



Warner Connects NH Newsletter Winter/Spring 2024

Warner Area Food Pantry and Family Closet

Dear Friends and Supporters,

For the past year Warner Connects NH has shown that with more help, we can help more. Even in the face of economic headwinds and continued inflation, our volunteers and our board found ways to help more people in our community than ever before. We hope you are also motivated to helping our team fight hunger wherever it lives in our community. For a complete 2023 Annual Report please visit our website at: warnerconnects.nh.org

Please join us for an OPEN HOUSE, 49 West Main Street, Saturday, March 9th from 10-1pm. Bring a non-perishable item to be entered into a raffle.

With Gratitude,

The Board of Directors

IMPORTANT DECISION PENDING

The Town of Warner Welfare Office is required by law to assist residents in crisis/emergency, including for food and shelter. However, the all-volunteer Warner Area Food Pantry has been providing food support to Warner residents without any direct monetary support from the Town. Our operations are funded in part from the operation of our Family Closet boutique, which is also entirely run by volunteers.

The selectboard has recently required that we pay \$400/month in rent for the space utilized by the Food Pantry and Family Closet in the Warner Community Center. Prior to this action, no rental payments were required. Last year we provided \$102,722 in food and commodities, of which 80% went to Warner residents. Our food and commodities are partially donated from US Department of Agriculture, Capital Region Food Program (Concord), Sweet Beet Market (Bradford), Kearsarge Food Hub (Bradford), Farmsteads of New England (Hillsborough), Merrimack County Conservation Commission, Bread Ministry (Concord), SPCA (Concord), Yankee Farmer's Market (Warner), Warner Public Market (Warner), and local community members. However, we also use donated funds to purchase approximately 10% of the food items and commodities that we distribute to needy individuals. The required rent payment has directly reduced the amount of food and commodities that we are able to purchase.

Some have argued that because we service some clients from surrounding towns, that Warner should not provide free rent to Warner Connects NH. However, we would require the same operating space even if the pantry was restricted to Warner residents, and such a restriction could jeopardize the many contributions we rely on from individuals and organizations in surrounding towns. Nothing would be gained for Warner residents by limiting the client-base of the Food Pantry to Warner residents. Food pantries in the surrounding towns do not incur a rent, and we are hoping that the Town of Warner will allow us to return to rent-free status.

A petition warrant article is being submitted for Town Meeting. It states: "To see if the town will vote to allow Warner Connects NH (Warner Area Food Pantry and Family Closet) to conduct their non-profit (EIN 85-4243224) operation rent free. This action would commence at the end of their current lease and would continue, in their current space, as long as they are servicing the people of our community." We invite you to come to town meeting on Wednesday, March 13th at 6pm.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Warner Connects NH is to improve the health and well-being of area residents in need by providing access to healthy foods, nutrition education, and clothing.

OUR CLIENTS – 2023 Year End Totals

Our clients are qualified through USDA guidelines as they already receive social services for income-based need and/or assistance programs (i.e.: fuel assistance, food stamps, WIC, etc.), either through the state or federal agencies. We are able to service clients once a week.

Warner Residents: 2459 individuals

Surrounding Towns: 753 individuals

\$80,123 of food and commodities to Warner Residents only

Percents for the Year: Adults: 46% Seniors: 37% Children: 17%

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers:

Jonathan Lord – Chair

Apryl Blood – Vice Chair

Joanna Moore – Treasurer

Lianne Roux – Secretary

Directors:

Brinda Balassone

Amelia Gardner

Patty Anderson

Operation Coordinators:

Apryl Blood, Food Pantry Coordinator

Patty Anderson, Family Closet Coordinator

INFORMATION ON OUR ORGANIZATION

We are located at: 49 West Main Street, Warner, NH 03278,
Mailing: P.O. Box 402, Warner, NH 03278

website is: www.warnerconnectsnh.org

See our website for updated newsletters throughout the year.

Donations: monetary donations through our website, in person or by mail.

We are a certified 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, which assures all your donations are tax deductible.

We are 100% Volunteer Run.

Food Pantry:

Phone: (603) 456-2053

Client Service Hours are: Tuesday, 4-6pm and Thursday, 11-1pm.

Office Hours are: Tues-Thur. 10-3pm. (donation drop offs and signups)

A storage cabinet outside the pantry, a box at Sugar River Bank and a bin at Market Basket are available for non-perishable donations.

Email us at: warnerpantry@gmail.com

Family Closet:

Phone: (603) 456-2183

Store Hours: Wednesday and Saturday 10-4pm.

Closed the month of January annually.

Donations: accepted during open hours. (Current Season Donations Accepted in 2 white kitchen trash bags max, or 2 boxes equal size)

Email us at: familyclosetwcnh@gmail.com