

**PATRICK J. AHEARN**  
**Recipient of the John J. Cronin Public Service Award**

The John J. Cronin Public Service Award committee annually awards Westwood's highest honor to an individual who has been remarkable in service to the community. John J. Cronin, Town Treasurer, for many years selflessly gave of his time and expertise for the betterment of the community, both as an elected official and in numerous volunteer activities. To recognize the spirit of community involvement illustrative of John Cronin's life, it is with great pleasure we announce Patrick Ahearn as the sixteenth recipient of the John J. Cronin Public Service Award.

Patrick J. Ahearn served on the Board of Selectmen for eighteen (18) years from 1993 to 2016, serving as Chairman six times throughout his tenure and serving as the Selectmen liaison on many boards and committees. Pat's extensive experience and background on the Board along with his background as an attorney provided invaluable insight, historical knowledge of policies and procedures to the Board throughout the years.

Prior to his service on the Board of Selectmen, Pat was a member of the Business Development Advisory Board which he Chaired for many years and actively researched and sought support for the Town to petition the General Court to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue liquor licenses.

During his first term as Chairman, Pat established the Aid to the Elderly program which reviewed options for increasing assistance to the elderly population, including tax relief. The Town has raised, through donations, a total of \$450,000 to assist in the tax relief to many seniors in the community since its establishment in 1999; received a grant for \$1 million from the state to purchase and preserve Lowell Woods for additional open space in Town.

In 2000, the Pat successfully negotiated the implementation of paramedic services to be offered in Westwood through the Fire Department; worked with the Youth & Family Service Commission to establish the Westwood Community Chest, an organization that helps Westwood individuals and families in need through charitable donations; successfully worked with the Selectmen, OPEN, Westwood Preservation Society and Westwood Land Trust to negotiate the purchase of 79 acres of open space owned by the Striar Family including \$1.7 million with \$75,000 from Land Trust, \$75,000 from Preservation Society and \$250,000 grant from Self-help program by Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

During his term, Pat sought and received appropriation from Town Meeting to design and construct a municipal building on Carby Street that houses the Department of Public Works administrative offices and all land use departments, freeing up office space in Town Hall; negotiated the transfer of cable licenses from AT&T Broadband to Comcast which provided high speed internet in Town.

In 2003, the Board of Selectmen petitioned the General Court for the authorization for the Board of Selectmen to issue liquor licenses for the service of alcoholic beverages in the Town of Westwood. Over the next year, the Board, with the caution and input from Pat, developed the Town's Alcoholic Beverage Rules and Regulations. Pat spent a considerable amount of time pledging the enforcement and oversight of all establishments within Town. With his careful and skillful deliberations with the Board, Pat made it his priority to protect the community, while boosting economic development.

Beginning in 2006, Pat and the Board established a Steering Committee to prepare the Town for proposals for a mixed use development application, known as Westwood Station. Throughout the years and through tough fiscal times, in his role on the Board Pat was able to bring history on the proposed projects, a steady vision for what the Town wanted, and ensured that proposals brought for consideration were in the best interest of the Town. In 2013 when the Town approved the University Station Project, Pat and the Board were in the forefront, negotiating and reviewing all the plans to safeguard the Town's best interest.

In 2009, Pat and the Board approved the installation of the artificial field behind the High School with lights to accommodate several sports including soccer, lacrosse, football and field hockey; oversaw the approval of the construction of new garage facilities for the Department of Public Works including an enclosed wash bay which allow for safe washing of the equipment vehicles in the water protection district for on the of Dedham-Westwood Water wells.

Through 2012, he oversaw the construction of the New Library with the Permanent Building Committee where the project was significantly under the expected bid price; participated and oversaw the purchase and sale of the Colburn School including serving on the Colburn School Reuse Task Force which researched and selected the appropriate bidder for best use.

During his Chairmanship in 2012, Pat oversaw the issuance of the first off-premise liquor sale license for wine and malt beverages, continuing to enhance the Town's economic position and increase the desire for companies to locate within the community; and during his Chairmanship in 2015, Pat sought and received Town Meeting allocation of \$850,000 to design a new Fire Station in Islington and \$1 million for the design of a Police Headquarters; further, sought and allocated \$8.6 million bond to construct the new Fire Station; received Department of Housing and Community Development certification that Westwood has achieved and exceeded the Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B requirement that 10% of the housing units qualify as affordable subsidized housing.

Pat was also instrumental in approving a transferring of the town and school employee healthcare coverage from West Suburban Health Group to the state GIC plans, which resulted in significant savings and committed the Selectmen allocating funds annually to cover the town's OPEB liability.

True to the dedication Pat has for his community, he was recently elected to serve as a member of the Sewer Commission in 2018. Pat has also been an active member of the community in various roles including, but not limited to, President of the Westwood Pop Warner, Pop Warner Coach, Little League Coach, and an Active Parishioner at St. Margaret Mary's Church.

On behalf of the John J. Cronin Public Service Award Committee, it is with great pleasure that we present this prestigious award to Patrick J. Ahearn and add his name to the plaque displayed in Town Hall listing all previously honored individuals.

---

John M. Hickey, Chairman

---

Nancy C. Hyde, Clerk

---

Michael F. Walsh, Third Member