

Selectboard Report 2009

The Selectboard meetings are scheduled to be held every Thursday (except Thanksgiving) at 7:30 pm, to handle the weekly business of the town.

Some surrounding towns are looking at possible large budget cuts and/or layoffs. This year, we at the Town of Walpole, are not. The Department Heads, Board Chairpersons and Committee's built responsible budgets and on average came in level funded or lower than last years. The Selectboard issued raises for all hourly employees of the town. Some other adjustments were made on stipends. The past year has been very challenging and productive; let us share with you some of the accomplishments.

The head wall cave-in on March Hill Road near French Road was completed and reopened in September. While the equipment was in the area our Highway Department took the initiative to repair another area of concern where March Brook goes under the road just south of the first cave in.

In May during a function in the upstairs of the Town Hall, the 1st floor ceiling started to pull away from the joists and come down. The Board contacted the Local Government Center who sent an Adjuster to evaluate the situation, unfortunately the damage was not found to be caused by a covered event, just years of use. His cost estimate for repairing and bringing the building up to present code was \$80,000. The Board then contacted the Department of Revenue stating the situation was an emergency and therefore should be allowed to take monies from the fund balance. The request was granted. After much discussion on quotes, the job was awarded to contractor Blanc & Bailey who completed foreseen and unforeseen repairs and code upgrades for \$45,200.

The Tri-Village Energy Committee secured a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund of the P.U.C. Grant for the town of \$138,345, to weatherize the Town Hall and the North Walpole Precinct Building. The upstairs of the Town Hall has been completed with the removal of the windows and full insulation being installed around the sills and in the walls. The weatherization of the downstairs will begin the end of March. To date we have received \$41,504 of the grant monies. We are expecting to see a substantial savings in fuel costs due to this project.

The basement meeting room received a much needed upgrade after mold and mildew was discovered. Renovations included deep cleaning to remove the mold/mildew, painting the walls, installing mold and mildew resistant carpet and new ceiling tiles. A window was secured from the recycling center and it, along with vents, were installed to help improve airflow.

After 18 years of service, Elaine Moore, the Town Office Manager and Secretary to the Selectboard, retired in September. Elaine is continuing on as the Walpole Welfare Director. We all wish Elaine the best in her future endeavors.

The Selectboard formed a search committee to fill the open position. After interviewing many good candidates, Janet Clough of Walpole was hired as the new Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard. We would like to thank Bob Miller and Dave Edkins for volunteering to serve on the search committee.

Selectboard Report 2009 (Continued)

The rainy seasons have continued to wreak havoc on our beautiful hillsides. The continued flooding of Union Street, yearly washouts on Hillside Acres Road (4 times in 5 years) and the washout of the Mill Road Bridge will need to be addressed at the 2010 Town Meeting.

On behalf of the Selectboard, I would like to thank the Town Employees, Elected Officials and Community Volunteers who work hard making this a great place to live and raise our families.

The Selectboard would also like to recognize Dale Hubbard, Jim Neal, Frank Brown and Pat Crotty of the Walpole Youth Baseball Foundation, on their work of adding a baseball and softball field in the area of the Legion baseball field. They would also like to recognize and thank George Gage and Ted Brooks for their many decades of volunteer service for maintaining our Walpole Baseball fields as well as coaching and performing other organizational duties. Also, special thanks to Bruce Bickford and his crew for their time and work on the skating rink.

Select Board – Whitney Aldrich, Chair

Jamie J. Teague

Sheldon Sawyer

