

**TOWN OF WALPOLE  
STAFF MEETING  
JULY 18, 2019**

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

Staff Present: Sarah Downing (Manager of Administration); Chief Michael Paquette (Police Department); Sandra Smith (Town Clerk / Tax Collector); Michael Rau (Road Agent); Justine Fafara (Library Director); Helen Dalbeck (Hooper Institute Director); Stephanie Green (Recreation Department's Pool Manager)

Excused: Richard Kreissle (Manager of Finance); Ben Hoy (Recycling Center Supervisor); Justin Cassarino (Recreation Department Director)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Dalessio called this Staff Meeting to order at 5:00 PM in the Walpole Town Hall and welcomed everyone. He advised this meeting is being recorded.

**Hooper Institute:** Mr. Dalessio introduced Ms. Helen Dalbeck, the new Executive Director of the Hooper Institute. He asked the other people present to introduce themselves and state a little about their positions.

**2019 Extraordinary Women:** Mr. Dalessio announced that Mrs. Pschirrer was named one of the most influential women in the Monadnock Region. Mrs. Pschirrer was stunned but very happy. She feels very humble about this. The Annual Extraordinary Women recognition ceremony will be held on Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 6:00 pm at the Redfern Arts Center at Keene State College.

**2020 Budget Schedule:** Copies of the 2020 Budget Schedule were distributed. Mr. Dalessio advised it is time to start thinking about next year's budget!

General Guidelines:

- Rich will handle all labor related lines, along with utilities, insurance, etc.
- Start with a level funded expense budget and be prepared to defend increases.

Schedule:

- July 24<sup>th</sup> Department managers receive worksheets from Rich;
- September 3<sup>rd</sup>, department managers submit budgets to Rich;
- September 12<sup>th</sup> Selectboard received first draft of the budget from Rich;
- Shortly after they get a first look at the budget, they will schedule their first budget work session towards the end of September or early October;
- Meetings with the department managers will be held right after Thanksgiving.
- Final budget due mid-December.

Warrant Articles:

- This year all Warrant Article requests should come with the quotations.

Mr. Dalessio mentioned this process has not changed in the past six years. If you have an increase in a line item, be sure it is factual. We are running about 4% under budget right now. Hopefully, they stay on target until the end of this year. They do have some big expenses coming up. The Highway Department needs a new truck.

**Library:** Mrs. Justine Fafara advised they had two awful days due to heat on the second floor of the Town Hall. They struggled through one day but closed early the next day. They will be closed Saturday so nobody has a heat stroke. She distributed copies of information from January to June 2019. Their numbers for the first of the year are a little off because they were moving in May and June was getting

settled in. However, right now the numbers are soaring. Julie is averaging 30 children at Storytime. They applied for a grant with the Keene Kiwanis Club to help fund a program in the fall. They asked for money to cover a lap top computer and to pay somebody to help run the program. They should hear next month. The Governor and Executive Council have finally passed a vote for a new State-wide inter-library system. The timeline is ASAP. They are right on schedule with the renovations. Mrs. Fafara reported they started framing in the back this afternoon. Mr. Dalessio was able to see Wiggle Time one afternoon. All the kids were running around and enjoying a bubble machine. It looked awesome. He thought this is how it should be in a small community.

**Police Department:** Police Chief Michael Paquette referenced the Police Department’s graph for the period of June 16, 2019 through July 15, 2019. Almost everything is down a little over last month. Numbers do fluctuate each month. With officers on vacation, the vehicles are not on the roads as much, etc. Crimes Against People is up a little over last month. They are about to hit a stumbling block on investigations as Officer Bromley is retired but is still on the books until the end of the year in the event he does not move out of the area before then. He handled a lot of their smaller investigations. Once-or-twice a month, he would go to the court to handle their violations, fraud, misdemeanors, etc. They are looking into sending one officer to take the pre-requisite class. Everything has to be in order for the court. This is the end of the third year when they go in to do a review of the towns and the caseloads. We should come in a lot lower. Officer Bromley was handling a lot of cases every month. It is important they find another detective. They are looking at about 150-200 cases a year. Mrs. Pschirrer pointed out that Officer Bromley was a valuable addition to the department. Chief Paquette said they are hoping to find somebody that is retired but willing to work about 20 hours a week. Two part-time officers will start to work a few more hours. Part-time officers are hard to find. The Bellows Falls fireworks will be on Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is one of their busiest days each year. He spoke with the Marine Patrol who will have a few boats on the river. They are waiting for permits from the DOT to shut down the bridge for about four hours from 7:00 to 11:00 PM. They will pull in 8-to-10 additional officers to help with this event. He spoke to Liberty Utilities about their pole project on Wentworth Road. They will start in the next 2-to-3 weeks. It will go on for about four months. He has not heard when the Route 123 project will start. The Route 12 project might not start again until August. There are issues with the railroad and drainage. They continue to work on cases including drug activity. They like to keep the speed unit in one place for about a week to get some good stats.

Public Safety Comparison:

Emergency – 27	Administration – 60	Citizen Assists – 42
Motor Vehicle Calls:		
Accidents – 8	MV Stops – 76	Traffic Safety – 17
Criminal Investigations:		
Drug/Alcohol – 15	Crimes Against People – 49	Crimes Against Property -12
Total Monthly Calls for Service: June 16, 2019 through July 15, 2019 – 306 Calls.		

**Recreation Department:** Ms. Stephanie Green talked about the pool portion of the report. This will be followed by the balance of the written report submitted by Mr. Cassarino. Their staff is on top of things and everything is going good. They have 12 lifeguards; 3 are new. They have had a few incidents in the pool. The lifeguards were fantastic in handling everything with no complaints. Due to a maintenance issue, the pool had to be closed for about 24 hours to be safe with the chlorine/chemicals. Sometimes the little children go in over their heads and the lifeguards have to go in to get them. They are having a little problem with parent supervision. There are some rowdy middle schoolers. They have a Warning

procedure; progressive discipline. This year one person was out for a week. Mr. Dalessio said there should be a written procedure for the lifeguards. Ms. Green will take care of this. They continue to do training on Sunday nights for about an hour. The Fire Department training is coming up this Sunday. It has been very busy. She has been at the pool for seven years. The change in hours that Mr. Cassarino made has benefitted the community. The Women of Walpole have purchased 12 family passes and 1 individual pass for Walpole families. A huge thank you to them for doing this.

Following are added written notes submitted by Mr. Cassarino.

Basketball:

- Both leagues are at the halfway point;
- They have heard a lot of positive comments about their new Summer Men's League – People have already requested that they do a winter league as well. They will look into seeing if this is possible for this year.

Family Fun Nights:

- Trivia Night – Saturday, August 3, 2019;
- WSBL Championship Night – Friday, August 9, 2019  
Will have laser tag and other inflatable activity;
- Laser Show with Music – Date TBA;
- Murder Mystery (Adults) – Date TBA.

Mr. Dalessio mentioned when he drives by at night the park, it seems pretty full. Ms. Green added that the swim lessons are also going very well. They have three classes in the afternoon and break them down into three levels. Replying to a question from Mrs. Pschirrer about the Red Cross life-saving classes, Ms. Green said there was a lady from Spofford there a week before they opened the pool and offered it to one new Walpole lifeguard. We do not have anybody on our staff to do that. The diving board broke last week. Some people are upset about this but there are questions about the liability insurance. They now have an instructor for Pickle Ball. People seem excited about this. There have been parking problems. Chief Paquette will take care of that. Ms. Mayberry talked to Mr. Cassarino and suggested changing Trivia Night because the fireworks in Bellows Falls are on Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Highway Department** – Mr. Rau came into the meeting during the Recreation Department report.

**Town Clerk-Tax Collector:** Mrs. Sandra Smith provided the following report dated July 18, 2019. They have collected \$5,241,505.46 on their Spring Warrant of \$5,592,973.00 this leaves a balance of \$348,513.54. This is a very small amount.

Their 2018 Lien has a balance of \$170,793.30. The deed date will be April of 2021.

The 2017 Lien balance is \$105,012.09/ This deed date will be April of 2020.

The 2019 Current Use Change Tax balance is \$14,000.00 with one account pending payment.

For a total uncollected of \$638,318.93.

Their total collected to date is \$5,954,245.73 – they have also collected interest in the amount of \$55,137.92.

The Town Clerk department has collected \$56,257.08 since their last staff meeting.

Vehicle registration fees were \$54,136.00.

Municipal Agent fees were \$1,149.00.

They collected \$317.08 in boat registration fees.

\$155.00 in dog license fees (this includes late fees).

Three marriage licenses = the Town portion was \$21.00 and the State portion was \$129.00.

Taxes are still coming slowly. But, questions still keep coming!

They send statements if the interest is over \$5.00, requesting payment. This is State law.

Property seems to be selling with new people moving in. They tell them that they made a GREAT choice and welcome them to Walpole.

Mrs. Fafara asked if the Town has anything to welcome people like a packet with Walpole information. When they moved to Town there were so many questions such as where is the Library, the Recycling Center open, etc. When do the Boards and organizations meet? Mrs. Pschirrer thought the Selectboard could ask the Women of Walpole to possibly do something like this. Their membership has grown. There was a consensus to have Mrs. Pschirrer look into this. Mr. Dalessio mentioned that Walpole has a low balance of uncollected property taxes as compared to many other towns/cities.

**Selectboard Office:** Mrs. Downing submitted the following Staff Meeting report dated July 18, 2019.

Assessing Update:

- Deed transfers have been occurring at a high level for the last 60-day period. Although some are non-contractual transfers, there has been a higher level of property sales with transfer taxes applied.

Water and Sewer:

- Water and sewer bills will be posted on 7/31/19 for second quarter usage by Mrs. Jodi Daigle.
- 90-day notices were posted in the first week of July.

EPA Cleanup Grant:

- The Selectboard Chair and the Manager of Administration attended an EPA training workshop on June 25<sup>th</sup> regarding the submission of the grant award processing application.
- The award processing application was sent for prior review with a final version submitted on 7/10/19 to the grant's EPA Program Manager.
- Peggy Pschirrer, the Town's Project Director (TPD) for the grant, has been sourcing Request for Proposal (RFP) samples. Additionally, she is gathering members for a community partner and stakeholder committee to assist grant activities such as reviewing the RFPs for a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP).

Town Hall Facilities:

- Earlier in the month, the US flag on the Common's flagpole had to be untangled and replaced.
- The Gazebo is experiencing heavy use this summer with higher damage/wear and tear issues occurring.
- The slate portion of the Town Hall roof is undergoing repairs due to several leaks that have become active within the last 6-weeks. Work should be completed by July 19<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting.
- The south-side main entrance ramp is also undergoing repairs due to concrete decay. Eventually, a new ramp will be required for this entrance.
- The south-side door is also experiencing issues. Countryside Lock and Alarm has been contacted and should be repairing the door as soon as possible.

**Highway Department:** Mr. Michael Rau reported the Highway Department crew has been paving in this hot weather. Blackjack Crossing is finished; Wentworth Road is being worked on. He had previously submitted the following report for the period of May 16, 2019 to June 19, 2019:

- Serviced trucks and equipment;
- Cold patched;
- Crushed dumpster at the Recycling Center;
- Mowed town properties;
- Made preparations for paving;

- Roads Paved: Mountain View Road, Mill Road, Halls Crossing Road, River Road, Industrial Park Drive, Seward Road.

**Hooper Institute:** Ms. Dalbeck reported her first four days as Executive Director were good. She has been in environmental education for many years. This is a vibrant place. This week she has been meeting a lot of teams at different locations. She will continue to meet the mentors. There are two students at the Recycling Center. This is so impressive. Mr. Dalessio advised they will have their “Meet and Greet” on August 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Hooper Institute:** Mrs. Eloise Clark had submitted her July Director’s Report from the Hooper Institute. Hooper Institute summer programs offer a continuity of outdoor experiences for children in first through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Summer camps in the second half of June were well attended.

Hooper Morning Camp for children entering grades 1-4 had 48 participants. Seven teen counselors were an integral part of camp planning. They did an excellent job shepherding students through the two-week camp. Every day featured a different Hooper theme: agriculture, forestry, botany, soils and nature study. They explored the forest, field, pond and stream around the Institute. Children played games, sang songs and made crafts. Dairy day is always a highlight when the children make butter and ice cream. Each camper also made a Hooper Camp T-shirt. Many campers return as counselors because they fondly remember doing just those activities as campers.

Students entering grades 5-8 had two options. Adventure Camp had 34 students enrolled with an average of 30 students attending each day. These energetic hikes included a visit to Kingsbury Mt. and pond; a cookout, games and building forts at the Hooper Shelter; a visit to a horse farm by way of the Mill Pond Conservation area and finally, a bike-hike along River Road South to the swimming hole on Great Brook. The campers enjoyed friends, outdoor exercise and the beauties of Walpole’s natural settings.

Woodworking camp was filled to capacity for both the morning and afternoon sessions. Children of all skill levels were welcomed. They completed many projects they were very proud of including birdhouses, boxes, shelves, a wagon, a spoon, a workbench, candy dispensers, chairs, tables and stools, plus a wooden bike rack. Again, Walpole teens did an excellent job as counselors in both camps.

Twenty-two High School teens are participating in the Summer Work Program. Some served as counselors at the camps. Others will work at the following locations through the summer: the Recycling Center, Walpole Veterinary Hospital, Abnaki Springs organic produce farm, Barnett Hill Vineyard, Malnati Dairy farm, Alyson’s Orchard, Meadowaire horse farm, Hooper Golf course, Distant Hill Gardens and the school and community gardens. Each year the teens work approximately 2,000 hours in the community. Besides learning about Walpole’s agricultural economy, they are building basic job skills.

Director Eloise Clark welcomed incoming Director Helen Dalbeck on July 15. They anticipate working together through July to help make a smooth transition for the many Hooper Institute programs. Eloise will officially retire August 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Highway Department:** Ms. Mayberry heard that the Highway Department did a good job on Mountain View Road. Mr. Rau said it came out great, but they had to put in some curbing and do some other work that added to the cost. They have some drainage issues that need to be addressed.

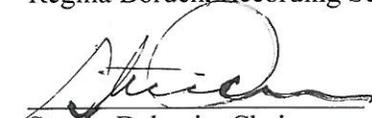
**Recycling Center:** Mr. Ben Hoy was unable to attend this meeting but submitted the following report:

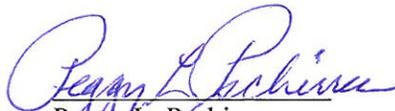
- Went to tour a compost facility; it was the Windham Solid Waste in Brattleboro;
- Hosted the Cheshire County Meeting;
- Two Hooper teenagers have joined them for the summer;
- Attended the Supervisor Academy.

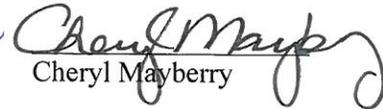
The Daily Weight report for June had been distributed.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Dalessio declared this meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

  
Steven Dalessio, Chair

  
Peggy L. Pschirrer

  
Cheryl Mayberry

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the July 25, 2019, Selectboard meeting.)