

# Town of Willington

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Board of Selectmen  
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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Budget Workshop Special Meeting Minutes  
Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

February 7, 2022  
5:30 PM

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

First Selectwoman Wiczenski called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM with the following in attendance: Selectwoman Boritz, Selectman Bulick, Assessor Walter Topliff, Business Manager Donna Latincsics, DPW Director Troy Sposato, Human Services Director Jennie Arpin, Tax Collector Janice Clauson, Town Clerk Robin Campbell and residents via Zoom.

### Present to Speak

None.

### Budget Workshop

The current budget is reflective of the changes that were made at last week's meeting, as well as the addition of the CIP numerical amount, and the addition of the positions requested with the corrected salary and insurance information. The budget discussed tonight is at a 17.6% increase, which is \$653,246.00, over the current budget. Business Manager Latincsics shared a spreadsheet by email of the proposed salary increases by department (whether it's a new position or an increased hourly position or an increased salary position). These salaries represent an \$180,000.00 cumulative increased total; this includes the shared services amount for the Assessor but does not include the proposed increase for Revenue Collector salary.

Currently the assessor is in the office 8 to 10 hours per week; unfortunately this is not an adequate amount of time to complete work or for face to face interaction with town residents. The Town of Bolton has expressed interest in sharing an assessor within our two town offices. The assessor would be paid full time with benefits but would work half time in both towns. There is currently \$22,000.00 in this budget now, but with the shared position the budget would need to increase an additional \$38,000.00. This process would be similar to the shared services of the Building Official. This is a considerable increase but it is needed to meet the needs of the residents. This is not something new and this is not an easy position to fill. The Assessor needs to be certified in order to sign the Grand List each year.

Discussion continued on the hiring of new positions that can be funded this year and positions that may need to be kept on hold.

Selectwoman Boritz stated that these positions are needed but the addition of new positions needs to be incremental and justifiable. The budget needs to be addressed by the non-negotiable costs (the costs of supplies, the cost of necessary items that cannot be removed from the budget, etc.).

Selectman Bulick agreed that the commodities that are needed to make business happen cannot be avoided but those line items need to be identified.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski continued reviewing the proposed salary increases: the upgrade from Laborer proposed to driver position is an additional \$4,954.00 a year. This is a necessary increase because of the amount the laborer is currently used as a driver anyways (during snow storms, during the summer for various activities). The Selectman's Assistant is an increase in the amount of hours in the office, as 30

hours currently is not enough time to get the job done. This would represent an increase of \$7615.00 in salary as well as an increase in the insurance benefits line item. The increase for the Revenue Collector is a must because the current collector is making less per hour than her assistant and we would like to retain our current collector.

The DPW mechanic is not in this updated budget, as decided upon last week. The additional laborer position needs to be decided upon. A possibility is hiring a part time summer help laborer to be phased in over the next few years as a full time laborer position. This will require a discussion to be held on the idea of part time during the summer and how this position would be useful to the department.

DPW Director Sposato stated that the chip seal / road maintenance line item can be reduced by approximately \$200,000.00 but this would eliminate an estimated 5 to 6 miles of road that was planned to be chip sealed this year. The BETA information system that is being discussed in CIP would be used in the next fiscal year and then those reports would show the need to move forward with scheduled infrastructure maintenance.

The salt budget was an increase but cannot be altered because this number is out of the Town's control. Salt increased by an estimated \$30.00 per ton this year.

Discussion continued on the increase in the tree removal line item and if any of the projected work for next year can be completed this year. It was stated that in the current fiscal year, this line item is already overspent.

The Assessor position was discussed again and how the split with the Town of Bolton would occur. The Assessor would work in Willington up to 20 hours per week and would be considered full time split between the two towns.

The public works laborer position discussion continued from last week. There is justification to keep this position because it is needed with the increased work that is being proposed. DPW Director Sposato stated that it would be beneficial to have that extra person during the year, especially during the summer. Having just one extra person could help to get more work done each year. First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked if there is a possibility of temporary summer help to justify the work that needs to be done outdoors, at the same time phasing the laborer position in. Discussion continued regarding temporary summer help as there is a need, but how can that need be met currently.

The \$254,000.00 increase to the Reserve fund, proposed in the CIP budget, will need to be reviewed after the plan is received from the Committee.

ARPA funding was discussed again for the funding of a portion of the Human Services Director position as well as the Assistant position for the Senior Center / Human Services Department to be phased into the operating budget for the Town over the next few years.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:29PM.**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 3 Yes (Bulick, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carries.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kelsey Allard  
Recording Secretary  
Town of Willington

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WILLINGTON, CT.

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TOWN CLERK