

Town of Warner

NEWS FROM THE TOWN

Fall 2009

Selectmen's Office
(603)456-2298 ext. 2
selectboard@warner.nh.us

Monday - Wednesday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
www.warner.nh.us

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Administrator's Page

Fall Foliage Festival has come and gone and eventually we'll have to face the fact that winter is around the corner. Fortunately for Warner, winter and the holiday season brings the annual Festival of Trees. Many hours of work by dedicated members of the WBA goes into this event so you won't want to miss it!

By now you should have already received your tax bills and noticed that the tax rate has dropped by \$.12/ thousand dollars of valuation on your property. This reduction was mostly due to stimulus money received by the School which appears to be a one-time reduction but you can get more information on the revenue received by the School by calling the SAU office. The Board of Selectmen and I have been working with Department Heads and Budget Committee on the 2010 budget. The operating budget that has been presented to the Budget Committee is reflecting a decrease of under 1.15% the 2009 budget. The Selectmen are also currently working on the Capital Budget which funds items reflected in our Capital Improvements Plan.

Along with the Budget, the Selectmen have been working on various zoning violations in Town with other known violations still to be dealt with. It's important that everyone takes Warner's Zoning Ordinance seriously and makes sure there are no violations on their property. Fighting some of the serious violations can be a lengthy and costly ordeal. The first step that is taken for any violation is sending a letter which outlines the violation and requesting that the property owner rectify the situation. For the majority of the issues, a letter is all it takes since most times the property owner isn't even aware they are in violation of zoning. Still, there are a few cases which are not as simple.

The Selectmen continue to participate in Joint Selectmen's Meetings with Selectmen from other towns who are part of the Kearsarge School District. The goal of these meetings is to share information which is mutually important and to discuss issues which may be resolved by working together with other communities.

Remember if you would like to attend any meetings but are not sure when they are held, you can check our online calendar by visiting our website which is listed on this page. You can also follow us on Twitter (Warnernh03278) and receive various updates or emergency information when applicable.

2009/2010 Budget Committee Meeting Schedule

November 12, 2009	Budget Review Precinct Budget Review
December 10, 2009	Open Meeting Work Session
January 14, 2010	Budgets Finalized
February 4, 2010	Review Petition Articles Public Hearing Town & Precinct
February 9, 2010	Snow Date
February 11, 2010	Final Vote on all Warrant Articles
February 16, 2010	Snow Date

Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.
Located at the Town Hall
(5 East Main Street)

Public is welcome and encouraged to attend

*****Notice*****

Winter Parking Ban is in effect. There is no parking allowed on streets from November 1 up to April 30th between the hours of 12 Midnight until 6:00 a.m.

From the Planning Board

Leading the list of items currently being discussed at Planning Board Meetings are those requiring compliance with state laws. They include: Workforce Housing Laws; Zoning Hardship definition change; and Town Building Code Ordinance. We are also considering five other land use items to be included on the town ballot in March 2010.

Work on updating the Master Plan continues with meetings conducted each month on the numerous subjects and areas that will be included in the plan. Professional staff members from the Central NH Regional Planning Commission are under contract to assist us with this project and their expertise plays a major role in getting the job done. We are currently in Phase Two of Three, with an expected completion time of 3rd or 4th quarter of 2010.

Application activity this year has been moderately slow with only a few requests for property subdivisions and lot line adjustments coming to the board for action, although we always seem to fill the agenda for the entire three hours of every meeting.

Jean Lightfoot, the secretary for the Planning and Zoning Boards has submitted her resignation to become effective later this year. She handled the duties of the office professionally and expertly during the past two-plus years and numerous folks have commented to us that she was very helpful with any interaction they had with our boards. Jean, who lives in Contoocook, is retired and is looking forward to spending all of her time practicing that vocation. We all wish her well and from those who worked closely with her, she will be missed a lot.

From the Tax Collector

The second tax bill for 2009 was mailed by the end of October 30th. If you have not received one and expect one, or if you have any questions, please call 456-2298 ext. 4.

Warner Tax Collector Office Hours

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday November 17 & 24
Wednesday November 18 & 25
Thursday November 12 & 19

4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday November 17 & 24

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Saturday November 28

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Monday November 30
Tuesday December 1

If you wish to mail a tax payment you may do so at:
Tax Collector
P.O. Box 264
Warner, NH 03278

Revaluation Update

Cross Country Appraisal has finished the first step in the revaluation process. They have visited all the properties in Town and have at least measured the outside of all buildings. They have also viewed the interiors of many of the homes. The next step is for them to data enter all the information, then both a supervisor from Cross Country and a monitor from the Department of Revenue will be confirming the information on the assessment card by spot check visits to some homes. After that, Cross Country Appraisal will do a sales analysis of all properties sold in Warner over the last 2 years. In March or April all property owners will receive a letter stating the new value of their property with a phone number to call to set up an appointment for an informal review of the assessment card. **YOU SHOULD MAKE THE APPOINTMENT TO MAKE SURE THE INFORMATION ON THE CARD IS CORRECT.** This is also the time that you can state your reasons for disagreeing with the new value. Cross Country Appraisal will also have people available to do interior inspections if you did not call to set one up in August.

From the Fire Department

The Fire Department is in the process of looking at locations to build a new Fire Station. If you have visited the station on one of our Sunday open houses, you know we are VERY limited for space. The Town owns seven trucks but the current station can only accommodate six and we are forced to store one at the old station and switch it out according to the season. The current station was built in 1962 and no longer meets National Fire Protection Agency standards and parking still remains a desperate issue. It gets a little crazy finding a place to park as we respond to our 400 calls per year.

While looking for a location for the new station, we realized that the ideal place would be in the downtown area but unfortunately, space in Town is scarce. One parcel that has become available is the Olmstead property on East Main St. and that property is currently being researched to see if it would be feasible to house a station. Chief Brown and the Selectmen have met on a couple of occasions to discuss various aspects of the property and the Town was given permission by the owners to conduct a feasibility study. Although the process is not finished, information is being gathered from DES, as well as a surveyor who has been hired to survey the property and who is familiar with environmental issues. Preliminary work shows that there is enough usable land to place a new station on but more information is in the works. The location of the property would not hamper response times and would clear up the parking issue. Obviously if this site were used, the gravel banks along Main St. would be removed and more than likely used as fill on the site where needed for leveling and thus giving an extensive line of site.

Although other locations have been suggested, careful consideration must be made about moving the station to a more remote location and whether it would hamper response times. Currently and according to our dispatch agreement, we have 4 minutes to get to the station and roll the trucks. One suggestion was to move our new station to Town owned land where the Highway Dept is. Although this has been discussed on the Fire Department level, the opinion is that it would not be the best area since we would have to travel through the Exit 9 area in order to get to the station, and then again with the emergency vehicles. It is estimated that it would add 10 minutes to response times and a study performed by the department a couple of years ago, indicated that the large majority of calls are either in Town or east of downtown. Since a fire doubles in size every minute, ten minutes is a crucial amount of time not to mention if there was a call for a heart attack or difficulty breathing.

As the NFPA standard change, we will need to plan for a full time Fire Department somewhere in the future. This will include male and female accommodations as well as handicap facilities. We have visited other Towns that have constructed new stations to get ideas and input on what they did and what they would do differently. This has been very helpful. The Department, thanks to Ed Mical, has applied to the Federal Government for a grant to build a new station and we should hear more on this by year's end.

From Pillsbury Free Library

National Gaming at the Library Day is on Saturday, Nov. 14. Stop in between 10 AM and 1 PM to play games with your family and friends, or come make new friends! If you want to set up an X-Box, Wii, or Nintendo game to share, please contact Nancy at 456-2289 ASAP. If you'd like to volunteer to help with other teen or "tween" activities during the school year, please contact the library.

LOW VISION? We are testing a new magnifier device this fall that plugs into a TV: come see it and/or borrow it!

Thinking of taking the G.E.D.? There will be a FREE Pretest in November at the Library, conducted by Susan Bubp of Second Start Adult Learner Services. Pre-registration is required: call 456-2289. We can also set you up with a free tutor to help you study.

Need help learning to use a computer or get a free email address? Call to make an appointment for free help at the library.

Museum Pass highlights:

Now showing at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston: "The Secrets of Tomb 10A: Egypt 2000 BC" 10:30 am, to closing, Monday to Friday. Museum admission with Library pass: \$5 (Normal adult museum admission is

\$20). Currier Museum of Art in Manchester to January 3: Brett Weston: Out of the Shadow (Photography) Evolution of a Shared Vision: The David & Barbara Stahl Collection (Prints and drawings). At the Museum of NH History in Concord: America's Kitchens and Abraham Lincoln and New Hampshire

Many thanks to all who helped, contributed, or bought items at the WFFF book and Bake Sale. Funds raised benefit the WFFF and the Library.

Programs for November/December:

After school crafts (Gr. 1-5) Wednesday, November 18 and December 16 at 3 PM. Call to sign up your child. Story time for Ages 1 - 4 is every Thursday at 10:30 AM.

From Parks & Recreation

Warner Parks & Recreation has been sponsoring Traditional New England Dances at the Warner Town Hall on 3rd Friday nights. These community dances are similar to old time social dances. Musicians from around the state come to Warner. There is no experience needed - everyone can dance and the dances are taught at each dance. Local young musicians often "sit in" and play with the experienced musicians.

Warner Parks and Recreation has collaborated with the following Warner community groups to provide volunteers and refreshments for each dance: Warner Business Association Retailer's Group, Warner Connects, United Church of Warner, MainStreet Warner Inc., Warner Historical Society and Pillsbury Free Library Friends and Trustees. Musicians such as the award winning duo: Two Fiddles - Dudley and Jacqueline Laufman of Canterbury, as well as The Bradford Bog People, The Parrott - Dorsey Pickup Band and The Sylvia Miskoe Band have performed.

The November dance will be Friday, November 20 with music by The Bradford Bog People and Lausanne Allen from Vermont calling. Dances are from 7:30 - 10pm. In January the dance moves to the 4th Saturday night. The first dance of 2010 is Sat. Jan. 23 at the Town Hall. The fee goes to pay for the musicians who travel to Warner from around the state. \$7- Adults, \$5 - Students and Seniors; Families are \$20. Come out some evening for some local live music and try these traditional dances! It is great exercise and lots of fun - the music gets your feet stomping!

Safe Routes to School

Simonds Elementary School is committed to providing a safe and efficient environment for kids and parents alike to make their way to and from school. There has been considerable work undertaken to date by the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) committee. This group is made up of school employees, town officials, parents, Warner selectmen and members of the police force. The SRTS Committee works closely with staff from the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission to develop a comprehensive travel plan which will identify safe routes to school for Simonds' students.

A successful SRTS program includes the Five Es: Evaluation, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Engineering.

Money that has been awarded will go to pedestrian and bicycle safety. Crosswalks, signage, sidewalks, and bicycle paths are all a part of this plan. Plans are underway for a Bike Rodeo this spring, complete with free helmets for all participants.

If you would like to know more about this on-going project, please contact the school @ 456-2241.

From the Transfer Station

The Board of Selectmen recently voted in favor of permanent Sunday operation hours. For your convenience the operation hours are:

Sunday's 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday's 12 noon - 4:00 p.m.
Thursday's 12:00 noon - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday's 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

From the Conservation Commission

Bound Tree Forest Conserved! After almost eight years of effort, the Town of Warner's Conservation Commission and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests are pleased to announce that the 374-acre Bound Tree Forest in the Mink Hills of Warner has been preserved with a conservation easement. We would like to thank the residents for their generous support of the project.

Please join us on the Bound Tree Forest for a snowshoe winter mammal tracking hike, on Saturday, February 13th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (snow date: Sunday, February 14th). A naturalist from the NH Forest Society will take the group on a mid-winter snowshoe adventure through the property. He will teach us about mid-winter wildlife ecology and how to recognize the tracks of foxes, coyotes, bobcats, fishers, weasels, mink, otter, squirrels and skunks that begin breeding as the days grow longer even as snow continues to fall. Meet in front of Warner Town Hall by 9:30 am for carpooling to parking site. BYO lunch, cocoa and snowshoes.

The Commission is also working with Bob Bower and Jennifer Ohler to explore a possible conservation easement on the 482-acre Kearsarge Gore Farm on the slopes of Mount Kearsarge. Additionally, the Commission continues to work on the conservation plan by holding meetings with representatives of the Trail Snails, Fish & Game Club and Recreation Committee to get their input.