

# **Town of Willington**

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## **BOARD OF FINANCE**

**Regular and Budget Meeting Minutes  
Via Public Online Video Conference**

**February 18, 2021  
7:00 PM**

*\*Minutes are not official until approved at the next regular meeting*

Members Present (a quorum of 4 members is required to conduct business):

Mike Makuch – Chairman  
Geoff Prusak – Vice Chairman  
Pete Tanaka – Secretary  
Matt Clark  
Christina Mailhos  
Lisa Woolf – Alternate

Members Absent:

Stef Summers

Also Present:

First Selectwoman Erika Wiczenski  
Laurie Semprebon – Treasurer  
Dick Palmer – Fire Marshal  
Alex Moore – Chief, Willington Fire Department #1  
Mike D'Amato – Land Use Agent  
Christine Psathas – Registrar of Voters  
Suzanne Chapman – Registrar of Voters  
Pete Andersen – Conservation Commission Chair  
Members of the Public

Chairman Mike Makuch called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

## **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

**Mike Makuch made a motion to seat Lisa Woolf for Stef Summers.**

**Geoff Prusak seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 4 Yes (P. Tanaka, M. Clark, G. Prusak, M. Makuch), 0 No**

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Christina Mailhos arrived at the meeting.

**Pete Tanaka made a motion to approve the budget meeting minutes of February 11, 2021. Geoff Prusak seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 5 Yes (G. Prusak, P. Tanaka, C. Mailhos, L. Woolf, M. Makuch), 0 No, 1 Abstain (M. Clark)**

### **PRESENT TO SPEAK**

Ryan Spooner introduced himself as the pastor of St. Paul's church and commented on the South Willington sidewalk project. He stated that the sidewalk is very bad there; if anyone tries to shovel it, the shovels break because it's so cracked. St. Paul's has people who come to the church from High Chase residential center and they have a lot of trouble with the sidewalk, especially those with wheelchairs or walkers. He gave the example of a man who broke down emotionally at the thought of returning to High Chase via the sidewalk, resulting in the pastor driving him back. He understands that funds are limited, but the sidewalk is a problem and has been for a while; if there's any chance it could get fixed, that would be awesome.

Peter Latincsics of 97 Trask Rd. stated: I wanted to speak tonight on behalf of the appointment of Brenda Abrams to the Board of Finance as an alternate. She is an outstanding candidate for this position. She is one of the highest vote-getters in our last municipal election when she ran for Board of Education and only narrowly missed. I think there's broad community support for Brenda, evidenced by all the votes she received. I think she'd be a good addition to the board and I urge the board to nominate her this evening.

Jim Bulick of 12 Laurel Dr. stated: I'm also speaking on behalf of Brenda Abrams to highly recommend her to fill a vacancy for the alternate position that opened when republican Mike Perry resigned and moved out of town. Brenda has management experience; she works in the health care industry. I have always known her to be a compassionate individual, deliberate, and views all sides of a problem before jumping to conclusions. She is not a rash individual, she would be an excellent candidate for the position. The Willington republicans nominated her late last spring when concerns about Mike Perry's board membership were raised and again recently when we learned he was no longer a registered voter of Willington. We highly recommend Brenda Abrams and hope that you give her your best consideration.

Orlando Rodriguez of 50 Timber Lane stated: I have asked to be nominated to the Board of Finance. I have been dealing with CT finance issues through my work for almost 20 years now. I am very familiar with most of the state grants to municipalities and education.

Brenda Abrams stated: I appreciate the nomination for the BOF. I'm excited about it; I have been showing interest in this for a long time and am excited to have the opportunity to be on the BOF. I have a lot of management experience, I have worked within budgets for the last 35 years, and I'm not one to make rash decisions. I consider the whole picture, I don't just make a decision off of one item; I look at the whole thing comprehensively. I'm looking forward to being able to work with the BOF and the town of Willington. Thank you for the opportunity that I may have.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Budget presentations tabled previously:**

#### **a. 0231 Fire Marshal**

**Attachment #1**

Chairman Makuch summarized that the budget is flat from the current year; 0 increase.

Fire Marshal Dick Palmer shared that he was able to purchase the newer code books out of last year's budget, so he's all set as far as those go. He is pretty fortunate to keep his budget the same and has been kind-of frugal in purchases and in trying to share correspondence and standards with other fire marshals.

Chairman Makuch asked whether the scheduled code change for September of 2020, which was pushed off to September 2021, is still on track. Dick replied that it is supposed to be, though he doesn't know how the state's going to do that. When he purchased the manuals, he made sure the ones he got were for this approval period and are up to date.

Chairman Makuch highlighted that the Fire Marshal's letter asked that if a raise was put in the budget for town employees, he is requesting to follow that raise as well.

#### **b. AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) Budget**

**Attachment #2**

Chief Alex Moore explained that there is no increase to the AED budget of \$6,000 and read through his letter (attached). The request includes equipment to hang the equipment in the buildings.

Lisa Woolf asked why the AED units need to be fully replaced instead of just replacing the batteries and pads. Chief Moore replied that the ones in the schools and on the apparatus are more than 10 years old and are no longer supported, therefore they can't get parts for them. They're trying to replace as many as they can and place them in areas where there weren't units.

### **2. Public Health Crisis Update – potential effect on municipal budgets**

Selectwoman Wiecenski shared that Congressman Courtney's office has disseminated information regarding the American Rescue Plan estimated allocations for Connecticut. Based on this, Willington's portion could be upwards of \$1,300,000. They've given some guidance on eligible uses; a pretty broad base but could include revenue that was lost, delayed, or decreased as a result of the emergency, which the last amount did not include. It's a large sum of money but there's a lot to do on the federal side before we know exactly what kind of funds we'll be getting if any.

Chairman Makuch asked if updated unemployment numbers were available. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that the numbers have been regularly released on the third Friday of the month, the morning after each regular BOF meeting.

Chairman Makuch commented that real estate is still moving very strongly.

Matt Clark said that in his news feed today it was reported by Apple that there were 821,000 new initial jobless claims nationwide; this recession is continuing on.

### **3. CIP/Capital funding process; continued discussion**

Chairman Makuch shared that the Capital Improvement Plan Committee met again last night. The CIP plan is pretty well put together, but there was no quorum at their meeting last night to be able to approve it. The Board can anticipate it'll be officially codified next week and moved on to Selectmen and will come to the BOF through them.

### **4. Monitoring the current FY budget**

Chairman Makuch stated that Business Manager Donna Latincsics sent a report this afternoon which was distributed to board members. He summarized that the general government running about right percentage-wise. K-8 education is running under, as is Region 19, possibly due to the way they structure expenses.

Matt requested to talk about the fact that Willington is behind on revenue collections by 9%. Treasurer Laurie Semprebson clarified that her email stated that, with the Revenue Collector's deposit at the end of January, the town is at about 91% of collection. People have until April 1 to pay their taxes unlike other years, so the tax amounts are still coming in.

Selectwoman Wiczenski shared that at the end of the day today, the Revenue Collector shared that we are at 94.42% of our usual 98% collection. For comparison, one year ago today, we were at 98.83% collection.

### **5. Board of Finance manual/policies/etc.**

Chairman Makuch commented that there is nothing new for this topic right now; the board is not able to give that attention during budget season and will come back to it later.

### **6. Annual Reports**

Chairman Makuch stated that the FY18-19 annual report was compiled and sent out to board members. The board will move now to compile FY19-20.

### **7. Appointment to fill vacancy (alternate) – expires at the next municipal election, Nov 2021**

Chairman Makuch stated that there are two interested parties. He opened the floor for discussion and nominations.

**Pete Tanaka nominated Brenda Abrams for the position of Board of Finance alternate. Matt Clark seconded the nomination.**

Lisa asked Brenda what size budget she is responsible for; how many employees and what is the book of business that she is managing. Brenda replied that she is in charge of about eight employees, though that number is less right now due to COVID. The budget entails meeting the needs of 150 residents; their social, emotional, mental, cognitive, and spiritual needs. Right now, the budget entails \$1,300 per month, although when they are fully open it is much larger. She also does events for the community, within the facility, and marketing which entails about \$2,500 per month.

Christina ask Brenda about her familiarity with our budget. This vacancy is to fill up to the next election in November, so it's just to serve through the remainder of budget season which we're halfway through. Does she understand our process, has anyone explained it to her, and has she watched any of our meetings so she's up to speed, because it's a lot to catch up with in a short amount of time.

Brenda replied that she understands that it's a temporary position. She has talked to Jim Bulick, Peter Latincsics, Pete Tanaka, and Geoff Prusak, and they've been very supportive and helpful in filling her in with what it all involves and to catch her up to speed. She has attended some meetings and followed up with YouTube and the minutes on Town of Willington website.

The board discussed the proper process for nominations and voting in the instance of multiple candidates.

**Mike Makuch nominated Orlando Rodriguez for the position of Board of Finance alternate.**

**Lisa Woolf seconded the nomination.**

Lisa recalled that Orlando mentioned that he has extensive experience with the state budget system and asked if he is actively involved in another board in town. Orlando replied that he just joined the CIP Committee in January.

Lisa asked Orlando to talk more about his managerial and financial experience with the state. Orlando clarified that he has no managerial experience. He tracks the state's finances; where the money's coming from, going, where the bonds are, how much the towns get, what they can and can't do with it, etc. If you want to know what's going on with the state budget, he's a good person to ask. In 2008 he did state population projections. He is a demographer, so he is very aware of what goes on within societies. He would be a good resource to have when it comes to talking about a new school or what's going to happen going forward; how much you can and can't predict. Orlando continued that if the board is looking for someone who has managed a budget before, that's not him, but he can tell what you can and can't do with money.

Matt asked for more information about Orlando's job, and whether it is for the state. Orlando replied that he worked at UConn as a demographer and did social economic work there as a staff researcher. Then he worked for the nonprofit Connecticut Voices for Children and did a lot of policy work on state policies that affect kids. He's done a lot of testimony in the state legislature and worked for the legislature for two years, so he knows how things work internally. Most recently he works for the Connecticut Education Association as their policy person. He tracks what's going on with education budgets, finance budgets, pensions, etc.

Matt asked if Orlando is familiar with Willington's budget. Orlando replied that he looked at it but hasn't kept track of it, as he didn't find out about this opening until about a month ago.

Discussion was held on the timeline of the position opening.

Matt asked if Orlando has been following the BOF meetings. Orlando replied not until now.

Christina asked if either nominee is planning on running for this seat in November, since it does take such a long time to get up to speed. Brenda replied that she would definitely be interested in running. Orlando replied that he would be interested in running but doesn't want to make a commitment now and have to go back on it since it's so far off and he can't say what's going to happen.

Pete Tanaka noted that BOF rules require that the alternates have to be of different parties, and there is already a Democrat in one. He asked if Orlando has a party affiliation or has ever been affiliated with a party. Orlando replied that he is unaffiliated, though years ago he was registered as a Democrat to vote in the primary.

Pete noted that the voter records show Orlando changed to unaffiliated as of January 2021. Orlando explained that he wanted to get involved in local politics and thought he needed to be affiliated with a party, but changed back to unaffiliated when he found out that wasn't the case.

Pete asked whether Orlando would run as independent or with a party if he ran in November. Orlando replied that he doesn't see the world that way; he looks at the facts and isn't driven by a political perspective. He is not a political animal and hasn't thought about it that far.

Geoff asked Orlando how he found out about and got interested in the open position. Orlando replied that he couldn't quite remember, but it could've come up at a CIP Committee meeting.

<b>Vote:</b>	Brenda Abrams	Orlando Rodriguez
Matt Clark	X	
Geoff Prusak	X	
Lisa Woolf		X
Pete Tanaka	X	
Christina Mailhos		X
Mike Makuch	X	

Chairman Makuch thanked Orlando for his interest and welcomed Brenda to the Board. Orlando thanked the board for their time. Brenda expressed her thanks as well. The process for following up with Town Clerk Robin Campbell for swearing-in was discussed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Budget Transfers – request of Board of Selectmen**

#### **a. Finance Office furnace**

Selectwoman Wiczenski summarized that she came to the board at its last meeting with some previously unexpected expenditures. The first is replacing the furnace in the finance office. They were able to locate funds within the current operating budget out of the Employee Insurance line item. That line was overstated by about \$45,000 because final numbers were received after the budget process last year. This board previously approved a transfer of \$5,000 for Open Space, leaving about \$40,000 in excess. They are asking for a line item transfer from Employee Insurance for the furnace project to TOB Maintenance and Miscellaneous.

**Mike Makuch made a motion to allow the transfer of \$7,200 from line item #0831 Employee Insurances to line item #0430 TOB Maintenance and Miscellaneous for the purpose of furnace replacement in the finance office.  
Christina Mailhos seconded the motion.**

Matt asked if this asset replacement was planned for. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that they didn't anticipate this furnace needing replacement as soon as it did. They anticipated the other furnace needing replacement this year and included that in the plan.

Matt asked why the request is to transfer between lines, not just spend that money. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that they believe they can use dollars that are in the current budget so there isn't an additional appropriation. Because there was excess in this line item, those funds are not earmarked for insurance for employees that we have. Rather than ask taxpayers for additional funds from the general fund, we are able to use money that is already appropriated. If unspent, these funds would be returned to the town at the end of the year.

Pete asked if this is the first time the board is hearing of this need for furnace repair. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that she brought it to the board's attention last money. At that time they were waiting on a couple of vendor quotes and wanted to see if they could come up with the funds out of the operating budget before asking the BOF for a new appropriation.

**Vote: 6 Yes (P. Tanaka, C. Mailhos, M. Clark, L. Woolf, G. Prusak, M. Makuch), 0 No**

**b. South Willington LOTCIP Project design**

Chairman Makuch recalled that this project has been discussed at previous meetings and that there has been a concern raised by the owner of one of the properties in the area.

Selectwoman Wiecenski summarized that the request is for a \$22,000 transfer from line item #0831 Employee Insurance to cover the design portion, which is what the town would be responsible for in the LOTCIP grant for a \$999,999 project that begins at Hall School and continues to Village St., just prior to high chase and the mills. Mike D'Amato was able to acquire some of the necessary items from the state as they were doing work in the area, so he was able to get the costs down to \$22,000. She reminded the board that these are already appropriated funds in this line item that are in excess.

Chairman Makuch recalled questions about the history of the sidewalk topic. There was a sidewalk committee appointed at one point to do some research. They brought back information in 2014 or 2015. There are questions about ownership of property, rights of way, who is responsible for what, liability, and who owns the sidewalks once they're done since none of it is town property. The communication sent to the board from Mr. Buccino brings back up those same concerns. Chairman Makuch asked if they have been able to address those questions about history, making sure we have clear guidance on rights of way, and to Tom Buccino's concern that the project is not going as far as the mill.

Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that there was a sidewalk committee formed in 2014 whose final analysis left in the air the question of who owned them, but made clear that whoever repaired

them would then take ownership of them. The committee recommended looking for grant funds to replace the sidewalks as to not burden the taxpayers, or to remove the sidewalks at an additional expense. As a result, the town has been looking for grant money to repair them. That does mean the town will have to take ownership of the, but at some point something had to be done. As far as the project, the amount of funds did not allow the project to continue farther than Village St. from the school. If more was available, they'd love to complete the entire project.

Chairman Makuch clarified that right now the town of Willington owns nothing in that area; it's either state highway or private property owners. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that there is no clear cut answer to that question. Chairman Makuch speculated that the sides of a state highway must be state property. Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that the town owns the property that the school is on.

Chairman Makuch summarized that once the town repairs the sidewalks, it will be responsible for them. Does that also include snow removal? Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that there is currently a town ordinance that speaks to snow removal; the property abutting it is responsible.

Christina asked why the engineering isn't being done all the way down. Even though the grant wouldn't cover going all the way, maybe the engineering could be done all the way so they would know how much to plan for in the future. She recalled that part of what came out of the sidewalk committee was to have the area considered a historic district, which they went through the process of doing.

Mike D'Amato replied that sometimes the parameters, design criteria, and level of plans changes based on the specific grant criteria. The projects also have to meet certain guidelines because they're on a state road, and if the specifications change, the project would have to be redesigned. Third, some grants pay for design and others don't, so if the town pays for engineering now and then finds a grant that would've covered it, that's an out-of-pocket expense.

Lisa commented that even though the ownership of the sidewalks is unclear, if someone gets hurt on them, the town could possibly be liable. Selectwoman Wiecenski commented that she's been committed to try to find funds to do the whole project and this is the first grant they've found. When they narrowed down the project, they hoped it would go the entire way to the mill, but in following state guidelines the dollars didn't go as far as they'd like them to. She mentioned that Mr. Buccino and ECHAP got an almost \$1 million grant, some portion of which could've gone toward repairing sidewalks as well.

Lisa mentioned that High Chase residents are also a part of Willington and that that is an important business in town. Selectwoman Wiecenski commented that the initial scope of the project was hoping to go that way and that they would like to go farther. To Christina's point, maybe we look into doing some separate engineering so we know the cost moving forward. Mr. Buccino's request to this board is to approve emergency funding to put sidewalks in, but we don't even know what that figure would be, and whether those are more urgent than the rest of the sidewalks in that area. They are trying to rectify the situation without a large burden to taxpayers.

Mike D'Amato provided background information on Mr. Buccino's request. He explained that the funds only allow the project to stretch so far; they chose to start at the school because they felt the ADA accessibility issues there are a primary concern and because the state had identified issues in that area as well.

Matt mentioned the success of a redesign project on his former neighborhood near Wesleyan University and hopes that something similar could be done in South Willington. Christina commented that that is exactly what the goal is. Willington's village is one of the only full mill villages in the state of Connecticut that's still standing, so it's a high value historical place and there is a lot that can be done there in terms of businesses and residential. She commented that she would like to see a CIP project to make the rest of the project happen if we're going to make it this far.

Selectwoman Wiczenski commented that one of the reasons this project isn't in CIP this year is because nothing fell into place. When we're done with this project, we'll have a better scope of whether the funds can be extended to go farther and then one of the out years could be formulated with what's left.

Pete asked if this project is going to affect South Willington Fire Station and response times. Chairman Makuch replied that the project takes place across the street and doesn't reach as far as the fire station.

Chairman Makuch clarified that the project will include cutting down some of the land on the property north of the church. Mike D'Amato confirmed that that improvement will be made in order to get an ADA accessible grade down the hill.

**Mike Makuch made a motion that the Board of Finance authorize the transfer of \$22,000 from line item #0831 Employee Insurance to line item #0503 Capital Projects.**

**Pete Tanaka seconded the motion.**

Matt suggested increasing the scope of the design project to include the design work necessary to meet our major mill owner's request that we extend the project. Chairman Makuch replied that the cost of that and where the funds would come from is unknown at this time.

Chairman Makuch asked if adding additional engineering would prevent the grant from continuing as it is. Mike D'Amato replied that he has to tell CRCOG tomorrow if the funds are secured for the project. He can't include that as part of the grant they're doing now because it's not within the scope of the project. They may have to revise the application to include that as a non-participating cost that's being borne by the town, which he isn't sure can be done at this point.

**Vote: 6 Yes (C. Mailhos, M. Clark, G. Prusak, L. Woolf, P. Tanaka, M. Makuch), 0 No**

## **2. Budget Presentations – Elected Officials and Commissions**

**a. 0121 Tolland-Mansfield Probate District**

Chairman Makuch stated that Donna shared that this amount is not available yet.

**Mike Makuch made a motion to table 0121 Tolland-Mansfield Probate District to the next budget meeting.**

**Geoff Prusak seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 6 Yes (L. Woolf, P. Tanaka, M. Clark, G. Prusak, C. Mailhos, M. Makuch), 0 No**

**b. 0126 Registrar of Voters**

**Attachment #3, #4**

Chairman Makuch highlighted the proposed 3.1% decrease.

**c. 0131 Board of Finance**

Chairman Makuch reviewed that he requested to add some funds to a line within the BOF budget as the Board looks into policies and rules of conduct or order as topics of discussion and may need to pay for hours to run something through the town attorney. It could also cover other administrative costs for rewriting policies or producing a policy manual.

**d. 0132 Treasurer**

**Attachment #5**

Treasurer Laurie Semprebon stated that her budget is flat. Some numbers were adjusted back to what they were in FY19-20 to reflect more accurately different expenditures. She commented that she assumes if there's a negotiated increase for the members of the union, the rest of the town employees would be included in that.

**e. 0135 Board of Assessment Appeals**

Laurie Semprebon relayed that the budget will remain the same so nothing was submitted. Chairman Makuch commented that he would follow up with Ed Taiman and ask for a submission for the BOF to review and approve.

**Mike Makuch made a motion to table 0135 Board of Assessment Appeals until a budget is received.**

**Geoff Prusak seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 6 Yes (L. Woolf, M. Clark, G. Prusak, P. Tanaka, C. Mailhos, M. Makuch), 0 No**

**f. 0161 Conservation Commission**

**Attachment #6**

Conservation Commission Chair Pete Andersen commented regarding the Open Space Talmadge Property: the commission utilized the money appropriated by this board and have the appraisals, which give them a little wiggle room for negotiations. The grants for next year have not been announced by DEEP yet but are expected likely next week. The project is predicated on receiving a DEEP grant.

Pete Andersen continued, regarding the budget, the bottom line stays the same. The largest category is \$800 includes professional help on the maintenance of the park. As the commissioners age it becomes more difficult to carry chainsaws to the far end of the park to keep the trails safe. They hope in the near future to redistribute management responsibilities to other departments. He commented that the parks and trails have been well used during COVID. The

Moose Meadow parking lot and the parking lot on Mason road have been full or overflowing and it's important to keep trails safe.

Christina commended the Commission for their great work. She has been on lots of trails in lots of towns in the last year and ours are great. Pete Andersen thanked the board for their commitment to Willington.

**g. 0171, 0172, 0176 Planning and Zoning, ZBA, IW&WC      Attachment #7, #8**

Mike D'Amato stated that he went through his submission with Walter Parsell and is submitting it on his behalf. Everything is at 0 except one line item which is requested to go back to the previous year's amount. He highlighted that the attached memo outlines what they are doing related to COVID and transitions they've had to do to provide services in a different way.

Pete Tanaka asked for more information on the GIS project. Mike D'Amato explained that over a decade ago, Willington invested in a document management system to create and digitize land use records. The town has been feverishly scanning and making digital files since then. They've created a link between that management system and the GIS, click on their property, and look at everything the town has, instead of coming in to the Town Hall to do that.

**h. 0175 Economic Development**

**Attachment #9**

Chairman Makuch summarized that EDC presents a 0% increase in their budget.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

All correspondence was forwarded to the board.

Matt asked the purpose of the fire chief sending the language regarding bargaining to the board. Chief Moore replied that he shared it for reference so the board knew what he was referring to during the conversation regarding negotiations.

**PRESENT TO SPEAK**

Dr. Kuldip Bhogal introduced himself as the owner for High Chase since 2014. He mentioned the history of the building and described its beauty and his work at restoring it. He welcomed anyone who would like to see it to come for a visit. He stated that his main concern has been the sidewalk in front of the building and the liability of it.

Ralph Tulis commented on the South Willington project. He shared that he was on the sidewalk committee in 2014 and that he prepared the report for the committee. He noted that the sidewalks preexisted the paving of Rt. 32 and the state taking over that roadway; it was a gravel road with sidewalks, presumably so the workers who lived in the village didn't track mud into the buildings. Ownership gets fuzzy once the state took over the road. It was the committee's sentiment that when the state highway department took over that road, it included the sidewalks. It was difficult for the committee to think that the onus for maintaining and repairing the sidewalks was on the town of Willington. He believes that once the DOT gets the right-of-way maps, the sidewalks will be on the state right-of-way.

Ralph continued that, in his opinion, any design work that is done should look at the entire package from the school to the end of the sidewalks at the mill. He detailed how much work it will require to manufacture the right grade in that area and the retaining walls which will need to be factored in.

Ralph expressed concern at how the DOT plans to influence traffic in the area, how that cost will impact the work that gets done on the sidewalk, what will happen to the grant if the final design estimates from contractors come in above the amount of the grant, and what the current safety criteria requires of sidewalks along a state highway. He encouraged the BOF to read the 2014 report.

Selectwoman Wiecenski will email that report and the VCI report about the historic district to Chairman Makuch to be distributed to the board.

### **GOOD & WELFARE**

Chairman Makuch commented that the pandemic is improving and encouraged everyone to stay healthy. He wished Stef's family well.

**Pete Tanaka made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58pm.**

**Geoff Prusak seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 6 Yes (L. Woolf, C. Mailhos, P. Tanaka, G. Prusak, M. Clark, M. Makuch), 0 No.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Marysa Semprebon*  
Recording Secretary



**TOWN OF WILLINGTON**  
OFFICE OF FIRE MARSHAL



TO: Board of Finance  
FROM: *Dick Palmer*  
Dick Palmer, Fire Marshal  
DATE: February 11, 2021  
RE: Budget Request 2021/2022

Enclosed is information for the Fire Marshal budget for FY 2021/2022. I've also enclosed the responsibility of the Fire Marshal and the requirements to maintain certification, and what does the Fire Marshal do within the Town.

I have no increases in my budget.

The budget breakdown:

1-01-231-200-115 – Fire Marshal Salary – \* No increase.

1-01-231-200-127 – Stipends for the Deputy Fire Marshals – No Increase.

1-01-231-200-300 – Operating Expenses – No increase.

\*I do however if the Town provides the non-union employees an increase that I be considered.



## **TOWN OF WILLINGTON**

### **OFFICE OF FIRE MARSHAL**



### **Town of Willington Fire Marshal key activities**

The following list outlines most of the key responsibilities that the Fire Marshal is responsible for.

Inspect all occupancies excluding one and two family dwellings for compliance to the State Fire Safety code plus follow General statutes Chapter 541.

Investigate all fires for cause and origin, and forward to the State these reports within ten(10) days.

Issuance of Blasting permits following all State and Federal guidelines, and to inspect said site.

Issue Open Burning Permits per State DEEP guidelines under Public Art 99-225.

Inspect all underground storage tanks removal, inspect propane and bulk oil storage facilities.

Review all new and renovation projects to ensure compliance with State Fire Safety code, and all other codes as apply.

Investigate Hazardous materials spills within the town.

Provide pertinent information to the General Public regarding Fire Safety issues.

Supervise appointed Deputy Fire Marshals, which the Town has presently two(2).



# **TOWN OF WILLINGTON**

## **OFFICE OF FIRE MARSHAL**



The following outline list of all key activities of the Town of Willington Fire Marshal.

1. Inspect all occupancies excluding one/two family homes for compliance to the Connecticut Fire Safety Code, and National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code, plus the Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 541, and to seek abatement orders for corrections if needed.
2. Investigate all fires for cause and origin, file investigative reports to the State Fire Marshal within ten days.
3. Issuance of blasting permits for use, transporting, or storage, and inspect all blasting sites.
4. Inspect all installation or removal of underground storage tanks. Keeps records of all Underground storage tanks for schools and service stations.
5. Inspect all Propane, Natural, and Bulk Storage Gas facilities.
6. Review all new construction or renovation projects for public occupancy, to ensure compliance with all fire safety codes.
7. Investigate all hazardous chemical/materials incidents.
8. Supervise Deputy Fire Marshals and Fire Inspector.
9. Process all manufacturing employer hazardous materials survey forms, MSDS lists, and inspect to their accuracy.
10. Provide pertinent information to the general public regarding fire safety issues.
11. Chairperson of the Town's Local Emergency Planning Committee.
12. Serves as the town's Open Burning Official to comply with the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Public Act 99-225, as having the sole responsibility of issuing those permits.



Attachment #2

**WILLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT INC.**  
426 RIVER ROAD P.O. BOX 161  
Willington, Connecticut 06279  
860.429.0288

Alexander J. Moore  
**Fire Chief**

Ronald A. Gantick  
**President**

02/04/2021

To: Chairmen Makuch  
Willington Board of Finance  
40 Old Farms Rd  
Willington CT, 06279

RE: Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) Line Item

Chairmen Makuch,

Over the last couple of years in a joint effort between Emergency Services, Board of Selectman, and the Superintendent of Schools we asked the Board of Finance to create a line item for Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's). With the funds approved last year we will be able to install AED's in the following locations.

1. River Rd Park
2. River Rd Fire House
3. Old Farms Rd Fire House
4. Center School
5. Replace one outdated unit on fire apparatus.

This year we are requesting that the line item remain at \$6,000.00 to install and or replace AED's at the following locations.

1. Replace two outdated units – (1 Willington #1 Service 213 / 1 Willington Hill Rescue 149)
2. Old Town Hall
3. Library
4. Hall School – Upper Wing

I ask that this please be added to the agenda for the February 11, 2021 Board of Finance Meeting so we may discuss further.

Best Regards,

*Alexander J. Moore*

Alexander J. Moore – Fire Chief

# Elections Department

*Suzanne G. Chapman / Republican Registrar Christine Psathas / Democratic Registrar*

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## TOWN of WILLINGTON

40 Old Farms Road ♦ Willington, CT 06279 ♦ 860-487-3120

February 9 2021

To: Board of Finance

From: Suzanne Chapman and Christine Psathas, Registrars of Voters

Attached is our budget request for the fiscal year 2021-2022. We approach our budget based on the Secretary of State's election calendar and the voting events that will occur within the fiscal year. This budget request ensures that the requirements of Connecticut State Statutes and Federal Election Laws are met for our elections, referenda and staff.

### **126.115 Registrar Salary:**

Our salary line item request will remain at \$25,278; this maintains the current salaries with no incremental increase, as it is a negotiation year.

### **126.160 Election Officials:**

There are four voting events budgeted: Democratic and Republican municipal primaries to be held on September 14; municipal election to be held on November 2 and the EO Smith/town budget referendum on May 3 2022. We pay our election workers a flat per event rate based on the number of hours we anticipate will be involved, taking into consideration the state's minimum wage; the minimum wage will increase to \$13/hour on August 1. This line item decreases \$154.

### **126.300 Election Expenses:**

As always the details that go into this line item are based on the voting events mentioned above. Although the tabulator maintenance contract from LHS Associates will be increasing by \$100, this line item decreases \$1,808. We don't anticipate increases from other vendors.

### **126.645 Elections Training & Education:**

We are obligated to provide continuing education for ourselves and our deputies and the most cost effective way to accomplish that is for us to take advantage of training provided by our professional organization, Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut (ROVAC), and the Secretary of the State. This line item is increasing by \$669.

The budget request that we are submitting is for \$40,301; an overall decrease of 3.1%.

We have not budgeted for any unexpected extra referenda, recounts or audits. If any of these do occur, the Board of Finance may need to provide additional funds to cover the costs.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 860 487.3120 or [registrar@willingtonct.org](mailto:registrar@willingtonct.org).

## ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT

2020-2021

Dept.	Obj	Description	FY 2019-2020			FY 2020-2021			FY 2021-2022		
			Approved	Adjusted	Budget	Expended	Approved	Adjusted	Budget	Request	% Change over 19-20
0126	115	REGISTRAR SALARY	20,369			20,526	25,278			25,278	0
0126	160	ELECTION OFFICIALS	6,719			2,374	5,810			5,656	(154)
0126	300	ELECTION EXPENSES	8,230			6,642	7,163			5,355	(1,808)
0126	645	REGISTRAR TRAINING AND ED	3,396			805	3,343			4,012	669
0126	TOTAL	ELECTION OFFICIALS	38,714		0	30,347	41,594	0		40,301	(1,293)
											-3.1%

Returned 8,367

## 2021-2022 Registrar of Voters Budget Detail

### 126.160: ELECTION OFFICIALS

		2020/21	+/-
Municipal Primary D&R September 14, 2021	1,280.00	1,403.00	123.00
Municipal Election November 2, 2021	2,445.00	2,476.00	31.00
Budget Referendum May 3, 2022	745.00	700.00	45.00
Deputy Registrars and Moderator Certification	1,186.00	1,231.00	45.00
<b>Total 126.100: Election Officials</b>	<b>5,656.00</b>	<b>5,810.00</b>	<b>(154.00)</b>

CT Minimum Wage	Change	
9/1/2020	12.00	
1-Aug-21	13.00	1.00
7/1/2022	14.00	1.00
6/1/2023	15.00	1.00

### 126.300: ELECTION EXPENSES

		2020/21	+/-
Ballots: Referenda, Primaries, Election	1,245.00	2,915.00	(1,670.00)
Election Supplies - Refreshments	250.00	250.00	-
Equipment: New Voting Booth		928.00	(928.00)
IVS Ballot Programming	-		
NCOA Processing (Annual Canvass-ROAST)	60.00	60.00	-
Voting Machine: Annual Maintenance (LHS)	900.00	800.00	100.00
Voting Machine: Memory Card Programming (LHS)	2,160.00	1,440.00	720.00
Voting Machine: Supplies (LHS)	80.00	110.00	(30.00)
Voter Checklist Maintenance	385.00	385.00	-
Office Supplies	275.00	275.00	-
<b>Total 126.300: Election Expenses</b>	<b>5,355.00</b>	<b>7,163.00</b>	<b>(1,808.00)</b>

### 126.645: ELECTIONS TRAINING & EDUCATION

		2020/21	+/-
Mileage/Training, Meetings	50.00		
Moderator Certification Class	120.00		
Professional Memberships	180.00		
Secretary of the State Conferences	3,662.00		
<b>Total 126.645: Training &amp; Education</b>	<b>4,012.00</b>	<b>3,343.00</b>	<b>669.00</b>

21-22 Treasurer Budget Worksheet

Attachment #5

Dept	Acct	Description	FY 2019-2020				FY 2020-2021			FY 2021-2022		
			Approved	Adjusted		Expended	Budget Request	Adjusted Budget	Expended 2/10/2021	Budget Request	\$ Change over 20-21	% Change over 20-21
0132	115.71	Treasurer Salary	32,680	32,680	32,546	32,680	32,680	18,238	32,680	0	0.0%	
0132	645.71	Training, Education, and Mileage	150	150	0	100	100	0	150	50	50.0%	
0132	690.71	Office Supplies	50	50	34	250	250	26	50	(200)	-80.0%	
0133	810.71	Dues, Fees, Memberships	300	300	284	150	150	250	300	150	100.0%	
0132	TOTAL	TREASURER BUDGET	33,180	33,180	32,864	33,180	33,180	18,514	33,180	0	0.0%	

**2021 - 2022**  
**Conservation Commission**  
**Dept. 0161**

The Conservation Commission is requesting **\$1,500** to fulfill our statutory responsibilities; our management duties at Fenton-Ruby Park and Wildlife Preserve, the Talmadge Tract and the Royal Knowlton Preserve; monitoring of town-owned open space; and outreach activities.

**Memberships and Conferences: \$250**

This includes CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions and CT Land Conservation Council memberships and educational conferences for commission members

**Programs and Outreach: \$250**

Funds are needed for environmental education events and instructional and display materials. This also covers the Daley Award.

**Park and Preserve Management: \$800**

Materials are needed for trail and facilities maintenance and development at Fenton-Ruby Park, the Talmadge Tract and the Knowlton Preserve. Almost all of this work has been done by volunteers since the Conservation Commission accepted responsibility for development and management of Fenton-Ruby Park in 1995 - and subsequently for the other two properties. It has become increasingly difficult to recruit and supervise volunteers and for current commission members to carry out all maintenance activities. We expect that we may need to hire contractors to perform such tasks as maintaining certain park areas as open meadows and cutting down hazardous trees.

**Open Space Monitoring: \$200**

We are continuing to use forest professionals to monitor other town-owned open space parcels (mostly acquired through sub-division requirements), including verification of boundaries and checking for possible inappropriate activity.

The Conservation Commission has been able to steward town open space and park lands, provide outdoor and conservation education, develop a Natural Resource Inventory and Open Space Conservation Plan and supporting maps, and prepare successful grant applications for state funding for the acquisition of the Talmadge and Knowlton Preserves with no professional assistance and minimal town funding. We feel that our request for the coming year is responsible and hope for your approval. We will be happy to discuss our proposal at your meeting on February 18th. Thank you.

Peter Andersen, Chair  
Julia Cartabiano  
Kathleen Demers  
Carol Jordan

Jacqueline Kulig  
Marilyn Schreiber  
Robert Shabot  
Mark Drobney, Alternate


# Town of Willington

PLANNING AND ZONING



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**To:** Willington Board of Finance

**From:** Michael D'Amato, AICP, CZEO. Land Use Agent 

**Cc:** Walter Parsell, PZC Chairman

**Date:** February 10, 2021

**Re:** Budget Request for FY 2021-2022

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Per the Budget Guidance letter dated January 14, 2021 from Chairman Makuch, I prepared the following memo to provide additional clarification as it relates to the budget request for this year. As I'm sure is the case with all departments, COVID-19 dramatically changed the operations of our office and how we provide service to residents. As you will see from the expenditures, the total number of applicants submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission was significantly less than previous years, which ultimately reduce the amount of money we've had to spend on legal advertising. These savings will be applied to cover costs related to various projects we have taken on to make our office more accessible via the Town's website, particularly during COVID.

There are two lines within the proposed budget that request an increase from the FY 20-21 funding level. However, both of the requests are simply to seek to restore funding that has been historically provided. I have outlined each specific request below:

**GIS Project (0171-431):**

This line item was reduced from \$1,500 to \$1,100 last year to accommodate the budget guidance at that time. As mentioned above, the Town has an online GIS system which our office has used to "link" scanned property information to make it available online to the public. Additionally, as our office receives zone change applications and wetland boundary updates we need to provide these changes to the GIS vendor so they can be adjusted on the GIS as well. These costs directly correlate to providing services to the public. Additionally, while it is not a cost that is supported by this budget, providing access to these documents electronically significantly reduces our need to print and make copies and ultimately printing costs.

**Land Use Consulting Engineer (0183-500):**

This line was also reduced from \$10,000 to \$7,500 for FY 20-21. This line, much like advertising fees is used in response to the applications that are received. With certain projects that will likely be before the Town in the near future it is important that we have the ability to retain engineering services to participate in the project and its review on the Town's behalf. Most notably, the Loves Travel Stop project will likely be finalizing their approval and submitted permit applications this Spring, it is important we have the ability to retain engineering services as this project moves forward. Additionally, should the Town identify other grant opportunities concept level plans which are required to submit an application would draw funds from this line. Lastly, our office does shortly anticipate additional invoices to be received for engineering services rendered which will increase total expenditures beyond the \$2,500 currently shown. Based on that, this line has been request at the previous funding level of \$10,000.

**TOWN OF WILLINGTON**  
**2021-2022 PLANNING AND ZONING BUDGET REQUEST**

Dept.	Obj	Description	FY 2019-2020			FY 2020-2021			FY 2021-2022		
			Approved 05/07/19	Adjusted Budget	Expended 6/30/20	Approved 05/28/20	Adjusted Budget	Expended 2/4/2021	Budget Request	\$ change over 20-21 Approved	% change over 20-21 Approved
PLANNING AND ZONING ACCOUNTS											
0171	121	ZONING AGENT ASST.	40,467	39,636	32,447	39,722	39,722	22,075	39,722	0	0.0%
0171	124	PLANNING & ZONING SECRETARY	38,739	38,739	39,060	39,504	39,504	22,674	39,504	0	0.0%
0171	330	LAND USE CONSULTING SERVICES	42,000	42,000	35,000	42,000	42,000	21,000	42,000	0	0.0%
0171	402	ZONING REG REVISION PROJECT	1,500	1,500	560	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	0	0.0%
0171	431	GIS PROJECT	1,500	1,500	750	1,100	1,100	750	1,500	400	36.4%
0171	540	PZC ADVERTISING	1,650	1,650	2,021	2,000	2,000	160	2,000	0	0.0%
0171	680	PZC OFFICE EXPENSE	1,500	1,500	1,135	1,500	1,500	332	1,500	0	0.0%
0171	810	PZ DUES, FEES, MEM	1,900	1,900	1,340	1,900	1,900	719	1,900	0	0.0%
0171	TOTAL	PLANNING & ZONING	129,256	128,425	112,313	129,226	129,226	67,710	129,626	400	0.3%
0172	123	ZBA CLERK	3,585	3,585	3,608	3,657	3,657	2,086	3,657	0	0.0%
0172	300	ZBA GENERAL EXPENSES	150	150	0	150	150	0	150	0	0.0%
0172	540	ZBA ADVERTISING	1,000	1,000	41	800	800	0	800	0	0.0%
0172	TOTAL	ZONING BD OF APPEALS	4,735	4,735	3,649	4,607	4,607	2,086	4,607	0	0.0%
0176	300	IW GENERAL EXPENSES	750	750	228	750	750	350	750	0	0.0%
0176	540	IW ADVERTISING	650	650	380	650	650	170	650	0	0.0%
0176	645	IW EDUCATION / MEMBERSHIPS	600	600	60	600	600	60	600	0	0.0%
0176	TOTAL	INLAND WETLAND COMM	2,000	2,000	668	2,000	2,000	580	2,000	0	0.0%
BOARD OF SELECTMEN ACCOUNTS											
0141	333	LAND USE ATTORNEY	10,000	10,000	10,730	10,000	10,000	5,117	10,000	0	0.0%
0183	500	LAND USE CONSULTING ENGINEER	10,000	10,000	9,427	7,500	7,500	437	10,000	2,500	33.3%

Dear Chairman Makuch, Vice Chair Prusak and members of the Board:

The Willington Economic Development Commission had a very productive year. We thank you for supplying the resources necessary to execute our strategy. The one thing that I am most proud of is that EDC has dedicated professionals in the Town Office that can respond to people inquiring about business. Cloud, Harbour & Associates LLP are under contract for services to reviews business proposals, discuss strategies and propose solutions for small businesses. We have seen the results, Dollar General, and Lots and More moving into Phelp's Plaza. We have big plans for the future.

Some of highlights from this year:

- \*Willington Development Guide

- \*EDC Website with updated contact information for businesses and residents

- \*Facebook page providing updated business information

- \*Business survey

- \*Sign Regulation change

- \*Working with all business to provide resources and guidance. For example, providing a list of developable parcels in town and guiding prospective purchasers through the approval process.

- \*Proposed zone change to South Willington Village increasing the proposed uses for the business district. Opening opportunity such as restaurants, breweries, child care facilities. Allowing for a special permit rather than a zone change application. This should generate additional business opportunities in South Willington. These proposed changes are now before the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Within this context EDC asks for a flat, no increase budget for 2021-2022 of \$19,280 to continue the important work of the Commission. I am sure that the increase in tax revenue from our support for smart growth, in the appropriate places, will more than offset our request for revenue.

Thank you,

  
Richard Maloney  
Chair, Economic Development Commission

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TOWN CLERK