

The State of the Town 2021



TOWN OF WARREN, RHODE ISLAND
Authored by: KATE MICHAUD, TOWN MANAGER



The State of the Town

2021

As required by the Warren Town Charter, I hereby submit the annual “State of the Town” report to the distinguished members of the Warren Town Council. In summary, the State of the Town remains strong and resilient in the face of hardship. Warren remains home to people who are full of heart and undaunted by challenges. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve this Town. Detailed in this report you will find both accomplishments of municipal government within the past twelve months and goals for the future. Boards and Commissions each produce their own annual report. These reports are available through the Office of the Town Clerk.

Elected Officials & Department Heads

December 31, 2021

Town Council

Keri M. Cronin, President
John W. Hanley, Vice President
Steven P. Calenda
Joseph A. DePasquale
P. Brandt Heckert

Department Heads

Roy Borges, Police Chief
Ed Cabral, Harbormaster
Matt Cabral, Building & Zoning Official
Fung Chan, Finance Director
Betty Hoague, Senior Center Director
Kristopher Leadem, Tax Assessor
Jan Malik, Director of Public Works
Kate Michaud, Town Manager
Ann Marie Roy, Social Services Director
Bob Rulli, Director of Planning & Community Development
James Sousa, Fire Chief
Sandy Speroni, Town Clerk
Tara Thibaudeau, Director of Parks & Recreation

General Economic Indicators

The devastating impact of COVID-19 was immediately apparent in the labor market, with a peak unemployment rate of 17.8% in April 2020. Double digit unemployment persisted through much spring/summer 2020, with a 2020 annual unemployment average of 9.2%. The Town of Warren saw a much-improved labor market in 2021, with a larger overall workforce and a lower unemployment rate.

Snapshot Employment Trends¹:

	% Unemployment	Total Workforce	Total Employed
November, 2021	4.2%	5,703	5,466
November, 2020	7.6%	5,539	5,117
November, 2019²	3.0%	5,720	5,551
November, 2018	3.3%	5,743	5,552
November, 2017	4.0%	5,716	5,485
November, 2016	4.4%	5,681	5,430
November, 2015	5.2%	5,689	5,392

Warren Labor Force Statistics³

Not Seasonally Adjusted

Month	Year	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
December	2021	5,642	5,442	200	3.5%
November	2021	5,703	5,466	237	4.2%
October	2021	5,614	5,395	219	3.9%
September	2021	5,844	5,626	218	3.7%
August	2021	5,483	5,150	333	6.1%
July	2021	5,522	5,202	320	5.8%
June	2021	5,480	5,179	301	5.5%
May	2021	5,513	5,195	318	5.8%
April	2021	5,467	5,191	276	5.0%
March	2021	5,558	5,131	427	7.7%
February	2021	5,521	5,068	453	8.2%
January	2021	5,635	5,072	563	10.0%
Annual Average	2020	5,534	5,027	507	9.2%

¹ Source: RI Department of Labor and Training

² Most recent statistics available

³ Source: RI Department of Labor and Training

As was the case in previous years, Warren’s largest employment sector in 2021 was manufacturing, followed by accommodations and food services and then health care and social assistance.

Employment Leaders⁴ 2nd Quarter 2021⁵:

	Number Employed	Total Units	Total Wages
Manufacturing	891	34	\$11,625,184
Accommodations & Food Services	587	46	\$3,229,860
Health Care & Social Assistance	472	43	\$5,422,097

All three of the leading sectors demonstrated improvement when compared to pre-pandemic levels in the second quarter of 2019. Manufacturing jobs saw a reduction of one unit, but an employment growth of 16.6% and a total wage growth of 24.4%. Accommodations and food services saw an increase of one unit, with an employment increase of 11.1% and a total wage increase of 33%. Health care and social assistance saw an increase of 5 units, with a reduction in the employment rate of 2.5% and an increase in total wages of 6.8%. Retail trade rated as the next highest employment sector, with robust growth in number of units, number employed and wages (vs. 2019).

After an initial steep decline in Spring 2020, meals and beverage tax collections have trended upward throughout the pandemic, with the most recent statistics capturing peak summer sales:

*Meals and Beverage Tax Collection (Local 1%) – Rhode Island Department of Revenue
Fiscal Year to Date: July through September*

	July – Sept: 2020	July – Sept: 2021	Change
Total Receipts	\$107,994	\$119,517	↑10.7%

Overall collections do not necessarily indicate increased profit, as restaurants have encountered increased costs for supplies, overhead and labor. However, the positive trend is indicative of a strong economic base.

Taxation and Budgets

Overall assessed valuations also continue to trend slowly upward⁶, apart from motor vehicle assessments, which declined slightly in Tax Roll Year 2020 (assessment period ending 12/31/2019) before rebounding in 2021.

⁴ Source: RI Department of Labor and Training; <https://dlt.ri.gov/labor-market-information/data-center/employment-wages-industry-qcew>

⁵ Most recent statistics available

⁶ Source: Assessors Statement of Assessed Valuations and Tax Levy

Gross Assessed Values (as of 12/31 of prior year):

TAX ROLL YEAR	2021	2020	2019
RESIDENTIAL	\$1,171,309,479	\$1,161,489,693	\$1,002,620,948
COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/MIXED USE	\$200,305,200	\$189,816,237	\$178,640,300
MOTOR VEHICLE	\$76,674,601	\$73,470,784	\$75,505,752
TANGIBLE	\$37,340,751	\$34,488,530	\$31,400,282

Property and tangible values continue to trend upwards including considerable private investment in major non-residential properties such as the TPI facility on Market Street, which has evolved into a world-class innovation center for the composites industry leader. Restoration of historic residential properties in the uptown area have catalyzed increased overall property values while ensuring the preservation of these community assets. New infill construction on Main Street at Nobert Street includes a mix of market-rate and affordable condominium units, with construction expected to be complete in 2022.

Construction of American Tourister Project is complete and at or near 100% residential occupancy; including both the mill renovation and new construction at 99 Water Street. Commercial tenants continue to come online, including The Guild brewery and a new In Your Ear location. Construction of the upgraded north pump station, required as a condition of approval of the Tourister project and funded by the developer, is complete and awaiting final approvals.

Hope & Main continues to be a major economic driver and the home base of the town's (and the state's) food economy. The summer "Schoolyard Market" and winter "Meet Your Maker" events continue to be a remarkable success in bringing visitors to town. Throughout the pandemic Hope & Main continued to expand its reach both as an innovative space for businesses development and as a community resource and support system. "Nourish Our Neighbors" was launched in 2020 and continued in 2021; inviting guest chefs to create a featured meal each week and provided a meal for someone in need for each meal that was sold to the general public. Plans are underway in 2022 to further develop the capacity for Hope & Main to assist in improving food security in Warren while continuing to be a leader in food business development.

Growth in the tax base will help to stabilize the tax rate and absorb increases required by reduced state aid and increased expenses; most notably school contributions, labor, health care and utilities. When comparing Tax Roll Year 2021 with Tax Roll Year 2014, total gross valuation has increased by 23.7% (from \$1,200,947,523 to \$1,485,630,031), while the tax levy has increased by 7.7% over the same period (from \$23,649,363 to \$25,480,939).

Overall, taxation rates have been very stable with lean annual budgets by all departments. Capital expenditures have remained consistent with an emphasis on infrastructure and public safety. The most sizeable recent capital project, the upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Facility, was made possible through a \$20,000,000 general obligation bond approved by the voters in 2017 and financed through Clean Water Bonds in April 2018. These bonds were made available through the RI Infrastructure Bank with an interest rate approximately 33% below the open market. Through the implementation of green infrastructure best practices in design, the project received approximately \$444,000 in principal forgiveness through the RI Infrastructure Bank and EPA. Nevertheless, this bond will continue to significantly affect taxation rates through its payoff in 2037. To limit the effect of additional debt payments, all capital in FY2018-2019 through FY2021-2022 was funded through the general fund's unrestricted reserve with no new borrowing.

Increased costs of equipment, supplies and utilities have challenged operations in 2021, driven by a 7.0% increase in the Consumer Price Index⁷. Significant lead times in equipment delivery, including new vehicles, parts, generators, audio visual equipment and medical supplies have complicated planning efforts and required increased coordination and increased hours to complete rote tasks.

A photovoltaic installation (solar farm) planned for the former landfill site behind the Department of Public Works on Birch Swamp Road is in the final stages of permitting. This public private partnership project, when constructed, will fund the proper closure of the landfill while reducing the town's energy costs. In late 2021 the Town began offsetting municipal energy use by up taking from an offsite solar installation; with an anticipated significant reduction in electric rates. The Town continues to work on improving energy efficiency in all municipal facilities.

The municipal tax rate increase, excluding motor vehicles, for FY2021-2022 was 2.09% (from \$17.36/\$1,000 to \$17.72/\$1,000). This includes a 6.85% increase in appropriation to the Bristol Warren School District. Municipal side operations expenditures were reduced by 4.47%, with a net increase in the cost of town government (including capital) of 0.05%.

⁷ <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2022/consumer-price-index-2021-in-review.htm#:~:text=From%20December%202020%20to%20December,December%20percent%20change%20since%201981.&text=Food%20at%20home%20prices%20increased,the%20year%20increase%20since%202008>.

TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE

2021 Highlights



2021 was the second calendar year overshadowed by COVID. Focus in 2021 was on managing the ever-changing landscape of COVID response, mitigation, and prevention. I continue to believe firmly that it is my job to create space for growth and innovation without compromising integrity and tradition. This year I was extremely proud to serve as the featured speaker for the Firefighter's Memorial in June. I had the opportunity to express my gratitude for being allowed to participate in the COVID-19 vaccination efforts. I believe that this may be my proudest career achievement, as I worked alongside so many wonderful people to fight back against the pandemic.

Clerk Denise Kinney continues to provide support and continuity for office operations and serves as an exemplary public servant in all aspects of her work.

2022 Goals

Goals for the upcoming year include:

- Continue to improve communications, including managing a full redesign of the town's website and expanded use of social media
- Advocate for predictable and stable state aid for both school and municipal functions
- Ensure that ARPA funds are spent judiciously and in accordance with federal requirements
- Prepare for the availability of federal infrastructure funds, ensuring that Warren has a full compliment of projects ready for implementation
- Continue to encourage and facilitate education and training opportunities for staff and boards and commissions
- Work to retain key staff to create continuity of operations and appoint a new Director of Public Works to succeed retiring Director Jan Malik
- Work towards identifying regional opportunities for collaboration; deepening relationships with our neighbors both in Rhode Island and Massachusetts

POLICE DEPARTMENT



The Warren Police Department continues to protect and serve the community in accordance with its mission statement:

We, the Warren Police Department, exist to fairly, compassionately and respectfully serve all the people in the community. We will strive to engage in:

I. Crime prevention, reduction, suppression and criminal apprehension

II. Protection of individual liberties and the reduction of fear

III. Reduction of personal injury and property loss through traffic collisions

IV. Provision of social services and improvement of the quality of life

The members of the Police Department shall remain sensitive to the needs and priorities of the people and always be cognizant that we are here to protect and serve.



In 2021 the Department managed through some significant staffing changes, including retirements, lateral transfers, promotions and new hires. In December, 2021 four (4) new recruits entered the police academy with graduation expected in May, 2022, followed by an intensive ten week field training program.

In furtherance of this mission, the Department has consistently prioritized community relations, including the judicious use of social media, attendance at community events and youth outreach. The Department issues its own detailed annual report, which is posted on the Department's website (www.warrenripolice.com). In 2021 Officer Robert Olivier, 22-year veteran of the department, joined the School Resource Officer program at Kickemuit Middle School. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, the Bristol Warren Regional School District discontinued the program in November 2021. The Town of Warren is hopeful that the program will be reinstated in 2022.



In October 2021, Chief Roy Borges was awarded the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Community Outreach Award. Patrolman Darrin Reynolds received his DUI pin for his excellent work in identifying impaired drivers. Several other officers received commendations throughout the year for their bravery and exemplary service.

In 2022 the Department will continue to update policies and procedures to maintain accreditation and to continue to protect and to serve the people of Warren.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT
AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**
COVID Response Takes Center Stage



Fire Chief James Sousa, Fire Marshal Matthew Primiano and Fire & EMS Coordinator Tracy Wazecha serve as the paid staff for the Town's Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services. Retention and recognition of volunteers remains a priority for this highly skilled and dedicated Department.



2021 brought an entirely new duty to the Warren Fire and Rescue: COVID-19 vaccination. In 2021, Chief Sousa led a team of dedicated volunteers in a comprehensive and coordinated effort to provide vaccination opportunities for all Warrenites. Regional clinics began in very early 2021 with first responders, teachers/childcare workers, and seniors at the Quinta Gamelin Center in Bristol. Through this regional clinic 4,159 people were vaccinated. Eighteen (18) local Warren clinics were held in town at various locations and provided another 2,154 vaccinations. Warren participated in clinics at Mt. Hope High School, providing 166 vaccinations to those aged 16 and older. Later in 2021, Warren joined an East Bay coalition of providers to staff the East Providence "POD" (point of distribution), where Warren staff assisted in vaccinating 7,717 people. Throughout 2021 Chief Sousa also coordinated the municipal staff testing program, providing on-demand testing for symptomatic employees/volunteers and close contacts.

In 2021 fire apparatus dispatch calls totaled 682, up from 610 in 2020. Fire calls were down slightly in 2019 (569) and 2020 (610) but have now exceeded the recent peak in 2018 (666). Significant storms, such as Ida in September 2021, can increase the number of fire apparatus dispatch calls as they report to flooded properties and respond to accidents.

As we have seen consistently, demands on the Emergency Medical Services (Rescue) continues to increase. In 2021 rescue patient contacts increased by 16.8%, from 2,286 in 2020 to 2,671 in 2021. Mutual aid calls for EMA have increased by 130.8% from 182 in 2020 to 420 in 2021. To keep pace with increased demands, new procedural requirements and changing technologies, Chief Sousa continues to work towards the planned construction of a new Fire and Rescue Station. Several sites in Town have been evaluated for location, cost and the needs of the Town and potential funding supports have been identified.

Training of new and existing members occurs on an ongoing basis, with volunteers dedicating many hours to improving and maintaining skills and techniques. Many of the Department activities are funded through fundraising events, including Warren's famous clambakes. While COVID has impacted the ability to hold traditional fundraising events, all are hopeful that 2022 will be some return to normalcy.

Fire Prevention was also busy in 2021 with approximately 438 contacts, including inspection of residential and commercial properties. In addition, new construction and renovation plan reviews were conducted for all applicable projects. Fire Prevention worked with the Building Department to address health and safety issues and to advise property owners on necessary improvements.



In July 2021, the Department participated in the Bristol 4th of July parade, with their float winning the coveted “Best in Parade” award. The Department’s float was a moving commemoration of the 20th year since the September 11 tragedies. The Department was joined in the parade by firefighters from around the region and by retired New York Fire Department Lt. Joe Torrillo, who survived the collapse of the towers.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT

The Harbor Commission’s Annual Report, which has been submitted to the Town Clerk’s office, contains a comprehensive review of Harbor Management activities. For day-to-day operations, enforcement and the administration of the dockage and mooring programs, Harbormaster Ed Cabral is joined by two Assistant Harbormasters.

In 2019, Phase 1 of the Town Wharf restoration project was completed under the watchful eye of the Commission and Harbormaster Cabral. This project proved to be exceedingly complicated due to the historic use of the property and the remnants of subsurface building foundations. Phase 2 of the project, consisting of the northern portion of the property, has been scoped and will be a priority for [near] future capital investment due to deteriorating conditions. Grant funds will be sought to offset the considerable cost of the project to the greatest extent possible.



Harbormaster Ed Cabral continues to complete upgrades and repairs to our various boating facilities around town, including the commercial docks and mooring fields. Harbor Management successfully teamed with the Recreation Department to provide a “Learn to Row” program at the Town’s Summer Camp. In addition, kayak/dingy racks were constructed, installed, and rented at the Town Beach with occupancy filling immediately. Demand for safe and affordable waterfront and water related recreation and commerce continues to increase, and additional racks are planned for 2022.

PARKS AND RECREATION



Director Tara Thibaudeau continues to lead the Department in expanding offerings and improving facilities. Summer programs included the popular and affordable youth summer camp, with 283 participants in 2021. Camp activities were limited due to COVID protocols, but participating youth enjoyed lots of fresh air through “play zones” established throughout Burr’s Hill Park and the town beach. Limited field trips were offered in addition to free weekly bowling at Dudek’s. All participating children were offered free lunches, provided through a Department of Education grant.

Other popular summer offerings included the summer concert series at Burr’s Hill Park, adult pickleball, youth tennis, women’s softball, and a highly successful youth basketball league. There were no beach closures during the 2021 beach season as Director Thibaudeau worked with the Department of Health to continuously monitor water quality.

In 2021, work continued implementation of the 2018 Master Plan for all recreational facilities. Highlights of projects completed in 2021 include the opening of the new dog park (April 2021) and the preliminary site work for multi-use fields near Warren Recreation Park (Gardner’s Field). Work is ongoing to establish a new community garden program, with a one-acre town-owned site identified at the corner of Schoolhouse Road and Kinnicutt Avenue.

A full annual report for the Department is available on the Town’s website and through the Recreation office at Mary V. Quirk.

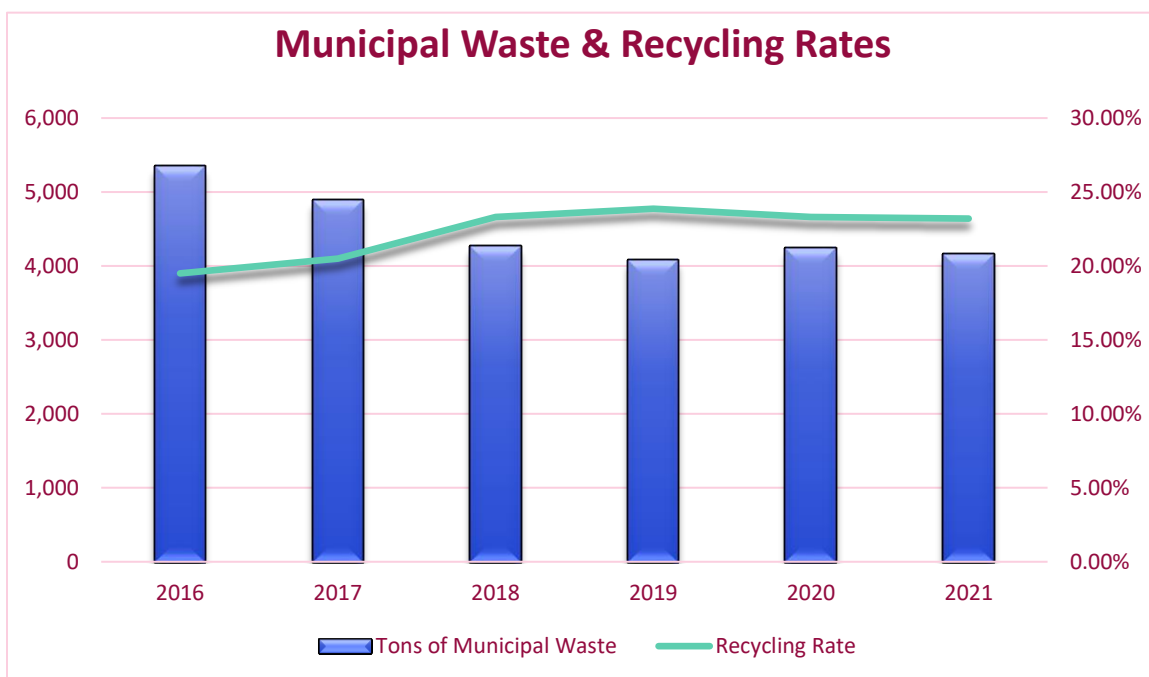
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



In 2021 Director Jan Malik continued to lead the charge to address the many infrastructure, maintenance and service needs falling under the purview of the Department of Public Works. In 2021 Mr. Malik and his capable staff continued an ambitious program of road repaving and sidewalk reconstruction, in addition to tending to frequent issues with stormwater management and facilities maintenance. In addition to routine tasks; snow events, windstorms and heavy rainstorms

create a litany of issues requiring the immediate attention of the department staff.

Waste tonnage increased in 2020 with an upsurge of residents working from home and enjoying takeout meals from restaurants. Additional waste sources included cleaning products and personal protective equipment. The number moderated in 2021.



The Town of Warren currently pays \$47 per ton for a “tipping fee” to dispose of waste at the landfill. We are allotted 3,349 tons of trash at this rate. Once the cap is reached, the tipping fee is increased to \$90 per ton. In calendar year 2021 the Town of Warren incurred \$157,403 in “under the cap” tipping fees and \$72,450 in “over the cap” fees. These fees are in addition to the costs of collecting, transferring, and transporting waste. Costs are expected to rise in 2022.

To ensure accessibility and mobility for all our residents and visitors, all sidewalk reconstruction projects undertaken include compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, the principals of urban forestry were applied, and, with the assistance of the Warren Tree Commission and the Tree Warden, many new trees of the appropriate species were planted as part of sidewalk reconstruction and in the town’s parks.

Sidewalk reconstruction projects completed in 2021 included:

- Lyndon Street
- Summer Street

Sidewalk repairs, including concrete shaving to mitigate heaving due to tree roots, occurred on Washington Street and Mason Street.

Repaving projects completed in 2021 included:

- Lyndon Street
- Summer Street
- Elm Street

The Department of Public Works continues to closely coordinate with Parks & Recreation for facilities maintenance. DPW is also responsible for maintenance and repairs within all town buildings – including repairing damage that occurred at Town Hall and Government Center due to a lightning strike in July 2021.

SENIOR CENTER

Mission Statement: The mission of the Warren Senior Center is to enrich the lives of all citizens in the community 55 years of age and older by providing education, socialization, recreation, health and information services, and congregate meals.

Senior Center Director Elizabeth “Betty” Hoague continues to provide excellent services for area seniors with one of the most well attended centers in the East Bay. With 550 members and growing, the center continues to serve a vital role in the independent lives of Warren’s seniors, all while making modifications and accommodations to ensure safety and good health in the face of the COVID-19

pandemic. In 2021 the Center launched a YouTube page, providing a link to senior fitness and stretching at home. Other services continue to be popular, such as free income tax preparation and health insurance counseling – both of which were modified for safety. The congregate meal program returned to an in-person program in 2021, providing nourishment for the body and social interaction for the spirit. In addition to in-house programming, the Center provides outreach and referral services regarding senior health insurance program, prescription assistance programs, senior services, food assistance, medical assistance, heating assistance, Senior Companion Program, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), AARP Tax Assistance and the University of RI Pharmacy Outreach Program. The Senior Center also provided vaccination and booster opportunities.



The Town of Warren provides senior bus transportation Monday through Friday to residents 60 years and older, or younger disabled, at no cost for shopping, doctors' appointments, and transportation to the Senior Center. COVID has also been a challenge in busing, but through masking and strict cleaning protocols the program has continued and continues to be extremely popular. In March 2021, the Town received a new bus, thanks to the generous support of the Warren taxpayers and a grant from the US Department of Agriculture. U.S. Senator Jack Reed's office was instrumental in assisting in the grant process.

OTHER TOWN DEPARTMENTS

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's office continues to provide excellent service to the public, acting as the first point of contact for most visitors to Town Hall. The Town Clerk's office provides administrative support to the Town Council and Board of Canvassers. The office coordinates elections, Town Council meetings, budget hearings and assists boards and commissions in filing minutes, agendas, and notices. The Clerk's Office processes and maintains all recordings in Land Evidence, issues all licenses and business registrations (when authorized by the Town Council), maintains vital records (birth, death, and marriage certificates) and handles all ordinance amendments. In addition, each clerk in the office is a Notary Public, offering free services to the public. The Town Clerk is the official keeper of the records and handles all public records requests filed with the municipality. (Police records are maintained separately.) The Clerk is also the Probate Court Clerk handling all Estate, Guardianships, name changes and Adult Adoptions.

In 2021 Town Clerk Sandra Speroni continued to expand online services for the benefit of the public. The Town Clerk's office served as the coordinating office for online meetings, providing technical support and information. Document preservation continued to be a priority, including scanning large format maps to create digital copies. 2021 also brought preparations for redistricting as a result of the 2020 Census, which will continue into 2022.

In August 2021 Jessica Capaldi was appointed as Deputy Town Clerk after several years as a department clerical employee. Part-time clerical employee Kathleen Rezendes moved into a full-time position in the office and Caitlin Marchetti joined the town as a part-time employee.

Finance Department

Finance Director Fung Chan continues in her role as Finance Director. Ms. Chan has continued to improve processes and institute best practices in the Finance Office. In 2021 Ms. Chan took on many new duties including serving as the administrator of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and documenting municipal costs relating to vaccine clinics for FEMA/RIEMA reimbursement.

The Finance Department handles the duties of both a Treasurer and a Tax Collector. The office processes all the Town's payroll and handles all accounts payable and accounts receivable. The staff coordinates annual tax sales and provides customer service for taxpayers and municipal lien certificates for property transfers.

Building & Zoning Department



In 2021 the Building & Zoning Department was led by the Town's Certified Building Official, Tony Carvalho. Mr. Carvalho was assisted by one full-time and one floating clerk (shared with the Tax Assessor), a part-time electrical inspector, a part-time plumbing/mechanical inspector, and a part-time Code Enforcement Official. In December 2021 Mr. Carvalho retired and new Building Official Matthew Cabral was appointed. He can be seen in the photo to the

left taking his oath of office with Town Clerk Sandra Speroni. Mr. Cabral will continue Mr. Carvalho's excellent work in inspections and enforcement, including coordinating the activities of the Housing Court and creating a public education campaign regarding common building code questions.

Tax Assessor

Tax Assessor Kristopher Leadem continues to effectively and efficiently handle the business of the Office of the Tax Assessor, including coordinating the statistical revaluation, processing tax additions and abatements, projecting revenues and assisting in setting the tax rate. Mr. Leadem coordinates the town's mapping system and processes property line changes, subdivisions, and new construction.

Social Services / Substance Misuse Prevention

In 2021, Director Ann Marie Roy continued to provide help and guidance to those in need, coordinating services offered through East Bay Recovery Center, East Bay Regional Coalition, East Bay Community Action Program, the Recovery Friendly Workplace of Rhode Island, the East Bay Center, and others to ensure that the citizens of Warren can maintain a roof over their heads and food in their cabinets. In 2021 a "little free pantry" was constructed by Warren DPW and installed outside of the social services office on the ground floor of Town Hall. The pantry is stocked with seasonally appropriate shelf-stable food and is available to all with no stigma or conditions.

With Program Coordinator Maria Ursini, Director Roy and the Warren Prevention Coalition is successfully participating in the Drug Free Communities Program. Activities include data collection through student surveys and numerous community outreach and education programs including Narcan training, wellness events, red ribbon week, Youth Force, and drug takeback events.



On August 31, the Warren Prevention Coalition hosted its first candlelight vigil, including a march down Main Street in support of prevention and recovery.



An annual report has been presented to the Town Council and is available through the office of the Town Clerk.

Planning & Community Development

Bob Rulli continues to wear many hats as the Town's Director of Planning & Community Development. Throughout the year, Mr. Rulli worked with multiple town departments, State and Federal agencies, businesses, residents, and non-governmental and quasi-governmental organizations to accomplish a myriad of tasks. In addition, Mr. Rulli served as technical support for the Planning Board, Economic Development Board, Traffic Advisory Group, Voluntary Historic District Commission, Arts & Cultural

Commission and Zoning Board. As support, he created new forms, provided data analysis, and offered recommendations for improved operations and procedures. He reviews all land development applications and chairs the Technical Review Committee. In 2021 he was appointed to the Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee. Mr. Rulli also serves as the town's representation at Discover Warren, Connect Greater Newport, and Discover Newport. Mr. Rulli is the Town's representative overseeing the upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Facility and he coordinates the town's onsite wastewater program. Mr. Rulli's efforts will be recognized in 2022 with the RI Chapter of the American Planning Association's, "Excellent Climate Change Impact Adaptation Plan" award.

The following is a sample of the Mr. Rulli's activities in 2021:

Funding/ Grants

- \$2MM Congressional Directed Appropriation (Rescue Station/EOC/Training Facility)
- DEM Recreation Grant (Burr's Hill Park-Bathrooms, Concession, Storage, Office, Playground)
- DEM Grant (Resiliency) Portable Generator
- SNEP Technical Assistance – Central Ave stormwater
- SNEP Technical Assistance – Haile Farm Preserve Detention Pond
- Rhode Island Foundation Grant (HCH) for COVID recovery planning

Market to Metacom

- Market to Metacom: Adaptation and Economic Development Plan – Completed
- Comp. Plan/Corridor Plan update initiated (Zoning Amendment, Zoning Map, Form Based Code)
- Form Based Code Advisory Working Group
- Presentation to Special Legislative Committee on RI Low and Moderate Housing Act

Town Activities

- Coordinated installation of fiber connections at Town Hall & Government Center
- Continued to coordinate the streetlight conversion and controls program
- Project manager for solar project at former landfill (DPW facility)
- Grant and program manager for the town's "Take it Outside" campaign (7 Electric Boxes, distribution of outdoor heaters, expanded outdoor dining)
- Project manager of Wastewater Management Facility upgrade projects
- Coordinator for the uptown parking study project
- Coordinator of the installation of an EV Charging Station Town Wharf, including ID'ing funding
- Project manager for the new [flood resilient] Town Wharf Bathrooms
- Coordinator of the Hazard Mitigation Plan update & training for Warren Police Department
- Primary point of contact for the Warren Gateway Project
- Obtained a Certificate of Approval (DEM) Wood Street Pump Station, making upgrades eligible for future grant funding

IN MEMORY



On September 2, 2021, the Town of Warren lost Assistant Fire Chief Brian Remy to a senseless act of violence. This is a loss that will leave a lasting scar on the community that Brian loved and served throughout his lifetime. Starting in 1973, Brian excelled as a volunteer firefighter in addition to many other volunteer roles including Charter Review Commission member, Sewer Commission member and Little League coach. He was a skilled tradesman and a successful local business owner. In addition to leaving behind a legacy of proud service to the community, Brian is survived by his wife and his son. May he rest in peace.