

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes
Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

March 15, 2021
6:30 PM

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with the following in attendance; Selectwoman Boritz, Selectman Blessington, WFD#1 Chief Alex Moore and residents.

Approval of Minutes

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the BOS Regular minutes of March 1, 2021 as written.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried.

Present To Speak

No one was present to speak

Correspondence

A list of correspondence was available for the Selectmen to view.

A discussion was held regarding the BOF request to enter into a discussion regarding ambulance services funding with the Town of Union. The Selectmen agreed that First Selectwoman Wiecenski will attend the initial meeting and bring in the other Selectmen as the discussion evolves.

First Selectman's Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided some updates. We are still waiting for the STEAP Grant contract from DEEP. The Emergency Communications Task force met regarding the survey sent out to residents. Chief Moore is on the agenda to discuss further. The next SBC meeting is scheduled on Wednesday March 17th. LOTCIP Grant, we are working with CRCOG on the details. Our Zoning agent is working with DOT to coordinate portions of the project they are doing as a separate standalone project. The BOF transferred the requested \$22,000 for the required design work.

Public Works

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided an update on behalf of Public Works Director Troy Sposato. We had a resignation from Todd Hettlinger, his last day is this Friday March 19th. We had a current PW staff member accept and will take the position. This leaves a vacancy beginning March 22nd for the Technician/Laborer position. This position will be posted internally for 5 days then post an open listing

for 2 weeks. PW will be down a full time crew member until the position is filled. We are considering opening the Swap shed at the Transfer Station tentatively April 10th.

A discussion was held regarding the Transfer Station Boy Scouts bottle return. It was discussed that the Boy Scouts are not quite ready to be hands on and open the bottle return.

- Road side mowing is continuing.
- Fixed a culvert on Daleville Rd.
- Brush chipping on Clint Eldredge Rd.
- Patched potholes around Town.
- Picked up trash in the park.
- Moved wood on Old Farms Rd.
- Worked on Sweeper
- Chipped brush from the past wind storm

New Business

A. Appointments – Willington Planning and Zoning Commission Vacancy

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint John F. Tehan as a regular member of the Willington Planning and Zoning Commission; filing a vacancy effective 3-16-21 expiring 11-16-21. Selectwoman Boritz Seconded the motion.

Mr. Tehan thanked the Board for having him. Mr. Tehan and his wife moved from Milford Mass where they have a tradition of public service. He went to UCONN and spent a great deal of time in this area.

**Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No.
Motion carried.**

B. Emergency Communications Task Force recommendation and next steps

WFD#1 Chief Alex Moore provided an update on the Emergency Communications Task Force. A survey was sent to residents and we received a very positive response of 299, more than we anticipated. There was an overwhelming response that residents want to be notified of emergencies in their area and road closures. There was significant feedback of residents who wanted to be notified of Town Meetings and such. The Committee met with two vendors for communications software, Everbridge that the State of CT uses and Code Red which is used by some towns. The Committee has voted and made the recommendation to move forward with Everbridge. While the price difference is quite higher, having staff and surrounding towns having the familiarity and resources has value and outweighs the cost. Once approved the next steps are to start working on policies and procedures that should be put into place and defining roles and responsibilities.

A discussion was held regarding the process flow of the Everbridge system and staffing familiarity and area town resources. The discussion continued on the development of policies and how the system should be used to strategically set up notifications as to not over saturate the residents with information.

Old Business

A. COVID-19 Update

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided an update Willington has had cumulative 221 COVID cases and 3 deaths with 15 probable cases which is an increase of 7 cases since our last meeting on March 1, 2021.

As of last Thursday we dropped from the Orange alert level to Yellow. We have seen a consistent decline in Covid positive cases. While this is a positive trend we still ask residents to remain cautious.

The Governor announced another pivot in the vaccine rollout for the cohorts by age. Eligibility is opening up to those age groups 45-54 beginning March 19 and then age group 16-44 tentatively April 5.

We will conduct a vaccine 2nd dose clinic for Tuesday March 24th at Willington Woods. This is a follow up of our February 24th 1st dose clinic.

Willington vaccine data as of March 8th is: 1,118 (19.7%) total 1st doses 411 (90.13%) for 65+ and 243 (87.10%) 75+ the numbers for these 2 groups are over the State average. We do not have reported data for Willington for the 55+ age group as of yet however the State is at 40% total for this group.

The current emergency declaration extension is set to expire on April 20th 2021. We do not know yet if it will be extended or the implications if it just expires. As of now we are planning for both an in person Town meeting and a hybrid if we are allowed.

This evening the BOAA is meeting in a hybrid meeting in the upstairs common room and on Zoom. They are the first group to hold a hybrid meeting. I would like to conduct our next meeting April 5th in a hybrid manner in some way. Heather and I will attend in person and Selectman Blessington and Selectwoman Boritz are welcome to join us if they so choose. The residents will still attend by Zoom. We would ask that everyone continue to wear a mask and socially distance. We are working with IT to have a way to live stream the meetings as soon as we are back to fully in person. Both Selectmen were in favor of meeting in person with others to attend via Zoom.

We are working on a plan to open the TOB to the public on April 19th. We will still ask people as much as possible to make an appointment however if the infection rate remains low we will move to return to a new normal. I expect to have more specific details at our next scheduled BOS meeting on April 5th.

The Federal American Rescue Plan was passed and signed last week. Willington is set to get at least \$578,970 in non-entitlement money and then a portion of the county fund. We have not seen the figures on this as of yet. We have seen broad acceptable use information but more detailed specific use will come from Treasury and we expect it sometime in the coming weeks. The money will be allocated in two tranches; 1 within 90 days and the 2nd 1 year from now. The Treasury has 60 days to send the funds to the State and they will be a pass-through for non-entitlement cities and they have 30 days to disperse. The funds must be spent by the end of calendar year 2024. We do know for sure that the funds cannot be used for 2 things; deposit to any pension fund and directly or indirectly offsetting a tax cut.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski would like to develop a working committee to determine the best way to utilize these funds while following the guidelines set forth.

Present to Speak

No one was present to speak

Good & Welfare

Mr. Tulis wanted to share that Jeff Kucko who was born and raised in Willington and now lives in Tennessee is battling stage 4 kidney cancer. We want to keep him in our thoughts and prayers and send him and his family well wishes.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided some updates and reminders. We had several brush fires over the last week. Our environment is dry and we encourage residents to be very cautious and please note the fire danger before burning. This information is available on the DEEP website or by calling our fire department.

You can find COVID information from <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus>

Mobile Food Share will be here at the TOB this Wednesday March 17th from 11AM to 11:30 AM. Contact Human Services with any questions.

Please if you can support our small businesses and restaurants.

Willington Day is currently being planned for Saturday August 28th 2021 with a rain date of August 29th 2021. If you are interested in being part of the planning committee you can contact Sarah Reis at Willingtonday@willingtonct.org for information.

Please continue to wear masks, wash your hands and socially distance as necessary.

Selectman Blessington moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 PM

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Sharpley
Administrative Assistant
Town of Willington

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WILLINGTON, CT.

2021 MAR 17 A 6:53


TOWN CLERK