



# Warren Township NEWS

ISSUE 2007-01

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF WARREN

Spring 2007

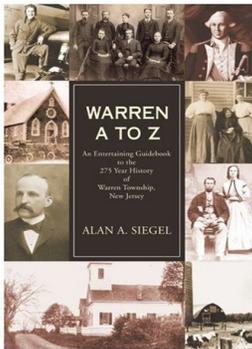
## YOUR TOWNSHIP CLERK

The Township Clerk's office is an important link between residents and the Township Committee. Patricia DiRocco and her staff are always happy to lend assistance to our residents and the general public. The office maintains custody of legal documents and Township records. Copies of ordinances, resolutions, land use and zoning books/maps and copies of minutes of Township Committee meetings may be purchased here. The office also issues licenses such as liquor, raffles, flea market/public auction, block party permits and Cable TV complaints.

Voter registration forms, absentee ballot applications, party declaration forms, the location of polling places, and information about all elections is available in the Township Clerk's office.

There are many boards and commissions in the Township. If you wish to be considered to serve, please stop by the Township Clerk's office for an application or download one from our Township web site at [www.warrennj.org](http://www.warrennj.org). The Township Committee encourages residents to attend their meetings. See your local government at work!

The Township Clerk's office is an excellent source of information and guidance. Residents may be especially interested in obtaining the very useful Township Information Pamphlet available in our office. We are here to serve our residents. Please stop by.



*Warren A to Z*, sponsored by the Warren Township Bicentennial Committee, takes new residents and old-timers alike on an informative tour of Warren Township including the land, places, people, issues, and events that have shaped "the greenest place in New Jersey."

Copies will be available for purchase and will be autographed by the author, Attorney Alan A. Siegel, at the Kirch-Ford House 2 - 4 pm, Saturday, April 07, 2007.

## From Our Mayor...

### The Property Tax Dilemma

**There is no doubt that one of the most critical issues facing Warren and its residents today is the impact of property taxes. This is a statewide issue not just a Warren issue. (Your Township Committee is only responsible for 12% of the total amount of Warren Township taxes collected.) Our children and seniors want to continue to live in New Jersey to be close to family and friends but, when property taxes make up 25% of the monthly house payment, this may not be an option. Like you, I want my family close to me and, as your Mayor, focusing on reducing property taxes will be my most urgent priority.**

The Township Committee, under the leadership of our Finance Chairwoman Carolann Garafola, worked long hours on our 2007 spending needs and produced a budget that requires only a 3% increase over 2006. The original budget proposal was cut by over \$500,000. The 3% increase is primarily the result of increased state imposed pension obligations and debt service for open space purchases. As per our Master Plan, we are also experiencing a reduction in building construction which has decreased revenue. In addition, we were required to inspect the Morris Union Jointure Commission School construction without being able to charge for our inspections which increased expenses without revenue offset. The Township departments and their activities described in this Newsletter constitute the end result of our budget reductions and I want to thank our department heads for finding creative ways to do "more with less" in meeting the needs of our Township.

A second and very significant factor contributing to rising property taxes are the school budgets. The School Board brought the Township Committee into the planning process and we found that they are doing an excellent job keeping local school expenses low for 2007. Unfortunately, they are not receiving an adequate share of State school funding. The taxpayer in Warren has to pay not only for the education of our children in our schools but also has to support "Abbott" school districts outside our County. These thirty school districts, out of over 500, receive most of the State funding.

Finally, we arrive at the heart of the property tax dilemma – unbridled spending by the State that comes through as massive additions to "local" property taxes. Like you, I have been following the saga of the reform efforts down in Trenton and, so far, the news is not very good. The only "solution" coming out of these negotiations has been a one-time tax reduction timed to ease the voter backlash which will assuredly occur this November if substantive tax reform is not passed. This does not fix the property tax dilemma we will face in future years.

I and the other members of the Township Committee intend to work closely with our elected County and State officials to ensure that true tax reform is achieved.

Victor J. Sordillo, Mayor

**WARREN TOWNSHIP**  
**PLANNING BOARD**

In December of 2006 the Planning Board adopted an Amendment to the Master Plan of Warren Township. **The Master Plan, Re-examination Report and Master Plan Amendment are available on the Warren Township website at [www.warrennj.org](http://www.warrennj.org).** Corresponding maps may be purchased for a fee of \$3.50 in the Planning Board Office on the first floor of the Municipal Building. Warren Township is also going through a cross acceptance procedure, along with Somerset County, in reference to the State Master Plan. (The State Master Plan was originally called "The Big Map" and later changed its name.) A copy of the proposed map and requested changes are on file with the Planning Board Secretary.

After a development explosion that started in the mid 1990's, Warren Township is beginning to see a wane in applications for new construction. This is good news to those who would like to preserve Warren Township's few remaining open spaces. Planning Board meetings were originally scheduled for twice a month but will now be scheduled once a month until applications become more frequent.

The Warren Township Planning Board held its reorganization meeting in early January 2007 where **Dan Gallic** was elected as the Board's Chairman, **Suzanne Smith** was elected as Vice-Chair and **Rick Kaufmann** was elected as Secretary to the Board. **Mayor Vic Sordillo** and **Committeeman Gary DiNardo** were selected to represent the Township Committee on the Board.

The Planning Board members have now completed their New Jersey State mandated classes held by the New Jersey Planning Officials. These classes give an overview of what the Board's functions are and some of the legalities of actions performed by the Board. These classes were mandated by the state in 2005.

The Planning Board Office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays) to answer questions and receive complaints. The board may be reached through Anne Lane, Administrative Secretary to the Planning and Zoning Office, at (908) 753-8000 x 243.

**ZONING OFFICE**

The Township requires permits for all sheds, fences, tree removal and signs. Application forms may be obtained on the Warren Township website at [www.warrennj.org](http://www.warrennj.org) or may be picked up in the Planning/Zoning Office on the first floor of the Municipal Building. The fee is \$25.00 for each permit. The Zoning Office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays) to answer questions and receive complaints. We may also be reached at (908) 753-8000 x 243.



**Open To The Community This Spring**

In August 2004 the Township Committee granted a license to the Arboretum Foundation to develop the Arboretum at Wagner Farm.

While the ground was frozen and the icy winds battered our fragile skin, the committees at Wagner Farm Arboretum Foundation have been very busy planning for green days ahead and spring planting. They've also been planning for the **ANNUAL PLANT SALE** on the weekend of May 18-20.

The **Community Garden** committee, under the leadership of Keith Cooper, has been working on layout design, rules, fencing, water supply and research on organic gardening. A deer fence will be installed. There are now plots ready for lease that measure 10' x 20'. So far, 48 people have signed up to receive applications for plots.

According to Cooper, if weather permits, the gardens will be ready for planting in late April or as soon as possible thereafter. Registrants will be invited to attend an orientation meeting on April 12. Master gardeners and other experienced gardeners are standing by to assist neophytes.

Ernie Cottrill has been diligently organizing the **Giving Gardeners project** that will provide produce to local food banks and organizations such as SHIP, Food Bank Network of Somerset County, Star Fish, Second Harvest, area soup kitchens, and other appropriate agencies.

All produce will be organically grown in the Community Garden and the Giving Garden. Master Gardeners and other experienced gardeners will offer training sessions and be available to answer questions throughout the season.

The fundraising committee has grown under the guidance of Carolann Garafola. The committee has developed plans to solicit funds from individuals and local businesses as well as apply for grants. Wagner Farm Arboretum Foundation (WFAF) received a generous donation at the end of 2006 from the Chelsea at Warren.

The planning for the arboretum's educational classes is being organized by one of our trustees, Karen Manner. She has contacted schools in Warren looking for teachers to volunteer to help plan the curriculum and teach classes.

*Anyone interested in joining any of the committees, working on any of the projects, becoming a member or just looking for more information, should visit our website at [www.wfafnj.org](http://www.wfafnj.org)*

For more information about the Community Garden or to sign up, **visit the Arboretum Web site at [www.wfafnj.org](http://www.wfafnj.org)**, and then click on Contact Us and then on Keith Cooper to get on the list. He can also be reached at (908) 322-8323. For more information about the Giving Garden, e-mail Ernie Cottrill at [ggp@wfafnj.org](mailto:ggp@wfafnj.org) or contact him by phone at (732) 560-8765.

## Open Space Site Acquisition Committee

Warren offers a unique environment in which to live. Vibrant shopping and business districts tastefully interlace with rural roads, farmland, and ample suburban home-sites. This balance is what the Open Space Committee strives to maintain. While we know that we can't turn back time, we are proud of our rural roots. Private sector pressure to overdevelop our Township's real estate assets will always be there. Thus, it is the duty of the Open Space Committee to counterbalance this effect, and to ensure that our Town maintains its rural character through open lands free of development.

As Warren progresses toward full development, our goal becomes even more pressing – to preserve as much open space as we can. While we don't directly get involved in land purchases, this is left to the Township Committee, our advice spurs their acquisitions. We update maps and inventory possible land tracts that would benefit Warren's open space needs. We look at parkland, recreational parcels, farmland, ecologically sensitive zones, and sites with scenic or historical value. With our input, the Town has successfully preserved areas on Dock Watch Hollow Road and Ferguson Road. The Codington Property, the Stransky Property, the Glenhurst Property, the lands across from Warren Middle School, various parcels along the Passaic River, and Wagner Farm all have been kept as green space for Warren residents to enjoy.

Several years ago, Warren residents showed their desire for conserving open space by voting for a tax dedicated to that purpose. The seven person committee, which is appointed by the Township Committee, is devoted to acquiring land for farmland preservation, general recreation, and conservation purposes. The current Open Space membership is: John DeCristofaro, Jon S. Deutsch, Diane DiFrancesco, Vance Gillenwater, Lisa Lindner, Mark Rosenman, and George Vetter. Our Township Committee liaison is Mal Plager.

Of course we are actively searching more property to safeguard. *If you own any land in Town you would like to see preserved as open space, or just simply want to offer your input about potential land parcels, please let us know.* The Open Space Committee meets on the third Monday of each month, with the exception of August and December, at 7:30pm in the Municipal Building. For additional information contact Vance Gillenwater, Chairperson, at (908)770-8384.



## Department of Public Works



### Help us help you - - -

New Jersey isn't called the Garden State for nothing - things grow quickly here. We try our best to keep it cut back so please let us know about any vegetation that needs to be cut back along township roads.

Pot holes and sink holes can happen quickly. Please let us know if you should spot one - also know that pot holes and sink holes cannot be repaired in extreme cold.

We are fortunate to have a lot of trees in Warren Township. Please let us know about any dead, diseased, downed trees and branches on right-of-way township property.

When it rains it pours. Please report any water drainage problems to us. Many times, drainage problems are because the catch basins or gutters are clogged with leaves - oh, and please do not blow grass cuttings or leaves into the gutters - it's against the New Jersey Clean Water Act Rules.

### The DPW also:

- Cares for the baseball fields, soccer fields, parks, schools & playgrounds.
- Maintains the Hoffheimer, Dealaman and nature trails.
- Repairs and maintains the Township vehicles including the Police cars & Fire Trucks.
- Installs and repairs the curbs, catch basins and drainage pipes.
- Arranges to have the streets swept.
- Arranges for the milling and overlaying of streets.
- Arranges for road line striping.

### Clean-up . . . . .

You can get rid of old furniture, appliances and stuff that you no longer want or need at the Warren Township Mini Dump (located at the Public Works Garage, 1 Bardy Road) which is open to all Warren Residents.

***The MINI DUMP will be open every Saturday starting on April 7, 2007 and the last day it is open is Saturday, October 27, 2007. The hours of the Mini Dump are from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. There is a slight fee for using the dump - cars = \$10.00, station wagons = \$15.00, small van or pick-up = \$30.00, full size van = \$50.00, and a full size pick-up \$70.00.***



**Please call us - the Warren Township Department of Public Works (908) 753-1223.**

We will gladly respond to your request or concern promptly. If we can't help you, at least we could point you in the right direction.



## “BUILDING COMMUNITY PRIDE THROUGH PARKS AND RECREATION”

The Warren Township Recreation Commission invites all residents to take advantage of the parks, natural resources, and recreation programs available in Warren Township. The Recreation Commission is an active group of residents, appointed by the Warren Township Committee, committed to providing Warren Township residents with a comprehensive leisure service delivery system. The commission is comprised of a number of subcommittees. The Trails Committee has been involved with significant trail work on several properties including Stransky, Dealaman, Codington, Glenhurst, and the Municipal Complex. Trail maps are available at the Municipal Building and several tours are scheduled throughout the year. The newly formed Safety Committee is designed to ensure the safety of the community’s youth sports participants through educational programs and training courses.

Elm Avenue Park, a neighborhood park for ages 2 – 12, was completed in February. The park boasts two separate age-appropriate play areas. Plans are also underway for a larger community park off of Community Place, the installation of an aerator at Dealaman Pond, and improvements to the Greenwood Meadows Tennis Courts and playground.

Programs and activities sponsored by the Recreation Commission include Adult Basketball, After School Programs, Coach’s Training, Community Trips, Fishing Derby, Golf Lessons, High School Recreational Basketball, Park and Playground Development, Summer Concerts and Movies, Summer Playground Program, Summer Science Workshops, Summer Sports Camps, Tennis Lessons, Trail Development, and Therapeutic Recreation Services.

All new and proposed programs are based upon our 2003 community-wide survey and 2006 Master Plan. Our Recreation Department is your Recreation Department!

Please contact the Recreation Director (908) 753-8000, x 270 for more detailed information and to register for all programs and activities.

### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

April – June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tennis Lessons</li> <li>• Spring After School Programs (Art, Science, Drama)</li> </ul>
May 12	Fishing Derby at Dealaman Pond
June 9	Trip to New York Yankees Baseball Game
June 25 – July 27	Summer Playground Program
July and August:	Concert and Movie Series (Thursday Nights)
July 23 – 27	Summer Playground Program
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer Science Camps</li> <li>• Summer Sports Camps</li> </ul>
September – June	Adult Basketball Program (Monday Nights)
October – December	Fall After School Programs (Art, Science, Drama)
October 13	Trip to Broadway Show (TBA)
November – March	High School Recreational Basketball Program
December 8	Trip to Radio City’s Christmas Spectacular

### *Youth Services Commission*

The Warren Youth Services Commission continues to work with the children of the Township of Warren. Since the beginning of the year, we have held a successful coffee house on a snowy Friday evening. In addition, we just completed our second annual Girls Day Out for girls in grades 5 thru 8. Those who attended were shown healthy exercise, learned self-defense, and some even learned how to knit. This was in addition to having Clinique and a new Semi-pro soccer team at the event to talk to the girls.

Our future events include a Coffee House on Saturday March 16th, a Boys Night Out on Friday May 11th, and the formation of a Warren Ophelia Project that will address relational aggression issues.

Anyone interested in joining the committees concerning any of these events or possible new events for next year should contact Roberta Monahan at (908) 647-4632 or RRMonahan@aol.com.

### Important 2007 Tax Dates

**2<sup>nd</sup> QTR Property taxes due May 1 - May 10**

**On or about July 25, 2007, the tax bills for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> QTR 2007 and 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> QTR 2008 will be mailed to residents.**

Any questions or problems can be addressed by calling or visiting the Tax Collector at the Municipal Building. If you have any questions regarding tax payments contact the Tax Collectors office at (908) 753-8000 x 231 or 232. Any questions regarding tax assessments should be addressed to the Tax Assessors' office x 235.

If you are paying your own taxes, please mail in sufficient time to insure that it is received prior to the end of the grace period. After the 10th of the month, interest is charged at a rate of 8% for the first \$1,500 and 18% thereafter.

### **WARREN CABLE TV 22**



The Warren Township Media Advisory Committee wants everyone to know that our local Channel 22 is here for the community. We are dedicated to meeting the needs of Warren Township and understand that changing state guidelines now make choosing your cable provider more complicated. We welcome viewers' comments and concerns. *Please feel free to send comments, questions and suggestions for programming to Warren Media TV, 46 Mountain Blvd, Warren, NJ 07059.*

You can also send questions to our *Station Manager Liz George @ lgeorge@warrentboe.org or call (908) 753-8000 x 267.*

*Please be advised that Warren Township is in contact with Verizon to insure that Channel 22 will be available.*

## **RADON TESTING**

Have you tested your home for radon? Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that is the second leading cause of lung cancer after cigarette smoking. It is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Radon is found in all homes, but in some homes it reaches high levels that can be a health hazard. Since radon is invisible and odorless you must test to tell you if your home has a problem. Now is a good time to test your home as it is still closed up for the winter.

Start with an initial test. Its purpose is to find out if radon may be a problem in your home. You can test your home yourself and at low cost by purchasing a canister from the Board of Health for \$18.00. Residents are provided with complete information as to how to do the test. All information obtained is strictly confidential. If you wish to purchase a canister, stop by the Health Office in Middlesex Borough Hall or Warren Township Municipal Building. If you wish to hire someone to do the test for you, call (800) 648-0394 for a list of certified testing firms or check the State's website at [www.njradon.org](http://www.njradon.org).



## **WOMEN'S HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Routine health screenings are vital to your health and we encourage everyone to be screened. In order to help facilitate this for those who may not be financially able to afford routine medical care the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission will be entering into an agreement with the Women's Health and Counseling Center, located in Somerville, to provide low cost annual women's health screenings. This program will provide the following services:

Annual gynecological screening visit including:

- ☞ Medical History
- ☞ Physical
- ☞ Breast & Cervical Cancer Screening
- ☞ Patient Education

The cost of these services will be \$135.00. If follow-up is needed the Women's Health & Counseling Center will work with the patient to assure a continuum of care, based on the patient's needs and financial status.

If you are interested in participating in this program please contact the Health Officer of the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission at (732) 356-8090 x 252 or by e-mail at [mbrhc@middlebrookhealth.org](mailto:mbrhc@middlebrookhealth.org).



## **RABIES CLINIC**



The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission, of which Warren Township is a member, will be offering one rabies clinic this spring to help our residents protect their pets against rabies. All residents are encouraged to have their dog or cat vaccinated against rabies. Spring is upon us and we can expect to see a restart of rabies activity in our local wildlife. Along with this activity comes the increased risk of exposure to rabies. If your pet has been previously vaccinated, the health department recommends that your dog or cat be vaccinated every other year. If your pet has not been vaccinated against rabies now is the time. **The clinic is free to all.**

**DATE:** Saturday, May 5, 2007  
**TIME:** 9:00 am to 10:00 am  
**WHERE:** Washington Valley Fire House  
Washington Valley Road  
Warren, NJ

In order to avoid exposure to rabies take the following actions.

- **Do Not Feed or Handle Wild Animals**
- **Avoid Contact With Strays or Pets Other Than Your Own**
- **If You Are Bitten:**
  - Immediately cleanse the wound thoroughly with soap and water.
  - Get prompt medical attention from a physician or hospital emergency room.
  - Report all animal bites to the local health department
- **Be sure all Pets are Appropriately Vaccinated Against Rabies**
- **For more information visit [http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/f\\_rabies.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/f_rabies.htm)**

## **THE SUSAN G. KOMEN BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION**

The Central and South Jersey Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation wants you to know about their "Reach Out for Life: Somebody Needs You<sup>®</sup>" program. This program exists to educate and sponsor screenings in Central and South Jersey. They are particularly interested in addressing disparities in cancer screening rates. African-American women have the highest rate of late-stage incidence of breast cancer and this program hopes to educate 10,000 and sponsor screenings for 1,000 African-American women.

By contacting the program at (800) 272-INFO [4630] a woman can avail herself of many different and necessary services. Depending on age and circumstances, a caller may be provided education and/or connected with a care manager. The care manager will work with individuals to provide education and assist in arranging for medical screenings and treatments depending on an individual's needs. Call the info line for more detailed information.

## **HEALTH COMMISSION OFFERS CHILD HEALTH CONFERENCE**

The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission and its member municipalities, Bound Brook, Green Brook, Middlesex, South Bound Brook, Warren, and Watchung, contract with the Community Visiting Nurses Association to offer a monthly child health conference. The child health conference offers services at no cost to children residing in the municipalities of the Commission. Some of the services available are as follows:

- Childhood immunizations
- Infant and Preschool age physicals by a licensed physician
- Counseling and education by registered nurses
- Diet counseling
- Lead testing
- Guidance and education on child development

We encourage all of our residents to take advantage of these services, particularly those who may have difficulty obtaining health insurance for their children or who may have financial constraints that prevent them from providing preventive health services to our youth. ***If you wish to take advantage of these services or want to learn more about the child health conference please call the VNA at (908) 725-9355 for an appointment or information.*** Together we can keep our young healthy.

**Important Numbers**

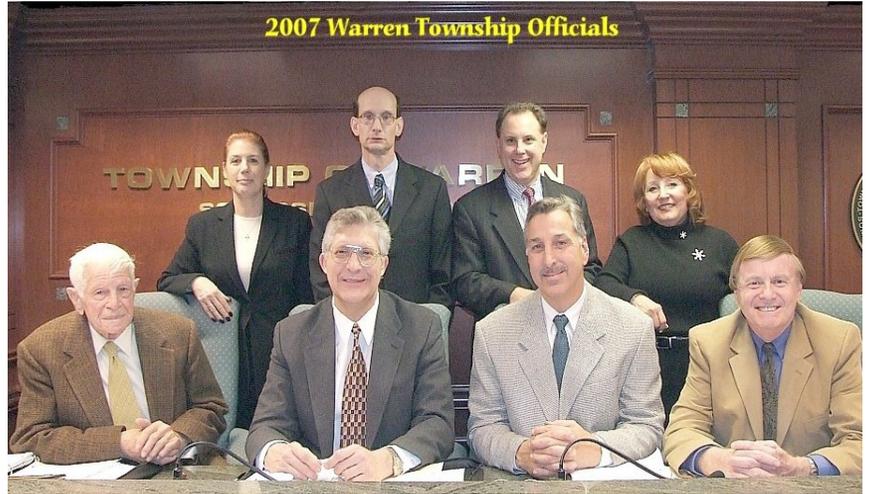
General.....(908) 753-8000  
 Township Administrator .....X 250, 252  
 Township Clerk.....X 221, 222

Board of Adjustment.....X 260  
 Board of Health.....X 239  
 Cable TV 22.....X 267  
 Construction Office.....X 242  
 Engineering Department.....X 248  
 Municipal Court.....X 226  
 Planning Board.....X 243  
 Recreation .....X 270  
 Sewerage Authority.....X 258  
 Tax Assessment.....X 234, 235  
 Tax Collector .....X 231, 232  
 Zoning Office.....X 243

Library.....(908) 754-5554  
 Emergency Management .....(908) 753-1000  
 Police, Fire & Rescue.....(908) 753-1000\*  
 \*Dial 911 for any EMERGENCY  
 Public Works Department.....(908) 753-1223

All correspondence should be addressed to individual departments and mailed to :

**Township of Warren  
 46 Mountain Boulevard  
 Warren, NJ 07059-5695**

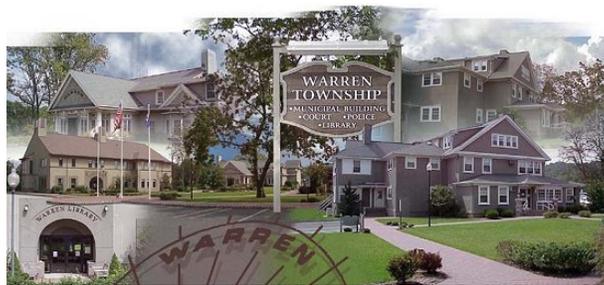


Top row l to r: Patricia DiRocco – Twp Clerk, Mark Krane – Twp Administrator, John Belardo – Twp Attorney, Carolann Garafola – Committee Member  
 Bottom row l to r: Frank Salvato – Committee Member, Vic Sordillo – Mayor, Gary DiNardo – Deputy Mayor, Mal Plager – Committee Member

**Newsletter  
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**Important Websites**

Warren Township..... [www.warrennj.org](http://www.warrennj.org)  
 Library ..... [www.somerset.lib.nj.us/warren.htm](http://www.somerset.lib.nj.us/warren.htm)  
 Police ..... [www.warrenpolice.com](http://www.warrenpolice.com)  
 Schools..... [www.warrentboe.org](http://www.warrentboe.org)  
 Watchung Hills Reg. HS..... [www.whrhs.org](http://www.whrhs.org)  
 Somerset County..... [www.co.somerset.nj.us](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us)  
 New Jersey ..... [www.state.nj.us](http://www.state.nj.us)



**Township of Warren  
 Somerset County  
 46 Mountain Boulevard  
 Warren, NJ 07059-5695  
 (908) 753-8000**

**PRSR STD  
 US POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 Plainfield, NJ  
 Permit No. 140**

**NOTICE TO DISTRICT 9 VOTERS  
 POLLING LOCATION CHANGE**

Please be advised that the polling location for voters in District 9 has been changed from Watchung Hills Regional High School at 108 Stirling Road to Woodland School at 114 Stirling Road. The change is in effect for the School Board, Primary and General elections.  
 If you have any questions or need guidance, please call Patricia DiRocco, Township Clerk at (908) 753-8000 ext. 223.