

Greetings from Colebrook Town Hall.

Next Wednesday, March 19th, at 6 p.m., representatives from Northwestern Regional 7 Middle School & High School will be at Colebrook Town Hall to discuss their proposed FY 25/26 operating budget. The public is invited to attend. The budget will be voted on by referendum in the four towns comprising Region 7 (Colebrook, Barkhamsted, New Hartford and Norfolk) on Tuesday, May 6th.

Earlier this week, the Board of Selectmen accepted a recommendation from the town Capital Improvement Program Committee to propose a \$450,000 capital budget for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board of Finance for their approval. The final capital budget will be voted on by the town at referendum, along with the Region 7, Colebrook Consolidated School (CCS) and town operating budgets.

A budget hearing will be held on Thursday, April 10th, at Colebrook Town Hall at 7 p.m. to discuss the CCS and town budgets, as well as the Board of Finance's proposed mill rate for FY 25/26.

Also at this week's Selectmen's meeting, we voted to approve a draft-in-progress of our next 10-year Town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). A responsibility of each town's Planning & Zoning Commission, the POCD is a state-mandated document that is used to guide the conservation, growth, land use policies, and development of a community. As part of the process to adopt our new 10-year plan, the Planning & Zoning Commission will host a public hearing this spring.

Community & Senior Center Co-Director Dana Towers recently announced that she will be leaving the Center in June, as she and her husband are moving out of the area. Dana and Co-Director Serena Brainerd have done an amazing job (as evidenced by 40+ for breakfast and approximately 20 for bingo this past Tuesday). Dana will be sorely missed. Looking ahead, we will be seeking candidates to succeed Dana as Co-Director. If you are interested, please contact seniordirector@colebrooktownhall.org.

As part of our next curbside recycling contract with USA Recycling, we are discussing a one-year food composting pilot program. Nationally, food waste constitutes a significant portion of municipal solid waste (around 24%). In Colebrook, that would amount to more than 125 tons annually.

Details currently being discussed include the town providing starter kits to interested households, with USA collecting food waste weekly (at no cost to the town) at two bear-proof collection sites in town. The food waste would then be transported to a regional anaerobic composting facility for processing. An informational meeting will be held during April (date to be announced), to provide interested residents with more details.

We have been discussing opportunities for educational collaboration with Norfolk. It's worth noting that there are areas where collaboration is already taking place. Ongoing initiatives include: the Nature's Classroom 6th grade end-of-year overnight trip; joint PTO curriculum and cultural enrichment initiatives; the annual River Day educational program (at the Farmington River); art and physical education initiatives; and specific teacher professional development activities. These are in addition to joint sports and Scouting programs between Colebrook and Norfolk.

A multi-district educational opportunity, new this fall, will be an integrated pre-school program offered through Shared Services, a regional educational collaborative. It will be located at Barkhamsted Elementary School. They will host a pre-school program for 4-year-olds. The cost will be \$600 per month. There will also be a half-day program for 3-year-olds for \$250 per month. For more information, please contact Daniela Belanger at 860.307.9170, or dbelanger@sharedservicesct.com.

If you missed our recent CPR class at the Colebrook Community & Senior Center, a second session will be held on Monday, March 24th, at 10 a.m. The cost to participate is \$20. To register, please call 860.738.9521.

Items currently needed at the Colebrook Associates Food Pantry (in the Community & Senior Center foyer) include breakfast items (e.g., coffee, cereal, etc.), canned fruit and vegetables, pasta and sauce, and rice. Donations can be left in the pantry, or the lobby of the Post Office.

Upcoming community events and fundraisers

Based on the success of last night's event, the Colebrook Community & Senior Center is hosting a second, "Paint and Sip" with June Seiser on Wednesday, April 9th, from 6-9 p.m. The cost to participate is \$15 per person. Snacks, coffee and soda provided. Please feel free to bring your own beverage or a snack to share. RSVP by April 3rd, to seniordirector@colebrooktownhall.org, or call 860.738.9521.

The Colebrook Recreation Board is seeking billboard sponsors for the Colebrook Recreation Baseball Field for the upcoming season. Learn more here or contact Katie Martin at colebrookctrec@gmail.com. Deadline to participate is tomorrow (March 14th).

The *Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Ceremony 2025* will be held on Thursday, March 27th, at 10 a.m. at the Gold Star Families Memorial Auditorium in Rocky Hill. This event is sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at bbremer@colebrooktownhall.org, or call me at 860.379.3359, extension 202.

Cordially,

Brad

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