

Town of Warner, New Hampshire

NEWS FROM THE TOWN

Fall 2018

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

Jim Bingham
Town Administrator
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From the Town Administrator

In 2017, after soliciting bids from qualified firms, the Board of Selectmen hired Thornton & Associates of Scarborough, Maine to conduct a compensation study of all town positions. Thornton & Associates brought over 40 years of Human Resource experience in firms ranging from manufacturing and high tech to hospitals and state government and ten years of wage analysis and consulting work for municipalities, county government, private companies and health care networks in Maine and New Hampshire.

Thornton & Associates were to address the following goals of the Select Board in this study:

1. Evaluate the job description of each town position to reflect what the employee is actually doing, and assess each position in terms of the level of required education, skills, responsibility, accountability, supervision, internal and external relations, and several other key factors. Each position was analyzed using a point based system to assign an overall value to each position. This allowed for an objective classification of each position based on the value of the work being done.
2. Compare the town's present compensation package, which also includes benefits such as accrued time off, health insurance plans, and work/family balance for each position to what other towns in the market region offer to their employees in that position. The municipalities to be included in the comparison were selected by the Select Board with input from the consultant.

In order to be sure that the market comparison study was comparing apples to apples, Thornton & Associates contacted the other towns in the market comparison for assistance in comparing the actual duties of their respective positions to those of Warner and not relying on job titles alone. As with many small towns, the individual in a position may do other tasks not generally expected for that position. For example, Warner's Selectmen's Secretary processes all the town's building permit applications and welfare applications and is the de-facto

purchasing agent for much of the town's office and building supplies in addition to her secretarial duties.

3. Based on this assessment work, the consultant would make recommendations to Warner's present employee compensation plan based on the results of the study. These recommendations would address the Total Compensation Plan provided by the Town.

Over the last eight months the Selectmen have held frequent work sessions and had vigorous discussions as they reviewed these results and recommendations with the objective of how best to revise employee compensation to maintain Warner's reputation as a good place to work with competitive compensation. The Board has made some preliminary decisions concerning the adoption of several of the consultant's recommendations, but more work on an implementation plan is required.

As anyone who manages or owns a business knows. Staying competitive in the workforce market with respect to compensation is crucial to hiring and holding onto reliable experienced workers, especially in such a competitive market as we face now with a State unemployment rate of less than 3%.

The full compensation study is available at the Selectman's Office.

Supervisors of the Checklist

The Supervisors of the Checklist will be meeting on **Tuesday, October 23rd from 7:00pm til 7:30pm** in our upstairs office of the Town Hall to allow you to register to vote or to make corrections to the Checklist. Corrections can include changes to your name, address or party changes. We will stay longer if there is a need. The Town Clerk can also help you with voter registration.

Election Day will be Tuesday, November 6th from 7am til 7pm. Please come out and vote!

From Parks & Recreation Commission.

Warner Parks and Recreation Commission works hard year round to provide the community a safe place to play and exercise. We believe that enriching lives through quality parks and programs can increase community pride. We listen to the needs of the community we serve and provide the resources to obtain them.

All our parks in Warner are in constant use and continue to grow. The dedicated volunteer Parks and Recreation staff take pride in the facilities and are delighted by the level of use by residents. We greatly appreciate all the volunteers through the local adult recreation and youth sports community for all the time and help they provide. We are proud to continue to host the following: WYSA Baseball, WYSA Softball, Co-Ed Adult Softball, Kearsarge Rugby, Old School PE, Football, Cheerleading, WYSA Soccer programs, Ice Skating and general use.

Parks and Recreation has been a part of the Adopt a Highway program since 2015. We are in charge of a section on Route 103 in Warner, from Exit 7 to Farrell Loop. We thank all the volunteers that have helped keep this up. Thank you to all the families, workers and volunteers that take the time to lend a hand and support us.

If you would like to volunteer to become a Parks & Recreation Commission member, you can contact the Selectman's office at 456-2298 ext. 1 or by email: selectboard@warner.nh.us.

From Emergency Management

Good News - EMPG Grant was approved for equipment at the new Emergency Operations Center located at the new Fire Station. The Governor and Council approved an EMPG Grant in the amount of **\$85,773.00** for equipment and furnishing to outfit the EOC spaces within the new Fire Station. We will be moving the standby generator and FM radio to the new station. Two new antennas will be installed for the FM radio along with internet, TV and communication wiring. New furniture will be purchased to outfit the EOC spaces as well.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update: Back in 2003, Warner created a Hazardous Mitigation Plan for the Town. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires communities to update their plans every five years. The last update was approved in March of 2014. Under a FEMA Grant, the Central Regional Planning Commission will work with our Hazardous Mitigation Committee to update the Plan following FEMA's new guidelines. Public participation is encouraged. Planning meetings will be posted on the Town's website and at the Town Hall, Transfer Station, and Post Office. You can contact Ed Mical, Emergency Management Director for more information. Remember, without an approved plan, the Town is not eligible to apply for Hazard Mitigation or other Grants that become available.

Do you or someone you know need special assistance during an emergency or disaster? Available on the Town's web site is a Functional Needs Assessment form to complete. Once the form

is filed out, you can mail it to the Town at P.O. Box 265- **Mark for Emergency Management** or drop it at the Selectmen's office. **All information received will be confidential.** Additionally, the Library has offered to assist anyone in completing this form. Are you aware of what to do when a disaster strikes? Do you have a family emergency plan? Do you have 72 hours of food, water, and medicine available in the event of a disaster? For more information, please go to ReadyNH.gov; or contact me, Ed Mical, Emergency Management Director, at 748-0560 for more information. This site continues to be updated with information on emergency planning for families as well as businesses.

Fire Station Construction: Project Update

By Kimberley Edelmann

At the recent Primary Elections held at the Town Hall, I heard a rumor that, while causing me to have a good laugh, proved to me once again that sometimes when people don't have facts, they create and spread their own. So, let me shed some light on what's going on with the fire station construction project.

First, nope, the fire station project is not a million dollars over budget! In fact, construction of the new facility is going well and is fully within the budget presented and approved in March.

A few citizens have asked specifically about the Owner's Contingency portion of the construction budget. We began with \$67,190; a frugal amount for a project of this scope. We've dipped into our contingency due to unanticipated aspects of the project, but also due to decisions made during construction. The site had more good loam and rocks than expected, which unfortunately, was not suitable for construction purposes. While it cost nearly \$39,200 to have 1870 yards of material hauled away, the good news is that our Department of Public Works retained it for future use at the site and other projects in town. After careful reconsideration, we decided to bury the propane tanks instead of having them above ground outside of the kitchen and training room; that cost \$3300. Working with the Water Precinct, we spent \$4200 reconfiguring and upgrading the water service to the site. We decided to bring back an air separator which had been bumped out during earlier budget reduction exercises; that cost \$890.

So, in terms of change orders, we have spent about \$47,590. However, we also decided to delete a couple door operators from the project, thus freeing up \$9250. So, at this point, we have about \$28,850 left.

But wait! There's more good news on the financial front! A few weeks ago, Governor Sununu and the Executive Council approved our Homeland Security & Emergency Management community grant request for Emergency Operations Center equipment. The \$85,773 grant is fully matched by the construction costs. Emergency Management Director Ed Mical put in long hours to get this grant pulled together, submitted, and approved. Great work, Ed!

Overall, construction itself is going well. Driving past the site, residents may have noticed that the exterior walls and the roofs are in place. Inside the administration side of the facility, interior walls are also going up quickly and the windows are installed. As I write this, on the apparatus side of the building, radiant floor heating tubing is now in place. Concrete will be placed over that. There is a lot of work that still needs to be done. Construction work we can expect to observe from the outside of the facility includes building siding, driveway paving, ground work and lighting. Inside, the utilities and mechanical systems will be finished and tested. Insulation will be put in place in the attic. Ceilings and walls will be finished. Floor tiles and carpet will be laid. Doors will be hung.

In terms of the schedule, we anticipate seeing our "Certificate of Occupancy" sometime in late December or early January. A final cleanup will take place after that. Warner Fire & Rescue will then be able to move into their new facility. And believe me, they're truly looking forward to doing so!

If you're a Facebook user, search for "Warner NH New Fire Station" and you'll find our page which provides frequent updates and lots of photos.

Warner's Fire & Rescue Department and our Emergency Management Department thank the citizens of Warner for supporting this project.

From the Transfer Station

Warner Recycles! Still

Recent press coverage of the current challenges facing the recycling industry have caused some to question the viability of our efforts. These stories, all well reported, should be scrutinized not for accuracy but applicability. While all communities release their recyclables into a common market how that material is collected and processed can vary greatly from town to town. These differences can be a strong determinant in the continued feasibility of a program.

Warner utilizes source separation at a single collection point; that is you the citizen/consumer bring your recyclables to the transfer station and segregate them into the various commodity types of fiber, plastic, glass, metal, etc. Many communities, especially larger ones, have commingled curbside collection; that being everything into one bin set out at the end of your driveway. This material is then taken to a recovery facility where it is segregated, often by mechanical means, into the various commodity types. While not without merit this approach does require a substantial infrastructure of collection vehicles and sorting apparatus creating the undesirable burden of high overhead in less than stellar market conditions. This could mean that some towns would now pay more to recycle an item than to dispose of it in a landfill or incinerator. Currently Warner is not one of these towns. Our low tech source separation and collection methods have given us greater resilience to weather a depressed market.

As always it should be remembered that markets are dynamic and though the prospect of paying to recycle items that once produced revenue may be unappealing this should be held in context of projections that show disposal costs doubling and perhaps tripling in the next five to ten years.

Shared Services Initiative

Over the past 14 months, as our busy schedules allow, the town administrators of Warner, Bradford and Sutton have been meeting to discuss and explore opportunities where the three towns can reduce costs and improve efficiencies in services through partnering in purchasing supplies, leasing equipment and technical services and where solutions to our mutual needs and challenges for expertise in various areas such as code enforcement can be most cost effectively met by sharing the cost of these expert services.

The first area where all three towns partnered was in pooling their purchasing power for fuel oil for the heating season. By combining the amount of #2 heating oil that each town needed for the heating season, we were able to receive a better price per gallon due to the increase volume that the vendors were bidding on.

Another example of sharing services to reduce costs occurred this past summer when the Town of Sutton joined Warner in The Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day held at the Warner Transfer Station. The Sutton Board of Selectmen agreed to contribute to Warner's cost of hiring the environmental engineering firm that conducts the hazardous waste collection and Warner would permit Sutton residents to bring their household hazardous waste to the transfer station. Thanks to the coordinating efforts of Tim Allen, our Director of Public Works and Varick Proper, Transfer Station Foreman, the collection day went off flawlessly with a higher turnout of participating residents than in previous years. Warner's cost for this service was subsidized by Sutton's contribution and Sutton Board of Selectmen were pleased to offer this needed service to their residents at a cost much lower than if Sutton ran their own collection day.

The administrators of the three towns are continuing to meet and have been inviting the public works and transfer station managers from each town to these meetings to participate in the discussions as they consider other areas where the costs of services can be reduced through coordination and sharing among neighboring towns.

*****Employment Opportunity*****

The Town of Warner is looking for a Buildings & Grounds Maintenance Supervisor Operator. The position is full-time, more information can be viewed on the towns website, warner.nh.us>government>job openings.

WARNER SESTERCENTENNIAL

On September 3, 1774 Governor John Wentworth renamed our town from New Almsbury to Warner. There is some controversy about whether the town was named for Danial Warner, who served on the Royal Governor's Council and was a loyalist, or for Seth Warner, who fought in the American Revolution. Either way, the Board of Selectmen would like to start planning for a yearlong 250th celebration in 2024. Our first step will be to hold an organizational meeting on **Thursday, October 18th at 7:00 pm** in the Town Hall. This will be an opportunity to exchange ideas and join in the planning events, projects and other forms of recognition over the course of the year. If you would like to be part of the planning, please join us.