

**TOWN OF WALPOLE  
JOINT MEETING  
HOOPER TRUSTEES With HOOPER INSTITUTE BOARD  
AUGUST 7, 2019**

Hooper Trustees: Steven Dalessio (Chair); Peggy Pschirrer; Cheryl Mayberry

Hooper Institute Board: Karen Galloway, Holly Gowdy, Elaine Heleen, Emma Kebeski,  
Heather Brady, Amy Owens, Eloise Clark (Retiring Director);  
Helen Dalbeck (Director); Absent: Marcia Galloway

Hooper Employee: Rebecca Whippie (educator)

Trustees of Trust Funds: Robert Kimball and Karen Galloway (also on Hooper Institute Board)

Guests: Susan Wyckoff, Rebecca Sethi

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Dalessio called this Joint Meeting of the Hooper Trustees with the Hooper Institute Board to order at 7:00 PM in the Walpole Town Hall. This meeting is being recorded. He asked everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves as there are three newly appointed members to the Hooper Institute Board.

**Frederick H. Hooper Institute – 1916:** Mrs. Pschirrer began her presentation on the Hooper history and the Trusts; informational packets were distributed. She discovered some documents contradict themselves. Times have changed on how issues are recorded; meeting minutes are now more accurate.

George L. Hooper:

- Date of Death 1916;
- Instructed his wife that at her death, she was to leave the Meeting House Farm and cash to the Town of Walpole to form a school with a pre-college program in agriculture, botany, soils, and forestry.

Mary Davis Beal Hooper:

- Date of Death 1924;
- She appointed John Clifford as Trustee and gave him two years to determine whether Walpole could manage a school which would meet George L. Hooper's requirements.

Mr. and Mrs. Hooper were actually residents of Massachusetts. As you read his will, a lot of money was left to people in that area. Mrs. Hooper also left large sums of money to various people.

Walpole Accepts Hooper Land and Buildings:

- Walpole at the 1925 Town Meeting, accepted the Hooper land and buildings for one dollar (\$1);
- Town leases the property around the Mansion to the Hooper Golf Club in 1926.

Mrs. Pschirrer could not find anything on the discussion at this Town Meeting especially in regards to the Golf Course. She read they started playing golf in 1927. Mr. Kimball stated the golf course got their Charter in 1927. About this time, the Town also received \$85,000 in cash but it was determined it was not enough money to build the kind of school that George Hooper envisioned. In 1926 the Town formed an Accumulator Fund; it was 20% of what was left to the Trust after a year of expenditures. In 1926 there is a list of what was given to the Town in 1925.

There are approximately 123 acres of Hooper land plus a small parcel on Reservoir Road that also belongs to the Trust. The Conservation Commission is talking about timbering again. This would bring in more income for the Trust.

Hooper Institute:

- Founded in 1928;
- Institute building is designed to look like the 1787 Mansion located across the street;
- Officially opens for classes;
- Agreement signed with Walpole School which shared expenses.

Mrs. Pschirrer has figures that go up to 1954 as to what was being spent and what was being accumulated.

New Hampshire Charitable Trust Department:

- Founded in 1943;
- Oversight of municipal trusts.

Today we elect three Trustees of Trust Funds to oversee all the Town's trusts.

Fall Mountain Regional School District:

- Opened in 1966;
- Probate Court determined funds could only be spent on Walpole residents;
- Elementary School programs were developed.

The Trust is intended for only Walpole students.

Eloise Clark, Director:

- Director since 1977;
- Elementary School classes;
- Summer Camps;
- Woodworking class;
- Interruption of programs in 1994-1995;
- Community Gardens.

Nineteen seventy-seven (1977) is a significant year when Mrs. Clark becomes the Director. We can thank her for the next 42 years of what she has accomplished with other people. In 1994-1995, there was a brief interruption of programs. In 1993 the Trustees of Trust Funds asked the Probate Court to look at the Accumulator Fund that had been growing. George Hooper had intended this to grow for many years and then it would be used to build new buildings. However, it needed to be used for maintenance. Consequently, there was a hiatus and Mrs. Clark and Ms. Fritze Till were not employed. This led to the 1995 Court Decree.

1995 Court Decree:

- Revision of Accumulator Fund – split the Fund in two parts;
- Half for scholarships and half for maintenance;
- Eliminated reverted clauses;
- Court adds environmental sciences to agriculture, soils, botany, and forestry;
- Eloise returns. Town handles employees as if they were a Town department for payroll and benefits purposes.

As times change, all courts have the right to look at a Trust but try to make it as close to the original as possible. It is not unusual for Trusts to be changed. At this time if the Court did not feel the Hooper Trust was being handled properly, it could have been divided three ways (Kimball Union Academy, New Bedford for scholarship programs and to a New Bedford hospital).

Hooper Study Committee:

- Created in November of 2011;
- Charged with “solving” the Hooper problem;
- Recommended conserving Hooper Golf Club property;

- Recommended selling Hooper Golf Club;
- Recommended merging Scholarship with Education Trust;
- Recommended & formed Friends of Hooper Institute;
- Also recommended & developed bylaws for a Hooper Board rather than a committee.

Prior to 2011 it was determined the Golf Course was not bringing in enough money. That committee did not get very far because the Hooper Trustees signed a ten year lease with the Golf Course. The Office of Charitable Trust stated if the Hooper Trustees could not resolve the problems of the Golf Course, they would. In 2011, after obtaining information on golf courses being sold for development, Mrs. Pschirrer called Mr. Ryan Owens of the Monadnock Conservancy to talk about putting a Conservation Easement on the Golf Course. They raised over \$500,000 to pay for the easement and there was enough money to pay for expenses.

#### Probate Court Decision:

- In 2014, Court Decree approved Conservation Easement with Monadnock Conservancy;
- Also approved sale of Hooper Golf Club property with easement;
- Approved merger of Education Trust and Scholarship Trust;
- Approved Hooper Institute going directly to Office of Charitable Trust for capitol expenditures from Maintenance Trust.

The Probate Court also gave permission for them to go back to the Office of Charitable Trust to request using the Maintenance Trust funds without going back to Probate Court because that is expensive.

#### Progress Between 2015-2018:

- Raised \$450,000 for Conservation Easement;
- Conservation Easement closed in January of 2016;
- Probate Court allowed lower price for Hooper Mansion and Golf Course;
- Friends of Hooper Institute becomes a 501(c)(3);
- Hooper Mansion and Golf Course properties sold in July of 2018;
- Scholarship and Education Trusts merge in 2018.

Mr. Dalessio felt this was a good refresher presentation given by Mrs. Pschirrer. It was a good idea especially for newly appointed Hooper Institute Board members. Mrs. Pschirrer pointed out that the public has access to the Golf course land in the winter, when there is snow on the ground, for various activities. The easement was written in two sections: the golf course is about 50 acres and about 80 acres is woodland. The easement does not permit any building on that property.

Mr. Robert Kimball said going back to 2015, much of this came about when a Walpole resident wanted to purchase the property to develop it. That is why the committee went forward with the easement and to raise the money.

Mr. Kimball said the Accumulator Fund still sits in the Education Fund – there is no principal any more but there is \$8,682.00 in the Education Trust and \$88,899.56 in the Scholarship Fund. In the past, not much of the Scholarship Fund money was awarded. They are now starting to give more out. Part I Education Trust has a principal of \$3,636,108.64. Part II Maintenance has \$1,124,462.93. These total \$4,760,571.57. The fund generates about \$40,000/year. To date they received \$16,596 but they do not see a lot of the income until November/December. Ms. Galloway explained we are spending down.

There was discussion relative to the Scholarship Fund and the amount given out. Mrs. Wycoff reported their expenditures fluctuate year-to-year. Ms. Galloway said they have guidelines; an applicant needs to be a Walpole resident.

Mrs. Whippie clarified that we have the original Trusts and the principal cannot be touched – the two categories are separate - Education and Maintenance. Mrs. Pschirrer said at some point the Scholarship Committee was told to only spend \$10,000. In those years \$125,000 had accumulated in interest on the Scholarship Fund. Then a decision was made to spend more money. The Scholarship and Education funds were merged but they were asked to keep them as separate budget items.

Mr. Dalessio explained the Town of Walpole pays all the Institute bills and then once a month collects from the Trust. Ms. Galloway said there is also a Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$17,645.00. Mrs. Sethi asked what happens when the programs in the schools are not happening because there is no money but there is a huge principal. Mr. Dalessio replied the principal cannot be touched. Even with the sale of the golf course money, there is a need to fundraise. Investments are volatile.

Mr. Dalessio did a presentation on fundraising; informational packets were distributed.

Hooper Trust – The Need to Fund Raise:

- Although sale of Golf Course provide additional monies, it is still not enough to sustain and grow the Hooper Institute.
- Expenses continue to increase year over year (Cost of Labor);
- Pending Min. Wage legislation could drastically impact our summer intern programs.
- Pre-golf course income for both the scholarship and education trusts is being consumed.

If the minimum wage law passes it could almost double wages of summer interns. Mrs. Clark asked if there will be exemptions for agriculture. Mr. Dalessio will question our legislators about this. The Hooper Scholarship Fund has about two years before that will have to come out of the combined Trust.

Hooper Trust – Let’s Start the Fundraising Discussion:

- Walpole is a giving community – if the story is “Right”
  - Hooper Golf Course Easement
  - Library Expansion
  - Walker Road.
    - Dr. Shaw and Mr. Boas raised almost \$300,000 for Walker Road in a short period of time.
- 2020 Challenge – Fund the Summer Internship Program Without Trust;
- “Many Hands Make Light Work”
  - Businesses
  - Individuals
  - Grants
    - Mrs. Sethi mentioned it is easier to raise money for a thing rather than general operating expenses.
- Need to be Repetitive and Consistent i.e. Friends of Library – Book and Plant Sale.

Hooper Trust – Let’s Start the Fundraising Discussion:

- Continue to collaborate with the Friends of Hooper;
- Fall Festival (Pumpkins on the Common)
- Winter Festival (Utilize Hooper Golf Course)
- Afternoon Winter Speaker Series;
- Host Farmers Market;
- Business Partnerships;
- Fee Based Programs at the Institute;
- Grants;
- Private Donations.

**These are just ideas. Good or Bad.**



Mr. Dalessio pointed out if they do not start fundraising now, it will hurt a year or two down the line.

Ms. Mayberry recommended they put good proposals down on paper and then prioritize. Many times the Institute entrance has come up but never carried forward. Suggestions need to be forwarded to the Hooper Trustees for their consideration. Mrs. Sethi said it has been hard as they were in a holding pattern for the last eight-to-nine years. Strategic planning was something they did not feel could be done until they knew what was going to happen to the golf course and where they were at. Farming is shifting but they have to move along. The entrance of the building will depend on how they are going to use the building. They need a vision.

**Board Training:** At one of their meetings Mrs. Pschirrer would like them to set some time aside for her to talk about the Board duties and responsibilities. Boards have special duties: Planning, setting policies, handling personnel, public relations plus fiduciary responsibilities of handling the budget. Ms. Mayberry noted that Mrs. Clark always had opened the meetings. Mrs. Pschirrer said Ms. Dalbeck will be the advisor for this board. The Board needs to meet, elect officers and facilitate meetings with Ms. Dalbeck. The Hooper Institute Board's members are: Marsha Galloway, Karen Galloway, Holly Gowdy, Elaine Heleen, Heather Brady, Emma Kebeski and Amy Owens.


Mrs. Wycoff mentioned in the interest of communication, someone from the Hooper Scholarship Committee should be invited to attend Institute Board meetings. Mrs. Pschirrer said there is a position for somebody from the Scholarship Committee. They are looking for adults to take classes such as bee keeping, organic gardening; people might pay a fee for these. They want to engage the community more widely. Mrs. Sethi advised the Hooper Institute Board had talked about the disconnect between that Board and the Scholarship Committee. Mr. Dalessio sees the Hooper Trustees as an umbrella. They all need to come together. This is the opportunity to move forward.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Hooper Institute Board:** The next meeting of the Hooper Institute Board will be on Tuesday, September 3, 2019, at 7:00 PM at the Hooper Institute Building.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Dalessio declared this meeting adjourned at 8:30 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 next Joint Meeting of the Hooper Trustees with Hooper Institute Board.)