

Write a comment... 📷 😊

19m · 📷

FYI



Michele for Tax Collector

1d · 🌐

Dear Colchester residents

It has come to my attention that checks for taxes may have been received and cashed by another department. Please make sure that checks made out for taxes: motor vehicle- real estate - business personal property are made payable to the tax collector.

Your account cannot be credited if I don't know about your payments. Please be careful and make sure that it gets to the tax office for processing.

🌐 1

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24m · 📷

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

First Selectman

From: Michele Wyatt
Sent: Friday, September 8, 2023 8:16 AM
To: AllStaff
Subject: Tax Office & accepting Payments

Good Morning

The tax office will be closing at noon today. Please do not accept payments or give out any balances. If taxpayers come to you, please advise them to use the envelopes provided outside my office and put their payments in the night drop.

Thank you all and have a great weekend.

Sincerely,

Michele Wyatt, CCMC

Tax Collector
127 Norwich Avenue
Colchester, Ct 06415
Phone: 860-537-7210
Fax: 860-537-1147
Email: taxcollector@colchesterct.gov

First Selectman

From: Jason LaChapelle
Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 9:06 AM
To: Michele Wyatt
Cc: First Selectman; Rosemary Coyle; Denise Turner; Deborah Bates; Mary Williamson
Subject: Re: Issues with receiving checks

It occurs to me that I forgot to include the audio of the conversation. Here's a link to it.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vVn1RIHoANZz6lC2Zjqv07fTIHUFHgsc/view?usp=drive link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vVn1RIHoANZz6lC2Zjqv07fTIHUFHgsc/view?usp=drive_link)

From: Jason LaChapelle
Sent: Tuesday, September 5, 2023 8:25 PM
To: Michele Wyatt <taxcollector@colchesterct.gov>
Cc: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>; Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>; Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>; Mary Williamson <mwilliamson@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: Issues with receiving checks

Michele,

I have read your email and decided to look into the matter. With all due respect, your recounting of events is painfully skewed. You maybe are not aware, but your conversation with Mary was recorded. She did not enter your office yelling, she entered your office to let you know that she deposited some tax checks so you could adjust your things accordingly. It was you who got angry with Mary, claiming she has no authority to deposit "your" checks. When she didn't just bend to your wish, or run in fear when you accused her of "illegally" taking your checks, you kicked her out of your office -- but not before you told her you wanted her to do things incorrectly in Munis.

These are not your checks, they are the town's checks. You claim the check was made out to the Tax Collector. That is not true, the check was made out to the Town of Colchester. Even still it's a non issue. Your complaint is that the Finance Director for the Town of Colchester deposited a check made out the Town of Colchester into the proper Town of Colchester bank account? That is patently absurd. The Finance Director has authority over the town's finances, which includes depositing checks.

Troublingly was you telling a private citizen that the Finance Director and the First Selectman effectively stole her money. You said they "cashed" her check and she should seek legal counsel. In your conversation with Mary you claim that depositing a check is the same thing as cashing it. You know that's not true, and you knew exactly what you were doing when you told the citizen their check was cashed. To quote you directly, you said *"This administration - and I'll be quite clear - our current First Selectman and his finance director think they can do whatever they wish. The finance director took your check and cashed it."* The check was not cashed, it was deposited. Again, a distinction you KNOW.

You then went on to say to the citizen *"My advice to you is to get an attorney and have him handle it. I will also tell you - 18 account in one day have been affected by their actions."* which again only reinforces your claim that her money was stolen along with the monies of 18 other people. You finish out your email with the citizen saying *"I wish you luck, but this is out of my hands and unfortunately you have to fight to get your*

money back." Yet again leading her to believe her money was stolen. You also told her in a later email that the money never made it to your office, failing to mention the money is in the town's coffers. Yet again incorrectly leading her to believe her money was stolen by the First Selectman and the town's Finance Director.

I shouldn't have to say how improper it is for an elected official to not only be spreading gossip about town hall, but outright lie about town employees to private citizens. Let me be crystal clear, **THE CITIZEN'S CHECK WAS DEPOSITED**. Her taxes were paid and they were deposited into the proper account (the general fund). You were made aware the funds were deposited. It is you and you alone who has refused to mark the citizen's account as paid and credit her account. As a result of your refusal, she could very well be charged interest on a bill she paid and was deposited into the town's account all because you refused to accept the payment because you weren't the one who deposited the check.

You repeatedly claimed you are just trying to help. How does refusing to accept payment for a tax bill and credit an account because you weren't the one to deposit it help anyone?

You have also repeatedly made the claim that finance was told they cannot deposit "your" checks (again, they are not YOUR checks) and yet I cannot find any evidence to back this up. I have asked the First Selectman and the town's Finance Director to provide any evidence of the sort and neither have any. I have scoured CGS looking for where it says the town's Finance Director cannot deposit tax checks. If you have evidence of this claim, please provide it. And you telling them they can't is not evidence as you have no authority over the town's Finance Director.

You are very concerned, and making a massive issue, out of who deposits the checks when all that's important is that our citizens' money gets deposited and their bills get properly marked as paid. Mary helped accomplish that, as is completely proper given her role as the town's Finance Director.

Lastly, your threat to Mary that "the papers will hear about this" .. yes they will because I've BCC'd them on this email. This constant bullying of the finance department for political ends is wearing my patience thin. The town's Finance Director deposited a check made out to the town into the correct town account. I don't know in what world you think that's illegal. And if that's illegal, what would it be if you refused to accept a citizen's tax payment just because you weren't the one to deposit it and then went ahead and charged them interest?

This is not only getting tiring, it's blatantly transparent.

Thanks,

Jason LaChapelle
Board of Selectmen