

Greetings from Colebrook Town Hall.

At their budget season kickoff meeting last week, the Board of Finance reviewed the 2024-25 grand list, and discussed the mill rate outlook and potential issues for the 2024-25 Town budget. The Board of Finance will next meet on Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> to consider the Board of Education-approved budget for Colebrook Consolidated School (CCS). Superintendent Bob Gilbert will attend. He and the Board of Ed are proposing a reduction in spending for CCS of slightly more than one percent from the current year.

Last week, the Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOG) met to discuss its legislative priorities. NHCOG is a coordinating body for twenty-one municipalities in northwest Connecticut, including Colebrook. One of the most important issues on the table for towns like ours is waste management. We are on the cusp of major changes with the planned closure of the Connecticut Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority, the state agency that provides single-stream recycling and trash disposal for Connecticut cities and towns.

Currently municipal solid waste in Connecticut (including our own curbside pickup) is transported by truck and railcar to Pennsylvania and Ohio. This is not a financially feasible approach, nor is it environmentally friendly. We are in conversation with neighboring towns and will keep you posted on developments.

Municipal solid waste was also on the agenda at the annual meeting of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) last week, as was the financial burden of state-mandated early voting. In fact, early voting provisions for this year's Presidential election alone are expected to triple the "Elections" line item in our own budget for our next fiscal year, beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>.

To that end, small towns are requesting a modification in state early voting staffing guidelines, and the Connecticut Secretary of State is seeking additional funds to help towns with this currently unfunded mandate for fiscal year 2024/25.

During December, we had a surprise inspection from Connecticut OSHA, the first such inspection for us in 15 years. Minor infractions were noted at Town Hall and the Town Garage. Bill Jasmin and Karen Odell, with support from Dave Hotchkiss, have been working hard to remedy the findings. Bill, Karen and I met with OSHA this morning to discuss with them the improvements we've made, and next steps.

The latest Town Annual Report is now available. This is compiled annually by Cathie Norton. Copies are available at Town Hall.

The Colebrook Associates will host its first annual Winter Warmer in the Town Hall meeting room on Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> from 2-4 p.m. The event features live music, a variety of hot tea selections, finger sandwiches and cookies. Best of all, it's free.

The Colebrook Community & Senior Center is hosting a scrapbooking event on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please RSVP by February 21<sup>st</sup> at 860.738.9521, or email [seniordirector@colebrooktownhall.org](mailto:seniordirector@colebrooktownhall.org). Cost is \$10. The Center will also be hosting a Leap Year Community Bingo on Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup> from 6-9 p.m.

This week, we celebrate the life of our neighbor Millie Johnson, who passed away peacefully at the age of 110 last Saturday. Millie was the oldest living person in Connecticut. You can learn more about Millie's remarkable life [here](#).

Town Hall will be closed on Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup> in observance of President's Day. Curbside garbage/recycling pickup will be on its normal schedule next week.

### **Upcoming municipal board meetings in Colebrook:**

Board of Finance – Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at Town Hall at 6 p.m.

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**

Brad Bremer  
Colebrook First Selectman  
860.379.3359 ext. 202  
[bbremer@colebrooktownhall.org](mailto:bbremer@colebrooktownhall.org)