor> or call 264-5671.

Upcoming Town Meetings

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

- **Planning Commission:** Next meeting: February 16th, at 7:00 PM via Zoom; <https://zoom.us/j/9359846003>; Zoom Webinar ID: 935 984 6003

- Live stream:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLljLFn4BZd2MtMV4SzmzYI6grkrjrcbym>

- Mail or email public testimony prior to the hearing (shadd@colchestervt.gov or Town of Colchester Planning Commission, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446)

- **Development Review Board:** Development Review Board: Next meeting: February 10, 2021 at 7:00 PM via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/9359846003>; Zoom Webinar ID: 935 984 6003

- Live stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>

- Mail or email public comments prior to the hearing (lriddle@colchestervt.gov or Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446) or participate at public comment periods during the Zoom meeting.

- **Recreation Advisory Board:** Next meeting: TBA

- **Conservation Commission:** 3rd Monday of the month. Next meeting: February 15, 2021 via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/94009416919> Dial by phone: 1-929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 940 0941 6919; Passcode: 291046
- **Library Board of Trustees:** Next meeting: February 18, 2021 at 4:30 PM. Dial: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 913 5435 3560 Passcode: 559104.
- **Selectboard:** Next meeting: February 9, 2021 at 6:30 PM.
- Attend via phone: 1-929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 988 0284 8778; Passcode: 568837
- or, alternatively, send a note to TownManager@colchestervt.gov with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and their 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>
- Selectboard Agenda: www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas

Subscribe to the Town Newsletter: <https://www.colchestervt.gov/list.aspx>

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