

**TOWN OF WALPOLE
SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING
HOOPER PROPERTY
October 6, 2011**

Moderator Peter Heed called this Special Public Hearing on the Hooper Property to order at 7:00 PM in the Walpole Town Hall.

Introductions: Moderator Heed began by introducing himself. He is a resident of Westmoreland, where there is no golf course, and is the County Attorney. He is happy to be here tonight and thanked the people for being here. He attends a lot of meetings but many times very few people are there therefore he is impressed with the amount of turn-out. The Hooper Trustees and the Trustees of Trust Funds want to bring both historical and financial information to those in attendance to let everyone know about the issues they are facing. After that there will be a period of time for public comment. They will be fair and try to have enough time to hear from everyone that would like to speak. This meeting is being tape recorded by the Town therefore he asked anyone wishing to speak to identify themselves.

Moderator Heed introduced the following people seated at the front table:

Hooper Trustees and Selectboard: Whitney Aldrich (Chair); Jamie Teague, Sheldon Sawyer
Trustees of Trust Funds: Jerry Galloway; Joe Dion; Robert Kimball
Town Attorney: Attorney Jeremy Hockensmith

Mrs. Teague provided the following brief, but not complete, history of the Hooper Trust:
“George Hooper died in 1916. His will instructed his wife to give to the Town of Walpole, certain real estate and funds upon his death if certain conditions were met.

Mary Hooper died in 1924. Her will instructed her trustee, John Clifford, to transfer the properties to Walpole if there was sufficient money to establish an educational institute. Clifford transferred the property in 1925.

Thus, the Hooper Trust was established in 1925 with \$85,000+ liquid assets and real estate consisting of the unimproved agricultural land at that time which the present Hooper Golf Club sits on and surrounding lands, the Hooper Cottage, the Hooper Institute land and a parcel of land on Reservoir Road.

The Hooper Trust was established to fund a college preparatory school at the high school level, teaching agriculture, horticulture and forestry.

Following George Hooper’s instructions, a second trust was also established. This trust was to be funded by 20% of the net income left in the Hooper Trust in any given year. This trust was called the Hooper Accumulator. The Hooper Accumulator received it’s first funding in 1926. One half of the total accumulation was to be used for new building construction only.

In 1926 the town petitioned the courts to see if Hooper Funds could be used to support a qualifying educational program in the Walpole public schools. The court said yes. In 1927-1928 a new school building was constructed on Hooper land across from the Hooper farm, now the golf course. The Walpole High School vocational agriculture program was operated in this building until 1966 and was funded in part by the Hooper Trust.

The Hooper Golf Club was first leased in 1928.”

In 1966 the Fall Mtn. Regional School was established. Walpole again petitioned the court to see if Hooper funds could be used for Fall Mtn. Programs. The court declined stating that the trusts were for Walpole citizens only.

Soon after this, the independent Hooper Institute educational program was initiated for Walpole elementary and Jr. High students still attending schools within the town of Walpole. This program did not conform strictly to the terms of the trust but it was considered the best option at the time. This Hooper Institute program operated pretty much without problems until the 1990's when a chronic shortage of funds developed.

In 1993 the Walpole Selectmen and Trustees of Trust Funds decided to petition the court to free up the income in the Hooper Accumulator Trust. We felt that any new building construction was unlikely. The plan was to use the income for building maintenance, thus freeing up all the income in the Hooper Trust for the Institute.

What we expected to be a cooperative effort with the Attorney General's office immediately encountered problems.

The N.H. state attorney, Mr. Cullimore, was immediately disturbed because he felt the terms of the trust were not being followed:

1. There was no high school program as mentioned in the original decree;
2. The Hooper Golf Club was not a viable investment.

Mr. Cullimore was correct on both counts.

It took until March of 1995 and several thousand dollars of legal expense to resolve all the issues and get a court decree.

The basic elements of the court decree are:

1. Hooper accumulator income is now available. ½ for maintenance, ½ for high school college scholarships in trust approved fields.
2. A high school program for Walpole students must be developed by the Institute using funds from the Hooper Trust.
3. The right of reverter whereby Walpole might lose the trust was rescinded.
4. The Hooper Golf Club must pay a rent yielding a market return. A formula for establishing value is spelled out in the court decree.
5. Hooper Trust property can be sold subject to court approval.

As far as building maintenance is concerned, the court decree left the Trustees in a precarious position. It approved upkeep on the Hooper Institute building but maintenance on the Hooper Golf Club buildings and the cottage are unclear.

This brings us to our current issue: A cash flow issue and situation was brought to our attention by the Trustees of the Trust Funds and the Attorney General's office got involved while discussing the terms of a subsequent lease with the Hooper Golf Association.

The Hooper Trustees met with the Trustees of Trust Funds to discuss what their options might be. One was to develop a golf course lease that satisfies the terms of the court decree and the Attorney General's office. Or if that was not possible, a second option was to sell off some of the property; or a third was any other alternatives whatever they may be. This is the reason for this meeting; to have the people present help them with a solution.

Mr. Kimball mentioned that there were two hand-outs at this meeting. He pointed out that the income is different than what was stated in the Walpole Clarion. The income from the Hooper Trust I is the Institute; the income comes from the Golf Club, Cottage rent and Investment Income from that fund. Hooper Part II (Accumulator); ½ of the Income is from Investment Income and is used for Scholarships. The other ½ of the Income is from Investment Income and is used for Maintenance. The problem at this time is that the court decree says they cannot use the principal of the accumulated fund for scholarships or maintenance. At the end of July the balance in the Maintenance Fund was \$30,282.93. This is hardly enough to maintain the property. Mr. Aldrich noted that since the end of July it was necessary to put a new section of roof on the cottage for \$6,450 and to replace the toilet however that bill has not yet been received. Mr. Galloway clarified that the two hand-outs that are available are the Flow Chart and the Maintenance.

Mr. Sawyer advised that some people feel the Trustees are opposed to the golf course but that could not be further from the truth. They do feel it is an asset to the Town. His comment is that it could be better with some major improvements if they could be financed. He would like to see a better golf course with amenities that would allow people to enjoy it more. If they are restricted to a lease this might not happen. This is one of the problems they are looking at as well as how they maintain these buildings. They have been asking each other these questions but are now asking for the public's input.

Mrs. Teague advised that they have a list of the people that signed up in advance to speak so they should have that opportunity before other people.

Holly Piccarillo: Mrs. Piccarillo read the following statement: “The planned sale of the golf course by the Hooper Trustees requires us to try to clarify the position of the Hooper Golf Club (HGC) for our members and the residents of Walpole. The Hooper Golf Club has rented the Golf course property, Mansion, Barn and Pro Shop since 1926 as approved by the voters of Walpole. The Town of Walpole Select Board governs the Hooper Trust as Trust Fund Trustees. In 1995, the Cheshire County Probate Court decreed that the Trust could rent the golf course at its Town assessed value less the golf course improvements provided that the rate of return was at the highest possible fair market rate consistent with the standards of prudence. Based on two independent assessments done in 2010 the value of the leased property less the golf course improvements is around \$600,000 and this year we are paying \$35,000 in rent, yielding a 5.8% return to the Trust. The Trust invests about \$2.5 million dollars in cash and the average return on those investments over the past ten years has yielded less than 3%. The return on the Golf Course lease is nearly double the return on the Hooper Trust cash investments. That makes this lease by terms of the Court decree better than the fair market return on the cash investments and certainly has been a prudent investment without losses in principal as has occasionally occurred with the invested cash. We believe the current return to the Trust from Hooper Golf Club rent is at a fair market rate and is a secure, prudent and diversified investment for the Trust. Furthermore, we believe the rental of the Golf Course by the Trust is significantly better than what the Court Consent decree calls for and is good for the Town of Walpole. The Hooper Golf Club recognizes the importance of the 18th century Mansion and its contents as a historical monument and it is an essential asset to the Town of Walpole. We therefore believe the discussion of the future of the Mansion and its contents should include a larger community group representing multiple interests of the Town of Walpole. We would support the mansion being a registered historic place. The Hooper Golf Course was recently rated 11th among thousands of 9 hole courses in the country, a testament to the good stewardship of the property by the Hooper Golf Club. The golf course is used by a great many visitors each year and brings revenue to local Walpole businesses.

Consistent with the Goals of the Hooper Trust to serve the youth of Walpole through educational programs, the members of the Hooper Golf Club have contributed to the McDonough Foundation which

provides college scholarships to students who have been involved with improving conditions of golf courses. Since 2003, seven students from Walpole have been awarded a total of \$14,150 through this program. This year's recipient is Bryant Tullar who has just entered a UNH farm study program. We believe the effort to sell the property by the Hooper Trustees if uncalled for as the lease is in keeping with the Trust requirements. The lease with the Hooper Golf Club should be continued as it has been for the past 85 years as was voted for and approved by the Town many years ago. We present the Hooper Trustees with a petition to stop the sale of the Hooper Golf Club. So far 1164 people have signed the petition and more than half of these are by citizens of Walpole. The other signees represent visitors to the golf course from 17 other states, the District of Columbia and London, England. In addition, we would like to present a petition to the Hooper Trust Trustees signed by 49 local businesses that want the partnership between the Hooper Trust, Town of Walpole and the Hooper Golf Club to continue. Lastly the Hooper Golf Club has been damaged financially by this public discussion of a potential sale and the uncertainty of the future of the golf club. Our memberships and club usage is significantly lower this year than last year and our employees are concerned about their jobs. The Hooper Trust Trustees told us in December 2010 that their intent was to sell the Golf Course property and again in March that they were going to get an appraisal and begin the sale process. At this time, the appraisal process has not begun and we remain in limbo. Without question our lease has been better than a fair market return as well as a prudent investment and is good for the Hooper Trust, the Town of Walpole and its residents.

We have requested verbally and in writing an extension of the lease so we can operate with some certainty and we implore you as Trustees to grant a lease extension of at least 4 and hopefully more years. Respectfully, Hooper Golf Club Board of Directors.”

Janet Hicks: Janet Hicks met with the Selectboard on August 4th and August 18th about rumors she heard about the sale of the Hooper property. She was told at that time that no decisions had been made as they were waiting for an appraisal. Mrs. Teague stated that she wanted to hear from all her constituents before casting her vote; her comments appear in the Eagle Times. She doesn't believe that Mrs. Teague was truthful in that she had a letter dated December 10th in which as a Hooper Trustees she stated her intentions to sell. In a letter dated March 10th it reiterated the intention to sell and on March 31st another intent to sell. It is her behavior which is speeding the perception of a hidden agenda. She believes that the residents of this town expect and demand honesty and integrity of the elected officials and she believes they have failed miserably. She asked that Mrs. Teague recuse herself from making a decision to sell Hooper and let it go to a Town vote.

Phil Hicks: Phil Hicks stated that because the Town voted to create the golf course in 1926 it is his sincere believe that it should go back for a Town vote and not back to the Selectboard.

Attorney Heed asked Attorney Hockensmith what the actual process would be to sell the property. Attorney Hockensmith advised that if the Trustees decided to sell they would have to Petition the court and there would have to be two Public Hearings before any decision is made. As far as he knows there have been no decisions by the Trustees.

Phil Hicks: Phil Hicks asked if they have had any discussion with any individuals or groups regarding the purchase of the Hooper Estate. If so, when and with whom? The Walpole Clarion states that three separate groups are interested in buying it. Why isn't this information available to the residents? Mrs. Teague clarified that her comments were that they had not taken a formal decision or vote to sell but they did enter into private discussions with the Hooper Golf Club hoping that they could buy the property at the end of their current two year lease. Other people have approached individual Selectboard members

saying they would like to own the property but there have been no formal discussions about price or sale other than with the Hooper Golf Association with two closed sessions and one open session.

Christine Burchstead: Christine Burchstead questioned the appraisal figure of \$1,800,000. How was that amount reached if the Trustees are stating they had no formal appraisal done? Mrs. Teague said it is the amount on the tax cards when you add them all together. An article states that according to the zoning that property could not be turned into condos but what about mansions. Mr. Sawyer said that is a zoning issue. The property isn't even on the market yet but if somebody were to buy it and there were no conditions in the sales agreement then under the Town's zoning regulations that could be taken under consideration.

George Jeffrey: George Jeffrey is concerned that the Town would lose control over the current situation if the property was to be sold. It might not be a public golf course but rather a private golf course. Local people will have to find another place to play golf. It is a part of the image of this Town; an historical portion of this Town. People that live here enjoy the Town. He is not in favor of private enterprise.

Bob Miller: Bob Miller questioned that the Selectboard manage the real estate owned by the Town of Walpole and does that includes being able to sell the real estate. Attorney Hockensmith replied that this sale would require the court approval. Mr. Miller said under the NH Statutes the Selectboard has the authority to act only in the interest of the Town but not in the best interest of the Trust. The Hooper Trustees have no authority to sell Hooper property so it is the Selectboard who is selling the Hooper property for the benefit of the Trust. He believes this is a conflict of interest and he would hope that this matter would go before the Town for a vote.

Charles Lennon: Charles Lennon moved to Town a few years ago and is not a golfer but a sale of the golf course and that property for development could have a chilling effect on future donors of real property to the Town. He would urge the Trustees and Selectboard to engage in forth-right and sincere negotiations with the golf board and saving the golf course for future generations. Selling this unique property should be the absolute last resort.

Ron Roscoe: Ron Roscoe is the golf professional at the golf course this year. They have collected signatures to stop the sale of the golf club. He shared a beautiful poem. If you have stood on hole 9 or heard the church bells from the Common or walked there under a sunset, you have felt it. It should be a place where you can listen to your inner voice. He never thought this was something he would have to fight for. 1,163 people have signed their Petition pages. Come up to the Hooper; listen to the tranquility.

Donna Drouin: Donna Drouin is not a golfer but they have had months of misgivings. She had questions on the legalities. She read from NH RSA 6697 that talks about conflicts of interest. The Selectboard must act in the best interest of the Town but not in the best interest of the Trust. The prudent course would be for the Selectboard to recuse themselves from any decisions on the sale of the property.

Jayson Munn: Jayson Munn stated that a Study Committee was formed. When was that formed and who appointed the members. Mr. Sawyer responded that there was a committee formed 12 years ago. He was not sure of the date. The most recent Study Committee members were the Trustees of Trust Funds, the Hooper Trustees, Mr. Varone (a resident), Mr. Smokey Aumand (North Walpole Village resident), plus one other member. Mr. Munn asked what the findings of the report were and where is the report. Mrs. Teague said there were no findings or a written report.

Neil Coughlin: Neil Coughlin is a member of the Hooper Golf Club and a member of the Hooper Hill Hoppers Snowmobile Club. He is in favor of it staying the way it is. A lot of people use it year-round. The one problem is that the world economy is poor now and so is the money that the Trustees are making off the Trust. He asked if anyone considered another Trust account for the mansion maintenance.

James Aldrich: James Aldrich did not respond when called.

David Howell: David Howell is a member of the Hooper Golf Club and a newer resident of Walpole. Hooper provides a cross section. He has met school teachers, engineers, plumbers and was introduced to Lefty Lopez. Wealthy and poor people play together. They started a Hooper Jr. Golf Club. It has increased the value of homes in Walpole. Leave it the way it is. It is beautiful.

Tom Aldrich: Tom Aldrich is not a golfer but he likes it the way it is. He hunts on the wooded areas. Recently there was an article in the Keene Sentinel about the golf course in Peterborough. They are asking the Town to buy that golf course. What if they cannot maintain membership here to keep it going the way it is; not sustain the rent. Could the Trust maintain itself without the rent from the golf course. Mr. Kimball said the income from the rent goes to maintain the Institute and that is by court order. One-half of the income goes to scholarships and the other half goes to maintenance. The Trustees want the golf course to stay but, at this moment, they have about \$15,000 in the maintenance fund. What will they do when there is no maintenance fund to maintain those buildings? Can they ask for that money to be raised by tax dollars? What will they do?

Jeff Miller: Jeff Miller is a golf club member and a life-long resident. 50 businesses want to continue their partnership and support the golf course; he presented this list to the Trustees. Every member of the Board of Directors has treated this as a community service. They run it in an efficient way. They have tried their best to preserve the area. They maintain the interior of the Mansion and have been a good partner with the Town. The last few years the maintenance did jump but it did not in the previous years. This past year they are trying to have some continuity to maintain a good flow of activity. It has been over six months since they requested that the Trustees grant them a lease extension for another 4-to-5 years.

Cliff Cooke: Cliff Cook asked if there was anyone present from the Hooper Institute. In 1920 agriculture was the middle name of Walpole but that is no longer the case. How valuable is the Institute now. How many people use it? If necessary it could be sold to keep the Hooper Golf Course and Mansion. Mr. Galloway responded that the Hooper Institute is what keeps this Trust alive; it has to stay in effect. They have to fund the school. He has been a Trustee of Trust Funds for many years. They have a fiduciary responsibility to the Trust. It is doubtful that the taxpayers want to pay for the maintenance there. There are many different ways to handle the golf course. He would urge people in Town to see how they can solve this to benefit the Town and the country club rather than just talk about it.

Nick Zachary: Nick Zachary is a Trustee of the Hooper Institute. He wanted to respond to the question of Mr. Cooke. The purpose of the Institute was for education in natural sciences and forestry. Every year from kindergarten through 8th grade a program goes on where Institute members teach the students. Some students are employed by the local farms and the Recycling Center to learn about various things. They have scholarships in these areas.

Peter Powers: Peter Powers is an accountant by trade. He pointed out that full and detailed reports of the trust funds are not available at the Selectboard's Office as set forth on page 45 of the town annual report. His suggestions were: 1) Consider selling to the Hooper Golf Club the building and the land while

keeping all development rights. This would assure that the future of the land remains in the hands of the town and that keeping the “green space” would remain with the voters. 2) The courts and the trustees of the fund have missed an important part of the trust. That is the phrase: “...and the enjoyment of clean and healthy diversions may be emphasized”. 3) He believes the court was incorrect in directing that ½ of the income go to maintenance of the buildings and ½ to scholarships. The town should go back to court and have the courts approve the phrase that “the money to be spent as the trustees find necessary to preserve the assets of the trust while still being able to provide scholarships”. 4) In 2010 it appears that the Trust’s entire investment portfolio lost money. 5) Urge the Selectmen to retain an independent panel to review the trusts, the assets and the options and then present a list of recommendations. 6) Request that the board become a little more transparent in its deliberations regarding the trust and its assets. 7) He pointed out some errors in the recent edition of the Walpole Clarion. Mr. Dion explained that improvement is when you add something that was not there but when a roof goes that is maintenance.

Peter Bowman: Peter Bowman moved to Walpole because of everything it has to offer. If Hooper wasn’t here Walpole would not be the same place. He learned to play golf there when he was 15 years old and his daughter now goes with him. It brings new people here and brings a good benefit to the Town.

Joe Coneeny: Joe Coneeny lives in the Village and loves the Hooper. He thanked the Selectboard for having this meeting. They have heard a lot of passionate comments. He agrees with many people but they have low economic times. It is a good time to look at extending the Hooper Golf Club lease. It is time for the Town to stand up and support the Selectboard to get this straightened out.

Noel Cassidy: Did not speak.

Nate Lynch: Nate Lynch is a resident. It seems that the difficulty is the way the Trust is written. They should have a new Trust with more flexible terms. How much money do they need. Some people would contribute. They need to work on the conditions. Mr. Kimball said there are certain things they need to do. He used to play golf but no longer can. He talked to J.T. Horne from the Trust for Public Lands and the Monadnock Conservancy. As an example: Sunset Golf Course in Sugar Hill, NH had the same problems but raised \$350,000 to purchase the development rights and then sold the golf course to the individual that now runs the golf course. We can do the same thing by raising \$500,000 through the Conservancy, buy the development rights and then sell the golf course to the golf club at a price they can afford. Then they can maintain the property and do what they want to maintain a viable golf course in Town. This is a viable solution. It would maintain green space. The cottage could be rented. The golf course is not on the tax roles at this time.

Peter Jeffries: Peter Jeffries is not a golfer but has lived here for 14 years. He enjoys the property at the Hooper.

Clancy Houghton: Clancy Houghton advised that when the Hooper property came to the Town the golf course was arranged by his Grandfather. He set up the Institute to help farmers get an education. In those days they used to play basketball by the school; it was the farmers against the city slickers but at that time Walpole was predominantly farmers. How many farmers are there today; about 13. Mr. Sawyer noted that there are more than that. The golf course is our heritage.

Chuck Bingham: Chuck Bingham has played a lot of golf at the Hooper. He read and handed in his “Saving Hooper – A Path Forward”. He feels that many citizens do not feel fully informed and many are concerned that decisions may be made with respect to the property that could cause long-term loss to the town. He suggested that the Selectmen could create a special task force of citizens (12 people – 4 from

the Selectboard, 4 from the Golf Association and 4 additional members) to consider the issues driving the Current Hooper situation and to present written findings of fact and recommendations by December 31. The Selectmen would still make any needed decisions according to their legal duties as Hooper Trustees but the public would have time to learn about the facts and to have input in a transparent process. All deliberations of the task force would be open or reported fully by it. Let's start with fresh eyes and come up with solutions.

Dave Johnson: Dave Johnson feels that for a short-term solution if they worked out a lease with the golf club they would find that they have a lot of manpower. They could help out with some maintenance projects. He thanked the Selectboard for their service on this board. This is one of the hard times but asked them not to make the sale of the Hooper be a part of their legacy.

William Therrien: Bill Therrien likes Bob Kimball's suggestion about the conservancy rights. There are other things they can do. The assets that the golf club is using that belong to the Town were roughly \$600,000 out of the appraisal; the remaining \$300,000 was based on Hooper Golf Club investments. He corresponded with Terry Knowles of the Attorney General's office. He reiterated his work on the lease agreement. If the golf club was to buy the property the sale would have included their assets, they would have picked up the mansion and as a private corporation they would have to pick up the taxes. He proposed that the Selectboard work on some of the items put forth tonight. He would like to add his request to find a path where they could continue to work with the Town and rent this property.

Nick Zachery: Nick Zachery read a note from a resident who could not be here tonight (Stephen Sinaco). The potential sale of the golf course is under closed door meetings. They want to know why this has been kept private. They want to know what is happening. Let the sun shine.

Jeanette Lovett: Jeanette Lovett did not speak.

Wayne Wallace: Wayne Wallace noted that his question was answered.

Becky Pearson: Becky Pearson feels that most of those present feel the same way. The golf course is only used for several months a year. The property could be used much more than it is. It could be utilized for a cross-country ski path, a place for weddings; a location for fall foliage tours, the mansion could be a Bed and Breakfast. We have three wonderful restaurants in Town, a beautiful Common, etc. She proposed that it be taken to somebody that does marketing and/or ask for a business student to create a marketing plan for the Hooper. It could be a 3-or-4 season facility. Help us save this gem.

Dean Allen: He advised that he was all set.

Jeanne Ramey: Jeanne Ramey has been a resident for quite a few years. Her daughter always liked to go to the Hooper and she is a golfer. We have to be more pro-active with the space we have and to brainstorm. Everybody has to know what is going on and try to keep what we have here. It is a great place and a green space.

Victoria Gohl: Victoria Gohl asked what it would take to create a fund to keep the Hooper as is and to supplement the Trustees for maintenance. Mr. Kimball said the Trustees are doing some calculations on this.

Kate Derwin: Kate Derwin said her question was answered.

John Hensel: John Hensel asked for a show of hands for the people that want to save the Hooper for the Selectmen to look at. We have an over whelming majority.

Stephen Benson: Stephen Benson was speaking on behalf of the Hooper. They are very wise to have done what they did. They were aware that things were going to evolve and the importance of the small children experiencing agriculture and forestry. It is important to put an emphasis on that. The golf club is terrific, it should continue to improve and stay in the current state that it is. He wants to help keep it going.

Bob Kimball: To answer Victoria Gohl's question, Bob Kimball said it is almost impossible to predict how much the maintenance will be for the next ten years. One year they were \$44,000 and another year it could be \$14,000. They do not know what conditions they will find next spring in the mansion. The kitchen will not be large enough to hold a large wedding party.

Sheldon Sawyer: Sheldon Sawyer mentioned that at one time they took into consideration all the expenses for maintenance. They had a contractor go up and tell them what the cost would be and then they put a priority on it. They never got to the last one that was the barn. There were other expenses that were unknown. They had to stay within the money that was available. He would like to see the barn repaired.

Moderator Heed advised that this was the end of the list of people that had signed up. He opened the comment period to those that did not sign up.

Fred Smith: Fred Smith suggested that they go back to the court and ask them to allow the Town to maintain those buildings. That is the solution. The Trust has a lot of money that needs to be put back in the right place.

Steve Varone: Steve Varone shared information on taxes and rent income. He questioned where they come up with \$35,000 as a fair market value rent on a property that is worth \$1.8 million. Mrs. Teague responded that that dollar amount was determined by the Attorney General's office. Mr. Therrien was in contact with Terry Knowles when those figures were worked out. This amount is \$5,000 more than the lease was last year.

Steve Dalessio: Steve Dalessio asked if only 20% of the revenue from the Hooper I Trust can be moved over to the Hooper II Trust. Mrs. Teague said that was in the beginning when it was originally created. Nothing funds the accumulator.

George Jeffrey: George Jeffrey mentioned that the residents appreciate Attorney Heed being the Moderator at this meeting. Moderator Heed said he volunteered to do this even though he didn't know much about the issue. Walpole is a special place. So many people are concerned about their Town. It is apparent how important the Hooper means to so many people. One of the big messages here is communication and transparency. The Trustees are doing this now to get the information out so give them credit for that. He thanked everyone for being here tonight.

Jayson Munn: Jayson Munn said that Jamie Teague has consistently said she will listen to the power of the constituents. He asked what her vote would be tonight if they were voting to sell the Hooper. Mrs. Teague said she had heard everybody loud and clear but there are about 3600 people in this Town so before she makes a decision she would like to hear from people in different areas of Town that did not come tonight or they do not understand the entire complicated issue. One person that she talked to

recently said they were not going to come tonight and stand up to speak as they are fearful because they are a small business in town and that they might be black-listed if they spoke against it. This bothers her. If she had to cast a vote tonight she thinks her opinion on the course of action to take right now would be to set up that committee of independent people with a great cross-section to look into what the best direction would be to take this property in the best interest of the Trust itself. In addition to that maybe look into petitioning the court to change the decree but there are no guarantees.

Janet Hicks: Janet Hicks requested that Mr. Sawyer answer the same question. Mr. Sawyer said they have heard a lot of comments. Some were constructive and some were from their hearts. He would like an opportunity to look at those options. He never thought that they wanted to do away with having a golf course there but the maintenance of the buildings needs to be resolved. The maintenance should not fall on the Selectboard or the Trustees. Mr. Bingaman's suggestion to have a committee of 12 is what they were thinking about when they did form a committee about 12 years ago. At that time the committee suggested a rent of \$36,000 but they settled it at \$20,000 and it went up \$2,000 each year to the \$30,000 last year. Times change and ideas change. He would be the last one to vote to do away with the golf course. It could be improved. There is no driving range; some people would like one. These are the things they are looking at and will continue to look at. When he gets ready to vote will be when these solutions have been resolved.

Holly Piccarillo: Holly Piccarillo summarized that most of them would love to have a 10 hole course. The Board of Directors cannot move forward without a long-term lease. Give them 3, 4 or 5 or more years while they work this out. Please.

Moderator Heed noted that they have come up with some tremendous ideas. There are other people in town. Be pro-active. Come up with ideas. Thank you for coming and reach out to your Board. He closed this Special Public Meeting at 9:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Whitney R. Aldrich, Chair

Jamie J. Teague

Sheldon S. Sawyer

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the Minutes of the next Hooper Trustees meeting.)