

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

Board of Selectmen
40 Old Farms Road
Willington, CT 06279
(860) 487-3100
(860) 487-3103 Fax
www.willingtonct.org

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes
Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

May 3, 2021
6:30 PM

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she is in a new spot for our Zoom meeting as we had to change locations due to the referendum. The new Audio Visual equipment is easily moved and set up anywhere. The banner behind which states Willington Connecticut Safer stronger together was made for us by CCM printing services free of charge for Municipalities for the past year during COVID. All the COVID related signage around Town was generously provided by CCM to support Municipalities during this health crisis at no cost to the Town.

Approval of Minutes

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the BOS Regular minutes of April 19, 2021 with the following correction to page 8 related to the Treasurers position discussion. *It should read: The person that we hired if I'm not mistaken is the highest paid employee of the Town of Willington.*

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

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

Motion Carried.

Present To Speak

No one was present to speak

Correspondence

None to report.

First Selectman's Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided a few updates.

There are no new updates related to our STEAP Grant for the Old Town Hall septic. We are still waiting for the contract from DEEP.

The School Building Committee the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 19th 2021. Kosta Diamantis, Deputy Secretary of Department of Administrative Services (DAS) will be touring the school facilities prior to the next SBC meeting.

The LOTCIP Grant for the Route 32 project. Our Zoning Agent Mr. D'Amato is working with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation. We are waiting for the final design to submit a Request for a quote (RFQ).

There is currently one vacant positions in Public Works, we have extended the deadline by one more week until Thursday May 6th, 2021.

We had new security cameras installed at the TOB. There are a total of 11 cameras, 9 outside and 2 inside.

The lights have been installed at the park and are now around the Basketball court. Soon the lights will be on the volleyball court and playscape will be on. As of now RRAC is open from dawn to dusk, the Recreation Commission will be updating their policies and the hours to allow for use under the light. We will share as soon as new times are determined and made official. Thank you to Maureen Parsell former Rec Director, for making this long awaited project happen and our current Director Bethany Cologna for seeing this project to completion.

The Conservation Commission is planning to apply for a grant to purchase a sixteen acre parcel. The purchase is also in the CIP plan that this Board approved as part of the 21/22 budget. This purchase will require approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission under C.G.S. 8-24. If this Board is in agreement with this project I will move forward and formally ask PZC for approval under 8-24 which will be needed in order for the Conversation Commission to proceed with this grant.

There was a consensus with the Board of Selectmen, that they support the purchase of a sixteen acre parcel.

Public Works

Mr. Sposato reported the following that has been done by Public Works

- Sweeping in still going on around Town
- Cleaned out swale behind a house on Schofield Rd.
- Roadside mowing is continuing
- Grading dirt roads is still continuing around Town.
- Helped with installing a tent at Hall School just like the one installed at Center School
- Installed new ceiling tiles at the TOB in the kitchen area.
- Installed/replaced some new road signs, speed limit signs.
- Loamed at the park where we installed the new lights.
- Picked up trash at the park.
- Tree clean up from Fridays wind storm. We had two big trees come down due to the wind storm, One on Bolster Rd and one on Pinney Hill Rd.

Mr. Sposato wanted to remind residents that the Transfer Station closes promptly at 3:45 allowing time for staff to close up for the day, perform required maintenance and to complete paperwork. We ask that residents please be mindful of the time and not linger around the swap shed on or close to the 3:45 closing time.

New Business

A. Town Clerk Week Proclamation

First Selectwoman Wiecenski read the Proclamation for Town Clerks Week May 2, 2021 – May 8, 2021 and congratulated Robin Campbell & Rachel Peirce on the great job they are doing for Willington.

Whereas, The Office of the Town Clerk, a time honored and vital part of local government exists throughout the world, and

Whereas, The Office of the Town Clerk is the oldest among public servants, and

Whereas, The Office of the Town Clerk provides the professional link between the citizens, the local governing bodies and agencies of government at other levels, and

Whereas, Town Clerks have pledged to be ever mindful of their neutrality and impartiality, rendering equal service to all.

Whereas, The Town Clerk serves as the information center on functions of local government and community.

Whereas, Town Clerks continually strive to improve the administration of the affairs of the Office of the Professional Municipal Clerk through participation in education programs, seminars, workshops and the annual meetings of their state, provincial, county and international professional organizations.

Whereas, It is most appropriate that we recognize the accomplishments of the Office of the Town Clerk.

Now, Therefore, I, First Selectwoman Erika G. Wiecenski, Town of Willington, do recognize the week of May 2 through May 8, 2021, as Town Clerks Week, and further extend appreciation to our Town Clerk, Robin Campbell and to all Town Clerks for the vital services they perform and their exemplary dedication to the communities they represent.

Dated this 3rd day of May, 2021

Selectman Blessington Seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski)

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked Robin and Rachel. They both took on new roles in the middle of a pandemic and a historic Presidential Election. They have both stepped up to the plate in an ever changing landscape. They have worked hard and has done their Town proud.

Robin Campbell responded by saying she is humbled by the outpouring of support from her peers and the community. She wanted to extend a thank you to everyone that has assisted her since she took on this role. She expressed that she couldn't have done this without the support of her assistant Rachael Peirce who works tirelessly every day.

B. Tax Refund

First Selectwoman Wiecenski Moved to refund \$138.50 to Wheels LT on a Certificate of Correction.

Selectman Blessington Seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski)

Old Business

A. COVID-19 Update

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided an update Willington has had cumulative 249 COVID positive cases, 3 deaths and 21 probable cases which is an increase of 7 cases since our last meeting on April 19, 2021.

As of last Thursday we are now in the Yellow alert level resulted from a slight decrease in cases from two weeks ago (7.3 cases per 100,000). Organizations, families and individuals must continue to be vigilant with practicing basic COVID precautions. Wear a mask, wash your hands and stay socially distanced.

Residents 16+ are still eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. If residents are having difficulty in getting an appointment, please reach out to our Human Services Department. They have a list of residents that they are sharing vaccine availability to ensure everyone who would like to receive a vaccine is able to get the vaccine.

Willington's vaccine data as of April 28th (45%) of our total population of 2662 received 1st doses. 1888 are fully vaccinated. Although it is not required or mandated, it is encouraged that everyone 16+ years of age consider being vaccinated. Connecticut is the first State to reach 50% of adults 18+ fully vaccinated, 69% 1st dose.

Governor Lamont has announced plans to eliminate most of the State's COVID restrictions for every sector by May 19th, 2021 with the exception of certain mask requirements that will remain in effect.

Effective Saturday May 1, 2021

- The curfew for restaurants, entertainment venues, recreation venues, and theaters will be moved back one hour to 12:00 AM midnight.
- Bars that do not serve food can open for service- outdoor only. Food is still required when serving alcohol indoors
- The 8-person per table limit will be lifted- outdoors only. The limit remains in effect for indoor dining.

Effective Wednesday May 19, 2021

- All remaining business restrictions will end.
- Indoor masks will continue.
- The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) will issue recommendations for indoor and large outdoor events (e.g. concerts).

The current emergency declaration extension has been extended to May 20th 2021.

In light of the decreasing positivity rate and the increasing vaccine rate we will potentially be looking to open the TOB and the remainder of public buildings in the beginning of June. We are waiting to see how the Legislature handles further action on the Executive Orders as the Governors orders end, specifically public meetings and allowing a hybrid version to continue.

There is no new information regarding the American Rescue Funds at this time. Funding for Willington is set to be turned over to the State by May 11th, 2021. The State has 30 days to turn the funds over to Towns.

B. Cadlerock Property – Tax Sale Update

Regarding the Cadle property, this morning the attorney acting for the Ashford and Willington Tax Collectors resumed the 2012 adjourned tax sale on the twelve Cadle lots at 9:00 AM this morning. There were no bidders so the Towns of Ashford and Willington will take possession of their respective lots. (Ashford 10 lots and Willington 2 lots) on November 3, 2021. The cost of the tax sale to Willington will be \$2,000 which was unbudgeted.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski Moved to pay Pullman and Comley in the amount of \$2,000 for services and expenses related to the Town's purchase of the Cadlerock Property at Tax Sale held on May 3rd, 2021.

Selectman Blessington wanted to know what line item the unbudgeted \$2,000.00 would be coming out of.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski responded to say the Attorney fees related to services and expenses related to the Tax Sale of the Cadlerock properties would have to come out of the Tax line item from the Revenue Collectors Budget. She feels confident that we will have funds to cover this unbudgeted line item.

Selectwoman Boritz Seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski)

C. Treasurer Position Discussion

The First Selectwoman started the discussion by saying the last couple of Selectmen's meeting we have had discussion about the Treasurer's Position. She proposed that the Board draft a job description for a new position of Assistant Business Manager that encompasses many of the current Treasurer duties.

Selectman Blessington advised that he has been researching this topic. The duties of the Treasurer outlined in the Connecticut General Statute (C.G.S.) are as such: ***Sec. 7-80. Duties of treasurer. Appointment of deputy.*** (a) *The town treasurer shall receive all money belonging to the town, pay it out on the order of the proper authority and keep a record of all moneys received and when received and of all moneys paid out, when, for what and upon whose authority, which record shall always be open to the inspection of any taxpayer in such town and shall be presented to each annual town meeting, being first sworn to by him and adjusted by the selectmen. The town treasurer shall be, ex officio, treasurer of the town trust funds and may appoint a deputy who shall, in the absence or disability of the town treasurer, perform all his duties.* All of this is currently being done by our financial office under the leadership of the Chief Financial Officer or Business Manager of the Town. He is in agreement that it may be necessary to create a new position as an Assistant to the Business Manager as a staff person and not a department head. With that said reducing the stipend that is appropriated to the Treasurer.

The discussion continued, there was a consensus with the Board that we may need to expand the Finance office personnel to accommodate assuming some of the Treasurers duties.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski advised that she will draft a job description for a discussion at our next meeting on May 17th, 2021 so we can move forward with this.

Present to Speak

No one was present to speak

Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided some updates.

Connecticut Water is looking for a representative from Willington for the Water System Advisory Committee; Connecticut Water is pleased to work with local communities and stakeholders in meeting the water supply needs of the Mansfield area through our Water System Advisory Committee ("Advisory Committee"). The group was first established in 2014 under an agreement with the Town of Mansfield when we were selected to provide long term water supply for the University and the Mansfield community. The committee, which includes representatives of Mansfield, UConn, adjacent municipalities, regional planning agencies, and other stakeholders, meets quarterly. Members have been valuable in providing local input and ensuring communication and collaboration relating to the water system, system improvements, local planning, economic development, water and land conservation, and environmental stewardship. Please provide us with the name and contact information of a designee for the Water System Advisory Committee to serve a two-year term.

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

Mobile Food Share will be here at the TOB this Wednesday May 12th, 2021 from 11AM to 11:30 AM. Contact Human Services with any questions. We are currently using a drive through model and is open to everyone. First Selectwoman Wiecenski wanted to thank the core volunteers many of who are from the Senior Center.

Farmers to families' food boxes will be distributed Friday May 14th, 2021

Please if you can support our small businesses and restaurants.

The Referendum will be here at the TOB tomorrow Tuesday May 4, 2021 from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM for just the Region 19 budget.

Organizations, families and individuals must continue to be vigilant with practicing basic COVID precautions. Wear a mask, wash your hands and stay socially distanced.

There is a fill a Public Works Truck event scheduled from May 17th 2021 to May 21st 2021

- Monday May 17, 2021 – Town Offices from 12:30 PM to 7:30 PM
- Tuesday May 18, 2021- River Road Athletic Complex from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Wednesday May 19, 2021 - Transfer Station from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Thursday May 20, 2021 – Willington Public Library 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Help us help others in Town by donating. You can contact Human Services with questions.

Reminder that all of the Town's Meetings are still being held virtually and can be viewed live or on the Town's YouTube page. There is a link on the Town Website on the left hand that states Online Boards and Commissions Meetings. Inside that page will be a link to the Willington You Tube channel.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to go into Executive Session at 7:08 PM to go into Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Matter and invite Lorin Dafoe, Jay Righenzi and Todd Hettlinger if they are on the call.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to exit the Executive Session at 7:24 PM

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 PM

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Sharpley

Administrative Assistant

Town of Willington

RECEIVED
WILLINGTON, CT.

2021 MAY -5 P 1:32


TOWN CLERK