

For the Week of March 28, 2022

What is the Fire District #3 Vote on Water Service?

Tuesday March 29th from 7:00AM to 7:00PM Colchester Fire District #3 (CFD#3) is holding a vote to dissolve the district and transfer their assets, responsibilities, and liabilities to the Champlain Water District. The vote will be held at the CFD#3 office at 428 Main Street in Colchester Village. Residents of the district, who are also registered as voters in the Town of Colchester, may vote.

CFD#3's elected Board of Directors, Jay Riedinger (Chair), Mike Chmielewski and Steve Roy, known as the "Prudential Committee," have considered this topic at multiple public meetings of their Committee, including their annual meeting this January. The CFD#3 Prudential Committee recommends this approval as explained in a [notice sent to members of CFD#3 in February 2022](#), and in an [interview with Prudential Committee member Steve Roy in the Colchester Sun](#). The Town of Colchester does not provide or oversee water services. Questions about this proposal not answered in the notice from or interview of the Prudential Committee should be referred to the Colchester Fire District #3 Prudential Committee Chair, Jay Riedinger, at 802-878-8622.

[Champlain Water District](#) (CWD) is a regional, special-purpose government of which the Town of Colchester is a member. CWD's Board, management, and your elected representative, Karen Richard, are in favor of this proposal. CWD provides the water and maintenance services to CFD #3. CWD owns and operates three water systems in the Town of Colchester: the Colchester Town Water Company, the Malletts Bay Water Company, and the area formerly served by Colchester Fire District #1 (CFD #1) which transferred its assets, responsibilities and liabilities to CWD as noted in this [letter from the CFD #1 Prudential Committee](#). Here is a [map and contact information for the four separate entities providing water service in Colchester](#).

The Colchester Selectboard wrote to both CFD #2 and CFD #3 about CFD #3's future and shared that letter publicly in the [December 2020 information packet](#). The Selectboard is interested in the future of water service in CFD #3 because: 1) Drinking water service to about 2,000 customers within the Town of Colchester is extremely important; and 2) Water service maintenance, improvements and expansions should work in concert with land use and other town directed improvements such as roads, paths, bus service, sewer and parks. Similar to fire-fighting services which the Town recently consolidated, there are benefits to water consolidation including: public information, billing, repair, standardization of equipment, and a common board for rate-setting and public input.

The Selectboard views Champlain Water District as an experienced, responsible entity for CFD #3 to transfer its assets, responsibilities, and liabilities to. But again, this is a decision for the members of Colchester Fire District #3, and is not under the responsibility of the Town of Colchester.

Town News Interviews

Praise for our EMS Providers!

*An interview with Scott Crady, Colchester Rescue Chief
by Alicia Tebeau-Sherry, Communications Coordinator, Town Manager’s Office*

After a tour of their recently re-painted and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)-filled station and a look inside their newest ambulance, Chief Crady filled me in on what Colchester Rescue is all about, how proud he is of the rescue staff for their work through COVID-19, and the entire Colchester Rescue Team’s thankfulness for the support from the Town and the Colchester community.

ATS: What services does Colchester Rescue provide to the Town of Colchester?

SC: We provide ambulance service, or strictly 911 Emergency Medical Services, and what that means is we’re responding to emergency calls only—we don’t provide interfacility services like some other ambulance services may. We respond to all medical emergencies in the Town, and these calls can range from cardiac arrest to someone not feeling well.

We normally staff and operate one ambulance, so when we’re out on a call and another call comes in, then mutual aid may take effect and this involves nearby cities and towns—mainly Burlington, Milton, St. Mike’s, and Essex for us—helping out on calls we are unable to make it to, and we would provide the same aid in return if they needed it.



The Colchester Rescue Station

ATS: How many calls is Colchester Rescue responding to and how often is rescue involved with mutual aid?



Rescue’s newest ambulance

SC: Well, at the end of December 2021, we responded to 1,940 ambulance calls—we were unable to go on roughly 150 calls, and we went out of Town to help at other locations close to 400 times. When we start hitting 2,200 to 2,400 calls we may need to start staffing a second ambulance, maybe not full-time, but using data we will identify the busiest times and try to staff those—believe it or not, Wednesdays have historically been one of the busier days! I’d like to stay around 2,000 calls because it appears to be the perfect amount—it keeps our EMS providers regularly responding without getting burnt out, and we don’t miss many calls either.

ATS: What might the Town not know about Colchester Rescue and what it offers?

SC: It’s hard right now because of COVID-19, but we do offer trainings. Before COVID-19, we were going to companies and teaching “Stop the Bleed” and providing instruction on how to use the defibrillators and trauma bags that are now in workplaces. We’d go to teach them how to use the equipment and how to be efficient with patients. Our most common training though is CPR, and anyone can call or use our website page to request a training. When the crew is here, they have to be ready to respond to calls, but sometimes we are able to do tours for schools and we can have an extra crew at special events held within the Town, like the triathlon or pond hockey. Another perk we offer is free 911 compliant, green, reflective street number signs. They can be requested online, and they are really helpful for fire, police, and EMS to be able to more easily identify addresses on calls. I would like to see more training being offered in the future. CPR and “Stop the Bleed” will continue, but we’re waiting to see what other community services we can brainstorm.



Rescue’s two ambulance being cleaned outside the station

ATS: What is staffing like? Has it changed because of COVID?

SC: We have done very well through COVID-19, and I praise the EMS providers. When COVID hit, there was a major adjustment period. I look at the pandemic as being a hazmat event, so using techniques of hazardous material operations, we provided our personnel with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and created different levels of PPE to learn and adjust to based on what type of patient was being served. We saw our personnel professionally and competently transform into this new level of operation.

In Spring 2020, we did change the staffing in the ambulance from four to three EMS providers.



Rescue members preparing a stretcher

This staffing downgrade was actually by choice, and even though our people wanted to work, we couldn’t let them because we needed to mitigate potential exposure, while still providing quality patient care. We chose three because this minimized the amount of people in the truck, but kept enough to get the job done well. Still, membership has stayed high—we’ve consistently maintained a waiting list—and we continue to receive volunteer applications. We’ve actually brought in new applicants recently to start hands-on training!

We’ve never missed a single hour of being in service during this pandemic due to COVID constraints, which a lot of places can’t say, and I really credit the combined volunteer and career staff. The Town support services, which include human resources,

finance, treasurer, vehicle and building maintenance, information technology, and the leadership from the Selectboard has been great as well—they backed us up 100% during COVID, and gave us whatever we needed, no question, to keep our staff safe on their calls.

ATS: What does a typical day at Colchester Rescue look like for its staff?

SC: So, we are mostly volunteer, but on a typical crew there are two volunteers and one career staff. Volunteers range from brand new, still going through an EMT class, to those who have been with us for 20 years, so there is a lot of experience. There are 6 full-time staff members, the chief and assistant chief and 4 captains, and 5-7 part-time employees who support the volunteers. There has to be a minimum of 2 licensed EMS providers, EMTs, AEMTs, or Paramedics, to a maximum of 4 providers to staff an ambulance crew. A typical day for the crew is two, 12-hour shifts. The first crew that comes in checks the truck, whichever they are assigned to for that day, and makes sure it's going to run, that the outside compartments and all the equipment they need is in operating conditions, and that the inside is in great, working order. Then they are ready to run calls.



Joint hostile-event training session with Colchester Rescue, Fire, and Police

Other duties may include cleaning the ambulance that just came out of service, doing the laundry, cleaning the station, and completing any necessary training. Our career staff do other tasks like completing quality assurance on patient reports from the day before, stocking station and medical supplies, coordinating membership, and conducting trainings. Then, again, whenever the calls come in, they respond.

ATS: What are you most proud of that Colchester Rescue has done?



Rescue members practicing spinal motion restriction

SC: I am so proud of our EMS providers. They never complain, and it's hard out there on the call, but they show up and do it, and they keep doing it every day. I'm so proud of them because, whether full-time, part-time or volunteer, you can see their commitment to serve the public. I'm also very proud of the department as a whole for all the CPR training they've conducted for the community and the thousands of people they've taught over the years.

ATS: How has Colchester Rescue overcome obstacles resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic?

SC: The biggest obstacle was addressing the question "how do we address decontamination to keep our personnel and patients from spreading the virus?" We would put on all the

new PPE gear, work the call, and then the problem becomes, now that your gear is contaminated, how do you remove everything and not contaminate yourself. So, it was a huge obstacle figuring out how to work well in the gear, but then cleaning up afterwards too. Again, it was tough, but our staff did great with it. Before COVID, keeping the number of volunteers up was challenging too. While we have a waiting list, it's still tough, even nation-wide. We are lucky to have a core group of many experienced volunteers.



Rescue members practicing a patient carry

ATS: As we've discussed, rescue staff is volunteer-based. If someone was interested, how would they go about becoming a volunteer?

SC: If someone is interested, they can go to the Town website, under Rescue, then Membership, and find and fill out the online application. They don't have to have certificates or training already, although during COVID, we've been accepting more of those who already have the licensing or training or those who are currently in an EMT class.

ATS: How can the community keep up with your department?

SC: We have a Facebook page where we post some of the events we are at, updates about the station, or information on what types of trainings we do. Our volunteer application and other resources are on the [Rescue Page of the Town website](#) as well.

Colchester Historical Society Update

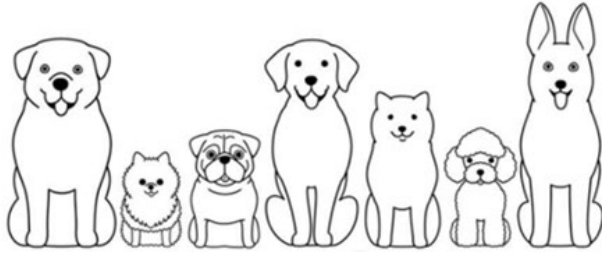


Walk, run, or bicycle the Colchester Causeway and imagine the days when a train, then known as the "Rutland Island Line" chugged along that very path on its way to Alburgh, then onward to Montreal.

Cabin Fever Reliever:

Spring is HERE! Looking to get out and about? Something interesting, educational and *FREE*? Check out the Colchester Historical Society's Self-Guided Driving Tour. No lines, no waiting, no schedule. Get started here: <https://colchestervt.gov/3257/Driving-Tours>

Reminder from the Town Clerks



Attention Colchester dog parent! Renew your dog's annual license by April 1st!

For more information go to <https://colchestervt.gov/323/Dog-Licensing> or call 802-264-5520.

Upcoming Town Meetings

Selectboard: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 6:30 pm 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

Planning Commission: Tuesday, April 5, at 7 pm at the Colchester Town Offices. Meeting to discuss East Lakeshore Drive.

Development Review Board: Wednesday, April 13, 7:00 pm at the Colchester Town Offices, 3rd Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. The Development Review Board will likely be participating remotely. Members of the public will have the option to choose either remote or in-person attendance. Masks are required for in-person attendance. Public comments can be submitted prior to the hearing by email to zmaia@colchestervt.gov or by mail to Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446. Alternatively, participate in the public comment periods during the hybrid meeting.

- Participate by Phone: 1-929-205-6099
- Meeting ID: 871 3561 5437 (US – New York)
- Link to meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87135615437>
- Watch Meeting Online via Live Stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Agenda: https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docId=DRBAgenda&path=DRB%2CDRB_Agendas%2CDRBAgenda%2C

Subscribe to the Town Newsletter: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/jkMAO2v>

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