

**TOWN OF WALPOLE
STAFF MEETING
SEPTEMBER 23, 2021**

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

Staff Present: Sarah Downing (Manager of Administration); Richard Kreissle (Administrator of Finance); Justin Sanctuary (Police Chief); Ben Hoy (Recycling/Reuse Center Director); Helen Dalbeck (Hooper Institute Executive Director); Jane Malmberg (Library Director); Meghan Hansson (Town Clerk/Tax Collector); Regina Borden (Recording Secretary)

Staff Excused: Michael Rau (Road Agent/Highway Department); Kraig Harlow (Recreation Director);

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Mayberry called this Staff Meeting to order at 5:00 PM in the Walpole Town Hall. She thanked everyone for attending. We are all back to wearing masks again. Therefore, everyone was asked to speak loudly. This meeting was being recorded.

Police Department: Police Chief Justin Sanctuary had sent in their usual draft for the period of August 16, 2021, through September 15, 2021. They had 458 Total Calls; Criminal Investigations – 127; Public Safety – 195; Motor Vehicle – 136. Mrs. Pschirrer asked what a typical call for service example is. Chief Sanctuary explained it is any call that is for service; it is needed for police but not an emergency. Emergency calls are responded to but are “911”. Mr. Dalessio mentioned the titles do not agree. At the top of the box it states, “Calls for Service” but at the bottom it states, “Total Public Safety CFS”. Chief Sanctuary reported they are trying to utilize the radar unit more this year. They are trying to make sure the officers are in prime locations at the busy times. On Old Main Street coming toward the Village, 71% of all vehicles were traveling under 25 MPH; 4% were more than 35 MPH. They had a lot of complaints about County Road near the Surry line. It will be up there for another week. It averages 548 cars a day. Eight percent (8%) were traveling more than 45 MPH. They have issued tickets and there were several DUIs. One 80 MPH vehicle was in a 35 MPH posted area. Sixty percent (60%) of the vehicles were traveling between 25 and 35 MPH. They are currently on Prospect Hill. Mr. Dalessio noted the question is what do they do? Chief Sanctuary replied they have officers on County Road during certain hours. Mrs. Pschirrer had a comment on Old North Main Street. People were coming to a “Stop” sign, so they slowed down; put it on the other side of the road when people are going out of Town, plus there is truck traffic.

Chief Sanctuary requested that people call them if they have complaints. Ms. Mayberry mentioned having more signs showing the speed limit in Town. It is 35 MPH other than where posted differently.

Finance Office: Mr. Rich Kreissle submitted the following report dated September 23, 2021.

Budget:

The budget meeting was held on September 10 to establish a base line budget. It went well. During the remainder of the year, it will be tweaked as discussions continue and numbers are firmed up. For example, the amounts for various insurances and professional association dues for the following year usually determined at in the 4th quarter of the year.

One result of the meeting was a request by the board for him to create an encumbrance “cheat sheet” to provide written guidance as to what encumbrances are and what’s required for funds to be encumbered.

Peterborough:

As most of you have heard Peterborough suffered a cyber-attack which cost them \$2.3 million. In a series of e-mails claiming to be from the Conval School District and the contractor working on a major bridge

repair project, Finance personnel for the town gave were told that Conval had changed their bank routing number. A payment of \$1.2 million to Conval was stolen along with payments to the bridge contractor. Peterborough discovered the theft when Conval called looking for payment.

The upshot of it all:

- Peterborough failed to follow their own procedures in confirming when a vendor changes banks.
- Though they have recovered just under \$700,000, their insurance may not cover the rest.
- There are only two vendors that Walpole pays electronically because we are required to.
- Sarah and he participated in a Zoom meeting sponsored by Cheshire County to further educate ourselves about cyber-security.

Encumbering Funds

What is Encumbering:

Encumbering funds is a means by which budgeted items from the current year can be expended in the following year. When funds are encumbered, the expenditure is recognized in the current year even though the funds are disbursed in the following year. Funds are encumbered as the Town approaches the end of its budget year.

What can be Encumbered.

Encumbrances are limited to those purchases for which some type of contract (quotes, proposals, etc.) are used to initiate purchase. They are not typically used for regular expenditures found within the operating budget (wages, office supplies, utilities, etc.). The reliance upon contract gives evidence that the transaction was committed to in the current budget year but will not be completed until the following year.

How long can funds be Encumbered.

Unless an individual warrant article is treated as non-lapsing article, funds can only be encumbered for one year. Non-lapsing warrant articles can be encumbered up to five years.

What is needed to Encumber funds.

Because the encumbering of funds is restricted to larger purchases the following documents are required before those funds can be encumbered:

- A purchase order signed by both the department manager and the Selectboard
 - The purchase order must contain the following information
 - Name of vendor
 - What's being purchased
 - The estimated amount of the item being purchased
 - Any deposit requirement
 - The general ledger account against which the item is to be posted
(Finance can supply this number for you)
 - The amount by which the item cannot exceed
 - A written indication that the manager wishes to have this purchase encumbered against the current budget
- The quote or proposal signed by both the vendor and department manager
- Any purchase order/quote/proposal without a specific dollar amount will not be encumbered.

Any questions regarding the encumbering of funds should be directed to finance.

Ms. Mayberry explained the benefit of encumbering funds is so that you can still spend the dollars in the year in which they are allocated even if you can't get the project done that year. Encumbering carries funds into the next fiscal year. It allows you to use the funds that were appropriated in prior year in the following year. The deadline is December 31st. It is good to know that this will allow you to allocate those funds without including them in the next year's budget because they will not be approved until the following March after Town Meeting.

Walpole Library: Mrs. Jane Malmberg presented their September 2021 Report:

Collection Development:

They have been using Better World Books to sell/recycle books they weed from their collection. This service seems set up to work best for larger libraries who do much more weeding than they do as they have not been able to send them enough saleable titles to earn any kind of rebate check (their minimum requirement is \$50 resale value each quarter which they never meet). She has signed them up for a new program from Baker & Taylor for selling/recycling their discarded titles that will give them 15% credit for every book they resell. There is no minimum requirement, they can easily track the credit they have earned and apply it to future orders. There is no cost for shipping. So far, they have earned \$20 of credit.

Programming:

Storytimes continue outdoors weather permitting. Monday's knitting continues to have good attendance. They did not have any takers for this month's Friday adult craft program, but plan to ramp up their advertising for next month. The Thursday morning Library Book Club resumes on September 30, at 12 noon. Future plans include Coding Club for kids in grades 2-5 on Tuesdays in North Walpole and Wednesdays at the main library (starting in October), a mini-pumpkin decorating contest in October, and three author talks: Anders Morley on October 5th, Alice Fogel on October 25th, and Bill Ranauro in November (TBD). They also plan to resume their Saturday Book Club where the participants have the choice to pick from 3-4 books with a central theme. Several staff members will take turns leading this book group – they will begin in November.

North Walpole:

They continue to have anywhere from 2-6 visitors most days and have seen three families with children. They have not made plans for story time yet – they are planning to see what happens with Coding Club first. The fire extinguisher has been replaced.

ARPA Grant:

She submitted her final report for the ARPA grant they received. Feedback from patrons has been positive so far and statistics show increased circulation of Launchpads and good use of the Universal Class service. She has applied for a grant from the Association of Small and Rural Libraries seeking funding for them to purchase their own additional copies of downloadable books and audiobooks on Overdrive so that more of the new and popular books will be available without such long wait times.

Policy:

The Library has adopted a new policy for photography/filming in the library. It can be found on the library's website. Due to the increased spread of Covid in the past month, they have decided to again require masks for everyone, regardless of vaccination status, inside the library. They feel that this is the only way they can continue to offer programs and services inside safely.

Their Monthly Library Statistics – Bridge Memorial Library – Library Visits & Hours Open for August 2020 and August 2021 plus % Change were attached.

Hooper Institute: Mrs. Helen Dalbeck presented the Director's Report for September 2021.

School Programs and School Gardens: School has started. Mrs. Whippie is working four days a week in the classrooms and Mrs. Dalbeck is working three days. They are harvesting each week and delivering what they have grown to the Walpole Elementary School Kitchen, which then serves all three schools.

Harvest and gardening lessons have begun in pre-K – 4, 5th grade is all about late season pollinators and migration. The 7th grade focus is new this year is with an “Ecosystem Series”, based at the Mill Pond, their outdoor classroom.

High School Work Program: The final, final numbers are in. Their 9 students worked 914 hours between 6/21 – 8/21/21 costing \$6,855. This summer, the NH Charitable Foundation granted them \$3,000 towards this program.

Outreach and Marketing: September, October Clarion plus many, many Facebook posts, school families, Fall Festival, and garden presentation posters. Marketing distribution lists are expanding to include the conservation and farm to table community, community gardeners statewide, The Shopper listings and ads with added help from their Library, their schools, and friends at Distant Hill.

Facility and Land: A group of volunteers have done some major clean-up of the Hooper front yard and gardens, building, and shed edges. Thanks to Jackie Caserta and Sue Nadeau who led this effort and the over dozen volunteers that happily did the work. The new sign work is ongoing. They have settled on the design, size, placement, and she is waiting on an estimate.

Administration/Special Events and Programs and Friends: It’s been all about the 1st Annual FALL FESTIVAL with the help FOHI, Community Garden members, HI staff, HI board members, generous community donors, the Women of Walpole, and the Firehouse cook-out crew. She could still use some volunteers the day of the event. If you would like to be part of the fun, please call 756-4382.

Development: Ongoing, on all fronts. She is hoping 2022 will be the breakthrough year they need to support all their mission driven and exceptional programs.

Walpole Community Garden: The “Garden Tour and Seed Saving” talk was held on September 11. Next up is “Garlic Planting with Fritze Till”, October 16, 10 am.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector’s Office: Mrs. Meghan Hansson submitted the following report dated September 23, 2021.

- Tax payments continued to come in (\$34,654) – most were late payments on 2021 tax bills (-\$25,000). Also, one supplemental warrant was collected for land use change (\$8,500).
- Town Clerk collected about \$88,066, out of which Walpole receives \$67,833.
- 407 vehicles were registered since our last meeting. Only 4 more boats were registered!
- The Deputy and Mrs. Hansson attended NHCTCA Town Clerk training September 8-10 in North Conway, NH. Training covered the departments of VV, Title, Elections, and Vital Records. They also saw vendor displays and were able to network with others.
- Software modules were installed on the server to service the Motor Vehicles computers, making them faster and providing access to updated information on vehicles, which can affect the amount of money the town gets during a vehicle’s registration process.
- They are also looking at the possibility of accepting payment for taxes by credit card. The vast majority of towns in NH do accept credit card payment.
- Have created the first draft of her department budget for the upcoming year.
- They are considering changes to their office hours in the near future that will notably extend their late day hours. (At least one morning a week the office will open to the public at 7 am.)

- The back door to the office has been replaced. In the process a great deal of rot was discovered, which required replacement of siding, sill, flooring, in addition to the door jamb.

Ms. Mayberry thanked Mrs. Hansson for considering some flexible hours opening earlier one morning and staying later one night. Some residents will be very appreciative. She is also looking forward to having a mail slot for payments on the outside of the building.

Recycling/Reuse Center: Mr. Ben Hoy submitted his September Staff Meeting Report. They hosted an NRRA meeting with several solid waste operators from around the state September 8th. NH the beautiful Recycling Grant application information submitted to us for the acquisition of new storage trailer(s). Town of Walpole must provide a minimum of 50% of total cost for new recyclable commodity trailer(s) if grant is approved.

Walpole recycling plastic video is complete and had many views on you tube and NRRA website. Thanks to Eric Merklein and Tara Sadd for helping get the word out about how they recycle plastic in Walpole! They would like to post the plastic recycling video on the Town of Walpole website. Ms. Mayberry posted the video link on the North Walpole Forum. It was wonderful.

Concrete pad has been poured giving them a much easier work area to move and alternate heavy trash trailers with the bobcat.

Their daily weights are about 30,000 pounds more than the average daily weight three years ago. Right now, cardboard is worth more than steel. NRRA made lots of suggestions on options.

Selectboard Office Report: Mrs. Sarah Downing submitted a report dated August 19, 2021.

Facilities Update:

- The new water fountain with a water bottle filler was installed in the Town Hall first floor hallway on the last day of August.
- The install of the exterior back door of the Town Clerk-Tax Collector's Office is occurring.
- A large area of rotten siding with sill decay was discovered when the TC-TC office door was being installed. Emergency repairs are occurring. The back entry deck will be removed and replaced with individual stairs to reduce future moisture damage this area.
- A small utility trailer has been purchased to haul items such as fall leaves and debris. It is stored at the Recycling Center and can be used by Town departments.
- LED replacement lights were installed in the south stairway to the second floor.
- The handrails for the south entrance ramp and stairs were repainted.

Many thanks to Brad Nash for assisting or completing the above projects.

Human Resources:

On Tuesday, October 12th, the Aflac insurance representative will be meeting with employees that need assistance with claim submissions. He will also be hosting a lunch for employees interested in hearing about optional insurances including life, serious medical, gap insurance for short and long-term disability and additional vision coverage.

Planning for an Appreciation Lunch for employees and a virtual presentation by Health Trust to review health insurance coverage/programs and wellness offerings are in process. The tentative date for the Appreciation Lunch is Tuesday, Oct. 19th. The tentative date for the Health Trust hybrid presentation is Friday Nov. 12th. The presentation will be displayed on the large LED screen in the main meeting room to an in-person group.

The deadline date to complete the online Harassment Awareness Training module is December 31, 2021. Each employee will need to register on the Primex website. An instruction sheet will be sent to all employees. The Selectboard Office has an extra computer station and a headset for those that need assistance during worktime hours to complete the training. The online training takes approximately 60 minutes. Primex training certificates are to be sent to the Selectboard Office when the training module is completed.

Highway Department: Mr. Michael Rau was unable to attend but submitted the following September 2021 report:

While highway crews continue clean up and repair efforts from the end of July floods; many phone calls, meetings, and paperwork have been taking place in hope to receive federal funding for the storm damages to help offset costs. We had FEMA join us for two days to evaluate all damage in town to determine if Walpole qualifies for relief funds. Emergency permits were applied for to repair major structural damage to roads that have been temporarily fixed in or order to allow travel. This process has many layers involved to be sure that the proper steps are taken to withstand future events, but also maintain the integrity of the environment around the damaged area. This is an ongoing process that involved meeting with the Army Corp Engineer to evaluate and formulate a blueprint for proper construction.

They are hoping to wrap up the Elm Street Road construction project within the next few weeks. With limited time between now and winter, some projects that had to be delayed, as well as fall and winter preparations will need to be done prior to snow fall.

Recreation Department: Mr. Kraig Harlow was unable to attend but submitted the Update 9/23/21.

Pool:

- The pool closed on Saturday, August 28th.
- The pool house had its water heaters and meter pit replaced through a warrant article this year.
- The ADA Chair was replaced, and the cost of replacement was \$5,745.
- The pool cover was also repaired over the summer which cost \$4,167.
- Eric Franklin is replacing the pool roof which costs \$15,200, through a warrant article this year.

Soccer:

- Soccer season started on September 13th.
- The program has two PK teams, three U6 teams, three U8 teams, and two U11 teams.
- There are about 80 children signed up to play and teams are organized as co-ed teams.
- Teams were sponsored by Home Away from Home, EE Houghton Co., Craig Vickers State Farm Insurance Agency, Salon 488, Latham Electric, ServePro, WW Building, and Walpole Savings Bank.
- Practices and games will be held at Walpole Primary School and Walpole Elementary School.
- This year they provided portable toilets in with Walpole Elementary School through Allard's Portable Toilets in Charlestown.
- This year the program generated roughly \$1,200 this year.

Tennis Court:

- Wilson & Lawrence came and repaired their tennis courts for \$6,924 and was covered through encumbered funds from last year.

Community Events:

- Walpole Recreation will be showing the movie Tom and Jerry on September 24th (rain date October 1st) at Whitcomb Park and the movie Coco on October 15th (rain date October 22nd) at North Walpole Park.

Masks: Replying to a question from an employee regarding the wearing of masks during the workday, Ms. Mayberry advised that last week the Selectboard agreed that for all public meetings and events inside the Town Hall, masks are required to be worn inside the building. They agreed that at this time they would not require masks to be worn by all employees while at work but that they would encourage it especially if they are in tight quarters and cannot distance well. Masks are now required at all public meetings and gatherings within the Town Hall. They encourage everyone to wear masks as the COVID count is increasing in the County. They will let the staff know if there are any changes to the mask requirement.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Mayberry thanked everyone for attending this meeting. The next Staff Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 21, 2021, at 5:00 PM. She looks forward to seeing everyone then. She adjourned this meeting at 5:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary


Cheryl Mayberry, Chair


Steven Dalessio


Peggy L. Pschirrer

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the September 30, 2021, Selectboard meeting.)