

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes
Lower Level Conference Room

December 17, 2018
*5:30 P.M.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting with Amended Agenda to order at 5:30 PM with the following in attendance: Selectmen Makuch & Blessington, and residents. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of December 3, 2018 with the following edit: page 6; Appointment of Tina Binheimer; should read: effective: January 1, 2019 (not 2018).

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of December 10, 2018 as submitted.

Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

Vote: 2 Yes (Wiecenski & Blessington) 0 No 1 Abstain (Makuch)

New Business

A. Appointments

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint AnnMarie Poole as a regular member of the Willington Zoning Board of Appeals; effective December 31, 2018; expiring December 30, 2019.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Vote 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

B. Tax Refunds

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$36.11 to Wenxial Zhau on a certificate of correction.

Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington).

Old Business

A. Personnel Matter – Revenue Collector Position

Revenue Collector Lisa Madden was present. The Selectmen had reviewed some documentation that was requested at last weeks' meeting regarding an org chart, salaries and union information as requested by Selectwoman Makuch. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that a summary of responsibilities for each department were also included in the packet as well as a background of the Tax Collector's salary. She then recapped that the Revenue Collector has requested an increase in hours from 30 to 35 with an adjusted salary;

which would reflect a 19% increase, if approved for the additional 5 hours per week. Selectman Blessington added that they were told we would be saving money by not filling the assistant position; but you are really just moving money around from one line item to the other and ultimately, we would be spending more. Do we know exactly how much this increase is going to cost the town? He then cautioned that the other position would still have to be filled. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that there would be a little bit of savings, because the new hire would start at a lower step/rate; but they would eventually catch up to the higher steps. Selectwoman Makuch added that it is a significant increase. First Selectwoman Wiecenski agreed; noting that we have 3 options: 1) agree on the increase to 35 hours per week with the increase in salary; 2) leave it at 30 hours per week with the current salary or 3) or increase from 30 to 35 and leave the salary where it is. Selectman Blessington assumed that if we go with option number 2; we would fill the assistant position as it was? First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she doesn't think filling the assistant position as it currently is would be the best option for the town; knowing that the person would not have enough work to keep them busy for 22 hours per week. Selectman Blessington then clarified that the Tax Collector needs help some of the time and there are other departments who could use the help as well. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the Revenue Collector has made the Tax Office very efficient; and does not need to fill the assistant position; and there is plenty of other work that can be done in other departments.

Resident Kim Kowalyszyn who was in attendance asked what would happen if the current Tax Collector were to leave? Would the Town be able to find another Revenue Collector who is as efficient as the current one? She then said instead of creating a floater position, why can't you just re-organize the work/job description of the assistant and offload some of the duties such as the Willington Wire? There is nothing to say that the Willington Wire cannot go from Recreation to the Tax Office.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski agreed, noting that we need to take into account that the office might be running efficiently now, but what if our current Revenue Collector were out for an extended amount of time? She then added that she is hesitant to decrease the department to one person because there is no back up.

Selectwoman Makuch stated that she is finding a challenge with this conversation because the Selectmen were told by the suggestion of the Revenue Collector that there was no longer a need to have an additional person in that office, but are now being told that her hours need to be increased because we are not filling that position. She then clarified if you need those extra 5 hours then we should not be eliminating the position. Ms. Madden clarified that she is fine if they decide to keep the assistant position. She clarified that First Selectwoman Wiecenski told her she would be open to 35 hours per week and she ran with it. First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that she was never open to the 35 hours per week; you said you didn't need an assistant and it was assumed that the workload was going to be handled as is. The discussion of the 5 hour increase did not come up until more recently. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then cautioned that she is having a hard time with the salary implications, noting that although she values what Ms. Madden does; the Town is not able to sustain this type of increase.

Selectwoman Makuch suggested moving forward with the assistant; but dedicating 5 (or however many) hours it will take to offset the work load to help the Tax Office and then re-work the job description of other duties to fill the position. She agrees – looking at the increases over the past few years – it is hard to justify right now.

Selectman Blessington said his original thought was- if it ain't broke, don't fix it. We should keep the assistant position; and have them help out the other departments who need assistance during the day. Selectwoman Makuch said it seems like the most logical sense.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski will revamp the job description to fit the assistant revenue collector assignments and add various job duties; and will review with the union. The Revenue Collector position will remain at 30 hours per week.

B. Personnel Matter – Office Manager hours

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the request had been made to change the Office Manager's position from 40 to 35 hours per week. She came on board at 30 hours per week, and was increased to 35 and then to 40 when the Assistant Office Manager had retired.

The Selectmen had suggested the best option would be to make a change to a salaried position. Selectwoman Makuch asked if she was ok with the change from hourly to salary? First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that at first she wasn't on board with it, but after discussing it with her, she seemed ok with it.

Selectman Blessington said he is not in favor of the salaried position, as most people get the worse end of the stick. He then asked what would happen, if she were over her 35 hours in the middle of a meeting. Would she up and leave? First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that the way the salaried positions are structured, is that some days might have more hours than others; some less as long as you fill the number of hours per week. Selectman Blessington said that is how it should work – but never ends up that way.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski cautioned that we need to think about this – can we sustain this type of increase; where the salary would remain the same across the board with less hours. She added that we need to look at this as the position; not the person. Would the Board of Finance support increases?

Selectwoman Makuch stated that she has a few more questions she would like to ask Ms. Campbell (who was not in attendance). Selectman Blessington said that he was hoping Ms. Campbell would be here to discuss.

This item was tabled and will be discussed at the next meeting.

C. Approve Public Works' Director job description

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she did not receive any feedback regarding the job description. The Selectmen stated that they were happy with the way it is written.

Selectwoman Makuch moved to approve the Town of Willington Director of Public Works job description.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she will begin working on an interview panel.

James Makuch asked if the issue of him trying to hook into the public water line been forwarded to the Town Attorney? First Selectwoman Wiecenski said yes it has and she has also held discussions with the Department of Health/Drinking Water section. She is gathering information on the subject.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 P.M.

Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

Respectfully submitted,
Robin Campbell
Administrative Assistant