

**TOWN OF WALPOLE  
STAFF MEETING  
APRIL 15, 2021**

Selectboard Present: Cheryl Mayberry (Chair); Steven Dalessio; Peggy Pschirrer

Staff Present: Sarah Downing (Manager of Administration); Justin Sanctuary (Chief Police Department); Ben Hoy (Recycling Director); Michael Rau (Road Agent/Highway Department); Kraig Harlow (Recreation Director); Helen Dalbeck (Hooper Institute Executive Director); Jane Malmberg (Library Director); Meghan Hansson (Town Clerk/Tax Collector); Regina Borden (Recording Secretary)

Staff Absent: Richard Kreissle (Administrator of Finance)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Mayberry called this Staff Meeting via Zoom to order at 5:01 PM. The Selectboard members are in three separate locations. This meeting is being recorded by the Town.

Ms. Mayberry called for a voice roll call of the Selectboard present: Steven Dalessio was present (at home); Peggy Pschirrer was present (at home) and Cheryl Mayberry was present (at home).

Ms. Mayberry called for a voice roll call of the Staff members present. All Staff Members responded that they were present and provided the location.

**Recycling Staff Meeting Report:** Mr. Ben Hoy, Recycling Director, submitted the following written report with a March Daily Weights graph.

- Keeping the Recycling Center clean and organized helps them to promote the same values from the public. When something is dumped in a place that it shouldn't be, it is immediately noticeable. In many cases the public will correct someone before an attendant can respond.
- Reduce/reuse/recycle are words they live by at Walpole Recycling. They can't control what is being thrown into Walpole trash bags, but they can show the public that they are passionate about living an environmentally friendly existence. Recycling is an easy routine if you pre-sort plastic/glass/ and cardboard at home. They have accommodating windows and staff/volunteers that are more than willing to help with questions or handling of recyclables. They love to see new people in Walpole Recycling!!
- Earth Day is next Thursday!! New Hampshire the beautiful (blue trash bags) are free for those willing to pick up Walpole roadways. Walpole Recycling is hosting a Whitcomb Road clean up on Wednesday April 21<sup>st</sup> at 9 am at the Recycling Center.
- Arlington Paving will be on site in a couple of weeks to begin removing unsuitable materials and grading in the sub base for the paving area behind the Recycling Center in between the trailers.
- Highway Department is helping them to excavate concrete pad area for Seldon Concrete. Getting dig plans marked out and calling Dig Safe as soon as paving is complete.

Mr. Hoy reported they are trying to keep ahead of their shipments as much as possible to get ready for the paving. After they come in he will have no access to any of the trailers. They just shipped plastic out. He talked to Mr. G's about not being able to handle their cardboard while the paving is being done. The Savings Bank of Walpole is looking to potentially adopt a portion of Route 12. They are trying to get as many volunteers as they can for the clean-up. They anticipate the spring clean-ups will keep them very busy going forward. Mr. Dalessio asked how long they will have to stay off the new paved area. Mr. Hoy explained they have to prep the area; he feels at least for a work-week. Mr. Rau noted it would depend on the weather; he would stay off it for at least 3-to-4 days.

**Hooper Institute Director’s Report for Town Managers:** Mrs. Helen Dalbeck, Hooper Executive Director, provided the following written report.

School Programs and School Gardens: The high tunnel is producing bags of greens for the school kitchen. They are about to seed for transplants in tunnel and beginning to prep for replacement of rotten boards on 6 raised beds, outside at the Middle School. Two grants were received to support the school gardens; an Outdoor Education Fund award plus Farm to School/Vital Communities, totaling \$1500. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade canoe trip over 2 days is happening in June. Regular Hooper science classes continue daily, pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Outreach and Marketing: Ongoing, on all fronts; Facebook, the Clarion, Friends of Hooper Institute, posters, Walpolean, school newsletter and more. Program announcements planned for The Shopper, Monadnock Shopper News, and local newspapers promoting Eyes on Owls on May 22 and Circus in the Woods, May 23. Circus in the Woods is pre-registration.

Facility and Land: Connecticut Valley Landscaping was hired to clean up front lawn debris and two fir trees, one downed by wind, the other pillowed and going. Met with Kevin Healy to fix front door, repair damaged soffits on the shed and called Houghton’s to replace outdoor spigot, which is now broken.

Administration: There are three new board members in the queue to be approved and sworn in. FOHI meetings are now monthly, planning for two fundraising events in the fall and winter, membership appeal and annual fundraising appeal.

Public Programs: Looking towards Owls and Circus in May.

Camps: Yes, camp is happening during the last two weeks of June and the week of July 12 (woodworking). Applications are due May 15.

High School Summer Work Program: She has six mentors (including Hooper Camp counselors) confirmed. She met with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class, to promote the program. Applications are available to students entering grades 9-12, due May 1.

Walpole Community Garden: So far, 6 new members, 13 returning. The spring clean-up day was April 10 and was a big success! They are all ready to go. One project in 2021 will be a new garden fence. The WCG (with FOHI) are hosting four garden talks/presentations this year. First one is “No-Till Gardening” with Jackie Caserta, May 15, 10 am at the Hooper Institute. Thanks for all your support.

**Walpole Town Library:** Mrs. Jane Malmberg, Library Director, submitted the following written report. In March they continued to see increases in library visits and checkout of materials. The library has received donations in memory of Nancy Shephard, totaling \$750 so far.

Programming:

They posted the IEP workshop on the library’s YouTube channel. This proved to be successful. They had over 50 viewings.

They have had to discontinue our Story Walk in North Walpole for the time being as they are having trouble keeping the stories secured tightly enough to the fence to prevent the wind from blowing the pages down. This has been a constant problem for the past two months and they now are left with two books missing pages.

There are two programs planned for May. The first is Talking About Race: Staying Curious, Moving Forward and Being Part of the Solution. This is a two-part discussion which will take place on consecutive Wednesdays, May 19 and 26, from 6:30-8:00 pm via Zoom. Here is a basic description:

This program will focus on the experiences of four local Black residents, Grace Aldrich, Claire Holston, Luis Rosa, and Doug Sutherland, who have generously offered to share what it means to be Black in the U.S. and the Monadnock region, including offering their thoughts and feelings about the murder of George Floyd and the storming of the Capitol on January 6. The discussion will be moderated by Allen Davis, an educator and racial justice advocate.

Their experiences will be the starting point for an open and thoughtful conversation about racism and how as a community we can learn to appreciate and understand experiences and perspectives different from our own.

They are also planning round two of their Virtual Bakeoff. This time they will be baking cookies. There will be one for children and one for adults.

She is working with Fritze Till to start up their seed library again. She has put out the call for donations from the community and they have already received a number of packets which are available at the library. She has applied to receive additional seed donations from seedsavers.org and will supplement with purchased seeds as necessary.

#### Policy/Procedures:

They have a large number of items that are more than 6 months overdue, some as much as two years past their due dates. Staff is working on contacting those patrons to let them know that they will not be able to use their library cards until these items are either returned or paid for. For those who do not return these items, they will be sending out a letter with a bill for the replacement cost.

She has also been working with staff to streamline the procedures for checking in returned materials and processing ILL's.

Since she wrote her report she met with the Staff last week and the Board this week and a decision was made to go back to their regular hours next week with a few exceptions. On Mondays and Wednesdays they will no longer be closed from Noon-to-1:00pm but they will close an hour earlier; open 10:00am to 7:00pm. The CDC put out some new materials. It is no longer necessary to quarantine books. They are excited about that. It will be faster and easier on the staff. Mr. Dalessio asked when they anticipate opening the North Walpole Library. Mrs. Malmberg felt they are hoping for June.

Mrs. Malmberg also submitted Monthly Library Statistics for Library Visits & Hours Open; Circulation; WIFI & Computer Use; Programs & Attendance; Website, Email, Social Media; Database Usage; and Donations/Fees/Book Sales.

**Walpole Recreation:** Mr. Kraig Harlow, Recreation Director, submitted the following written report.  
Basketball Camp:

- Recreation Department will be hosting a week long basketball camp from April 26 to April 30.
- Walpole Primary School has allowed us to use the gymnasium to host the event.
- The camp will have multiple sessions for grades 1/ 2, 3/ 4, 5/ 6 and 7/ 8 and will be split into block times to allow traffic in and out of the building.
- Each block will host no more than 20 boys and girls together.

- COVID-19 protocols will be followed with hand sanitizer, temperature checks at door, and masks while participating.

Pool:

- The Recreation Department is preparing to open the pool mid-June.
- We have two quotes to repair the pool roof through Eric Franklin and Long's General Contracting and Repair.
- The two estimates are \$15,200 and \$16,892.60 dollars.
- The town pool will be purchasing a new ADA accessible pool lift for the summer season.

Tennis:

- Wilson and Lawrence will be repairing the tennis courts this spring.
- We have an estimate from last fall of \$5,796 dollars from the fall and have encumbered the funds from last year's budget.
- The courts may need additional repairs due to new cracks and damages from winter.

Walpole Summer League:

- The Selectboard has approved the Recreation Department to host the annual summer basketball league.
- In 2020, the league was cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Sport Camps:

- The Recreation Department is working with local coaches to help host multiple week long daily camps which include volleyball, football, and soccer.

Community Events:

- The Hooper Institute will be hosting an Owl event on May 22<sup>nd</sup> down at Whitcomb Park. Mrs. Dalbeck advised the rain date is June 5<sup>th</sup>.
- The Recreation Department is looking to co-sponsor with the town library to show a monthly summer movie at the park.

Mr. Dalessio asked how the new tiles are working out on the basketball courts. Mr. Harlow noted there are a few holes but he is leaving them as is for now. Mr. Dalessio asked if the tennis courts are nickel-and-diming us to death. Mr. Harlow feels the \$6,000 will repair it for 2-to-5 years. A good tennis court life is 30-to-40 years. A new court would have a 25-year warranty. This is something they should start to look at. The existing court is approximately 40 years old. The poles are starting to shift. He would like to put pickle-ball lines in there as well because now more people want to play pickle-ball than tennis.

**Walpole Highway Department:** Mr. Michael Rau, Road Agent/Highway Department, provided the following written report:

The Highway Department has been busy getting roads prepped for the 2021 paving season. With this, they have begun the process of meeting with potential contractors and obtaining prices on the large operation. Ditching has also begun, which is an important aspect to paving as well. This consists of removing debris from roadsides allowing for proper drainage. Now that mud season is coming to an end, they have been able to start working on grading and spot graveling dirt roads throughout town.

Mr. Rau reported that ditching has been done on March Hill and Maple Grove. Right now on the Paving List he has the Old Keene Road, Maple Grove to March Hill plus he wants to do some roads in North Walpole in the development behind the school. He is waiting to see how many roads the money will do. He has been working on the Elm Street Project with Mr. Mark Houghton trying to map everything out to be sure they know where everything is. They are not sure if their old map is accurate or not. Probably next week they will do more grading on the roads. They are trying to recover some cones that have been missing (stolen). He is now purchasing some pink cones which are DOT regulated but four have been

lost already. If anyone sees pink cones where they should not be the Highway Department would like them back. Each one costs about \$20.

**Selectboard Office:** Mrs. Sarah Downing, Manager of Administration, submitted the following written report.

After Town Meeting, the Selectboard Office focuses on updating and finalizing assessing information in preparation of the spring property tax warrant. The deadline for receipt of PA-29 forms for tax credits and applications is today, April 15<sup>th</sup>. The list of credits included Veteran's and All Veterans' along with Elderly, Blind and Solar Exemptions which reduce property values. The due date is firmly set by RSA. A-10 applications for current use and discretionary easements are also due on or before April 15<sup>th</sup>. There have been several current use applications this year with property owners adding additional acreage to current use for existing lots or submitting new applications due to lot line mergers.

The spring tax warrant is to be signed by the Selectboard on or before May 15<sup>th</sup> with tax bills being due no earlier than July 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office and the Selectboard Office are currently working on a joint project to remind elected officials with unsigned oath of office or appointment notices to be sworn in. By RSA, all Town officials are required to complete forms to become legitimate voting members of a board, commission, or committee.

**Police Department:** The Police Department had submitted a graph with Police Stats – March 16, 2021 through April 15, 2021. Total Calls: 388. These were broken down as follows: Criminal Investigations 107; Public Safety 160 and Motor Vehicle 121.

Chief Justin Sanctuary reported they have been doing more motor vehicle patrols and have been using the radar sign. It is on Old Cheshire Turnpike right now. At the beginning of May it will be down in the Village when the Elm Street Project begins. Mr. Dalessio asked if Chief Sanctuary knows who rents these units. Chief Sanctuary suggested asking the DOT. Mr. Rau knows of a company that rents them; cost is about \$3,000/month. At night they will keep a sign up on Elm Street that says "Local Traffic Only". During the day it will be closed down completely. Chief Sanctuary advised they have been real busy with more call volume, an increase in drug issues, one serious crash and DUIs have increased. It has been business as usual and they are getting ready for spring/summer. Mrs. Pschirrer mentioned they had 51 more incidents than the month before. Chief Sanctuary replied there has been more fraud and/or attempted fraud. There are people out of work with a lot of free time on their hands. However they have seen a down-turn in burglaries; that is good. A lot of the courts are opening up so they are seeing more arraignments; they are trying to get caught up on the backlog. "Drug Take Back Day" is Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup> between 10:00am and 2:00pm. There will be two locations: Recycling Center and the Police Station.

**Walpole Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office:** Mrs. Meghan Hansson, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, provided the following written report. She was unable to unmute her microphone. Therefore, there was no discussion.

- Have deposited \$69,449.62 of property taxes since the last staff meeting.
- Lien Notices were sent out to owners of delinquent accounts.
- Have closed out 16 liens since the beginning of the year.
- Redemption information sent to Cheshire County Registry of Deeds.
- Tax training...every Wednesday of the month of April. This is a free online course offered by NH Tax Collectors Association and DRA.
- Have been looking into the possibility of payment plans for owners of liened property.

- Tuesday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, took part in on-line training with our Clerkworks software company, Interware. Concentrated on boat registrations and dog licensing.
- Deputy Vicki Gohl is now doing MV renewals and E-registrations and also dog licensing.
- Registered 552 vehicles between the last staff meeting and this one. Of the \$115,527 collected, about 88K belongs to the Town.
- Have registered 30 boats so far this year. (Last year we registered a total of 105.)
- Just had a divider installed between the two customer windows, allowing us to serve indoors two customers at once.

Ms. Mayberry pointed out that they are very busy especially with motor vehicle registrations.

**Finance Office:** Mr. Rich Kreissle, Administrator of Finance, was unable to attend this meeting but had submitted the following report: “The quiet before the storm”:

The annual audit has been scheduled for the week of May 10<sup>th</sup>. Due to COVID this will be done remotely. The auditor is assembling a list of documentation that has to be forwarded to them prior to the audit and transferred to their portal. There’s considerable leg work on his end during this time. The good news is due to successful analyses of certain areas (cash, payroll, accounts payable) in years past, the auditors will be asking for limited samples from these areas. He thinks both the auditors and he find it a challenge to have the audit done remotely as it doesn’t allow for the one-on-one, face-to-face conversations that can more easily resolve questions regarding issues that arise during the audit.

Related to the audit he has been reviewing the accounting records in light of findings from previous years in order to help the audit go as smoothly as possible. The beauty of audits is the auditors are always finding areas that can be tweaked and improved upon in the future. We’re fortunate to contract with a firm that has always been a resource for improving how the accounting process.

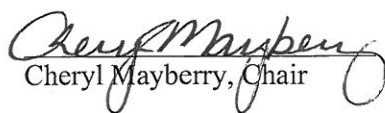
He started initial groundwork for writing up request for proposals for new copiers for both the Selectboard and Town Clerk’s/Tax Collector’s Offices. His goal is to get them out by the end of next week.

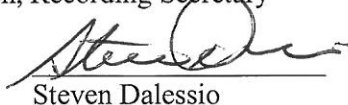
The retro pay raises have been included in this week’s pay checks. Implementing these takes a fair amount behind the scenes work on the part of both Sarah and him. In addition to determining the number of hours that have elapsed between the first pay period of the year to the most recent pay period, the amount of each employee’s raise needs to be calculated, the new pay rates for each employee needs to be entered into their employee record in the accounting system, the amount of the retro entered in for payroll processing purposes, and files involving the New Hampshire Retirement System need to be updated.

Ms. Mayberry thanked everyone for their participation. The Selectboard would like each Department Manager to think about what their mission is in their department and in the Town. Bring them to the next Staff Meeting on Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, along with their regular monthly report. If anyone has questions contact one of the Selectboard members or their Liaison.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Ms. Mayberry adjourned this Staff Meeting at 5:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

  
Cheryl Mayberry, Chair

  
Steven Dalessio

  
Peggy L. Pschirrer

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the April 22, 2021, Selectboard meeting.)