

Walpole dedicates new fire station

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WALPOLE — The Walpole Fire Department cut the ribbon on its new home this past weekend.

State and local officials - as well as Congressman Stephen Lynch - joined firefighters in a public ceremony Saturday morning, commemorating the new headquarters.

Selectmen Chairman Eric Kraus noted that the new Stone Street building was the department's third facility on the same site; the first was built in 1902, while the second was constructed in 1954.

"This is twice as large as the former station, and will house 40 firefighters and one administrator," he said, adding that the facility would house equipment that would strengthen protection for Walpole residents. "(The station) was built without an override, meaning not one additional tax dollar was spent."

Walpole Fire Chief Timothy Bailey spoke about the process that made the new station a reality, saying the earliest efforts began years ago. The department, he said, took an aggressive approach to the project and - one year and one month after construction began - it was dedicating its new building.

Bailey thanked the public for its continued support of the project.

Town Administrator James Johnson thanked all those who had a hand in making the station possible.

"I'm awfully proud today to be here at the opening of the building," he said. "It's been a long time coming."

Lynch said he was pleased to see Walpole upgrading its public buildings; the town's library and police station have also been replaced in recent years.

"As the responsibilities of firefighters here and across the country have broadened, it's imperative they have the resources to meet the demands of their profession," he said. "With the current opioid crisis we're dealing with, oftentimes it's the firefighters working in a relief capacity who save lives."

State Rep. Paul McMurtry thanked the town's firefighters for putting themselves in harm's way to protect their fellow citizens, and congratulated them on the new station.

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