In the month of March we are still in the budget process. The schedule this month includes a Board of Selectman (BOS) regular meeting with a budget workshop on 3/3/20 at 7:00 PM. Budget presentations by the Superintendent of the Horace W. Porter School and the Town Administrator to the Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC) will be held on 3/18/20 at 7:00 PM. FiPAC will have a budget workshop on 3/25/20 at their scheduled Special Meeting. We have included in this newsletter the additional budget workshop dates, Public Hearing and Annual Town Meeting dates.

The process of filling the lake has begun. This is to allow the lake to fill to capacity during the maximum run-off months of March and April. Each year in March when the surface of the Lake is essentially free of ice, the gate shall be closed and the Lake allowed to return to normal water level. In the event that a substantial ice sheet re-forms and lasts more than 72 hours, the lake level is held to at least 3’6” below normal water level until the new ice is completely out.
CORONAVIRUS: As the details of the COVID-19 outbreak change and the likelihood of community transmission increases, Easter Highland Health District (EHHD) has real-time information on their website www.ehhd.org with an embedded link to the CDC (COVID-19 Information from the CDC).

If you have specific questions please contact EHHD directly at (860) 429-3325.

Governor Lamont issued an update on CT’s Coronavirus prevention efforts on February 26th. Still No Confirmed Cases in Connecticut; State Continues Outreach to Schools, Health Departments, and Residents on Prevention: (HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Ned Lamont today said that the State of Connecticut is continuing to coordinate its prevention efforts and organize necessary resources to respond to the potential novel coronavirus pandemic. While there are not any confirmed cases in Connecticut, the governor is urging residents to take all necessary precautions and follow guidelines issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

SOCIAL ISOLATION AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP: One of our more challenging goals for 2020 is addressing social isolation. The level of social isolation in Columbia may be greater than imagined. Isolation is difficult to find unless a community is intentional about it. We will need to create opportunities to break out of the isolation cycle. There are many factors that can contribute to social isolations, such as, long-term illness, disabilities, transport issues, unemployment and economic struggles, or domestic violence. We are working with the Columbia Senior Center Director, the Commission on Aging, AHM Youth and Family Services, Inc. to help children, teens, and families overcome challenges. At a recent Hunger Action Team regional meeting, we had discussions on common concerns for residents from all our communities experiencing social isolation.

Some tools that we will be engaging include expanding our senior bus hours. The additional hours will increase the scheduled runs to provide more wellness trips throughout the week. AHM formed a strategic planning committee that held 14 focus groups; consisting of community leaders from our local schools, town, state, and faith groups, plus parent surveys. This helped create the three-year strategic plan that will help us improve our human and capital resources.
Mark your calendars for **Saturday April 25th** as our first Neighbor Helping Neighbors Day. We will be looking for you, your friends, family, church, business, school, or civic organization to help with identified service projects. Ways to sign up: call 860-228-9488 or visit [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com).

To Volunteer: [Community Day volunteer Sign-Up](#)

Project Requests: [Community Day Project Request Form](#)
COMINGS & GOINGS: Please welcome a new employee to our Park and Recreation Department, Nicole Morey. Nicole grew up in Columbia and is a resident to this day. She graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University with her Bachelors in Sports and Leisure Management. While at Eastern she was captain of the basketball team and worked in the athletic department. She has a variety of experience in organizing fundraisers, events, and camps. She is very involved in the community especially in youth sports, assisting with different fundraising needs and as a volunteer coach. Nicole will be a great asset to the Town and the Parks and Recreation Department.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES: Animal Control Officer: The Town of Columbia is accepting applications for the position of Animal Control Officer. This position’s primary goals are to enforce animal related laws, reunite lost dogs with their owners and find loving homes for dogs not claimed by their owners. For full details and application, please go to the Town of Columbia’s website and click on Employment/Volunteer Opportunities.

To list your event in this newsletter, contact Jennifer LaVoie at jlavoie@columbiact.org by the 15th of the previous month.
# 2020-2021 Budget Process

**Town of Columbia**

Below are 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 [www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org).

To view the Board of Education Budget Process Schedule, please go to the Board of Education website at [www.hwporter.org](http://www.hwporter.org).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/09/19</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Budget Forms available to Department Heads and Board Chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/18/19</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Tri-Board Meeting between FI PAC, BOE &amp; BOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/03/20</td>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Deadline for Budget submittals online by Department Heads and Board Chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/03/20 - 01/24/20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Town Administrator meets with Dept. Heads and develops Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/03/20</td>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Town Administrator delivers budget to BOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/04/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>BOS Regular Meeting - with Budget Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/11/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>BOS Special Meeting - with Budget Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/18/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>BOS Regular Meeting - with Budget Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/25/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>BOS Special Meeting - with Budget Workshop (tentative)</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/03/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>BOS Regular Meeting - with Budget Workshop (tentative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/11/20</td>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Superintendent &amp; Town Administrator Deliver Budgets to FI PAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/15/20</td>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Per Charter, last day for BOS &amp; BOE to present budgets to FI PAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/18/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>FI PAC Regular Meeting - Budget presentations by Super &amp; TA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/25/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>FI PAC Special Meeting - with Budget Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/01/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>FI PAC Special Meeting - with Budget Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/08/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>FI PAC Special Meeting - with Budget Workshop (tentative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/10/20</td>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Legal Notice for 4/22/20 Public Hearing is posted &amp; published. Budget document made available on Website, Town Clerk and Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/22/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Public Hearing on budget with FI PAC Special Meeting to follow</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/29/20</td>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Deadline to advertise legal notice and public notice for Budget Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/12/20</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Annual Town Budget Meeting (called by BOS). Per Charter must be held between 2nd Tuesday of May and 1st Tuesday of June</td>
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</table>

*View posted board/commission meeting agenda to discover changes to this schedule*
One of our town’s strongest attributes is our commitment to our youth’s educational as well as extra curricular development. This is exhibited in our robust boys and girls youth sports program that includes basketball, soccer, softball and baseball development from elementary through middle school ages. Some of these youngsters than go on to compete in their sports at the high school level and beyond.

An example of that success at the high school level is four Columbia young ladies as members of the E.O. Smith High School Varsity Girls Basketball team played a role in the team earning the 2020 Central Connecticut Conference (CCC) Championship. The conference consists of 32 teams throughout central Connecticut. The team concluded the season with a 14-6 record which ranked 14th amongst the 16 teams that qualified for the tournament. In their journey they defeated the #3 seed, Northwest Catholic, the #6 seed, Glastonbury, the #10 seed, Conard and the #4 seed East Catholic in the championship game.
Congratulations to Taylor Golembiewski, Madison Hughes, Elizabeth Levine and Olivia Verboven for attaining this success. Taylor, a junior is E.O.S’s floor leader spearheading the team’s offense and defense. Maddie, a freshman earned a starting role with her strong post play. Olivia, a sophomore guard comes off the bench and energizes the team with her three point shots and pesky defense. Elizabeth, a sophomore earned a post season Varsity roster spot for her hard work and effort.

Congratulations! We are proud of these young ladies who serve as examples of our commitment to developing our youth and their desire to continue competing in high school. Annually E.O. Smith’s girl’s team partners with our town’s girls basketball players to attend a game as Junior Panthers.

By Mary Roickle
UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS

Please check the Town of Columbia’s website for any updates.

- Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission - Conference Room, Monday, March 2, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Board of Selectmen (BOS) with Budget Workshop - Conference Room, Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Lake Management Advisory Commission (LMAC), Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 7:30 PM
- Recreation Commission - Recreation Department, Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM
- Szegda Farm Management Committee - Conference Room, Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM
- Board of Assessment Appeals - Conference Room, Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Columbia Conservation Agriculture Commission - Conference Room, Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Planning and Zoning Commission - Conference Room, Monday, March 9, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Fiscal Policy Board - H.W. Porter Conference Room, Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 8:30 AM
- Economic Development Commission (EDC) - Conference Room, Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Board of Selectmen (BOS) - Conference Room, Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Financial Planning & Allocation Commission (FiPAC) - Conference Room, Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Columbia Open Space - Conference Room, Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 8:00 AM
- Planning and Zoning Commission - Conference Room, Monday, March 23, 2020 at 7:00 PM
- Commission on Aging (CONA) - Beckish Senior Center, Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 9:00 AM
- Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) - Conference Room, Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 7:00 PM

Please visit our website to access the Community Calendar.
REGISTRAR OF VOTERS: Presidential Primary - The Presidential Primary is a Primary to determine which candidates will appear on the Presidential ballot in November. The Republican and Democratic Primary will be held on **April 28th, 2020** at **HORACE W. PORTER SCHOOL.** Primaries in CT are “Closed Primaries”, meaning that only voters registered in the party which is holding the Primary may vote. So only registered Republicans can vote for Republican candidates, and only registered Democrats can vote for Democratic candidates.

If you are not currently registered to vote, or not currently affiliated with a political party (registered as Unaffiliated), you can enroll in a party until noon on April 27th, 2020 and still be eligible to vote in the Presidential Primary.

*Did you know?* There is a difference between Independent and Unaffiliated. The Independent Party is a recognized minor party in the state of Connecticut. Whereas, Unaffiliated means you are not registered in any party.

Please check our [Registrar of Voters](#) page on the town website or contact our office for more information.

Registrars of Voters
Karen Butzgy – Democratic
Katherine Morrison – Republican
(860) 228-6843 x113

*registrar@columbiact.org*

ASSESSOR’S OFFICE: The Homeowners program will start accepting applications again as of February 1, 2020. 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 2019 calendar year to our office once they are completed or all your income information if you do not file income taxes.

This year’s maximum income limit for married couples is $45,100, and for unmarried filers it is $37,000 which includes all income including your social security income. If you have any questions, feel free to call us at 860-228-9555.
BECKISH SENIOR CENTER: by Bernadette Derring - The Beckish Senior Center has been a place to display the works of some of our resident artists. Recently Bob Oxenhorn, Kim Kordonowy, and Janice Knight have displayed their paintings. Starting March 15th artist, Katherine Mann, will show her work at the Beckish Senior Center. Kathy has lived in Columbia with her husband for almost 50 years. After growing up in Waterford, CT, she earned a BA in English from the University of Connecticut where she met her husband, Bob. They purchased their home on Cherry Valley Road shortly after they were married, and it is there that she now has her home studio. Kathy was a language art and reading specialist until her retirement, and just began to paint about 15 years ago. Bob supports her by scouting out subjects for her to paint, and he loves to photograph old barns and landscapes for her. Kathy has received significant recognition and awards from the Lyme Art Association (where she is now an Associate Artist), the Mystic Art Association, and the West Hartford Art League. More locally, Kathy’s work was “Best in Show” in 2014 in Mansfield, and she was a recent first-place winner in our own annual Rose Marrotte Art Show at the Beckish Center.

It is always interesting to understand how an artist becomes inspired to take up painting. Kathy recalls an early attraction to art, but it was not until she was retired that she found the time to pursue it, which she believes requires serious focus. Talking to Kathy, I was struck by the influence of her elementary school on her life choices. She has a vivid memory of painting in First Grade. Students who finished their work were allowed to paint freely in a cloakroom hallway where easels were set up and outfitted with paint, brushes, and paper. She fondly recalls murals throughout the school which supported learning in other curriculum areas. The power of integrating art into her early education made all the difference for Kathy, and
likely planted the seed for her second career as an artist. She had little formal training in art in college, but now she reads avidly about art and artists, and studies the work of old masters and the recent work of many regional artists who show and teach in New England.

I asked Kathy what she found most challenging or difficult about painting. Her answer was surprising. “Everything!”, she replied. She elaborated that there are so many places a good painting can go “off the rails”, and recounted that Cezanne, the famous French Impressionist, smashed many of his paintings out of frustration. She added that a good painting needs proper attention to many elements: composition, texture, draftsmanship, color, edgework, and “value.” Value is simply a measure of how light or how dark something is, but proper value in a painting she believes is the key element to a most successful painting. Studying Japanese woodcuts also really helped her understand the elements of design that are so essential to any piece of art.

Two famous artists Kathy admires are Joaquin Serolla and Frans Mortelmans, artists I knew little about. Serolla was a 19th century Spanish Impressionist whose land and seascapes simply glow, giving him the moniker of the Spanish “Master of Light”. Serolla’s work, like Kathy’s, uses sharp value contrasts which enlivens both of their paintings. Frans Mortlemans was a Belgian who in the early 20th century was most appreciated for his luminous painted flowers in a style that marries impressionism and realism. After viewing Kathy’s floral still-lifes, it is easy to see that she emulates his style and love of flowers. glow, giving him the moniker of the Spanish “Master of Light”. Serolla’s work, like Kathy’s, uses sharp value contrasts which enlivens both of their paintings. Frans Mortlemans was a Belgian who in the early 20th century was most appreciated for his luminous painted flowers in a style that marries impressionism and realism. After viewing Kathy’s floral still-lifes, it is easy to see that she emulates his style and love of flowers.
Do you need help with chores around your home? A new program in Columbia is pairing senior citizens with teens from the community. The teens can help with yard work, light housework, reading, or computer assistance. The program is funded through State Department of Education YSB grant, which means that the teens will work for seniors at NO COST to the senior citizens. Income eligible seniors only.

Contact Bernadette at the senior center for an application or contact Katheryn Graham at AHM Youth & Family Services at 860-228-9488 for an application or more information.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: At Rec Park, please park in the winter gate parking lot. Do not go into the main gate parking lot. Only construction vehicles will have access to the main gate parking lot during the final stages of construction on the Rec Park road.

TAX OFFICE: You can look up your 2019 tax payments using the on-line system on the Town of Columbia’s website (www.columbiact.org). On Columbia’s home page, scroll towards the bottom click on the square that says view/pay tax bills. This brings you to the FAQ, on-line payments page. The directions will be listed.

You can call the tax office at 860-228-0230 during the office hours for assistance.

Wednesday March 18th the tax office will be closed and will reopen Thursday March 19th at 10:00 am until 6:00.

Office hours are Mon-Wed 8-2, Thursday 8-6 and closed on Friday.

TOWN CLERKS OFFICE: ELECTION YEAR 2020 -The Presidential Preference Primary will take place on April 28, 2020. Absentee ballots will be available beginning April 7, 2020.

Applications for absentee ballots are available now in the Town Clerk’s office.

PARKS & RECREATION: The Parks and Recreation department offers a wide range of recreational opportunities for all ages and ability levels. View a complete list and information on all available programs and activities through RecDesk. You can register and pay for the programs listed online from your phone or computer. Looking to rent a town facility for an event? RecDesk provides descriptions, rates and the ability to make reservations online for town facility rentals.
**BOATING LICENSE COURSE:** Warm weather is coming up quickly and you won’t want to miss out on this great opportunity to get your boating license! Columbia Parks and Recreation has paired with Safe Boating Connecticut to offer this one day, eight hour course being held on Saturday, March 14th from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm in the Yeoman’s Hall Conference Room. Sign up today using [RecDesk](#)!
**APRIL VACATION CAMP:** Need a fun, healthy and safe place for your child to go during April vacation? The Parks & Recreation Department runs camp over April vacation from Monday, April 13th through Friday, April 17th. Camp begins at 8:00 am and ends at 4:00 pm. This great opportunity is available for only $110 for the entire week or $25 a day. Visit RecDesk to sign up!
COLUMBIA 5V5 CLASSIC

ADULT BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Double Elimination
1st & 2nd Place Trophies
MVP
All-Tournament Team
Gift Card prize by local sponsor

AGE: 16+
(UNDER 18 MUST HAVE PARENT PERMISSION)

$150 PER TEAM

*PENDING NUMBER OF TEAMS*

FRI 20th MAR
SAT 21st MAR
SUN 22nd MAR

2020

PORTER SCHOOL GYM

RECREATION @ COLUMBIACIT.ORG
860-228-8513
COMING EVENTS

3/12/20 & 3/26/20: MOBILE FOODSHARE: THURSDAY, MARCH 12TH AND 26TH FROM 1:00 PM TO 1:30 PM COLUMBIA-BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP, 195 US-6:
An outdoor food distribution service for persons of low income. Please bring your own grocery bag. Text FOODSHARE to 85511 to receive the mobile schedule and cancellations directly on your phone. More info.

3/8/20: COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (323 CT-87) COMMUNITY BREAKFAST: SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2020 - 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM, Parish Hall:
Contact the Church office with special requests. We aim to please. 860-228-9306. Breakfast includes omelets and Belgian waffles made to order and served with grits, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, frittata of the month, fruit, homemade baked goods, coffee, tea and juice. Something new each month. Lactose and gluten free items available.
ALL YOU CAN EAT: $10.00 Adults $9.00 Seniors $4.00 for children under 12.
See you on the 2nd Saturday: March 7, April 11, May 9, June 13, July 11, Aug 8, Sept 12, October 10, November 14, December 12.

COMING UP AT THE SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY THIS MONTH:
Concerned about your self or a loved one? Come to Dealing With Dementia, Tues, 3/3 6:30.
R.S.V.P. at the Library!

So much to say, come discuss @ a book group! 3/10, Adult fiction book group is discussing An American Marriage by T. Jones. On 3/24 Adult non-fiction is discussing, The Genius of Birds by J Ackerman. Both start at 6:30 p.m.
A true tale of espionage, The First Conspiracy: The Secret Plot to Kill George Washington by Brad Meltzer will be discussed at the Beckish Sr. Center, at 1:00 p.m. on 3/26. On 3/5 at 11 a.m. we’ll discuss Gardens in picture books (adult group) or come to our crafter’s book group 3/25 to discuss T. O’Neil’s Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady’s Guide to Sex, Marriage and Manners. All are welcome!

Build a Leprechaun trap with us at 6 pm, 3/12, but call first, space is limited and filling up fast!!
Contact the Library at 860-228-0350 or Megan at mquigley@columbiactlibrary.org to register.

3/26 join us for the 9th Annual Peeps Diorama Contest. All materials provided, but space is limited. Can’t make it in that night, be sure to stop by the Library to vote in the Peeple’s Choice Awards!
Plan ahead! April 7th 6:30 come learn about **Suffragettes in Corselets: the Evolution of Underwear and the 19th Amendment**!

Visit our website at [columbiactlibrary.org](http://columbiactlibrary.org) or like us on Facebook to keep up to date with everything going on at your local library, including story times, Friday movies, knitting group, writing group and more!

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**Feature Film Fridays**

Fridays at 1:00 pm come and check out these recently-released movies that the critics and your friends have been talking about! These screenings are always popular, so we recommend arriving early to make sure you have a good seat.

- 3/6 - Jojo Rabbit (PG-13, 1 hr. 48 min.)
- 3/13 - Knives Out (PG-13, 2 hr. 10 min.)
- 3/20 - Dark Waters (PG-13, 2 hr. 6 min.)
- 3/27 - Harriet (PG-13, 2 hr. 5 min.)

Please arrive early to grab a seat and a snack before showtime! All screenings will include subtitles when available. No registration required, but adults only please!