

SELECT BOARD'S REPORT 2008

The Selectmen welcomed Jamie Teague as the new member of the Board. Jamie has been a great asset to the Board. Select Board meetings are held every Thursday at 7:30 P.M. to handle the weekly business of the Town, such as payment of bills, payroll, abatements, refunds, sewer & water accounts, current use requests, timber cut permits, veteran's exemptions, committee reports, Hooper business, and any other business that may come before the Board.

In addition, we always start our meetings with any public business or concerns from the general public. As a result of state enacted property tax for schools and the mandated Re-evaluation every five years, we spend a lot of time addressing requests for Property tax abatements.

The Board has a major assignment in presenting a budget for the ensuing year. This year has been especially difficult due to the recession. We feel we are presenting a bare bones budget without significantly cutting services.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES IN 2008:

In April a cave-in on March Hill Road caused one-way traffic near French Road. After determining the cost (\$110,000) of correcting this situation, the Board decided to stabilize the remaining road and continue one-way traffic until Town Meeting, when a warrant article would address the situation.

A Petition to try to correct the deteriorated condition of the State owned portion of the County Road was received by the Select Board. We decided to send the petition, along with our own request, to State Highway to see if something could be done. State Highway responded by shimming and greatly improving the surface of this road.

A Community Development Block Grant was made available to Andrus, LLC to relocate an existing business to be located in a third of the Dunning Building in North Walpole.

We investigated possible ways of providing Public Transportation for seniors, and others, to various places in Walpole and/or Bellows Falls. The investigation is ongoing.

The Bag fee was increased by fifty cents per bag to cover an increased cost of handling trash at the Recycle/Transfer Center.

Bazin Brothers won the bid to replace the Red Listed Bridge over Great Brook on Old Keene Road. The bridge has been completed and inspected by the State, and at this time we are still waiting for the Town's eighty percent reimbursement of the cost from the State.

Long's General Contracting was hired to replace the shingles on the Pro Shop at the Hooper Golf Course at a cost of \$11,239.80. The work has been completed. Kelly Goodrich – TKG Contractors was contracted to replace the steps and walkway at the Hooper Institute at a cost of \$4,000. This work has also been completed.

Thru private funding and several grants, as well as \$50,000 from the Conservation Fund, the Ballam farm property was put under a permanent Conservation Easement. A significant addition to this arrangement was the giving of eight acres of land that surrounds the River Well was given to the Town of Walpole.

The East side of the Town Hall was painted. Due to a lower bid than the \$15,000 Warrant Article, we were able to get the windows painted, and repaired and still return \$2,000 to the General Fund.

The State of New Hampshire finally granted a bid to Whitcomb Construction to rebuild the bridge over Cold River on Route 123 that was washed out in the flood of October 2005. The bridge has been completed.

The storage building at the old town landfill caved in due to the heavy snow load last year. A new building has been contracted thru LaValley Building Supply and the cost will be covered by insurance except for the \$1,000 deductible.

In August the Board received the resignation of Rick Cooper, the long time manager of the Recycle/Transfer Center. Paul Colburn was hired to replace Rick.

The Town's Ford F-450 truck caught fire and was declared totaled. The Town Highway Superintendent, with the approval of the Select Board, negotiated a three-year lease of a new F-450 truck. The first payment of \$14,579.53 was covered by the insurance company. The next two one-year installments will be covered by a warrant Article in March at Town Meeting.

Aumand & Sons building in North Walpole was consumed by fire and it is hoped will be replaced this spring if the economy will allow.

Chamberlin Machine has negotiated with the Town to be allowed to relocate their business in Walpole at part of the old Hubbard Huntington Farm. The building is almost complete and business in planning a move on March 1. This addition to Walpole will be a significant addition to our tax dollars, as well as a nice clean business.

Benson Wood, or its sub-business has also negotiated to expand its present business abutting Chamberlin Machine, and although the economy has slowed this addition, it will be much appreciated once the economy turns around.

These are just some of the highlights to a very busy year for the great town of Walpole.

The Select Board would also like to give accolades to our tremendously devoted town employees that try hard to keep "Walpole the Beautiful".

Select Board - Sheldon S. Sawyer, Chair, Whitney R. Aldrich Jamie J. Teague