

For the Week of February 23, 2026

Manager's Message

2026 Town Meeting Day - Ballot Items

The Town's elected Selectboard has proposed two Town articles to be voted on by Australian ballot this year, the Town Municipal Services Budget, and the Public Safety Capital Plan. You will find additional information below.



BALLOT QUESTIONS

ARTICLE 13 - Town Municipal Services Budget

“Shall the voters of the Town of Colchester approve total general fund expenditures of Eighteen Million, One Hundred Sixty-Three Thousand, Seven Hundred Fifty-Six Dollars (\$18,163,756) of which Fifteen Million, Two Hundred Seventy-One Thousand, Five Hundred Sixty-Six Dollars (\$15,271,566) shall be raised by taxes and Two Million, Eight Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand, One Hundred Ninety Dollars (\$2,892,190) by non-tax revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027?”

- Estimated to increase the municipal service tax rate by 6.6%
- Maintains current level of municipal services and addresses needs for: 1) paid on-call staffing for the Fire Department; 2) increases in salary, benefits & training for the Police Department; 3) increases in salary and benefits for the Rescue Department; 4) increased costs for necessary software for Information Technology (IT).
- Residential Property Value Impact: For a property valued at \$300,000, the estimated increase would be \$134/year or \$2.58/week

ARTICLE 14 – Public Safety Capital Plan

“Shall the voters of the Town of Colchester reauthorize the Selectboard to maintain a reserve fund accumulating annually in the amount of Thirty Thousand, Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$30,750) for a period of five years, for the purpose of financing public safety equipment replacements and upgrades?”



- This is a reauthorization of the current annual funding and will not increase taxes
- For the owner of a home with an assessed value of \$300,000, this plan at a rate of \$30,750 annually, costs approximately \$4.15/yr.
- Designed to fund specialized equipment for Rescue, Technical Rescue, and the Police Department such as

power cots, cardiac monitors/defibrillators, stair chairs, radio & communication equipment, inflatable boat, air packs, air tanks, harnesses, wet suits, search camera, two police boats and motors as well as the Mobile Command Unit.

If you have any questions, please contact Renae Marshall, Deputy Town Manager at RMarshall@colchestervt.gov or by phone at 802-264-5509. More information on Town Meeting Day can be found here: <https://colchestervt.gov/342/Town-Meeting-Budget>

2026 Town Meeting Day – General Information

The legal voters of the Town of Colchester, Vermont are notified and warned to meet at the Colchester High School Auditorium, Laker Lane, in said Town on **Monday, March 2, 2026**, at 7:00 PM to act on Articles 8-12 not involved in voting by Australian ballot.

The legal voters of the Town of Colchester, Vermont are notified and warned to reconvene at the Colchester High School, Laker Lane, in said Town on **Tuesday, March 3, 2026**, for voters in District 19 and District 20 to vote for Town Officers and to transact any other business involving voting by Australian Ballot with voting to begin at 7:00 a.m. and to close at 7:00 p.m. (Early voting information below.)

Early/Absentee Voting:

- 1) Request a ballot from the [state online](#) and vote by early/absentee ballot.
2. Request by phone at 802-264-5520 to have your absentee ballot sent by U.S. Mail.**
- 3) Obtain ballot in-person at the Town Clerk's Office at the Colchester Town Offices, 781 Blakely Road, M-F, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Completed ballots can be:

1. Brought to the Town Clerk's office by noon, March 2, 2026.
2. Dropped off in our Green Drive-up Box between Town Hall and Police Department buildings, by 4:30 pm, March 2, 2026.
3. Sent by US Mail and received by Tuesday, March 3, 2026.**
4. Brought to the Colchester High School gym on Election Day, March 3, 2026, and deposited in the drop box at the HELP DESK.

[Voter Registration Information](#)

To ensure your ballot is received on time, we recommend coming in person to pick up an absentee ballot and then utilizing the Green Drive-up Ballot Box to return it. If you do choose to utilize the mail to receive and return your ballot, we recommend requesting your ballot far in advance and leaving ample time for the ballot to be mailed back to Town Hall.



Volunteer Drivers Needed – Special Services Transportation Agency (SSTA)

If you'd like to support your neighbors and are looking for something to fill up some of your time, **SSTA is looking for volunteer drivers!** Being a volunteer driver is incredibly flexible; you choose your hours and SSTA will coordinate the rest for you!

You can be in the comfort of your own vehicle, while still supporting your community! SSTA reimburses at the current GSA mileage rate of 72.5 cents per mile for your travel.

If you'd still like to support the vital services SSTA provides to our community but don't have time to spare, donations are always welcome! Donations go directly to SSTA and help keep this essential program running.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer driver or donating to the program, visit <https://www.sstarides.org/volunteer-community-drivers> or call (802) 878-1527.



The Colchester Democrats and Republicans are once again collaborating on a free, bipartisan event for the community.

This year's Legislative Town Hall and Community

Dinner will take place at Colchester High School on Monday, March 2nd from 5:30-7:00 p.m., just before the Town and school budget presentations.

We are fortunate to have Papa Frank's Italian Restaurant preparing a wonderful dinner! This event is a great opportunity to connect with your neighbors and stay informed about important local issues.

A Message from VTrans: Exit 16 Construction Update

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Starting **March 2, 2026**, intermittent daytime blasting will take place on U.S. Routes 2/7 (U.S. 2/7) between Hercules Drive and Rathe Road and on Rathe Road near its intersection with U.S. 2/7. This schedule is subject to change; more details will be shared next week. For drilling and blasting FAQs, [click here](#).



TRAFFIC IMPACT AND DURATION: From Monday, February 23, through Friday, February 27, between 6 AM and 3 PM, lane closures and lane shifts will be in effect:

- on the west side of U.S. 2/7 between Hercules Drive and Rathe Road,
- on the west side of U.S. 2/7 below the Interstate 89 (I-89) bridge at Exit 16,
- on Rathe Road near its intersection with U.S. 2/7,
- on the south side of Upper Mountain View Drive near the CVS Pharmacy.

A possible lane width reduction may occur on the I-89 Exit 16 southbound on-ramp, with traffic maintained.

Independent utility companies will periodically be on-site conducting utility work along U.S. 2/7 between the Winooski town line and Sunderland Woods Road under lane closures.

Visit the project website for more information: <https://www.exit16ddi.vtransprojects.vermont.gov/>

Questions and concerns about the project can be directed to VTrans by calling the project hotline at (802)595-4399 or emailing info@exit16ddi.vtransprojects.vermont.gov

Department Updates

A message from the Department of Public Works: Road Salt Shortage

As you may know, there is a regional road salt shortage which is impacting every part of the state, the Northeast, the Midwest, and even parts of Canada. Governor Phil Scott and the Department of Motor Vehicles have issued an emergency notice regarding the situation

(<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/.../Vermont%20January%202013...>).

Due to the shortage, the Town of Colchester will be rationing its remaining road salt until we are able to find a stable supplier. We will only be salting hills, sharp curves, and major intersections unless there is an emergency requiring additional salting. Depending on the weather and road conditions, our highway crew may use sand on paved roads when deemed necessary.



In general, road salt is not effective under 15°F. This is a factor that we have always considered and will continue to consider when spreading our limited supply of road salt.

We recommend motorists drive with extra caution, plan for longer drive times, brake early for intersections and crosswalks, and leave extra space between yourself and the car in front of you. We appreciate your patience and understanding as our Public Works team navigates this situation with the available resources.

Questions can be directed to the Department of Public Works at: (802) 264-5620 or DPW@colchestervt.gov.

Upcoming Town Meetings & Agendas

Selectboard Meeting: Tuesday, March 10, 6:30 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3rd 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 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

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

Recreation Advisory Board: Wednesday, March 11, 7:00 a.m. at the Colchester Recreation Center, 80 Dick Mazza Drive. Agenda: <https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docid=RecAdv&path=BOARDS%2CRecAdv%2C>

Development Review Board: Wednesday, March 11, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3rd 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 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

Library Board of Trustees: Thursday, March 19, 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 Town News

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Colchester – What do you want to do today?

Colchester Conservation Commission: Monday, March 16, 6:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 2nd floor Champlain Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Agenda:

https://clerkshq.com/Content/Colchester-vt/Boards/ConservCommsn.htm#_CPA1

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