

**TOWN OF WALPOLE  
STAFF MEETING  
FEBRUARY 17, 2022**

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

Staff Present: Sarah Downing (Manager of Administration); Richard Kreissle (Administrator of Finance); Ben Hoy (Recycling Director); Michael Rau (Road Agent/Highway Director); Helen Dalbeck (Hooper Institute Executive Director); Jane Malmberg (Library Director); Kraig Harlow (Recreation Director); Meghan Hansson (Town Clerk/Tax Collector)

Excused: Justin Sanctuary (Police Chief)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Mayberry called this Staff Meeting via Zoom to order at 5:00 PM. The Selectboard and Staff members are at various locations. This meeting was being recorded.

Ms. Mayberry advised the "E-mail Etiquette" Training scheduled for this meeting has been postponed until the next Staff Meeting on Thursday, March 17, 2022, at the request of the presenter.

**Recycling Center:** Mr. Ben Hoy presented the Walpole Recycling Staff Meeting Report for February.

- Attendance was down at the Recycling Center in these cold and stormy months. It is expected at this time of the year.
- They could use a pallet stacker to alleviate continuous shoulder strain for the baling of Mr. G's cardboard. They have 1 pallet stacker that is used for everything except cardboard. It is tied up working with the many different commodities that they bale. It can't be shared with cardboard for this reason.
- They looked at using a conveyor belt on both sides of the cardboard hopper, but the length of the conveyor belt would interrupt their system and cannot be used.
- A new pallet stacker costs between \$4,000 and \$8,000.
- Used pallet stackers are considerably less, but there is nothing available currently.
- Cardboard prices have dropped to \$150 per ton. A full truckload of cardboard was paying them over \$5,000 per load this summer at over \$200 per ton. They are currently making \$3,400 per truckload-(still not bad as far as traditional cardboard value goes).
- They have had issues with ice building up on dirt driveway at Recycling Center, creating a slippery hazard with some large frozen ruts. Their paved section has been clear throughout the winter. Mr. Rau has helped them out quite a bit.

At their last Safety Committee meeting they discussed continuous shoulder strain for the baling of cardboard; specifically throwing it over their left shoulder. They have looked at their options. They were thinking they could use a new pallet stacker at some point. They have one that is used for plastics, etc. It is a great tool and they could use one for cardboard. Mr. Dalessio felt it was only to be used from the conveyor side. Mr. Hoy said that is a consideration. The issue with that is the public uses the other side; there is a lot of congestion. He would like to find a solution so the operator is not using his shoulder so much. Mr. Dalessio would like to see a solution start tomorrow morning as it could spare a shoulder injury. Mr. Hoy feels using the conveyor belt might be the way to go. The Recycling truck is going to need some work before it gets inspected in March.

**Recreation Department:** Mr. Kraig Harlow had submitted the following report - Update 2/16/22: It has been a relatively busy winter season. The last basketball game is Saturday.

Winter Basketball:

- They had roughly 50 children signed up for basketball from grades PK-6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- The program generated about \$1,350 through registration and signups.
- They currently have a one PK team, two 1<sup>st</sup> grade teams, two 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teams, two girls 3 / 4 teams, two boys 3 / 4 teams, and one girls 5/6 team.
- Games were held on Saturday mornings at Walpole Elementary School from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. and at North Walpole School from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- Practices will be held at North Walpole School for one hour between 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
- They have Diamond Pizza, McGill Woodworking, Houghton, Paquette & Sons, ServPro and Craig Vickers insurance sponsoring teams this season.
- The season ends Saturday, February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Shed:

- Walpole Recreation purchased a shed from LaValley's and was delivered on January 5<sup>th</sup> to Whitcomb Park and was placed on the back end of the park.
- They will be painting it this spring when the weather warms up.

Hockey Rink:

- Walpole Recreation purchased an EZ Ice Rink for Westminster St. Field this winter and it has been used frequently when the weather has permitted it.
- They have also purchased a hockey goal for the rink for the public to use.

Community Events:

- Currently, they do not have any community events scheduled for the February and March.
- Jerrod Atkin from Bellows Falls will be building the recreation some benches for Whitcomb Park to earn his Eagle badge.

Pool House:

- The Walpole Recreation Department is seeking a \$75,000 Warrant Article to fix the pool house. The article will be used to paint the walls, fix the cement floor, add new toilets, sinks, showers, countertop, etc.

Recreation Committee:

- The Recreation Committee has grown by two with the addition of Marilou Blaine and Jean Kobeski.
- The committee plans on meeting in March to discuss the future of the recreation program in 2022.

Mr. Harlow reported that the Father – Daughter Dance was cancelled again due to Covid. Mrs. Pschirrer noted the Warrant Article will also be used to find the leak(s) in the pool. Mr. Harlow stated this will be the first priority in May. Mr. Dalessio received some feed-back on the skating rink. They feel it was not filled up far enough; it should be almost up to the top. They are afraid somebody's skate will go through the liner. Mrs. Pschirrer has had comments that it is not big enough, but it can be expanded. Ms. Mayberry asked about the recommendations for the water in the ice rink. Mr. Harlow said they were for 6-to-9 inches of water; right now, there is about 6-inches. He is glad people used it as much as they did.

**Administrator of Finance:** Mr. Rich Kreissle presented the Finance Office Report - February 17, 2022. February, a time to catch a breath....

- Worked with the Selectboard to finalize the 2022 budget.
- Welcomed aboard our new Treasurer, Dave Adams.

- The MS-636 has been completed and filed with the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA). The 636 represents a summary of the proposed budget and is one element in the setting of tax rates.
- The Warrant Articles have also been posted with the DRA.
- Developed a cash flow proposal for Hooper to assist in maximizing their cash moving forward.
- The 1095-B's have been processed and you should be getting them in the mail shortly. This is an informational return only. You do not have to file anything with the IRS. This informational return only reports to the government those individuals were covered by a health insurance plan throughout the year and was a result of the Affordable Care Act.
- Tidying up the final figures for 2021 with minor adjustments as they arise.

Looking forward:

- There are a couple of reports that will need to be filed with the DRA after Town Meeting.
- The budget entry will be entered into our accounting software, AccuFund.
- Collaborating with Sarah, he will be working on the COLA so new pay rates can be established.
- Some expenditures listed in the budget will need to be made immediately after Town Meeting. These primarily involve disbursements to the Trustees for capital reserve funds.

Important, Important, Important (this is important)

- For those departments that have individual Warrant Articles that get approved at Town Meeting, please get your purchase orders into the Selectboard office along with supporting documentation so the Selectboard can approve and sign them.  
**Deadline:** No later than noon on Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Once you get the signed PO you can proceed to place the order.

Mr. Kreissle mentioned when the Town Hall lost its power during the storm a few Fridays ago, the oil tanks were almost empty which was a problem. They went ahead and ordered an attachment that will notify Mr. Kreissle when the Town Hall is down to a quarter of a tank. If he does not respond within a reasonable period of time, then Mr. Brad Nash will be notified. It is a form of security, so they do not run out of oil.

Mr. Dalessio mentioned there are times when they do not know the cost for an expense. Departments get the work done and then submit the purchase order. It is better to put in a purchase order for "an amount not to exceed" so it is approved before the work starts. It refers to line items in the budget.

**Walpole Town Library:** Mrs. Malmberg had submitted the following – February 2022 Report. There is a lot going on legislatively that affects libraries. As of this writing there is a bill before the NH House, HB 1529, that if enacted, would require public libraries to conduct federal background checks on all staff and volunteers (even one-time volunteers) before they can start work. The New Hampshire Library Trustee Association and the New Hampshire Library Association are opposed to this bill as it would be costly, time-consuming, and it makes no designation between paid library staff and volunteers, which can be problematic. Librarians and Trustees are encouraged to submit testimony to the House Committee in opposition to this bill.

Last Thursday evening, she attended the Fall Mountain School District's deliberative session as there was a warrant article that would require public libraries in the Fall Mountain School District, as well as the high school library, to serve as repositories for all school curriculum materials and to make those materials available to the public. The article was amended to remove the requirement for any kind of curriculum repository and the amended article will appear on the ballot in March.

**Budget:** She attended the Public Budget Hearing via Zoom.

**Building and Grounds:**

**Signage:** She has been in touch with the Zoning Board regarding their plans to replace the outdoor sign. She has looked at the ordinance for outdoor signs, and plans to attend the Zoning Board meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> to clarify any questions regarding size, location, etc. She will also ask if they can suggest a local business to supply the sign.

**Front door:** She has estimates for the cost of a new door from both Adam Vose and Mark McGill. These have been shared with both the Selectboard and the Library Board of Trustees. Mr. Dalessio mentioned an automatic door closure. Mrs. Malmberg looked into it, but it would be expensive. She feels it best to not include it at this time.

**North Walpole:** She attended the North Walpole Commissioners meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>. She mentioned the problem with ice on the sidewalk. They offered to provide a bucket of sand for them to spread on the walk when it ices up during the day. Jason Colburn also provided her with his cell phone number and encouraged staff to call him to come and clear the walk if needed. She also received approval for Brad Nash to paint the bench outside.

**Staff:** She attended a Webinar on Best Practices in Conducting Employee Evaluations offered through the State Library via Primex.

At the request of Sarah Downing, she has updated the staff job descriptions and titles, (except for her job description, which had already been updated in 2020), to better reflect the responsibilities and expectations for each position. She has also sent copies of them to Peggy Pschirrer for reference during the Town's salary review study.

**Programming:** They are continuing with virtual/take away programming only for the month of February. She plans to resume in-person programming in March as the case numbers in NH are finally dropping after the Omicron surge. They will continue to require masks in the library for ages 2 and up.

**Monthly Library Statistics** – Bridge Memorial Library and the North Walpole Library are available in the Selectboard Office.

**Walpole Highway:** Mr. Mike Rau submitted the following report dated February 2022.

- **Winter weather callouts:** 1/25, 1/29, 1/30, 2/3, 2/4, 2/5, 2/6, and 2/8.
- **Winter** continues with icy conditions and with that, a large amount of salt has been used in recent storms. It took quite a while to clean-up after the last ice storm. Many roads had to have thick ice cleaned off with the use of the grader. Cuts in snowbanks have been made for runoff to be allowed to reach drains. They also have taken advantage of the few warmer days to fill in potholes.
- **Equipment and Truck Repairs:** They had many trucks down with multiple issues this past month causing strain during storms. They had to have several trucks towed during storms including his truck. Crews work together quickly when this happens to clean up routes not covered by these trucks. Their sidewalk machine has also had several breakdowns this winter causing delay in cleaning sidewalks in both Walpole and North Walpole. There are problems with new and old equipment. He spoke about the Warrant Article for the new sidewalk snow-blower; this single piece of equipment will do more than one job when it is used. Anticipated life is 20-to-30 years. They are hoping for an early spring.

Mr. Kreissle asked about the salt supply. Mr. Rau replied that he had been using the salt supply a lot. They had some old stuff in the back (about 3 years old) it was like running into a concrete wall. It took them hours to break it up. He used more salt and more fuel in the last month than he did all last winter. He probably still has 300 tons. He is holding off on purchasing more because right now it is \$20/ton more. They will buy it if they need it. In North Walpole, they do more sidewalk footage. Ms. Mayberry asked what sidewalks are done in North Walpole. Mr. Rau said Main Street down from Route 12 to the Box Shop, Roger Street to Up-Down Street, and Russell Street.

**Hooper Institute:** Mrs. Helen Dalbeck presented the following Director’s Report - February 17, 2022. School Programs and School Gardens: January-February is all about winter wildlife, adaptations for survival, tracking in all grades plus winter botany in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and the beginning of maple sugaring in the primary grades.

Outreach and Marketing: January and February Clarion submissions plus many Facebook posts; monthly school newsletter, posters for February events. The February CLARION had some great Hooper Institute coverage which is very encouraging. She will be attending the Town Meeting, March 12.

Facility and Land: The new sign was installed, and it looks great. She checks on the buildings twice a week and plans to reopen by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Administration: They are looking for new board members and have one good candidate in the wings. The 2021 Town Report submission is in. She meets with Becky Whippie weekly, board meetings and development committee meetings monthly.

Special Events, Programs, and Friends: The Winter Fun Day February 12 happened and was well attended. Sled making, meeting George Levi Hooper and refreshments took place at the Hooper Institute. All sledding was at the golf course. The weather cooperated. Everyone had a great time, and some stayed to see the sunset. It was attended by about 200+ people. It was a great kick-off event for the George Levi Hooper Birthday Fund and Year of the Hooper fundraising for their core education and scholarship programs.

Thank you, Bill Perron, for his storytelling, the Walpole Parent and Teacher Group for co-hosting with coffee and popcorn making, the Highway Dept. street cones and driveway prep, the Recycling Center’s donations of materials, Mrs. Downing for getting the insurance and to all of their wonderful volunteers and staff that showed up and donated to a great cause.

Development/Fundraising: This is “The Year of the Hooper Institute”. February 12<sup>th</sup> was the roll out for a town wide and beyond fundraising campaign. A birthday celebration for George Levi Hooper at the Hooper Institute will be on May 14, 2022, and the birthday campaign itself will be wrapped up in June. They will continue to raise funds beyond the birthday bash with a Fall Annual Appeal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fall Festival, Giving Tuesday and end of year push for donations. Their goal is to raise substantial funds to help secure the future of the Hooper Institute’s education and scholarship programs.

### **The Year of the Hooper Institute: 2022 Calendar**

February – Winter Fun Day 2/12/22 plus kick off of GH Hooper Birthday Fundraising Campaign.  
April – Earth Day Celebration at the Hooper 4/23/22; Opening Day Walpole Community Garden;  
May – George Hooper Birthday Party 5/14/21;

June – Birthday campaign will wrap up June 4 (16-week campaign); Old Home Days Hooper Institute Alumni Display; 6<sup>th</sup> grade River Trip; 2 weeks Hooper Day Camp and 2 weeks Adventure Camp;  
July – High Summer School Work Program; 1 week Woodworking Camp; 6 weeks Flower Bouquet CSA begins; Presentation Night for HS Work Program and Hooper Scholarship Recipients.  
August – High School Work Program, Flower CSA;  
September – Flower CSA ends; Fall Festival kids off Annual Giving Appeal fundraising efforts;  
October – Garlic Saturday; Walpole Community Garden Closing Day;  
November – Thanksgiving Farmers Market; GIVING TUESDAY;  
December – Wreath-making Workshops, End of Year Appeal.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office:** Mrs. Meghan Hansson presented the following February 17, 2022, Report:

- Since last month (Jan 19<sup>th</sup>), the Town Clerk collected over \$94,000 dollars, \$71,766 of which belongs to the Town.
- Since last month, they have done 89 vehicle renewals online. Attached is a monthly plot of registrations per month for the last two years. They are only halfway through February; so, the February number (see green line) will continue to rise, most likely to a level above both previous years (as January).
- Renovation is essentially complete.
- Candidates have filed for the upcoming March election. Ballots have been ordered and arrived Monday of this week.
- Data was collected on the survey question asked on tax bills to all property owners as to whether they would like the option of paying taxes with a credit card. Many bill stubs did not come back due to escrow company payments, etc. and many bill stubs returned were unmarked. However, of the marked survey questions, there was some distinct interest in credit card payment possibility. A memo with details to be sent to the Selectboard.

**Selectboard Office:** Mrs. Sarah Downing submitted the following Report dated February 17, 2022.

Trainings during Staff Meetings: The “Email Etiquette” training will occur at their next Staff Meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup>. This live, online training will be conducted by Zoom. An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) trainer will be the presenter. The Town’s EAP is offered through HealthTrust.

A Training on the topic of “Listening” will be held at a future date and will be presented by Peggy Pschirrer. They hope this training will be in-person.

Assessing:

Abatement, Veterans, Tax Credit, Elderly Tax Credit and Solar System Exemption and Current Use application forms are being accepted. The deadline to file a property tax abatement is March 1<sup>st</sup>. There is now less than two weeks available for property owners to submit this form.

All other forms have a deadline of April 15<sup>th</sup>. Forms are available on the Town website or by the tax map in the Town Hall.

Thank You: Mrs. Downing, Mr. Kreissle and Mr. Nash thanked the Highway Department and E.E. Houghton as they brought up fuel to heat the Town Hall during the ice storm. That happened after the electricity came back on. That is when Mr. Brad Nash noticed they were just about out of oil.

Town Meeting:

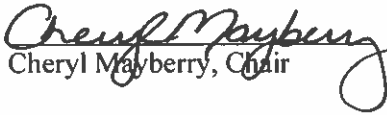
Scheduled for Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup> starting at 1 PM. Department managers are expected to attend. The meeting location will be the Walpole Elementary School Gym to allow for social distancing. As with meetings held in the Town Hall, masks are required.

**Walpole Police Department:** Chief Justin Sanctuary was unable to attend this meeting. They did submit Police Stats from January 16, 2022, through February 15, 2022. Total calls were 303. This is broken down as follows: Criminal Investigations – 74; Public Safety – 148; Motor Vehicle – 81.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Ms. Mayberry adjourned this Staff Meeting at 5:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

  
Cheryl Mayberry, Chair

  
Steven Dalessio

  
Peggy J. Pschirrer

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the February 24, 2022, Selectboard meeting.)