

**TOWN OF WALPOLE
STAFF MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2019**

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

Staff Present: Sarah Downing (Manager of Administration); Michael Rau (Road Agent);
Justine Fafara (Library Director); Justin Cassarino (Recreation Director);
Ben Hoy (Recycling Director); Helen Dalbeck (Hooper Institute Exec. Director)

Excused: Richard Kreissle (Administrator of Finance); Sandra Smith (Town Clerk/Tax
Collector); Police Chief Michael Paquette;

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.

Recycling Center: Mr. Ben Hoy distributed copies of drawings for the new proposed Reuse Center. They are proposing to build the new Reuse Center to the right of the entrance where the garage door is. Mr. Bill Hatt advised it will cost about \$50,000 to put the new addition on that side. There would be complications with the existing angled roof. If it was built away from the building, it would be cheaper to build a four-sided building on a slab. A separate building would be about \$30,000. There are options. Mr. Dalessio said they could build far enough away so there could be a breezeway between this building and the Recycling Center. Mr. Rau noted they might have to move it about ten feet away from the other building to get the snow off. Mr. Hoy advised the old salt shed came down during the strong wind storm. Therefore, he would like a shed to put salt in. For now he was going to put it in the extra trailer they have so the salt would be under cover but available to the public. The Selectboard agreed that having a new salt shed is a good idea. They recently received 150 gallons of waste oil from Green Mountain Railroad that will help keep them warm this winter. They are receiving a little more revenue from LenTex for the long paper cords. Markets are going down.

Mr. Hoy submitted and discussed the following written report dated November 21, 2019:

- They hosted Boy Scouts food drive benefitting the Fall Mountain Food Shelf. Two pickup truckloads of donated food were ushered in by the Boy Scout troop at the Recycling Center.
- Hosted Drug Take Back Day with the Police Department last month;
- Hosted Safety Committee meeting at the Recycling Center on November 14th;
- Making progress on Reuse Center plans, while completely removing old Reuse Center to free up space at their facility;
- Mr. Hoy donated recovered wire and various metals from the old Reuse Center back to the Town of Walpole. All valuable items from old Reuse Center have been carefully packed, wrapped, and stored until operations at our new Reuse Center opens.
- They are currently accepting applications for the current Recycling Center position available;
- He has instituted minor changes to recycling of cardboard. There is to be no contamination of OCC (cardboard) with mixed paper items as the market demands pure recyclable content to receive the highest prices in return.
- Waste zero has confirmed that Walpole bags should contain no more than 33 pounds of waste. More weight can cause subsequent strain on the drawstring/the bag itself. The Walpole bags are constructed with recycled materials.
- Donated over 1,000 banana boxes to Fall Mountain Food Shelf to suit their packaging needs for Thanksgiving.

Mr. Dalessio reported the Boy Scouts collected over 1,400 items of food and well over \$1,000 during their food drive. The Recycling Center was a great place to do this. It was a team effort and went well.

Highway Department: Mr. Michael Rau advised they have been getting ready for winter and making sure everything is ready to go. There have been no major problems. The catch basins were cleaned-out in the Villages. Mr. Rau had ordered 1,000 pounds of salt.

Mr. Rau submitted a written report for the period of October 17, 2019 to November 20, 2019:

- Serviced trucks and equipment;
- Cold patched;
- Crushed metal dumpster at Recycling Center;
- Roadside mowing;
- Dug out culverts;
- Cleaned catch basins;
- Prepared equipment for winter;
- Closed the fountain;
- Winterized equipment;
- Windstorm on November 1st - picked up downed trees;
- Mixed sand;
- Winter weather call out on 11/12 and 11/19;
- Put out sand piles.

Mr. Dalessio had talked with Mr. Rau about tree removal including trees in the North Walpole Village Park. Mr. Rau will follow-up with Rice Tree Service and try to get a date for removal. The trees near the front of the Library are on the list. Mr. Dalessio would like Rice Tree Service to evaluate the trees by the Town Hall and take appropriate action. Mr. Rau stated if there was an emergency Rice Tree Service would be right here as they were at the Recycling Center when the tree came down on the Reuse Center.

Library: Mrs. Fafara submitted the following report dated November 20, 2019:

Things are good but very busy. The new ILL system is going well. They had some hiccups, as to be expected with a brand new software program, but it's working well and it's taking much less staff time.

They started showing movies after school on Thursdays in October and it was very well received. They will pick it up again in January in the new Hubbard Community Room.

They are already brainstorming some new programs to host once they have the new community room. They have a new book discussion group and some craft programs lined up right now. She had a few requests to bring the cookbook group back. They will try to do that again in January.

They already received a handful of requests from outside groups to use the Hubbard Community Room in 2020. The Library Trustees made it a priority to edit and approve our meeting room policy to better reflect the new space and its functions. The next step is to find a scheduling program; it could be something free like google calendar or we may look into real software that the public could submit requests through. It would also give them better options for registering for events. The Fire Code is for 70 people; they are going to use a limit of 60 people.

She attended the New England Library Association Conference and there were some great sessions. The best session was on the 2020 census which will be all online with paper options mailed out as a last resort. Libraries will need to be a place with internet access and assistance for people who do not have the necessary computer skills. The Census starts in March 2020.

She created a staff schedule and a volunteer schedule for the move back to the library. For the next three weeks they will be closed to the public. Next week (Thanksgiving) they will be packing upstairs. They will be utilizing volunteers on Monday, December 2nd at 9am to help with the physical move back to the space. Then they will be utilizing volunteers to help them unpack and clean all the materials that have been stored in the library during construction. This part has actually started this week; a little earlier than originally planned, but is going well. They had a great group of 12 volunteers in Monday morning and they have two more groups of volunteers for Thursday and Friday.

The Library's soft opening will be December 16th. The grand opening celebration is scheduled for Saturday, January 4th from 11am-2pm. All are welcome to come get a tour of the new space and enjoy some cake and warm beverages.

Mr. Dalessio asked about the Ken Burns donation. Mrs. Fafara replied it has not yet been finished. They expect it the second week in December. They are allowing people to reserve the meeting room after hours until 9:00pm. A staff person will have to be in the building. Some book clubs meet until 9:00pm.

Hooper Institute: Ms. Helen Dalbeck submitted two written reports for the periods of 9/19-10/24/19 and from 10/25-11/21/19.

9/18-10/24/2019 Report: School Programs: Pre-K – 4th Grade focus on harvest and school gardens: 5th – Insects and Fall Migration; 6th grade Botany and Trees. The WES gardens have grown and harvested 1600 lbs of produce that went straight into the kitchens and on to the lunch menu that feeds our Walpole students. The High Tunnel is now growing spinach, lettuce and radishes for the winter.

Public Events and Outreach: Museum Day, Walpole Community Garden Potluck (9/21); tent and table at the Chickens on the Loose Event with hoola hooping, friend making and a crafty craft, insert antennae for the kids, (really for everyone). (10/12).

Looking Forward: StoryWalk with the Library on the Common -11/8; Village along the Connecticut River (Family Program) 11/9 and the Walpole Community Garden Clean-up 11/9, both at the Hooper Institute.

Save the Date: Wreathmaking at the Hooper Institute, 12/6 and 12/7; details to follow. All materials will be supplied.

10/25-11/21/2019 Report: School Programs: Becky and she have been hopping as Hooper educators. The 4th grades have been travelling to local farms. All others have been harvesting, cider making, planting seeds in the High Tunnel and cleaning/clearing the raised beds, prepping for winter. The 5th and 6th graders have given migratory bird reports and tree reports respectively and the students have honed their field identification skills. Soil studies have begun in 5th grade, composting and putting the gardens to bed plus the new "Village along the Connecticut River" Native American program for 6th grade.

Public Programs/Community Outreach: They had a StoryWalk with the library on 11/8. The new "Village along the Connecticut River" was presented at the Hooper Institute (HI) 11/9, and the Walpole Community Garden cleanup followed. She lunched with the Walpole Seniors 11/18 and shared stories, artifacts, and updates with all. They will have a table with crafts at the Farmers Market in Walpole on Nov. 23, meeting the people and spreading the good word with a special focus on the school gardens. The plan is to close the Hooper Institute building for the winter on 12/20/2019.

Their proposed 2020 schedule includes a Walpole Village tree tour in January with Distant Hill, a live owl program in April plus we are adding large festivals spring and fall, skill based programs sprinkled throughout and Earth Week during April vacation. She will use the Walpolean to post events. Mrs. Fafara will post news items on their Library web page. Mr. Dalessio would like postings to go on the Drewsville Store bulletin board. Mr. Hoy welcomes postings at the Recycling Center.

Ms. Dalbeck reported that the Hooper Institute committee is now the Hooper Institute Board. They have welcomed new officers and two new members to the board. Friends of Hooper Institute is a fundraising arm of the Hooper Institute. They are signing up new members and will continue to invite all to join the Friends of Hooper Institute. “You’ve got to have friends”!

Walpole Recreation Department: Mr. Cassarino has submitted the Walpole Recreation notes dated November 21, 2019, and review them as follows:

Basketball:

- All teams have started up this week.
- Pre-K to 2nd grade clinics will be starting after Thanksgiving;
- They have a boys and girls team for the following grade levels:
3rd/4th grade and 5th/6th grade;
- Their numbers for the clinics are:
Pre-K to K has 19 participants;
1st to 2nd grade has 34 participants; their numbers are growing.
- They have participants from Alstead and Westmoreland as well.
Their programs did not have enough participants to have a team, so they welcomed them to play with us to give the kids an opportunity to play.
- The following companies have agreed to sponsor a team:
Matt Beam Plumbing
Mike Beam Landscaping
Diamond Pizza
State Farm – Craig Vickers
Tim Latham Electric

Murder Mystery:

- They had 50 participants attend the event this past weekend.
- Heard a lot of positive remarks about the show/activity and the dinner that was catered by Spencer’s Place. It was a successful event.

RVSAH:

- Their Rec. Committee met with Jean Kobeski to discuss how their two groups could combine to do activities for the River Valley Seniors at Home (RVSAH) group.
- They really enjoyed the pickleball court, but don’t have a lot of social activities to do over the winter;
- Would love to start a walking club/group.
Trying to think of spots where they could do it during the winter where it would not be cold or icy to participate. Mrs. Pschirrer said many would like to have a bocce ball court.

Daddy & Me Dance:

- Will start planning and selling tickets for this event in December.
- Families have already been reaching out to see if this will be happening again.
February 8, 2020.

Selectboard Office: Mrs. Sarah Downing reviewed her submitted written report dated November 20, 2019.

Assessing Update:

- The Selectboard signed the 2019 fall tax warrant on the evening of 11/19/19. The warrant has been handed to Sandy Smith, the Tax Collector, for processing.
- Tax bills will be due on Monday, December 23rd.
- The 2019 Walpole tax rate is \$26.61 and the North Walpole tax rate is \$29.87.
- Opt-out requests for “list and measures” by Avitar Associates have been processed. The field representative will begin his work in mid-December.
- Letters to schedule interior viewings of properties will be sent separately.

Water and Sewer:

- Third quarter water and sewer bills are being processed by Mrs. Jodi Daigle and are due on November 30th.

Insurance/Primex:

- A reminder to Department Managers that copies of Certificates of Liability Insurances from contractors need to be sent to the Selectboard Office. No work should begin on Town property until a proof of liability coverage certificate is provided.
- Volunteers assisting various Town departments should be filling out Waiver agreement forms. Completed forms are to be kept on file at the Selectboard Office.

Town Hall Facilities:

- During Veterans’ Day Weekend of November 9-11, the gazebo on the Town Common had 21 railing spindles broken, a stair railing and sections of lattice work were damaged. Two additional spindles were broken in the following week.
- A new outside light fixture was installed on the south side of the building.
- The Town Hall kitchen stove and the elevator were repaired on Nov. 19th. Much thanks to Otis Elevator and the EE Houghton for their prompt follow-up for repair requests.
- Thank you to the Highway Dept. and in particular, Keith Hebert and Harry Clark, for cleaning up the leaves on the Common and around the Town Hall. The area looks tidy and ready for winter.
- Thank you to the Recycling Center for helping with removing items from the basement and the use of their truck to move a multitude of items that are no longer needed.
- A new locking system is to be installed in the Town Hall during December. Rich Kreissle and Brad Nash headed up this project. The Selectboard Office will be in touch with outside keyholders with more information regarding the change.

Town Clerk / Tax Collector’s Office: Mrs. Sandra Smith was unable to attend but provided the following report dated November 21, 2019.

Tax bills were mailed today! Due date is December 23rd. Merry Christmas!

They received the signed Warrant Wednesday morning November 20th.

She called Ray Boas and asked him to put a reminder in the Clarion and to put “Early Payments would be appreciated” and the due date. This does help. She also printed it on her tax bills.

People have been calling all month, thinking the tax bills were lost in the mail.

She started printing the bills Wednesday morning, then had her daughter, Terry Jo come in and help stuff and seal the envelopes. Meghan did the “window”, helped stuff the bills then she left at 2 P.M. for a doctor’s appointment.

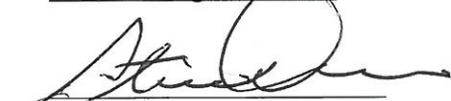
Terry Jo and she ran out of envelopes and she called Craftsmen Press and they printed a box of their tax bill envelopes with their permit number. She drove over today, picked them up—came back and stuffed the remaining bills.

Then she could not locate their postal bulk mailing form. Spent time on the Internet, could not locate the form. Called the Walpole Post Office, they tried and could not locate the form! They said if she could find the form and get the bills to them before 3 P.M. she could mail them today. Finally located her file folder it had slipped behind another folder. The post office was happy as she made them a couple of copies for their file. She mailed the bills just before 3 P.M. The Walpole Post Office is great to deal with. Very friendly and helpful.
She is exhausted – so going home to crash.

Selectboard Comments:

2020 Budget: Mr. Dalessio announced that the Selectboard will have their 2020 Budget Department reviews on December 6th. Warrant Articles should have written quotes. If department managers feel strongly about increasing a line item previously handed-in, this is when it should be brought up for discussion.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Dalessio wished everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving Day. He adjourned this Staff Meeting at 5:56 PM.



Steven Dalessio, Chair



Peggy L. Pschirfer



Cheryl Mayberry

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the November 27, 2019, Selectboard meeting.)