

COLUMBIA



PHOTO CREDIT: PAUL RAMSEY

UPDATE JANUARY 2022



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

Happy New Year! We certainly have faced many challenges with the pandemic in the past year and already 2022 has brought some new challenges.

We understand that the communication of the distribution of the COVID-19 test kits on Sunday, January 2nd did not reach everyone. We encourage residents to sign up for Email Notifications and Emergency Alerts. Please go to www.columbiact.org, click on the **Notifications** tab located at the bottom of the website.

- To receive **Emergency Alerts** click on the EVERBRIDGE Alert Program link. The Everbridge Emergency Alert Program enables us to provide critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods.
- To receive **Town News via email**, click on the Email Notifications link then click on the Town Notifications box.

For COVID-19 Testing sites please click [here](#) or [211 website](#). In addition you can visit the Eastern Highland Health District website at www.ehhd.org.

We encourage the public to visit the Town website at www.columbiact.org for up to date information, the Town of Columbia [YouTube](#) channel and on our [Facebook](#) page.

Thank you and please be safe.

Steven M. Everett, First Selectman
severett@columbiact.org
860-228-0110



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

The month of January starts in earnest with budget preparations for the Fiscal Year 22/23. The Town Departments and Boards/Commissions are in the process of completing their submission of their Operating Budgets and Capital Budgets. The process can be unfamiliar or confusing to those who are not deeply involved on a day-to-day basis with the budget process. We have put together an informational brochure located on pages 5 and 6 to help inform and guide residents through the process.

We encourage you to attend the Board of Selectman (BOS) and Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC) meetings to engage in the budget process and we welcome your input. Meetings are held both in-person and virtually. Please visit our website and click on the [Calendar](#) tab for login information. You can also send in your input to PublicInput@columbiact.org.

For the most up-to-date budget calendar please click [here](#).

My door is always open as well as the First Selectman to address any questions or concerns that you may have about the budget.

EVERBRIDGE EMERGENCY ALERT NOTIFICATIONS: We will from time to time issue an Everbridge Emergency Alert Notification with a message from the First Selectman, Steven M. Everett to help keep you informed in the case of an emergency. This system enables us to provide you with critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. You will receive time-sensitive messages wherever you specify, such as your home, mobile or business phones, email address, text messages and more. You pick where, you pick how. To sign up for Everbridge Emergency Alert Notifications please go to the Town's website and click on the [Notifications](#) tab, then click on the EVERBRIDGE Alert Program link.

EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS: To receive Town news please go to the Town's website and click on the [Notifications](#) tab and click on the Email Notifications link.

If you need assistance please do not hesitate to call the Town Administrative Office or the First Selectman at 860-228-0110 or email us at townadministrator@columbiact.org.

All my best to you and yours for a Happy New Year!

Mark B. Walter, Town Administrator
323 Route 87
Columbia, CT 06237
860-228-0110

***Town Offices will be closed in observance of
Martin Luther King Day on Monday, January 17, 2022***

Find us on 

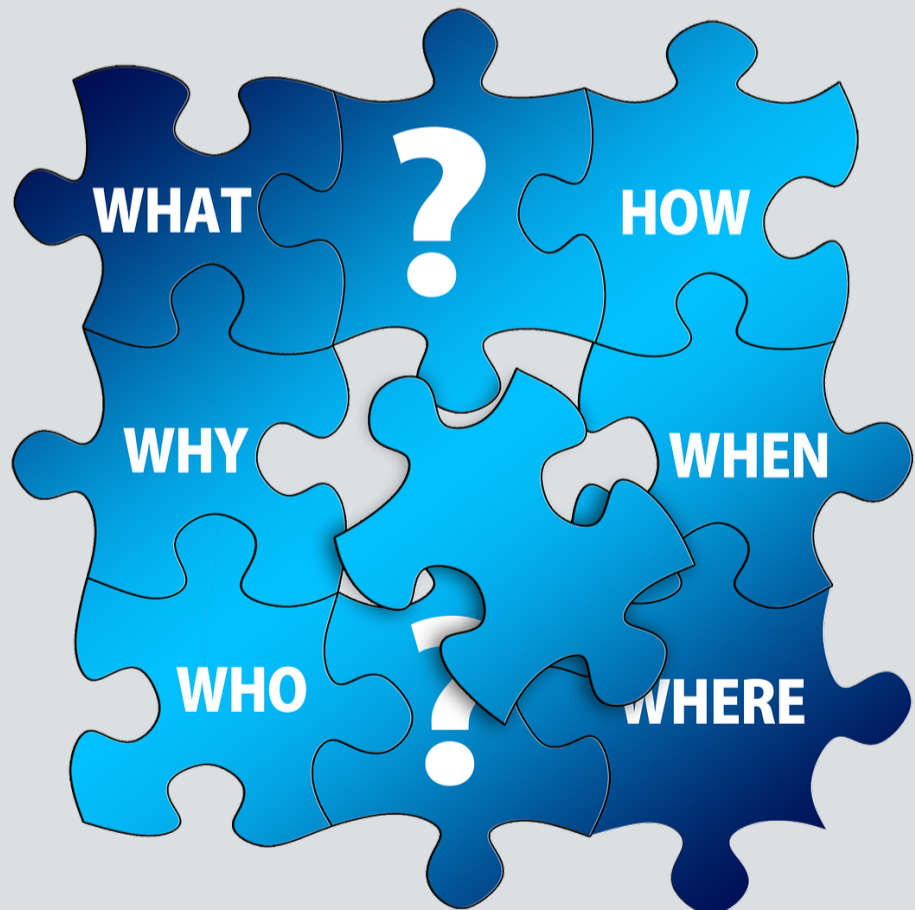


Image by Pixabay



2022-2023 BUDGET PROCESS

TOWN OF COLUMBIA

THE BUDGET PROCESS

The budget process, which includes board meetings, workshops and public hearings, is an effort to balance how much is needed to operate the town with how much the town can afford to spend.

The annual process, which is typically finalized in May, begins many months before and included a review of the town government and education expenditures and revenues.

The town's budget begins with the Town Administrator, working with the Finance Director, receiving budget requests from the various departments, boards and commissions and external agencies. The requests are reviewed and compiled and submitted to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) for budget workshops. At the same time, the Board of Education (BOE) works with the Superintendent, Finance Director and administrative staff to develop a proposed budget for the schools.

The finalized BOS and BOE budgets are presented to the Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC) at the budget workshops. FiPAC discusses and deliberates on the proposed budget and holds a public hearing to gather citizen input. After considering all input, FiPAC recommends its proposed budget to a Town Meeting for final vote and approval.

Upon adoption of the budget, FiPAC holds a meeting to set the mill rate.

Preparing the budget December - February

- School administrators submit budget requests to Superintendent
- The BOE, FiPAC and BOS hold Tri-Board meeting to kick-off the budget process and solicit public input.
- Town Departments submit budget requests to Town Administrator.
- Superintendent reviews budget request and submits a proposed budget to the BOE.
- The Town Administrator & First Selectman reviews all requests and submits a proposed budget to the BOS.
- BOE holds budget workshops, deliberates and approves a proposed budget.
- BOS holds budget workshops, deliberates and approves a proposed budget.

Reviewing the budget March- April

- BOS and BOE present budgets to FiPAC at budget workshops.
- FiPAC holds budget workshops and public hearings to gather citizen input.
- FiPAC deliberates and recommends a proposed budget to Town Meeting.

Adopting the budget in May

- Annual Town Budget Meeting held on proposed budget.
- Taxpayers vote on budget at Town Meeting.
- FiPAC sets mill rate.



2022-2023 BUDGET PROCESS

TOWN OF COLUMBIA

Below are the scheduled budget events. All meetings are open to the public. Any changes to the calendar due to weather or unforeseen events will be on the Town's website at www.columbiact.org.

To view the Board of Education Budget Process Schedule please go to the Board of Education website at www.hwporter.org.

DATE	TIME	PROCESS
12/06/21	N/A	Budget Forms available to Department Heads and Board Chairs
12/15/21	7 PM	Tri-Board Meeting between FiPAC, BOE & BOS
01/07/22	4 PM	Deadline for Budget submittals online by Department Heads and Board Chairs
01/11/22-01/24/22	N/A	Town Administrator meets with Department Heads & develops Budget
01/31/22	4 PM	Town Administrator delivers budget to BOS
02/01/22	7 PM	BOS Regular Meeting – with Review of budget highlights from the Town Administrator (tentative)
02/08/22	7 PM	BOS Special Meeting – with Budget Workshop
02/15/22	7 PM	BOS Regular Meeting - with Budget Workshop
02/22/22	7 PM	BOS Special Meeting – with Budget Workshop (tentative)
03/01/22	7 PM	BOS Regular Meeting – with Budget Workshop (BOS Budget Approval to go to FiPAC)
03/10/22	4 PM	Superintendent and TA deliver Budgets to FiPAC
03/15/22	4 PM	Per Charter, last day for BOS & BOE to deliver budgets to FiPAC
03/16/22	7 PM	FiPAC Special Meeting – Budget presentations by Super & TA
03/23/22	7 PM	FiPAC Special Meeting – with Budget Workshop
03/30/22	7 PM	FiPAC Special Meeting – with Budget Workshop
04/06/22	7 PM	FiPAC Special Meeting – with Budget Workshop (tentative)
04/13/22	7 PM	FiPAC Special Meeting – with Budget Workshop (tentative)
04/14/22	4 PM	Legal Notice for 4/27/22 Public Hearing is posted & published. Budget document made available on Website, Town Clerk and Library
04/27/22	7 PM	Public Hearing on budget with FiPAC Special Meeting to follow
04/27/22	4 PM	Deadline to advertise legal notice and public notice for Budget Meeting
05/10/22	7 PM	Annual Town Budget Meeting (called by BOS). Per charter must be held between 2nd Tuesday of May and the 1st. Tuesday of June

UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS

Many meetings will be held by utilizing remote access; however, some meetings are being held in-person. Please check the Town calendar and the Agenda posted for directions on login information if virtual, or the meeting location if in person. Each board or committee will provide the information needed to join using an on-line conferencing platform. Please check the Town of Columbia's [website](#) for updates.

UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS

- 01/03/22 Mon: Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission, 7:00 PM (Canceled)
- 01/04/22 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM
- 01/05/22 Wed: Lake Management Advisory Committee, 7:00 PM
- 01/06/22 Thur: Recreation Commission, 6:00 PM (Recreation Dept.)
- 01/06/22 Thur: Szegda Farm Management Committee, 9:00 AM
- 01/06/22 Thur: Conservation & Agriculture Commission, 7:00 PM
- 01/10/22 Mon: Planning and Zoning Commission, 7:00 PM
- 01/10/22 Mon: Board of Education, 7:30 PM (H.W. Porter Cafetorium)
- 01/12/22 Wed: Fiscal Policy Board, 8:30 AM (H.W. Porter Conference Room)
- 01/12/22 Wed: Youth Services Committee, 5:30 PM
- 01/12/22 Wed: Economic Development Commission, 7:00 PM
- 01/18/22 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM
- 01/19/22 Wed: Financial Planning & Allocation Commission, 7:00 PM
- 01/20/22 Thur: Open Space Committee, 8:00 AM
- 01/24/22 Mon: Planning & Zoning Commission, 7:00 PM
- 01/26/22 Wed: Commission on Aging, 9:00 AM
- 01/27/22 Thur: Zoning Board of Appeals, 7:00 PM

Public Comment will be accepted by our dedicated email at PublicInput@columbiact.org or by USPS mail to 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting).

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

ASSESSORS OFFICE: The Homeowners program will start accepting applications again as of February 1, 2022. If you are already in the program, you will receive a letter from us reminding you to file. If you are not already in the program you will need to bring a copy of your 1040 income tax forms for 2021 to our office, once they are completed, or all your income information if you do not file income taxes. We cannot accept paperwork before February 1st. If you have any questions, feel free to call us at 860-228-9555.

The revaluation notices are coming out in December. If you want to dispute or discuss your value, please make an appointment with eQuality immediately after you get your notice. Their number will be in the letter that is sent to you with the new value. You will book and informal hearing with them. Please do not delay as we have a small window of time to get values set for the next Grand List. We cannot extend the time per State statute.

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS:

**Legal Notice
Town of Columbia
Board of Assessment Appeals**

In accordance with Section 12-110 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Columbia Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 starting at 7:00 p.m. by appointment only via Zoom virtual platform for the purpose of hearing appeals related to the assessment of real estate, personal property and motor vehicles on the Grand List of October 1, 2021 and the Supplemental Grand List of October 1, 2020 in the Town of Columbia.

Appellants are encouraged to provide any documentation they believe support their appeal. Examples include, but are not limited to, real estate appraisal, bill of sale for real estate purchase, vehicle bill of sale and/or repair bills, photos showing condition of vehicle, and photo of odometer reading. The BAA uses N.A.D.A Guides for vehicle pricing.

Complete applications and supporting documentation must be filed in writing and received no later than February 21, 2022.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS CONTINUED: The meeting agenda with appointment confirmation and zoom meeting instructions will be emailed prior to the meeting to applicants who have filed applications in a timely manner. Please contact the Assessor at 860-228-9555 or email the Board Clerk at boardclerk@columbiact.org with questions.

Applications are available in the Tax Assessor's Office or at www.columbiact.org. Completed applications may be put in the Town Hall drop box (write "BAA application" on application envelope) or mailed to: Board of Assessment Appeals, Assessor's Office, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237.

Dated at Columbia, Connecticut this 8th day of January 2022.

Michael Hamilton, Chairman

Board of Assessment Appeals

In accordance with Section 12-110 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Columbia Board of Assessment Appeals will hold a public meeting for the purpose of hearing appeals related to the assessment of real estate, personal property and motor vehicles on the Grand List of October 1, 2021 and the Supplemental Grand List of October 1, 2020. **Taxpayers appeals will be heard on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 starting at 7:00 p.m. Due to precautions for COVID-19, the meeting will be conducted via Zoom virtual platform by appointment only.**

Applications and supporting documentation (examples include, but are not limited to, real estate appraisal, bill of sale for real estate purchase, vehicle bill of sale and/or repair bills, photos showing condition of vehicle, and photo of odometer reading) must be received in writing no later than **February 21, 2022**. The BAA uses N.A.D.A. Guides for vehicle pricing. Applications must be completed in their entirety. Appointment confirmation and Zoom meeting instructions will be emailed to applicants who have filed applications in a timely manner. Applications are available in the Tax Assessor's Office or at www.columbiact.org.

Completed applications may be filed in the Town Hall drop box outside the front door (make notation "BAA application" on application envelope) or mailed to: Board of Assessment Appeals, Assessor's Office, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237.

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Please print or type

Application to Appeal Grand List of: 2021 & SUPL 10/01/20 GL List #:

Appeal for (check one) Real Estate Personal Property Motor Vehicle

<p style="text-align: center;">Property Owner:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Appellant:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Correspondence & Contact:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p>Telephone No. _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Signature of Property Owner or Duly authorized Agent:</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Attach proof of authorization)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Property Description:</p> <p>Make _____ Model _____</p> <p>VIN # _____</p> <p>Location _____</p> <p>Mileage _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reason for Appeal:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Appellant's Estimate of Value:</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Attach documentation of Value, if applicable</p> <p>EMAIL Address: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
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TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

BECKISH SENIOR CENTER:

The Beckish Senior Center would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year!

Beckish Senior Center Digital Literacy Program: The Beckish Senior Center is dedicated to teaching our seniors technology and to help them adapt and communicate as our digital access grows. Educational training could not be done without the generous donations from Spectrum Communications. Spectrum donated 10 Chrome books to the Beckish Senior Center to be used for our digital literacy program. Our program will have computer classes twice a month throughout the new year! More information on classes will follow in February 2022. Be sure to check the [link](#) for the Beckish Senior Center.

FAREWELL TO MARGARET VERIZZI! Margaret Verizzi has been an integral part of our Senior Center for the last three plus years. She has also worked for the Town of Columbia for over 11 years. Her contributions will always be valued, remembered, and will never be forgotten. Margaret's hard work, commitment, and continuous dedication to our seniors and transportation program is more than worthy of admiration. Margaret has become so much more than my Senior Dispatcher; she has become my friend. Margaret will be greatly missed by all here at Beckish, especially the seniors. Replacing Margaret will be very challenging as she has the compassion and kindness to serve the needs of our seniors. We all wish Margaret health and happiness in her retirement.

COLUMBIA MOBILE FOODSHARE: The Beckish Senior Center hosts the Mobile Foodshare Every Other Thursday from 1:00PM to 1:30PM. For January the dates are January 13th and 27th. Please see the Mobile Foodshare flyer on the following page for more information.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Derring
Director Senior Services & Transportation
Municipal Agent for the Elderly

BECKISH SENIOR CENTER CONTINUED:

MOBILE FOODSHARE

**COLUMBIA'S
MOBILE FOODSHARE**

**Beckish Senior Center
188 Route 66, Columbia**

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY

**Jan 13th , Jan 27th, Feb 10th, Feb 24th, Mar 10th,
Mar 24th, April 7th, April 21st, May 5th, May 19th**

1:00PM TO 1:30 PM

NOTE CHANGE:

**PLEASE PARK YOUR CAR , SAFELY GET IN
LINE ALONG SIDEWALK TO PICK UP YOUR
FOOD AT THE TRUCK. BRING YOUR OWN
BAGS.**



**EVERYONE IS WELCOME—NO PERSONAL INFO
RE-**



TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

BECKISH SENIOR CENTER CONTINUED:

January Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 	3 10:00 Ping Pong 12-TVCCALunch 1:30 Virtual Yoga 4:30 Fit Fusion	4 9:00 Women's Club 9:30-11:30- Wood-carving 10:00 TOPS 1:00 Tai Chi 1:00-3 Open Pool	5 9:00 Zumba 10-Men's Group 12-TVCCA Lunch 1:00 Bridge 1-3 Open Pool 4:30 Fit Fusion	6 9:00 Ping Pong 9:00 Virtual Chair Yoga 10-Coffee/Social time 12-3 Reflex/Mass 1:00 Mahjong 1-3 Movie Time 1:30-3 Open Pool 6:30—Open Pool	7 9:00 Coffee/Social 12:00 TVCCA Lunch 1:15 Duplicate Bridge 1:00 Quilting 1:00 Open Pool 6:30 Setback Night	8
9	10 8-12 Haircuts 10:00 Ping Pong 12-TVCCALunch 1:30 Virtual Yoga 4:30 Fit Fusion 	11 9:00 Women's Club 9:30-11:30- Wood-carving 10:00 TOPS 1:00 Tai Chi 1:00-3 Open Pool	12 9:00 Zumba 10-Men's Group 12-TVCCA Lunch 1:00 Bridge 1-3 Open Pool 4:30 Fit Fusion	13 9:00 Ping Pong 9:00 Virtual Chair Yoga 10-Coffee/Social time 12-3 Reflex/Mass 1:00 Mahjong 1-1:30 MobileFoodshare 1-3 Movie Time 1:30-3 Open Pool 6:30—Open Pool	14 9:00 Coffee/Social 12:00 TVCCA Lunch 1:15 Duplicate Bridge 1:00 Quilting 1:00 Open Pool 6:30 Setback Night	15
16 End of week is DEAD-LINE FOR February GEM	17 CLOSED Observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day	18 9:00 Women's Club 9:30-11:30- Wood-carving 10:00 TOPS 1:00 Tai Chi 1:00-3 Open Pool	19 9:00 Zumba 10-Men's Group 12-TVCCA Lunch 1:00 Bridge 1-3 Open Pool 4:30 Fit Fusion	20 9:00 Ping Pong 9:00 Virtual Chair Yoga 10-Coffee/Social time 12-3 Reflex/Mass 1:00 Mahjong 1-3 Movie Time 1:30-3 Open Pool 6:30—Open Pool	21 9:00 Coffee/Social 12:00 TVCCA Lunch 1:15 Duplicate Bridge 1:00 Quilting 1:00 Open Pool 6:30 Set Back	22
23	24 10:00 Ping Pong 12-TVCCALunch 1:30 Virtual Yoga 4:30 Fit Fusion	25 9:00 Women's Club 9:30-11:30- Wood-carving 10:00 TOPS 1:00 Tai Chi 1:00-3 Open Pool	26 9:00 Zumba 10- Men's Group 12-TVCCA Lunch 1:00 Bridge 1-3 Open Pool 4:30 Fit Fusion	27 9:00 Ping Pong 9:00 Virtual Chair Yoga 10-Coffee/Social time 12-3 Reflex/Mass 1:00 Mahjong 1-1:30 MobileFoodshare 1-3 Movie Time 1:30-3 Open Pool 6:30—Open Pool	28 9:00 Coffee/Social 12:00 TVCCA Lunch 1:15 Duplicate Bridge 1:00 Quilting 1:00 Open Pool 6:30 Set Back	29
30	31 10:00 Ping Pong 12-TVCCALunch 1:30 Virtual Yoga 4:30 Fit Fusion	Feb 1 9:00 Women's Club 9:30-11:30- Wood-carving 10:00 TOPS 1:00 Tai Chi 1:00-3 Open Pool	2 9:00 Zumba 10- Men's Group 12-TVCCA Lunch 1:00 Bridge 1-3 Open Pool 4:30 Fit Fusion	3 9:00 Ping Pong 9:00 Virtual Chair Yoga 10-Coffee/Social time 12-3 Reflex/Mass 1:00 Mahjong 1-3 Movie Time 1:30-3 Open Pool 6:30—Open Pool	4 9:00 Coffee/Social 12:00 TVCCA Lunch 1:15 Duplicate Bridge 1:00 Quilting 1:00 Open Pool 6:30 Set Back	5

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

BUILDING/LAND USE DEPARTMENT: GENERATORS: STAND-ALONE (STANDBY SYSTEMS) & PORTABLE FUELED WITH LP / GAS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED WITH PERMIT APPLICATIONS

- The electrical permit must include the cost of the generator in the construction value.
- The electrical and LP / Gas permit applications are to be submitted simultaneously.
- The applicant shall include the following required documents when submitting the permit application(s):
 - a) Contractors licenses and certificates of insurance.
 - b) The Type, make, and model of the transfer switch to be installed along with a cut/specification sheet.
 - c) The Type, make, and model of the generator to be installed along with a cut/specification sheet and clearance requirements for the generator.
 - d) If an 'automatic transfer switch' is proposed to be installed, a load calculation is required in order to show compliance with the capacity and rating requirements of Section 705 of the 2017 National Electrical Code (NEC).
 - e) A wiring diagram to show, in detail, the location of the new equipment and the existing equipment, the transfer switch location (before main or after main), wiring sizes and method. Also note: if a whole house transfer switch is being proposed to be installed ahead of the current main disconnect, details on the grounding and bonding arrangement are to be provided.
 - f) If a permanent generator is being installed, a letter of proper operation is required for the final inspection and certificate of approval.
 - g) At meter: socket label "MULTIPLE SOURCES"
 - h) An accurate drawing/siteplan showing the location of these components (generator & fuel tanks) in relation to the front, rear, and side yard property lines must accompany your permit application.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

BUILDING/LAND USE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED:

PLEASE NOTE: Columbia Zoning Regulations require zoning approval for placement of both the generator unit and LP tanks, respectful of the zoning setback requirements.

The Columbia Building Safety and Land Use Department is offering this handout as a representative of the typical information and/or questions that arise for a typical generator installation proposal. The Town assumes no responsibility for any errors, omissions that may be found or is missing from this handout. This is to be used as a supplement to the normally required information that is submitted on a permit application. The installer is required to follow all applicable codes and standards applicable to the installation. This handout cannot possibly cover all situations, set-ups, or configurations, not is it intended too.

Building Department

Terri Lasota, Building Department Administrative Assistant

(860) 228-0440

email LandUse@columbiact.org.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: Provided below is important information for the winter months.

SNOW REMOVAL RULES:

- Make sure that your roadside trash bins stay on private property and do not venture out into the road. The Town is not liable for any damage as a result of bins that get damaged by passing traffic.
- Refrain from plowing and blowing snow into or across roadways or onto town rights-of-way. Doing so creates unsafe conditions for drivers and vehicles.
- Refrain from parking in town roadways or in Municipal and School parking lots during snow events.
- Refrain from using snowmobiles, using all-terrain vehicles and engaging in snow skiing on town roadways.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS CONTINUED:

MAILBOXES: As a courtesy to our taxpayers the Town will replace mailboxes on town roads that have been determined by the Public Works Department to have been rendered unusable by damage from snowplow contact from a town truck. Such box and post must have been in sound condition prior to incident. Replacement will be in accordance with USPS Standard 7B01 and a 4x4 post. Replacement will occur after winter season and subject to DPW work schedule. If resident has an expensive box, the town will either replace as stated above or issue a check for \$25.00.

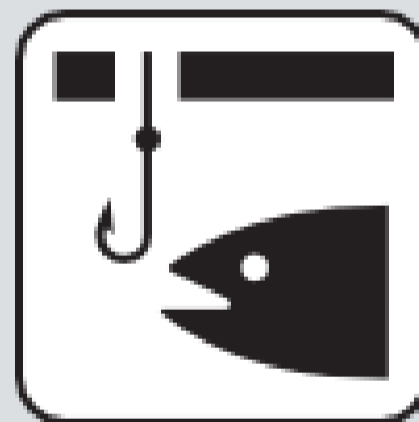
Please check your mailbox and post to make sure both are secure. You may also want to install a secured protective shield to deflect the snow from the mailbox and post.

SAND: Free sand (up to 2 five-gallon containers) is available to residents during the winter months located behind the Swap Shop at the Transfer Station. Residents must provide their own container for the sand. The Transfer Station is open on Wednesday's and Saturday's from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

BAIT BUCKET DISPOSAL CATCH BASIN AVAILABLE FOR ICE

FISHERMAN: Please use the bait bucket disposal catch basin located in the parking lot in of the Murphy House. Please do not throw any bait on the beach or in the lake.

If you have any questions please contact DPW Director, Beth Lunt at 860-228-4270, or elunt@columbiact.org. The Public Works Garage is located at 89 Route 6, Columbia, CT. 06237.



TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

FIRE MARSHAL:

PREPARING FOR A HOUSE FIRE

Install appropriate smoke alarms throughout your home. Test these alarms once a month and change the batteries at least twice a year. Any devices that are 10+ years old should be completely replaced.

Teach children what smoke alarms sound like and what to do when they hear one.

Have a household exit plan and establish a family meeting spot outside of your home.

Teach household members to STOP, DROP and ROLL if their clothes should catch on fire.

Consider storing copies of your current insurance policies and other important documents in a secure, remote location. Having an extra set of car keys at this location may be helpful as well.

In the unfortunate event of a house fire, get out of your home immediately.

- Priority is you get yourself and your family members out as quickly as possible – do not attempt to collect your valuables.
- Notify all other occupants and account for everyone once outside.
- Call 9-1-1 and give the dispatcher as much information as possible.
- Never re-enter your home for anything.
- When the Fire Department arrives, communicate if everyone is accounted for and if there are any special hazards, e.g., guns, ammunition, propane gas, or lost pets.
- Try to remain calm.

After the fire, there will be an investigation to determine the cause and origin of your house fire. You will need to contact your insurance company. Be mindful when signing any contracts for cleanup services.

Please feel free to contact the Fire Marshal at (860) 228-0440 or the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department at (860) 228-9602 if you ever have any questions or concerns regarding fire prevention and safety.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

SOCIAL SERVICES: While the pandemic has been part of our lives for the last year, things are very different now than they were 365 days ago. We have adapted, learned a lot, and gained solutions to help us move forward safely. And with or without the pandemic, that is always the goal! To support the continued well-being of our community, please know you can reach out to me to:



- Talk with a social worker.
- Receive guidance/advocacy with eligibility/benefits. energy needs.
- Learn about what programs you may qualify for.
- Get referrals to appropriate programs/services.

We have collected an A-Z sampling of support resources that can be accessed on our website at [here](#). You may find something helpful for you, a family member, or a neighbor. Knowledge is power!

This is a not an exhaustive list. For further information on a topic or for information on a topic not listed, visit or call 211, United Way <https://www.211ct.org/> 24/7.

Fuel Assistance Deadline is May 31, 2022. No Asset Limit for Energy Assistance this year! Apply for your heating benefit now. This program is available to all heating customers (electric heat, gas heat, oil, kerosene, etc.). Households with heat included in their rent may also qualify. Funds may be available for furnace repair, clean, tune and tests. Apply in person or by phone by calling the Access Agency for an appointment at 860-450-7400.

For assistance in navigating programs, or if there is another need, please contact me, Katie Wilt, Town of Columbia Community Social Services Coordinator, at 860-228-1008 or kwilt@columbiact.org (Typical hours Monday & Tuesday 8:30-5:00).

Katie Wilt [*she/her/hers*] Community Social Services Coordinator
Town of Columbia, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237
kwilt@columbiact.org

Direct Number: 860.228.1008 - Main Phone: 860.228.0110 x128
(Typical office hours: Monday & Tuesday, & Friday 8:30 am-5:00 pm)

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

RECREATION DEPARTMENT: Please note that the Parks and Recreation Department is now located at the Murphy House at Columbia Lake. Follow us on [FaceBook](#) and [Instagram](#)!

UPCOMING EVENTS: REGISTRATION FOR PROGRAMS [ONLINE AT RECDESK](#).

EXERCISE PROGRAMS held at Yeoman's Hall.

Fit Fusion: Mon/Weds 4:30-5:30pm, Yeomans Hall

Yoga: Tuesdays 6pm to 7pm, Yeomans Hall

For all exercise classes we have a max capacity of 12 people per a class. Due to this we are asking those who wish to attend to email ahead to reserve a spot recdirector@columbiact.org. Walk-ins will be accepted if the class is not already at capacity.

COMMUNITY GARDEN: Happy New Year to All. The holidays are behind us and the thought of gardening seems a bit premature, but garden/seed catalogs are reappearing in mailboxes. Visions of flowers and vegetables dance in our heads. Gardeners are beginning to plan for their spring crops and outdoor comradery will once again be possible. If you are looking to expand your horizons Columbia has just the spot.

The Columbia Community Garden located on Szegda Road offers a secure, sun filled, fenced area with water on site for each plot. With the expansion of the fenced area, there are now new plots of varying sizes for residents and non-residents to rent through the Columbia Recreation Dept. NOW IS THE TIME TO START PLANNING A GARDEN. Contact the Rec. Department at (860) 228-8513 or email to recreation@columbiact.org for more information about reserving a plot for to begin your gardening adventure. Make new friends, swap gardening stories, advice and plants with gardeners who have had plots since the garden was created in 2008. Gardening help and advice is never in short supply at the Columbia Community Garden.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

TAX OFFICE: Don't forget!! The second installment of the Real Estate, Personal Property and the Supplemental Motor Vehicle taxes will become due on **January 1, 2022**. The last day to pay without a penalty is February 1, 2022. If taxes are not paid on or before February 1, 2022 interest will be charged at the rate of 1½% per month (18% per year) from the due date of January 1st. The minimum interest charged is \$2.00 (per vehicle). Failure to receive a bill does not invalidate the tax or interest per CT State Statute. Bills are not sent for this second installment, please put a reminder on your calendar!

Regular office hours for the TAX OFFICE: Monday through Wednesday 8:00-2:00, Thursday 10:00-6:00 and closed on Friday. In December town offices are closed on the 23rd, 24th, 30th and 31st for the Holidays.

The Tax Office has extended hours during the tax collection month of **January and February 1, 2022:** Monday through Wednesday 8:00-4:00, Thursday 10:00-6:00 and Friday 8:00-12:00.

Mailing address for tax payments:

Town of Columbia

Dept # 347

PO Box 150512

Hartford, CT 06115-0512

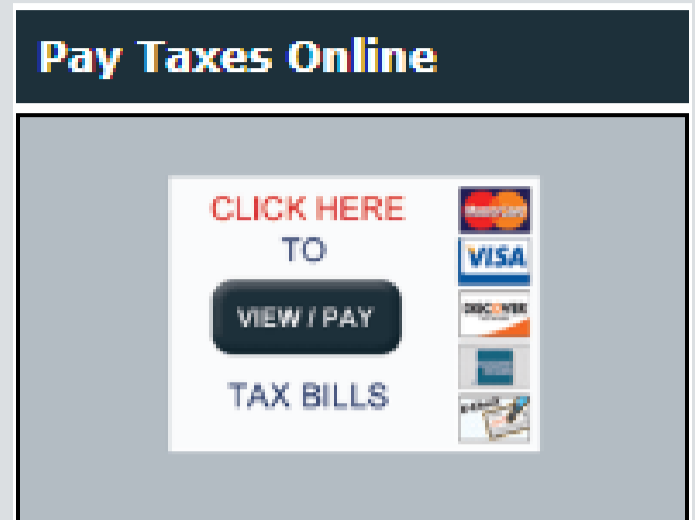
Drop boxes for payments and correspondence are located at the right side of the entrance of the Town Hall and in front of Yeoman's Hall. The drop boxes are emptied at 8:00AM each weekday, weekend tax payments are processed on Monday. Please be aware that tax payments put in the drop box after 8:00AM will be processed the next day the Tax Office is open.

You can view and pay taxes online. Service fees for tax payments are, .95 cents to use a bank account and 2.95% for credit and debit cards.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

TAX OFFICE CONTINUED: To find your tax bills online:

- go to www.columbiact.org and click on the pay taxes online tab.
- on the next page click on the square that says view/pay tax bills.
- the search criteria will need to be entered exactly how the tax bill is written. last name, space, and your first initial.



You can also utilize this site to look up your payment

history. Locate your bill using the instructions above, then hover over the icons in the option column and select tax payment history. If you have any problems using the online system, please contact the Tax Office at 860-228-0230 or taxcollector@columbiact.org and we will gladly assist you.

For those seeking an immediate clearance for DMV due to delinquent taxes please contact the Tax Office at 860-228-0230 or taxcollector@columbiact.org for information on the process. Paying the tax bill online does not clear you immediately at DMV. You will need to contact the tax office during the tax office hours for assistance.

Carol Price, Tax Collector

TOWN CLERKS OFFICE: The Town Clerk's office is fully open to the public – no appointment necessary. We are here for those services you might need – Recording and Searching of Land Records, Dog Licenses, Transfer Station stickers, Certified copies of Vital Records, Marriage licenses, Fishing and Hunting licenses, etc.

Due to the continuing pandemic, the need for social distancing and for your convenience, a large white drop box was installed outside the doors to Yeoman's Hall. This box can be used to drop off items for the Town Clerk and is shared with other offices in Town Hall. Masks are required to enter Town Hall.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call us (860-228-3284) or reach out to us by email – Robin (townclerk@columbiact.org) or Gail (). Happy New Year!!

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY: The Saxton B. Little Library has returned to our fine structure January 1, 2022. Please stop by or call the Library if you have questions.

Masks are required by everyone in the public spaces of the Library. If someone does not wish to wear a mask or would prefer not to enter the Library, we remind all that Curbside service is still available.

Story times are taking place virtually Tuesday mornings at 10:30 am. Baby Bees are continuing virtually Friday mornings at 10:30. Call or stop in the Library for a standing Zoom code.

Our book groups, weekly Stitcher group and bi-monthly Writer's group are all accepting new members. This month we are also offering Zoom programs for adults: Online Safety for Kids and a Cooking With Fish Sauce.

To sign up for a program or get more information, contact the Library at: 860.228.0350 / SBL@columbiactlibrary.org / www.columbiactlibrary.org

Note: The Library will be closed on January 17, in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

COLUMBIA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT:

EMT's and Firefighters Needed!

- Are you a resident, live nearby, or are you employed by the town of Columbia?
- Are you 16 years of age or older?
-

Certifications and Experience not required for application

Please inquire about training

To Apply click [here](#) and someone from our membership committee will reach out to you

OPPORTUNITIES

- Join the proud tradition of the CVFD family
- Help your neighbors and community in times of need
- Earn a tax abatement up to \$2000/year
- Learn new skills useful in all areas of life
- Receive training and equipment provided at Department cost
- Participate in grant writing and administrative functions of CVFD

WHO WE ARE?

- We are your neighbors
- We are emergency medical technicians, fire police, fire fighters, engineers, instructors, and apparatus drivers
- We range in age from 16 years to 65+ years
- We are women and men
- Respond to over 800 calls for EMS, fire and fire related, and mutual aid
- We spend over 1300 hours on training
- We are 100% volunteer

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

COLUMBIA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED:

FIRE

*Firefighters * Apparatus Drivers*

Learn to work as a team to protect lives and property. Participate in Department training and State certified programs. Duties include extrication of victims at fires and accidents, water rescue, containment of hazmat incidents, suppression of all types of fires including structure, brush, and vehicle. Assist with medical calls and provide mutual aid to surrounding towns.

EMS

*Medical * Trauma * Accidents*

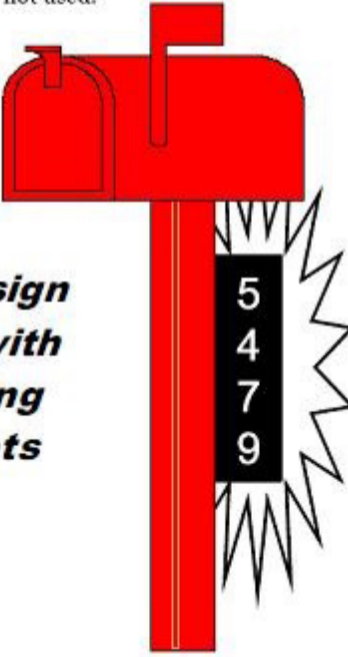
Be a part of pre-hospital assessment and treatment to stabilize patients and prevent further injury. Learn the skills necessary to report accurately and provide rapid transport. Training is provided for Certified EMT's (Emergency Medical Technicians)

FIRE POLICE

The Fire Police protect the members of the Department and community at all types of calls. With additional training, CVFD fire police can join the Tri County fire police to provide services to other communities in our area.

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

COLUMBIA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED: REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKERS: If there is an emergency, help our Fire Department find you! 911 reflective address signs ensure a quick response. To order the Reflective Address Markers please go to the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department's web-page at www.columbiafire5.org and download the printable form or you can fill out the electronic form online. The price is \$10.00 per sign or \$12.00 with mounting brackets.

Columbia Volunteer Fire Department	
REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKER ORDER FORM	
Please complete the following information:	
Name _____ Address _____ City, ST Zip _____ Phone Number _____	
Address Number Requested	
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<small>Note: If your address has fewer than 5 digits, please X those boxes not used.</small>	
Mounting Preference	
HORIZONTAL _____ VERTICAL _____	V E R T I C A L
HORIZONTAL	
Mail to: Columbia Volunteer Fire Department PO Box 26 Columbia, CT 06237 (860) 228-9602	
 \$10 per sign or \$12 with Mounting Brackets	

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

AHM YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES: Happy New Year from your friends at AHM.

Check out just some of our upcoming programs:

- Tasks for Columbia Seniors – for help around your home with projects such as spring cleanup. TASKs jobs are available for students by calling Patricia Sciglimpaglia-Vigue, 860-324-1820.
- SMART Recovery Groups for young adults and their families are confidential and offered virtually.
- Family Counseling Services for Columbia families with children from birth to age 26 are available. To schedule, an appointment call the AHM offices at 860-228-9488.
- Student Support Services at Horace Porter School supports the social and emotional well-being of your child/children. Cheri Rivard Lentz assists students and their families that are experiencing personal problems or issues that are interfering with their ability to have a successful school experience.
- Play and Learn Groups for Columbia adults and children ages Birth-5 on Mondays and Thursdays offer crafts, playing, and circle time. Registration is \$85/family for a 12-week session starting the week of 1/10/22 on Mondays from 9:30-10:30 and Thursdays from 10:00-11:00. Register at: <https://ahmyouth.org/play-and-learn-at-ghs-registration/>



NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

AHM YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES CONTINUED:

- First Steps in Music Class for children Birth-5 and Adults at AHM, 25 Pendleton in Hebron, will be held on 8 Wednesdays, starting 1/19-3/9 from 9:30-10:15. Registration is \$125. This is a Family Developmentally appropriate and researched early childhood music program with singing, movement, rhythm, and instruments. Please register here: <https://ahmyouth.org/first-steps-in-music-registration/>



- Messy Play for little ones for children 18 months-5 years and adults at Gilead Hill School on Fridays from 10:00-11:00 on, 1/14, 1/21, 1/28, 2/4, 2/11, and 2/18. Various sensory play activities for children to enjoy with their adults! Registration will be on the AHM website shortly. KinderRHAMa Preschool Registration for 2022-2023 School Year to be held online starting on 3/28/22. Please go to the AHM Website. Please register at www.ahmyouth.org for any of these programs please see the website at <https://ahmyouth.org/programs-services/family-resource-center/> or contact Becky Murray at beckym@ahmyouth.org or Laura Beeler at laurab@ahmyouth.org for more information.

Upcoming programs and events include: Performing Arts for children, Nature and Adventure Day, as part of the annual Maple Festival; RUNA, a night of Celtic music on Saturday, April 23rd. Visit www.ahmyouth.org for more information.

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION



FIND US ON



Horace W Porter PTO and
Parent Community



Horaceporterpto@gmail.com



https://www.columbiapublicschools.org/horace_w_porter.php



Join us by sending an email



Paypal for payments only:
porterptotreas@gmail.com

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND
NON-PROFIT
NEWS AND INFORMATION

HORACE W. PORTER PTO

BINGO

FEB. 11TH

H.W.P Cafeteria

GAMES - FUN - PRIZES @ 5:30PM

FACEBOOK: HORACE W PORTER PTO AND PARENT COMMUNITY

\$5 PER PERSON, \$20 FAMILY CAP, \$3 PER EXTRA CARD

PAYPAL: PORTERPTOTREAS@GMAIL.COM

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL:
HORACEPORTERPTO@GMAIL.COM**

H.W.P PTO is a registered 501(c)3 organization

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NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

UCONN EXTENSION - TOLLAND COUNTY OFFICE LOCAL FARM GUIDE: The Winter Gift Guide for the North East Connecticut Farms is now available to support our farmers in Northeast Conn during these winter months!

The link to the guide is [here](#)

HORACE PORTER SCHOOL:

PRESCHOOL SCREENINGS

The Early Childhood Team of Horace W. Porter School is pleased to announce that we will conduct Preschool Screenings for Columbia 3-year-olds (turning 3 by July 31, 2022) and any 4-year-olds not previously screened. Please call Deborah Dupuis at (860) 228-0585 if you would like your child to be screened. All public-school systems in Connecticut are responsible for the identification of children who may be eligible to receive special education services. The early childhood team in Columbia offers preschool developmental screenings for current resident children. The purpose of this screening is to collect information about each preschooler's early development in the areas of cognition, communication, motor functioning, and social interaction. This will help us to determine whether your child needs any special services in order to prepare for school success.

If you have concerns about a child that has not yet turned 3, please contact the CT Birth-to-Three program at (800) 505-7000.

PORTER PALS PRESCHOOL LOTTERY REGISTRATION: If you have a child who will be turning 3 or 4 years old by Dec. 31, 2022 and would like them to be considered for the lottery, please go to www.columbiapublicschools.org and click on Student Services. Under the Student Services tab, please click on Preschool Porter Pals. There will be a link to register your child. We will be holding the Lottery on Thursday, March 31. If your child will be turning 5 prior to Dec. 31, 2022, then your child is eligible for Kindergarten and not Preschool. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deborah Dupuis at (860) 228-0585.

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

COLUMBIA LEO'S: Happy New Year from the Columbia Leos! The Columbia Leo's January 2022 Drive For The Town of Columbia Fuel Bank! To donate online please click [here](#). We will be at the Senior Center on Saturday January 8th to collect food and checks in person.

As the new year begins and winter settles in, we realize that some of our fellow Columbians may need help getting through this cold stretch. As we all know, fuel prices have soared and purchasing power has declined.

That is why The Columbia Leos Club is reaching out to you to ask for your help in supporting The Town of Columbia Fuel Assistance Program. All contributions made to The Columbia Leos will be passed along to the Town. More information on the fuel assistance program is available by calling 860-228-0110.

You can give today by clicking on the "Donate" button above. You can use a credit or debit card. If you prefer you can mail your donation to:

Town of Columbia Fuel Assistance, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237 OR Columbia Leos Club/
Fuel Assistance, PO Box 1 Columbia, CT 06237

Thank you for helping us as we try to make a direct and positive impact in our community! Our town's unfailing generosity and concern for others inspires us in all we do!

Thank you, The Columbia Leos

Donations Will Benefit
The Columbia Leos

Contact Information:
Lion Jim Blair, Advisor
860-428-2916

Jbland15@earthlink.net