

**TOWN OF WALPOLE**  
**STAFF MEETING**  
**April 20, 2023**

Selectboard Present: Peggy L. Pschirrer, Chair; Cheryl Mayberry and Steven Dalessio

Staff Present: Sarah Downing (Manager of Administration); Jordan Cannon (Recording Secretary); Richard Kreissle (Administrator of Finance); Helen Dalbeck (Hooper Institute Executive Director); Kraig Harlow (Recreation Director); Ben Hoy (Recycling Director); Mike Rau (Road Agent), Meghan Hansson (Town Clerk/Tax Collector)

Excused: Jane Malmberg (Library Director), Justin Sanctuary (Police Chief)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mrs. Pschirrer called the staff meeting to order at 5:00 PM in Walpole Town Hall. Mrs. Pschirrer questioned those in attendance about what could be beneficial to them in their work in staff meetings. Mrs. Pschirrer spoke about the benefit of training and focused on the importance of listening. She stated that next month's staff meeting would include an evaluation of staff meetings.

**FINANCE:** Mr. Kreissle gave the following report.

- Revolving Funds
  - Worked with our treasurer, Steve Varone, to move the police and parks and recreation's revolving funds from a savings account with Savings Bank of Walpole to NHPDIP. Funds will earn greater interest. He stated that all funds will flow into PDIP. Makes the movement of funds easier.
  - Wrote up the accounting procedure necessary to record transactions involving the above.
  - Participated in the discussion with the board and treasurer on how to maximize cash resources through the strategic use of bank accounts/NHPDIP
- Friendly reminder- all invoices are to be sent to the Selectboard Office. Mr. Rau questioned the benefit of this new process. Mr. Dalessio stated that with everything being mailed to the Selectboard Office, it is easier for vendors and suppliers.
- Town Meeting: Posted results of town meeting to the Department of Revenue Administration (ORA) - creates form MS-232. DRA reviews and approves. Once approved - the board signs.
  - Unusual for this year- an amended article!
- Wrote a procurement policy for federal and state projects.
- Quarterly ARPA funds reporting to the US Treasury (due 4/30/23)
- 1st Quarter Benefit Hours statements were produced.
  - Department managers received monthly vacation accruals for each of their employees.
  - Employees have 2 weeks to bring any discrepancies to my attention COLA's processed.
- Updated the NHRS templates - A somewhat tedious and time-consuming process of updating worksheet and the file sent to NHRS for reporting purposes.
  - One template is an Excel worksheet I use before recording the items. Mr. Kreissle spoke about his process in working with the template he provided in his report.
  - An XML file -this file is the one that gets uploaded to NHRS.
  - Sample section of an XML follows.
  - Despite many, many tries in the past, this file CANNOT be produced in AccuFund (the town accounting software).

Mr. Dalessio questioned how other municipalities handle this process. Mr. Kreissle stated that other towns may have additional staffing and resources.

- Accounts Payables checks will now be issued on the 1st and 3rd weeks of the month beginning May 1st.
  - If a check is needed in an emergency that can still be done
  - Payroll will STILL be done on a weekly basis.

- Mr. Kreissle will be attending the NHGFOA Annual Conference May 4-5. Payables checks will be cut on May 3.

Ms. Mayberry questioned if the ARPA documentation is a report of expenditures, and questioned if there is any pre-authorization required.

**HOOPER INSTITUTE:** Mrs. Dalbeck gave the following report.

**School Programs and School Gardens:** Becky Whippie has returned from leave and resumed her classes on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Since then, she has been teaching about amphibian life cycles and identification with a focus on NH frogs and toads and the beautiful spotted salamander. Lots of drawing and labeling in student made guidebooks. The whole school is planning on a farm field trip, so Becky has hit her stride with farm designs, chicken and eggs and the milk cow. Tree ID as spring has sprung with 4th grade especially focusing on buds and twigs found in the school yard. They are so happy to have her back! 5th grade has become experts with seed id and dissection (germinated sunflower and wheat), planting a variety of vegetables and herbs in the high tunnel, taking apart, labeling and drawing a daffodil flower and outside in the gardens for cleanup, composting, digging and more. The gardens are in fine shape as they leave for school vacation. 6th grade has been glacial geology with two in depth classroom lessons, a film, vocabulary, reading then a demonstration with large cooking sheets, soil and ice that the kids build. This activity demonstrates how glaciers moved over the continent and created a new landscape. It was a muddy, fun, play with ice on the hottest day in April outdoor class. Otherwise known as a success! Next up are the forests of the world classes, river studies and watershed activities.

**Outreach and Marketing:** Clarion, flyers, Facebook, school newsletter, school posters, school email

**Administration:** Ongoing, in every way. I am eager to begin advertising for the Hooper Educator position. The job description is being revised.

**Special Events, Programs, Scholarship and Friends:** Dahlia Day is happening on May 20, organized by Friends of Hooper Institute and community volunteers. There will be a wide selection of locally grown dahlias which are moving into the high tunnel 4/19. I've heard there could be up to 100 pots for sale. Subscriptions are now available for the 2023 Flower CSA; 11 sold, 4 more to go.

**Camps:** Registrations are coming in I A sample invitation with most details is below.

Hooper Institute MORNING CAMPS

Morning Camp meets mornings Monday thru Thursday with Mrs. Whippie

Week 1: June 26 through June 29, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM for Walpole Students entering 1st through 2nd grade 4 day session cost per camper \$50.00.

Week 2: July 3, July 5 through July 7, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM (no camp on July 4) for Walpole Students entering 3rd & 4th grade 4 day session cost per camper \$50.00.

ADVENTURE CAMP This year Mrs. Dalbeck (Helen) will offer one week of Adventure Camp July 3, July 5 through July 7, 9:30 to 12:30 pm. Four-day session cost per camper \$50.00/week for Walpole students entering 5th-8th grade. We will explore together the forest trails, waterways and ravines of Walpole, meeting at a new location each day. This is an active walking, hiking and climbing week.

Details will follow once registered.

WOODWORKING CAMP in the Hooper Institute Woodworking Shop with Steve Dalessio. July 24 through July 27, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm for Walpole students entering 5th - 8th grade. Four-day session cost per camper \$50.00/week. This camp is a classic and creative week with make and take- home carpentry projects. Helen will assist and has work bench space for 12 students. Register soon.

**Walpole Community Garden:** Sixteen members signed up with one new family in 2023. There are currently 41 beds of different sizes that are being organically gardened and cared for. I've organized a spring clean-up day and a Gardeners Tea for this Saturday April 22.

**High School Summer Work Program:** Interviews will take place on April 19 at the Hooper Institute. There are seven students that will be interviewed by Becky Whippie, Seth Andrews, Sue Nadeau, Will Grossman and

me. The work sites are Hooper Day Camp, Hooper Adventure Camp, Hooper Garden Assistant, Malnati Farm and Abenaki Springs Farm.

**Development/Fundraising:** I plan on a letter that features Becky Whippie, her upcoming retirement and her dedication to the Hooper Institute and Walpole kids for the past 22 years.

**Scholarship:** The total awarded for the school year 2022-23 is \$15,000. She stated that an article in the Clarion would be forthcoming.

**Other news:** The building is open and cleaning, organizing, community use has commenced.

**RECYCLING:** The following report was given by Mr. Hoy.

- Trash bag delivery from boxes and bags unlimited arrived last week.
- Michael Albert is putting on Reuse Center craft workshop on Saturday, May 6th from 10am to 3pm. The event was postponed due to a snowstorm. He stated that Mr. Albert makes art out of cereal boxes.
- Battle of the bands at Walpole recycling: 2 local bands are putting on a musical performance on a Saturday to be announced from 12-2pm at the Recycling Center.
- Business is picking up at Walpole recycling as spring cleaning has arrived.
- Earth day is this Saturday, April 22nd. We had 10 volunteers offer their time this Sunday to pick up 65 bags of trash along Whitcomb Road. Roadside cleanups are free to dispose of at Walpole recycling with the use of our blue "New Hampshire the beautiful" trash bags available at the recycling center. Please ask an attendant about the clean Walpole program.
- Walpole police department will be at the Recycling Center for drug take back day on Earth day (April 22nd). Please properly dispose of your drugs.
- Hazardous Waste can be dropped off at the Keene recycling center on Route 12. Walpole residents can dispose of up to 10 gallons of hazardous waste per visit free of charge. Oil based paints, stains, and antifreeze are considered hazardous waste.

Mrs. Pschirrer commented that this week is National Volunteer Week, and that volunteers should be thanked for the work they do for the Town. Mrs. Pschirrer voiced her appreciation to volunteers who work at the transfer station and who keep the trails clean.

#### **TOWN CLERK-TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE:**

- The Town election was held on March 28th, being postponed due to the winter storm. We had twice the typical number of voters for a Town election and twice as many absentee ballots as is typical for a Town election.
- The Town Meeting followed on Saturday, April 1st. It was well attended with 122 voters from the Checklist. Meeting minutes have been finalized.
- The Town Clerk-Tax Collector' Office was closed on Wednesday, April 5th so that my Deputy and I could attend Spring Tax Collectors Workshop. It was a very informative workshop and well worth attending. Vicki made a short presentation for the Legislative Committee, of which she is now the Chair.
- The Intent to Lien notices went out on 4/3. Outstanding liens will be perfected on May 4<sup>th</sup>. (Last day to pay by check will be 5/2.) Also, on May 4th the Impending Deed notices will go out with a deed date given as 6/14.
- We have tax bill paper and tax bill envelopes ready for the Spring Tax Warrant.
- Online transactions are busy. Last month (March) 175 vehicles were renewed online, 17 dogs were licensed, and two vital records were purchased. This represents \$34,355 worth of transactions online with either a credit card or an ACH payment. April numbers are following a similar track.
- As of Tuesday 4/18, we have licensed 258 dogs. State law requires all dogs to be licensed with the Town Clerk by 4/30 of each year. Mr. Dalessio commented that the Town had to print the ballots twice to make a warrant article clearer.

**RECREATION:** The following report was given by Mr. Harlow.

**Hockey Rink:** The ice hockey rink was picked up and stored at Whitcomb Park on April 13th.

**Summer Basketball**

- o Youth basketball flier will go out April 21st.
- o Sign-ups will be May 24th and May 31st and a possible late date if numbers are low League will begin July 10th and end August 10th with the playoffs beginning August 11th.
- o Walpole Recreation plans on bringing back the summer Men's League this year with a fee of \$400 dollars for a team and a possible free agent team.

**Summer Movies**

- o Movie titles are yet to be determined.
- o Movies will be shown at North Walpole Park and the Town Green (Common) Movie Dates selected June 23, July 21, August 18
- o Rain Dates are June 30, July 28, August 25

Mrs. Pschirrer commented that because there are residents around the common, consideration must be given prior to finalizing the location. Mrs. Pschirrer reflected that resident sometimes object to live events on the common. Mr. Dalessio suggested the possibility of Drewsville Common as an alternative venue.

**Age in Motion:** As of March 22<sup>nd</sup>, AIM had made \$936.00 and spent \$19.00 on new equipment and \$440 on salaries. Mr. Harlow commented on the socialization observed among those who attend AIM.

**Pickleball/Tennis**

- o The tennis nets and the pickleball nets are set up at for the year.
  - o Our tennis players have a league set up for Monday mornings 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
  - o Wilson and Lawrence Co. will be fixing and pairing pickleball lines on the court in June.
- Mrs. Pschirrer asked how this will compromise. Mr. Harlow stated the recreation department is working on a scheduling of pickleball and tennis to ensure that both sets of people are in agreement.

**Pool Update**

- o Currently have 4 lifeguards on staff, we would like 10.
- o Lifeguard ad is now in the Clarion. Mr. Dalessio questioned if the pool repairs would be complete before opening weekend. Mr. Harlow stated that the start of the repair is sealing the crack. Mr. Harlow stated that with the repairs the pool may last another 10-15 years.
- o We have lined up a WSI certified swim instructor for the year.
- o The pool plans to open on June 17th.

**Recreation Committee**

- o David Kuniholm and Scott Rodenhauer were voted onto the recreation committee. Mr. Harlow commented that Mr. Kuniholm has been helpful in finding compromise between the tennis and pickleball players. Diane Harty has been voted to stay onto the recreation committee.
- o Walpole Recreation Committee came to the consensus of meeting the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6pm.

**HIGHWAY:** The following report was given by Mr. Rau.

**Winter Operations:** We are in the process of removing winter equipment off trucks including on spots, plows and wings. Washing of trucks and equipment to remove salt and other debris and then storing of equipment for the season.

**Grading:** With an unusually insignificant mud season we have experienced this spring; we were able to grade all gravel roads early without the use of extra gravel or stone.

**Spring Clean-up:** After a long winter with several large storms that attributed to many down trees and large amounts of debris, most of which was temporarily moved to the roadsides until accessible for clean-up. Following snowmelt; brush, trees, and debris was chipped and cleared on roadsides. Mr. Dalessio questioned the general policy for trees cut down by Asplundh. Mr. Dalessio confirmed that residents could collect this downed wood if they so wished.

Mrs. Pschirrer reviewed with Mr. Dalessio that she had begun the present meeting by asking the directors to evaluate staff meetings to make them more valuable for directors and their staff. Mrs. Pschirrer spoke of her appreciation of the town directors and staff. Ms. Mayberry and Mr. Dalessio reiterated this position.

**FEMA:** Weekly video meetings with FEMA and Homeland Security continue to meticulously obtain and enter precise information to be awarded funds for the declared environmental disaster in 2021.

**SELECTBOARD OFFICE:** The following report was given by Mrs. Downing.

**Assessing**

- o The application period for current use, veterans' tax credit, elderly and solar energy exemptions closed on Monday, April 17th.
- o The updated Elderly Tax Exemption was approved at Town Meeting. The Veterans' and All Veterans' Credit article to maintain that credit was also approved at Town Meeting.
- o Record updates for new construction and lot line mergers/adjustments/subdivisions are occurring in the Avitar software program.
- o Abatement applications that have not received a response should be addressed soon. Avitar is sending recommendations to the Town within the week. They will be processed as soon as possible.
- o All edits and changes to property assessment must be completed before May 15th or when the spring tax warrant is created.
- o Excavation and Timber Reports are being submitted and billed if required. Walpole experienced higher volume for Intents to Cut for timber than in the past. However, due to the warmer winter, several intents were canceled with "no cut". Property owners are beginning to resubmit their "no cut" intents for the coming year. Reminders will be sent to those with open intents to submit their reports.

**Facilities Update**

- o The Town Hall elevator's fireman's hat sensor was installed. However, the software in the elevator will not recognize the new sensor. There are ongoing calls and discussions with Otis Elevator regarding how to fix this issue. The extension from the State of NH to fix the violation is about to end. Mr. Dalessio commented on the use of the upstairs of the Town Hall without having a functional elevator.
- o The main entrance door on the south side of the building will be replaced. The estimated work start date is May 10th.

**LIBRARY:** The following report was submitted by Mrs. Malmberg.

Statistics for March are encouraging. At the Main Library, visits increased 24% over last year. Physical checkouts increased 22% and checkouts on Libby increased 11% over last year. Other large gains were children's program attendance, a 39% gain, and usage of Hoopla and Newsbank, which increased 108% and 128% respectively. You will notice a decline in virtual programs, this is since Carolyn is no longer doing her Tuesday and Saturday virtual programs. Visits to the North Walpole branch increased 49% compared to last year, and circulation and programming figures remained steady.

**Building and Grounds:**

The Board of Trustees voted to accept the quote from Don Newcombe to replace the chimney. He will be providing us with a timeline for the project and some samples of the stone veneer.

The Board has engaged Adam Vose to build a new front door for the library. Work will commence in May with a target of early to mid-June for installation. The Main Library will be closed during installation but will continue to offer curbside pickup. The North Walpole Branch Library will be open expanded hours during that time and library programming will take place at the branch as well.

**Programming:**

Attendance for our first two April programs for adults was great. We have eighteen people in person and eight on Zoom for the Great Decisions program with Keene State Professor Jim Waller. In May, we hope to have a guest speaker, the former US Ambassador to China, Stapleton Roy.

We had a terrific film and discussion program about 100 Nights Inc., a homeless shelter and resource center in Keene, featuring Executive Director Mindy Cambiar and nonprofit consultant Sara Barrett. Twenty-nine people were in attendance.

Six people attended our "Life, Death and Cake" program and found it very informative. The presenters were very knowledgeable and engaging.

Julie has started making visits to the North Walpole School. She visited two third grade classes in March to promote the library and do book talks. There was an immediate payoff- several of the kids came into the library later that day looking for the books she brought with her.

**PR & Marketing:**

The library will be offering tote bags for sale featuring our new logo. The bags were purchased from Enviro-tote, a woman-owned business based in Londonderry that uses eco-friendly materials. We are asking for a suggested donation of \$5.00 per bag.


**POLICE DEPARTMENT:**


Mrs. Pschirrer spoke to the Police Department being understaffed. Chief Sanctuary was not present. Mrs. Pschirrer stated to those in attendance that he was away due to police matters.


**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Dalessio spoke to Mrs. Pschirrer being away on vacation in the coming week. Mr. Dalessio called the meeting to close at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary

  
Peggy L. Pschirrer, Chair

  
Cheryl Mayberry

  
Steven Dalessio

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the April 27, 2023 Selectboard meeting.)