

**DRAFT
WARREN BOARD OF
SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, July 9, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairwoman McCartin called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Select Board Members Present: Shirley McCartin, Chuck Sackett, and Jeremy Hair.

Staff/Officials Present: Town Administrator – Austin Albro, Tax Collector – Maria Sanders, Deputy Tax Collector – Karen Youngman, Fire Chief – Arthur Heath, Police Chief – John Semertgakis

Public Present: John Elias, Aileen Elias, Chris Ball, Katy Cote, Tracie Wheeler, Tom Babbit, Christine Hytenin, Peter Boncek, Chris Whitcher, Justin Monninger, Gabby Fuller, Jazz Click, Jeffrey Tompkins Sr., and others.

SELECT BOARD MANIFEST: *C. Sackett moved to approve the July 9, 2025 manifest as presented. S. McCartin seconded the motion. Vote: McCartin – yes, Hair – yes, Sackett – yes, and the motion passed 3-0-0.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *C. Sackett moved to approve the June 25, 2025 minutes as written. S. McCartin seconded the motion. Vote: McCartin – yes, Hair – yes, Sackett – yes, and the motion passed 3-0-0.*

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Maria Sanders inquired whether the Board of Selectmen had received any communication from the School Board about the Warren Wentworth School Commission Report. J. Hair explained that it was his understanding the school districts would continue to work together regarding field trips, sports, and potentially other extracurricular activities.

TREASURER:

Treasurer Sheila Foote was present at the meeting and provided a report to the Board for review.

The Town of Warren Operating Account balance is \$785,300.48 after tonight's approved manifest of \$17,439.57.

The Town of Warren Town Clerk Account balance is \$3,500.00.

The Tax Collections Account balance is \$358,227.11.

The auditor was in the office on July 1, 2025. The field auditing is complete.

On June 25, 2025 the Town received the annual distribution of the PILT grant in the amount of \$62,346.

TAX COLLECTOR:

Tax Collector Maria Sanders was present and provided the following reports and information for the Board's consideration.

Collections Summary for the month of July 2025 (Printed July 9, 2025)

- a. \$504,227.07 has been collected in Gross Receipts. (\$498,993.86 in principal; \$162.86 in interest/penalties; and \$5,070.35 in credits to be applied to 2025 P02 bill.)

Year to date collections summary (1/1/2025 -7/9/2025)

- a. \$1,802,042.19 has been collected in Gross Receipts. (\$1,785,338.94 in principal; \$9,542.09 in interest/penalties; and \$7,161.16 in credits to be applied to 2025 P02 bill.)

The first billing of 2025 property taxes is due July 10, 2025.

Deed notices will be mailed to property owners with 2022 liens and older on July 17, 2025.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:

Manager George Russell was not present but submitted a written report. He replaced the battery on the town office generator and helped Road Agent J. Corso with drainage on Swain Hill. G. Russell planned to put the tables and chairs out under tents on Thursday and will be brush hogging at the hiking trail, as early as next week.

At the Transfer Station, freon was removed from refrigerator and AC units. Scrap metal will be shipped out next week. One bale of aluminum cans was produced and one bale of cardboard is in production.

ROAD AGENT:

Road Agent John Corso was not present but submitted a written report. J. Corso reported that the drainage improvements were complete on Swain Hill and some ditch cleanup is still to be completed. The estimated project cost excluding pavement is approximately \$7,000. Gravel is scheduled to arrive on Tuesday and paving will be scheduled after that. J. Corso indicated he reached out to the collective purchasing group about the upcoming truck purchase and was waiting for a call back and quote. J. Corso shared that he recently purchased additional safety equipment including signs and cones. Road Agent J. Corso provided the Board with a list of upcoming projects: Breezy Point bridge re-decking, Swain Hill gravel work, Gould Hill and Beech Hill ditching, and culvert clean-ups.

FIRE CHIEF:

Fire Chief Arthur Heath shared recent department activity including a report of an electrical fire at Walt Whitman noting that Warren was recalled en route.

POLICE CHIEF:

Chief Semertgakis was present at the meeting and provided a report of recent activity to the Board. OHRV Issue, Route 118: observed OHRV cross Route 118 from Studio Road, warning issued. Welfare Check, Route 118; no issues. Motor Vehicle Collision, Route 25; driver reports a rock from sand and gravel truck struck and cracked his windshield, report taken. Vandalism, South Main Street Water District; report of vandalism to an outdoor panel, may have been natural causes. Concert on the Common; great turnout, no issues. The Chief provided an update relative to the passing zone in the densely populated portion of Lake Tarleton Road.

29 Stops, 3 Citations.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

Town Administrator Austin Albro shared a report of recent activity. The Administrator noted that the town is expected to proceed with the “.gov” grant later this year. A. Albro provided an update relative to the InvestNH Municipal Demolition grant noting that the Town is eagerly awaiting DES approval of the contractor’s work scope to oversee grant management and demolition. A. Albro explained that the Town had secured the letter of support from the White Mountain National Forest for the Town’s application to the Federal Lands Access Program funding for the Fish Hatchery bridge project and that he would work to relay that message to DOT. The Administrator noted that ALTA CPA, the Town’s auditor, was in town last week and that a complete audit report is expected next month. Finally, the Administrator concluded that he expected the Town Building Committee and the Highway Garage Project planning to begin in August.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board of Selectmen presented the following statement:

“Town Administrator Austin Albro and Selectman Jeremy Hair attended an emergency meeting in Wentworth this morning after learning of an abrupt interruption in emergency medical services. The meeting, organized by Plymouth Fire & Rescue Chief Kevin Pierce, included Fire Chiefs from Rumney, Plymouth, Warren, and Wentworth; a representative from the Glenclyff Home for the Elderly; and members of the Wentworth Selectboard.

Chief Pierce reported that at approximately 8:00 A.M., he was informed by Lakes Region Mutual Aid Dispatch that the Warren Wentworth Ambulance Service (WWAS) had notified dispatch it had no available providers and would be unable to respond to emergency calls.

In response, Plymouth Fire & Rescue committed to covering EMS calls in both Warren and Wentworth. Woodsville EMS will also provide coverage for the Glenclyff Home and surrounding village area. This interim arrangement will remain in effect while discussions continue.

Dispatch has been instructed to simultaneously tone out the Warren Fire Department alongside Plymouth EMS for all emergency medical calls. Both the Warren and Wentworth Fire Departments have expressed interest in enhancing their emergency medical response capabilities. Plymouth Fire & Rescue will coordinate with the State to facilitate additional training and assist both towns in obtaining non-transport licenses, enabling fire personnel to provide a higher level of care while awaiting transport.

As of this release, the Town of Warren has not received any formal communication from WWAS, its Chief, or its Board of Directors regarding the disruption in service. Residents are reminded that WWAS is an independent, contracted provider and not a department of the Town of Warren. Questions regarding WWAS operations should be directed to their Board of Directors.

Of the \$325,000 appropriated at the March 2025 Town Meeting for ambulance services, \$215,000 remains unspent. The Town paid \$110,000 to WWAS on April 2, 2025, covering services through July. The remaining funds are available for the Selectboard to allocate toward alternative emergency medical coverage.

The contract between the Town and WWAS allows for termination with 60 days written notice. It also states that in the event of termination, the Town is entitled to a prorated refund for services not rendered. While the Town may explore its options under the agreement, the immediate priority remains ensuring reliable EMS coverage for Warren residents.

A follow-up meeting between the Warren Selectboard and leadership from the Town of Plymouth is being scheduled to further coordinate regional EMS efforts and explore long-term solutions.”

Peter Boncek, Chairman of the Warren Wentworth Ambulance Service addressed the audience. Peter expressed his displeasure with the Chief’s actions and indicated that transfer call volume was dropping below expectations. Peter explained that as a result of the declining transfer calls, changes were made to the organization’s structure, including shift length and layoffs, which led to additional internal problems. Peter stated that on July 8, the WWAS Board of Directors informed the Chief that the Board would be assuming the Chief’s duties and that the former Chief could remain as a provider.

Rebecca Crane, former employee of Warren Wentworth Ambulance Service, explained that she had confidence in the Chief and expressed her opinion that the internal problems with the organization were a result of the decisions made by the Board of

Directors. She expressed regret that WWAS had closed and that she would no longer be able to serve the community.

Aileen Elias asked whether the Town was covered by legal counsel. The Board responded yes.

Chris Whitcher stated that the arrangement with Plymouth and Woodsville was not a long-term solution.

Arthur Heath asked whether the Town was currently being charged a fee per call. The Town Administrator explained that there was no formal agreement in place and he did not expect a fee until an agreement was reached.

Justin Monninger encouraged the Town and residents to work together with other communities experiencing EMS challenges and suggested getting the attention of elected officials in Concord.

Tom Babbitt stated that if the community wants EMS services, the community has to pay for it.

As the conversation started to devolve, S. McCartin asked if there were any additional questions for the Board of Selectmen. There were not.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- a) The Board reviewed recent correspondence.

ADJOURN:

S. McCartin moved to adjourn the regular meeting of the Select Board. The motion was seconded by C. Sackett. Vote: McCartin – yes, Hair – yes, Sackett – yes, and the motion passed 3-0-0. The Board adjourned at 5:54 PM.

Selectman, Chuck Sackett Jr.

Selectman, Jeremy Hair

Chairwoman, Shirley McCartin