

**From:** brenda kniska <bkniska@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 5:01 PM  
**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Playground and Basketball courts

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this email to express my support for the Recreation Department request for monies to be allocated for the new playground and the repairs of the basketball courts in town. I cannot stress enough how important these two projects are to our town. In the case of the playground it seems to me that this is a no brainer for the town. We are getting 200,000 brand new playground equipment to be installed for the children of our town. Our children have been using broken down equipment for far too long. After last year where our children have had to and still are suffering through this horrible pandemic I can't think of a nicer and safer thing to have for them as a brand new playground to get outside and play as they get reacquainted with their peers. There is money in the budget for this project! Tiffany Quinn has worked extremely hard for this to come to fruition I implore you do not take this away from our children. In regards to the basketball courts there is a desperate need for the courts to be repaired. This is a health and safety issue for our town. If the courts are allowed to stay in the shape they are in it becomes not if someone gets hurt as it becomes when someone gets hurt. Again there is money in the budget for these repairs. As a 50 year resident of Colchester I have seen this town grow to the community that it has become. It has always been a town that has looked after each other young and old. I have become disheartened with the lack of monies that the town has given to the Parks and Recreation departments. As you all must know we need safe and healthy ways for young and old to be able to come together and this department is vital for that growth. Also if our brand new playground is funded and installed we will not only get Colchester families to come out and enjoy it but will get families from surrounding towns to come out and enjoy it. We all know what that means more income for our small business. This is a win win for the town. Make room in the budget our children are our future.

Thank you for your time,

Brenda Kniska

**From:** nicole hosford <nicole.hosford120@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 8:30 PM  
**To:** budget@colchesterct.org <budget@colchesterct.org>; Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>; Bernard Dennler <bdennler@colchesterct.gov>; Mike Egan <megan@colchesterct.gov>; Mike Hayes <mhayes@colchesterct.gov>; Andrea Migliaccio <amigliaccio@colchesterct.gov>; abisbikos@colchester.gov <abisbikos@colchester.gov>  
**Subject:** Support of BOE Budget

Good evening,

I wanted to take a moment and express my support of the BOE budget. I am absolutely in favor of the proposed BOE budget. Our youth and teachers have faced so much over the past year, cutting any funding from education would be detrimental to the educational well being of our youth. NOW is the

time we should rally and show our support for our youth and our educators. When the pandemic began we all struggled to shift gears and adapt. Our youth suffered the most and our educators went above and beyond during this time. We need to step up as a community and take care of our youth and the educators. Do NOT cut education funding. We cannot allow our children to be put on the back burner.

Thank you for your time,  
Nicole Hosford

**From:** Laurie Buyniski <lauriebuyniski@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 5:47 PM  
**To:** Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>  
**Cc:** Mike Egan <megan@colchesterct.gov>; Mike Hayes <mhayes@colchesterct.gov>; Andreas Bisbikos <abisbikos@colchesterct.gov>; Bernard Dennler <bdennler@colchesterct.gov>; Andrea Migliaccio <amigliaccio@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Support of the proposed budgets

Mr. Tarlov and members of the Board of Finance,

I am writing again as I have continued to follow the budget discussions over the past several meetings. I want to confirm my continued support of both town and school budgets.

The supports and services we offer our Colchester community through the Youth Center, library and facilities are vital. Sustaining our population of families with children and attracting new residents to our town will perpetuate a positive future of growth and development. I believe the proposed budgets are smart and have been developed with the best interests of the town.

Thank you for your efforts in managing the budget process.

Sincerely,  
Laurie Buyniski

**From:** Jennifer Cox <jennifer3280@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 4:32 PM  
**To:** Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>; Jeff Burt <jburt@colchesterct.org>; selectman@colchesterct <selectman@colchesterct>; mtomasi@colchesterct.org <mtomasi@colchesterct.org>  
**Subject:** support of the Colchester town and the BOE budget

Dear Selectwoman Bylone, Chairman Tarlov, Chairwoman Tomasi and Superintendent Burt,

I have reviewed the proposed town and BOE budgets for Colchester. I am in favor of accepting both budgets as written and do not think it is prudent to reduce the BOE budget by \$275,000. The increase does not represent superfluous spending. The 2.78% increase is worthwhile and does not reflect

egregious spending. The 8% increase in the town budget does seem excessive, until one looks at what the expenditures are. Improving the RecPlex (including irrigation), adding police services, and "fixing" things that are broken do cost money.

I have also perused other town budgets, their mill rates from last year and their possible mill rates for next year. While I understand comparing towns is like comparing apples to oranges, what is clear is that Colchester's mill rate will not increase to be more than other towns with a similar population. What is also clear is that if Colchester does not make improvements to the shared community facilities and services, businesses will not want to stay, locate, or relocate here. Revenue will decrease and both the town and school will suffer.

Please accept the budgets of both the town and BOE as written.

Regards,  
Jennifer Cox  
7 Ivy Court

**From:** Andrew Perham <app8@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 3:48 PM  
**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** In support of the proposed budgets

Hello Board Members and others,

I am writing to voice my support of the proposed budgets as presented by the First Selectman and Superintendent.

We moved to Colchester for the rural character, good schools and affordability. I feel investing in our schools, infrastructure and business atmosphere is an investment in ours and our child's future. Investing in good schools will attract homeowners, which will increase property values and provide a larger tax base. Many of the comments in the survey talk about the inadequate condition of the Rec Plex. I couldn't agree more. Having kids play on safe, well kept fields is paramount to their success, happiness and general well being.

The pandemic has created great challenges for kids and parents alike. What we do NOT need is to maintain the status quo of school quality and field conditions. We basically lost a whole year of quality educations, sports and recreational activities and one of the most important aspects of living in Colchester is having high quality schools and an accessible and safe environment to enjoy the outdoors and sports in general. The fields at the Rec Plex are NOT in good shape and need irrigation and more attention regarding grading and seeding. It is embarrassing and dangerous. The playground is over 25 years old and is now not safe and should be replaced or rehabilitated.

I am also in favor of protecting open space in Colchester. This is an important factor in providing a high quality of life. Managed open spaces protect drinking water and provide a peaceful landscape that most homeowners are attracted to in their town.

I am also in support of funding another police officer(s) and establishing more police presence. We've lived here for about 7 years and rarely see police pulling over speeders yet we experience excessive speeding on a daily basis. Speed limits are largely ignored. The constant speeding and "peeling out" is dangerous, loud and needs to be acknowledged.

If the goal of the proposed budget is "to live, to visit, to invest", as stated in the First Selectman's 4/6/2021 presentation, then we need the funds and resources to promote a place worth living, visiting and investing. This means having good schools and recreational opportunities; creating and maintaining open space; providing quality and caring law enforcement; investing in infrastructure; and providing an enticing business environment.

Finally, the First Selectman, Board of Selectman, BOE, BOF and all other critical Town Boards shall be commended in keeping the Town successfully operating during this extraordinary time. We want to feel proud of Colchester. I don't feel this increase is extraordinary considering a 0% increase last year. The cost of everything continues to go up. If we decide not to pay up and invest, we will fall behind. Please make it happen.

Thank you for taking my message into consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Perham  
16 School Rd

**From:** Don Kennedy <donken134@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 3:42 PM  
**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Town and BOE budgets

I am unable to make the meeting tonight, but am emailing you now to say I am in full support of both the Town and BOE budgets.

Thank you,

Don

**From:** CINDY PRAISNER <praisner@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 1:44 PM  
**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Citizen's Comment

Dear Members of the Board of Finance-

Thank you for your dedication and time in developing a budget that balances so many variables. As my youngest graduates high school this year, I have reflected on raising three children here in Colchester over the past 21 years. It is a town with so much to offer.

I applaud the Board of Selectmen for bringing forth a budget that acknowledges the costs of keeping Colchester green, well-maintained, and safe as well as for providing for the needs of its members through senior, youth, family, and recreational programming. Living in a town that is also a community has been so important for our family. It is one of the things we value most about our town and continues to entice us to stay.

The Superintendent and BOE have also worked hard to bring forth a budget that will meet the needs of students and staff facing the daunting task of providing for the social-emotional and academic needs of youth in the after-math of a pandemic. Needs known and still to be discovered are important to address early and earnestly to keep our children on track. Resources both material and human should not be whittled away.

I believe that the original proposed budgets were presented in good faith and were crafted with goals and a vision for our community members in mind. Therefore, I believe that we should endeavor to come as close to fully funding these budgets as possible.

Thank you for your consideration!  
Respectfully,  
Cindy Praisner

**From:** Sheila Horvitz <sshesq@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 3, 2021 4:34 PM  
**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Budget Question

I support the town and education budgets as they are now constituted- and do not support any further cuts.

Sheila Horvitz  
108 Jaffe Terrace  
Colchester  
860-8845

From: Karen Romero <krersr@comcast.net>  
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 4:53 PM  
To: Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
Subject: Budget Question

We support both of the budgets for the Town and the Board of Education without any further cuts! We want the Town Services, Properties, Employees and School System to be managed/maintained to reflect the standard of quality the residents of Colchester desire and deserve!!!  
Long term sustainable vision is necessary!

Sincerely,  
Karen and Edward Romero  
215 Woodbine Rd  
Colchester, CT 06415

From: **Alyson Darvas** <[jewelrygirl68@gmail.com](mailto:jewelrygirl68@gmail.com)>  
Date: Mon, May 3, 2021 at 7:25 PM  
Subject: [Budget]  
To: <[budget@colchesterct.org](mailto:budget@colchesterct.org)>

Hello,

I would like to let my feelings be known about the proposed budget for the playground at the Rec Plex. I am very much in favor of restoring the playground. I feel very strongly that this is an asset to our community, a place that allows our children a fun and safe environment to play in and socialize. This is necessary for their development and a worthy investment in my opinion. It is definitely part of the reason we enjoy living in Colchester for our children's sake.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Sincerely,  
Alyson Darvas

From: **Wendy Moores** <[moores.wendy@gmail.com](mailto:moores.wendy@gmail.com)>  
Date: Mon, May 3, 2021 at 8:45 PM  
Subject: [Budget] Town and Board of Education budgets  
To: <[budget@colchesterct.org](mailto:budget@colchesterct.org)>

I am writing to indicate my support of the town and Board of Education budgets. The budgets presented include investments in the town and schools that are necessary if we want to continue to grow and support our town and our students. Please move these budgets forward as presented.

Sincerely,  
Wendy Moores

**From:** Abigail Dunbar <[abigail.dunbar16@gmail.com](mailto:abigail.dunbar16@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 3, 2021 3:34 PM

**To:** Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>; budget@colchesterct.org <budget@colchesterct.org>  
**Subject:** advocating for children's programming

To the Board of Finance,

My name is Abigail Dunbar-Willbanks. My husband and I moved to Colchester in the beginning of 2016. We chose this town for its beauty and opportunity to raise our family in a close and active community,

In 2020, my family along with countless others experienced the effects of the pandemic. Schools closed, all activities cancelled and my children were stuck without the comfort of a routine that the town-run activities gave them. The parks and recreation facilities that Colchester has was a comfort to us. It provided a safe outdoor experience while being able to see friendly faces. It gave my kids a sense of normalcy in such a time of turbulence and uncertainty.

As the Health and Safety chair at the Colchester Cooperative Nursery school, I see our families invest their time and effort into their children's growth and education. We as parents rely on our board of education and town to maintain a high standard of programming that will attract more families to the area.

My two children, toddler and preschool age have grown so much through the programming this town has provided. Classes such as "Joyful Noise" and "It Takes a Village" parent groups led by Colchester Children's Collaborative, or "Music and Movement" at the library have given them a space to learn and play. It also supports us as parents. We need that community networking as we continue to work and struggle to get to a new normal. We look forward to watching our family grow up in a town that offers such support.

Please, continue to invest in our children and families

Sincerely,

Abigail Dunbar-Willbanks RN, BSN

**From:** JOAN CAHILL <jcahill@snet.net>

**Sent:** Sunday, May 2, 2021 4:41 PM

**To:** Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

**Subject:** Supporting Town and Education Budgets

Dear Board of Finance Members,

I am writing to express my support of both the Town and Education budgets, "As Is."

Colchester is long overdue for maintenance and upkeep. Keeping these necessary expenses in the budgets as presented will well-position the town for success as we come out of the pandemic.

I am a senior citizen and on a fixed income, so I understand the hesitance for a tax increase. However you can't put off the inevitable and these expenses are necessary to stave off more expensive corrections down the road..

Thank you for your consideration.

Joan Cahill RN, BA

122 Prospect Hill Rd

**From:** Sarah Manfre <smanfre860@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, May 2, 2021 7:41 PM

**To:** Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>; abisbikos@colchester.gov <abisbikos@colchester.gov>; Andrea Migliaccio <amigliaccio@colchesterct.gov>; Bernard Dennler <bdennler@colchesterct.gov>; budget@colchesterct.org <budget@colchesterct.org>; Mike Egan <megan@colchesterct.gov>; Mike Hayes <mhayes@colchesterct.gov>

**Subject:** Please don't cut the budget

Hi,

I have heard about the plan to cut the budget from the youth of colchester. That is a horrible mistake. The current playground is so old and it needs to be replaced. It gets used all the time year round by so many people and is such an asset to the community. It is a place for children to make memories and meet new friends. The amount of money the town needs to pay for this project is so minimal when you look at the overall budget. So much is being donated and funded through donation. To not subsidize the rest would be crazy. My family and I moved to colchester because of everything the town had to offer and it would be horrible to see something like this get cut. By cutting the budget you are taking away from the kids. I would prefer my taxes increase and all the money go to the schools that they see fit. I also know many other parents who feel the same. This is the future we are talking about. Please take this into consideration.

Thank you

Sarah Manfre

**From:** Melanie Parciak <mlprck27@yahoo.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 29, 2021 10:41 AM

**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>

**Subject:** Town Budget - Library

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing you today in favor of the budget requested for the Cragin Memorial Library. The library and the programs they offer have been a blessing to our family. We have been using their children's programs for the past 7 years. My two boys are huge fans of reading and I can confidently say that we owe that to Mrs. Jennifer, Mrs. Sarah, Mrs. MacDonald, and so many more of the librarians and staff at Cragin Memorial. My 1st grader is reading above grade level and is always running into the library to pick which book to read next. On average we take out 30-40 books a week and often some of those books have been held for us by the librarians because they have seen something they know my children will enjoy. Colchester is all about community and the library is the perfect definition of what our community stands for. The library fosters education, growth, family, friendships and memories. Through the covid pandemic our library went above and beyond by delivering books to our homes even when they were closed down. Opening those boxes was like Christmas morning. The craft kits and foodie fun bags they offer on a weekly basis provide many families with a free activity/craft that promotes imagination and family time. The summer reading programs and scavenger hunts are something we look



forward to every year. In order to continue to grow the library and this community the library needs to continue to receive the necessary funds to maintain these programs and book collections. They are also a huge advocate of small business in this community. They continuously find ways to support businesses, collaborate and bring fun initiatives to the people of Colchester. Thank you for your time.

Best,  
Melanie L Goggin  
Colchester Resident  
Mel's Downtown Creamery, Owner

**From:** Melissa Deacon <mjfeather7@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:57 AM  
**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
**Cc:** First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Support for Cragin Memorial Library

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you in regards to the importance of Cragin Memorial Library to our town. Cragin is more than just a library, more than just its books and media. It a place of encouragement, a place where we always feel welcome, a place of growth, and a place of learning.

The library was one of the first places in town that we visited when we moved to Connecticut 4 years ago and we were immediately impressed with all the activities and resources available through the library. Through their story time program, I was able to meet other parents in town and begin to feel connected to the town. The library helped introduce us to some of our first friends in town that we may not have met otherwise.

Many people think of the library for the books it provides to residents. But Cragin is much more than its books. The library offers a wide range of programs that my family frequently participates in. During the summer break, my children and I would be at the library multiple times per week, participating in the various events, visiting and interacting with and see their friends. The weekly evening programs they offer are wonderful, and provide hands-on experiences to supplement what they learn in school. Some of their evening programs include Story Time with the CES teachers, Connecticut Science Center, The Children's Museum of Southern Connecticut, Riverside Reptile Education Center, and Bubblemania.

The summer reading program offered through Cragin is something that we have come to look forward to every summer. Our sons are avid readers, and this is due in part to encouragement provided by the library's summer reading program. Through this program, our children earned free tickets to YardGoats games, a wonderful motivation for them to continue their reading. The summer reading initiative is a critical part of our family's efforts to prevent the summer slump and ensure our children are ready to begin the school year on the right foot.

During the pandemic, the library really showed its dedication to our town and its residents. When the library was not able to allow citizen inside its doors, they launched a book delivery program, bringing books directly to citizen's doorsteps. In the face of this unprecedented challenge to our town and its citizens, the library has been a source of stability and routine for our family. The library and its staff have gone above and beyond to not only to keep books in the hands of our sons, but to safely provide activities to keep them actively engaged in reading and learning. Their book deliveries, curbside pick-up and "make & take bags" of crafts were the highlight of the week for our kids.

The librarians and staff at Cragin are truly wonderful. They have taken the time to get to know us and learn about which topics our sons are interested in. They always take the time to help them find books that will keep them interested and have encouraged their growth by bringing them progressively more challenging reading material. The fact that our sons are such avid readers at their young ages can be directly attributed to the library staff and their dedication to the library patrons.

Cragin Memorial Library is a foundational component part of our community, and Colchester is truly fortunate to have this wonderful resource in our town. Many parents I have spoken to are always amazed by all Cragin has to offer. The librarians are always thoughtful with the programs they offer to be able to continue to stay active and relevant with the community. There are numerous ways the library has partnered with and supported the town - from working with CPS and Youth Services for the Half Day Hooray Programs, to their Around Town Story time series.

This past year has highlighted how adaptive and creative the librarians are, and demonstrated how important Cragin is to our community. The library truly is an integral part of our town, and a critical resource for my family. Investing in the library is investing in the town – everyone has access to it and it serves as a charging station during power outages, a cooling center in the summer and offers free Wi-Fi for residents that may not have access at home. The library's meeting rooms allow community organizations such as the Colchester Garden Club a place to meet and provide additional educational programming to the community. The library continues to serve our community and we in turn should do whatever we can to continue to support them.

Kind regards,

Melissa Deacon

**From:** Penny Gadbois <sewcraftypen@att.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 23, 2021 10:32 AM  
**To:** Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Voting

I have two questions:

Will the residents of Colchester be voting for the 2021 town budget and how?

What was the percent of increase in the First Selectman's salary in 2020? Is there an increase for the First Selectman's salary in the budget for 2021?

Thank you

Pauline Gadbois  
30 North Court  
Colchester, CT 06415

**From:** Matt Parsons <mattpar20@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 24, 2021 12:54 PM

**To:** Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>; Bernard Dennler <bdennler@colchesterct.gov>; Mike Egan <megan@colchesterct.gov>; Mike Hayes <mhayes@colchesterct.gov>; Andrea Migliaccio <amigliaccio@colchesterct.gov>; abisbikos@colchester.gov; Colchester Town Budget <townbudget@colchesterct.gov>; budget@colchesterct.org; BOEChair@colchesterct.gov; First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoyale@colchesterct.gov>; Denise Mizla <dmizla@colchesterct.gov>; Denise Turner <dtturner@colchesterct.gov>; mtomasi@colchesterct.org; cmcglynn@colchesterct.org  
**Subject:** Budget

Hello,

Please take into consideration the attached letter.

Thank you for your hard work,

Matthew Parsons  
218 Taylor Rd

**From:** Stacey Kilgus <staceylynnk@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 23, 2021 3:13 PM  
**To:** Robert Tarlov <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** April 21 meeting

Hi Rob,

I am emailing you from my personal email account and speaking I guess as a citizen first, but also as the BoF meeting clerk and a staff member of the First Selectman. I wanted to speak out in regards to the comment Andreas made towards Mary during the discussion on salaries being paid to Social Services staff. I found his words incredibly disrespectful and truly hurtful. I have been listening to these meetings for several months now and while I have come to expect some debate and push back from him, this was way over the line. I also think it was terribly insulting to the 2,143 voters who elected Mary to her office. I feel strongly that, at the very least, he should apologize to Mary just as publicly as he insulted her. But I think he should step down from the Board as well. His comment was beneath the dignity and honor of serving on the Board. My fellow citizens of Colchester and I deserve better.

I have first-hand knowledge of how Mary works tirelessly for the people of this town and her staff who also work hard to keep the town running. She is far beyond mediocre.

Thanks for your time,  
Stacey Schweighoffer

April 23, 2021

Mr. Chairman,

I am sending you this email to express my deepest disappointment for the insulting comment that was directed at the First Selectman by member Andreas Bisbikos.

At the start of the meeting, you stated that everyone should be civil in disagreeing with one another. In fact, several people who apparently had issues the night before apologized for their conduct. To say to the First Selectman "we hired you and your mediocre" was clearly meant to be insulting.

There is no place for this kind of behavior from an elected official when dealing with such important issues concerning the budget. Any disagreements Bisbikos may have with the First Selectman or anyone else for that matter should be addressed in a professional manner.

Mr. Chairman I want you to know that I have great respect for you and believe you are an honorable person. It is my sincerest hope that you will correct this type of behavior from Mr. Bisbikos so that we all can address the needs of our citizens.

Respectfully,

Jim Stavola, Chairman

Colchester Police Commission

cell:860.490.5206 email: ewajim@aol.com