

Greetings from Colebrook Town Hall.

Last week, the town Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee voted to recommend a \$450,000 capital budget for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board of Selectmen. The proposed budget will also require approval by the Board of Finance and will be voted on by the town at our May 6<sup>th</sup> budget referendum.

Capital items recommended by the CIP Committee for next fiscal year, beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, include: attic insulation and technology upgrades for Colebrook Consolidated School; gear, tools and high-band radios for the Colebrook Fire Department; building improvements for the Center and Forge Company firehouses; a new snowplow truck and blade for Public Works; matching funds for an anticipated state grant for paving; monies to partially fund a new Community & Senior Center bus; (being paid for over multiple years, and potentially with grant assistance); and Town Hall technology upgrades (replacing the current 20-year-old phone system and purchasing a new computer server). These projects are part of a proposed 5-year capital plan for the town.

As noted last week, the Board of Selectmen (BOS) presented its FY 25/26 budget proposal to the Board of Finance. The BOS proposed a 0% increase budget for Town Hall and the Department of Public Works for the coming fiscal year. Included in the proposed Selectmen's budget are investments needed for fire protection and ambulance services, and an increase to the cost of providing curbside trash pickup. Savings in other areas net out to arrive at the proposed flat budget.

Last night, representatives from Colebrook, Barkhamsted, New Hartford and Norfolk met to discuss the FY 25/26 budget for Northwest Regional 7 middle school and high school. The Region 7 budget is currently slated to increase by 2.78%.

Each town's share of the overall Region 7 budget for a given fiscal year is computed by taking the anticipated student enrollment by town as a percentage of total student enrollment. Based on that formula, last year our share of the cost of the Region 7 budget decreased slightly. If their budget passes, our share will increase by 7.92%, resulting in \$177,012 in additional assessment for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Each year, prior to the May budget referendum, representatives from the Region 7 Board and Administration hold public informational meetings in each of the four towns to discuss the proposed budget. They will be at Colebrook Town Hall at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. Colebrook members on the Region 7 Board are Lisa Fragale and Terri Kenneson. Lisa and Terri have represented us tirelessly for eight years and 20 years, respectively.

We continue to benefit from our participation in the state's Short-Term Investment Fund (STIF). Fiscal year-to-date (through eight months), we've earned \$111,000 in interest income.

If you missed last week's CPR class at the Colebrook Community & Senior Center, a second session is being offered on Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, at 10 a.m. The cost to participate is \$20. To register, please call 860.738.9521.

Congratulations to our fifth and sixth grade basketball team on a great season as they finished 11-1 and second in league competition!

A black cat has been found on Old Creamery Road and is being cared for pending identification of its owner. Please contact [skschlosser333@yahoo.com](mailto:skschlosser333@yahoo.com) for details.

### **Upcoming community events and fundraisers**

The Colebrook Associates will be holding their second annual Winter Warmer this Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, from 2-4 p.m. at Colebrook Town Hall, in the upstairs meeting room. This is a free event. Tea and light refreshments will be served.

The Colebrook Community & Senior Center is hosting a second, "Paint and Sip" with June Seiser on Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 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 3<sup>rd</sup>, to [seniordirector@colebrooktownhall.org](mailto: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](mailto:colebrookctrec@gmail.com). Deadline to participate is March 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Upcoming municipal board meetings**

Board of Finance – Today (Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>) at 6 p.m. at Colebrook Town Hall (upstairs meeting room)

Planning & Zoning Commission – Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. at Colebrook Town Hall (Land Use office)

Board of Selectmen – Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m. at Colebrook Town Hall (upstairs meeting room)

Board of Finance – Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, at 6 p.m. at Colebrook Town Hall (upstairs meeting room)

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [bbremer@colebrooktownhall.org](mailto:bbremer@colebrooktownhall.org), or call me at 860.379.3359, extension 202.

Cordially,

**Brad**

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